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BUF 4900  
Professional Development Critique #1

During the Fall 2024 semester, students attending New York College of Technology, City University of New York, taking the class BUF 4900: Internship, were asked to complete two Professional Development critiques. The Professional Development Center hosts these events both virtually and in person on the school's campus. The first webinar I attended was Career Planning 101: Unlock Your Potential by Christopher Millington. This event took place on October 22, 2024, from 3 pm to 4 pm. It provided valuable insights into setting career goals and building actionable plans to achieve them. The session was interactive, allowing students to ask questions and apply strategies in real time.

The webinar, Career Planning 101: Unlock Your Potential, hosted by City Tech's Professional Development Center, was designed to guide students in shaping their career paths and preparing for the professional world. The session covered essential strategies for career exploration, understanding your strengths, setting achievable goals, and taking proactive steps to enter the workforce. One of the key points discussed was self-assessment, which involves evaluating your skills, values, and interests to ensure that the career path you pursue aligns with your personal attributes. This resonated with me because it emphasized the importance of choosing a career that feels fulfilling, rather than just practical. Another vital lesson was about networking, which was presented as a crucial element for advancing in any field. Building strong connections with peers, mentors, and professionals in your desired industry can create a wealth of opportunities. The third takeaway was the importance of setting SMART goals. By

creating goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound, I now understand how to break down large ambitions into manageable steps. This approach allows for consistent progress and helps keep you motivated and focused on your long-term objectives. These three lessons — self-assessment, networking, and goal-setting — are essential for creating a structured and strategic career plan.

The Career Planning 101 webinar closely ties into my studies as a Business & Technology of Fashion major at City Tech. Throughout my courses, I am learning about the intricacies of the fashion industry, from brand image marketing to global sourcing and trend forecasting, all of which require careful career planning. The webinar helped me see how important it is to align the technical skills I'm acquiring with my personal goals and values. For example, in my Brand Image Marketing class, we study how businesses craft their identity and appeal to consumers. This directly connects with the self-assessment aspect of career planning, as I now see how understanding my strengths can help me build my own personal brand in the fashion industry. Additionally, networking is a critical component of both business and fashion technology. Building relationships with industry professionals, classmates, and faculty not only opens doors to potential internships or job opportunities but also offers valuable insights into the industry. The webinar reinforced how essential it is to stay connected and engaged with industry trends, which are discussed in courses like Global Sourcing and International Retail Trade and Trend Forecasting & Social Media. By incorporating these elements into my career plan, I now have a more holistic approach to how my degree can lead to diverse career opportunities in the fashion world.

The most significant takeaway from the Career Planning 101 webinar was the value of setting SMART goals. Before attending the session, I knew the importance of goal-setting, but

the SMART framework provided a clear, actionable structure for how to approach my aspirations. Learning to create goals that are specific, measurable, and realistic has made me understand how to break down big dreams into achievable milestones. This method allows for a more focused approach to career planning, ensuring that each step is aligned with my overall vision. I would highly recommend this webinar to my peers, especially those who may feel uncertain about their career path or lack a clear plan. The practical advice shared in the session, such as using self-assessment tools to explore career options and understanding the power of networking, is invaluable in helping students develop a more concrete, personalized career strategy. Even if you are confident in your goals, the insights offered on how to refine and execute them more effectively are worth learning. The webinar serves as a great resource to guide anyone through the complexities of career planning, giving them the tools to create a more successful and fulfilling professional future.