



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.

A prospective apprentice should prepare by conducting some research. Specifically, students should:

- 1) Define the desired outcome from the apprenticeship
- 2) Identify the key credentials of the artist to provide the training
- 3) Enhance any skill sets that may make them more competitive
- 4) Be prepared to commit the appropriate resources (time, money, willingness to learn) required to engage in a productive 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 students to the respective roles and responsibilities of a trade apprenticeship.

### Evaluate the Purpose of the Apprenticeship

Training with a master artist can jumpstart a career with hands-on business experience. Although the creative process is vital to growth as an artist, so are the critical skills of operating a business and marketing the work. Students should assess what elements are most important for the learning experience to balance classroom and the studio training:

#### What do you want to learn?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> History of craft, medium      | <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creative trends in 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                      |



Some artists will offer the complete package of learning. Most, however, will focus on the creative development through on-site experience and rely on educational institutions and professional organizations to provide the more instructional business, financial and marketing applications. To make sure the student receives optimum and diverse training, identify the partnerships or additional resources available to complement the specific instruction provided by the artist.

### Select the Right Type of Apprenticeship

One of the most important considerations for students is the amount of time to dedicate to an apprenticeship. Artists may provide – and expect – different levels of engagement in return for their training and on-site creative assistance. Three models that warrant review and consideration are:

#### **Full-time apprenticeship**

- Requires student to commit to 40 hours of work each week, with additional studio time available at no charge
- May or may not be paid for time; optional compensation for piece work or barter for studio time
- Minimum of three month commitment, with a year-long term preferred for intensive education
- Offers full-range of training, from day-to-day tasks to seasonal marketing and cyclical business activities

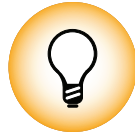
#### **Part-time apprenticeship**

- Requires student to commit to 10-20 hours of work each week, with potential for additional studio time available at a reduced or negotiated fee
- May or may not be paid for time; optional compensation for piece work or barter for studio time
- Day-to-day duties fluctuate; not as intensive learning and training
- Minimum of three month commitment

#### **Resident Apprentice**

- Requires student to commit to 40 hours of work each week, with additional studio time available at no charge
- Room and board provided as part of the apprenticeship; optional compensation for piece work or barter for studio time
- Minimum of three month commitment, with a year-long term preferred for intensive education
- Offers maximum learning experience and training, from day-to-day tasks to seasonal marketing, cyclical business activities and artist mentoring

Prospective students must evaluate these different scenarios within the context of personal creative goals and individual life situations to determine which type is the best fit.



Like artists, students should also think the apprenticeship through to its conclusion.

- What knowledge will the student have learned at the end of the apprenticeship?
- How will success be measured?
  - Growth in creativity
  - New insight into operating a business
  - Enhanced technique in craft medium
  - Specific instruction on how to make, market and sell
  - Expanded network of craft industry and potential buyers of work

These benchmarks should be established prior to seeking out an apprenticeship with a master artist to ensure the right fit and to realize expectations. It will also be helpful if students are active in determining the appropriate classroom teaching necessary to supplement the on-site experience.

### Abilities Assessment

To prepare for an apprenticeship, students should focus on existing skills. What makes you an attractive candidate? Have you received kudos from previous workers? Did you excel in previous craft classes? These are some of the qualities most artists look for in selecting a candidate:

- Desire to learn
- Interest in the creative process
- Good work ethic
- Reliable worker
- Attention to detail
- Follows direction well

Demonstrate how these skills have been applied at school, other jobs or creative growth to help the artist understand your unique strengths and abilities.

Once the student has identified the potential and appropriateness, and made the mental commitment to enter into an apprenticeship, it is time to prepare and apply (*See Sections C and D*).