

Carlos Contreras  
Professional Development Critique

**1. What was the purpose of this workshop? Its title, names of who hosted, who attended? Where?**

The Professional Development Center (PDC) at the New York City College of Technology, City University of New York (CUNY) provides workshops that assist people in improving their professional abilities, knowledge, and general performance. On October 13th, 2023, the Professional Development Center hosted an event titled *CUNY Tech Prep Info Session & Pitching Yourself* which was facilitated by Selene Shen. The specific purpose of this workshop was to introduce participants to CUNY Tech Prep, a new course scheduled for the upcoming year, and guide them on creating a quick and effective elevator pitch. Approximately 15 individuals attended the workshop, with a majority being City Tech students from various majors. While the Professional Development Center conducts some workshops in person, this specific session was held online through a Zoom call.

**2. What was the most significant thing you have learned in this workshop? Why is it so important? Give details.**

During the scheduled hour for the Zoom call with the Professional Development Center, the most significant things the students learned about were the new CUNY Tech Prep Course and its offerings. Selene Shen discussed the program goals with everyone, outlining how the PDC aims to bridge the knowledge gap between a major's curriculum and current industry practices. Additionally, the PDC seeks to assist students in becoming competitive candidates when applying to tech roles at local companies. This is important because the course would help students find and secure full-time jobs or internships. Overall, the insights gained from the session underscored the practical benefits of participating in the CUNY Tech Prep program.

**3. What would you share with your colleagues about this professional development seminar? Why? Please explain in detail. Should be different than the previous answer in #2.**

Professional Development workshops typically aim to enhance skills in networking, career advancement, problem-solving, and personal growth. Regrettably, the event organized by the Professional Development Center failed to deliver on these objectives. The allotted time for the Zoom call was about an hour, but 80% of that time was dedicated to informing City Tech students about a course that 90% of the workshop attendees would not be able to take. Despite the event being titled *CUNY Tech Prep Info Session & Pitching Yourself*, attendees only spent about 10 minutes learning about how to pitch themselves. Although rushed, City Tech students

were still able to grasp the basics of a quick elevator pitch by following a three-step model provided by Selene Shen. Near the end, some examples were shared, with the best one provided by Janet Gili.

**4. How does this professional development seminar contribute/enhance your learning as a BUF major at New York City College of Technology, CUNY?**

Assuming the seminar did not heavily emphasize promoting a new course for the next academic year, it could prove highly beneficial for BUF majors at the New York City College of Technology (CUNY). The seminar would assist students in preparing for a common scenario in the BUF world because one never knows whom they are going to meet. This training in delivering an effective elevator pitch would be advantageous for BUF majors in various professional situations, enabling them to confidently introduce themselves and communicate their skills. Mastering the art of delivering a concise and impactful elevator pitch is a valuable skill that can set BUF majors apart in competitive job markets. In essence, the seminar provides an invaluable tool for personal and professional growth.

**What are some of the most valued lessons you have learned during your time at NYCCT? Which classes/events? Why? Give details**

As Carlos Contreras' time in college comes to an end, he reflects on the many valuable lessons he has learned throughout the years. Carlos perfected his time management skills after realizing he could no longer complete assignments the day before they were due, as he would in high school. A perfect example is when Dr. Dixon assigned an 18-page paper, and Carlos knew there was no way he could complete it within 24 hours before the deadline. Another significant lesson Carlos acquired was finding his voice and overcoming the fear of expressing his thoughts. In this regard, he owes his gratitude to none other than Dr. Adomaitis, who confronted him one day after class and provided reassurance that there are no wrong answers. These lessons may not sound like a lot, but they have shaped and molded Carlos into the person he is today.