



One of the most critical decisions of a successful trade apprenticeship is selecting the right partner. To prepare for this selection, both artists and students must give careful and thoughtful consideration so that expectations and deliverables can be defined. Both parties should also carefully analyze the purpose of the apprenticeship, identify the best environment to provide the work experience, and determine the necessary expertise to accomplish the desired end results.

Before an artist is ready to take on an apprentice, specific activities must be completed and a number of decisions made. These preparation steps help the artist:

- 1) Determine the credentials of the desired apprentice
- 2) Identify the key learning for the apprentice
- 3) Understand the benefits of having an apprentice
- 4) Commit to the responsibility of training for the designated period of the apprenticeship.

Successful apprenticeships depend on clearly stated terms and conditions for on-site training, expectations of both parties, and measurement tools to grade the experience. A contract binds both parties and ensures that these elements are understood and accepted. The contract will also specify how disputes will be handled and determine the conditions for dissolving the contract (*See Contract Section E*). The following information will help orient artists to the respective roles and responsibilities of a trade apprenticeship.

Experience Assessment

Before selecting a student, the artist must establish a foundation for the apprenticeship program that includes a definition of the unique aspects of the artist's work environment and how the program will benefit both the artist and the student. The following activities are suggested for the artist:

- Create a current resume outlining education, experience, clients and other creative accomplishments
- Provide a written profile of the artist's overall business/creative philosophy and a brief description about the studio or workplace
- Identify the types of on-site activities that will be offered to prospective students
- Highlight the benefit(s) for the student
- List specific expectations that include, but are not limited to:
 - Minimum set of skills required for apprenticeship
 - Hours/days the apprentice is expected to work (weekly)
 - Specific duties that will be performed as part of the apprenticeship
 - Periodic performance review schedules and benchmarks

The artist should also think through to the end of the apprenticeship to consider:

- How will the apprentice's performance will be evaluated
- What will the student receive: an opportunity for full-time employment, a certificate of completion, work to exhibit (at school, special recognition ceremony), etc?



Key Learning Objectives

Unlike other staff, apprentices expect to be taught the business. This instruction includes the creative aspects of producing a handmade object as well as the business side of being a full-time working artist. By definition, part of the apprentice's instruction will be hands-on and part will be classroom/supplemental instruction. One of the first decisions the artist must make is to determine the type of instruction he/she feels comfortable (capable) of conducting as part of the on-site work experience and what teaching should be outsourced or provided by other organizations or individuals.

The ideal condition would be, I admit, that men should be right by instinct; But since we are all likely to go astray, The reasonable thing is to learn from those who can teach.

Sophocles, *Antigone*
Greek tragic dramatist (496 BC - 406 BC)

What do you want to teach?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> History of craft, medium | <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creative trends in the discipline | <input type="checkbox"/> Small Business Operations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selection, use of materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Tax & Legal Issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Design of objects | <input type="checkbox"/> Product display and exhibitions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creation of objects | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Studio Preparation | <input type="checkbox"/> E-commerce |

Artists must have a roadmap to follow to ensure consistency and completeness of instruction. This roadmap should include all the major areas of instruction and an outline of the key learning points for each area to make sure the apprentice gets the desired instruction. For each major area of instruction that is identified, the artist must also answer the following questions:

- What are the three most important lessons that the apprentice needs to know about craft?
- What is the best way for the apprentice to learn these lessons?
- How does this training break down to weekly activities?
- What supplemental training, reference materials and technical assistance are available to complement the on-site experience the artist is nurturing?

Community colleges, non-profit organizations and trade associations can provide the instruction that the artist does not want to offer. Check with area institutions and trade journals for a list of sources – such as the Arts Business Institute – that provide professional development training specific for the craft industry (See Section F).