

# Vermont State Colleges Prior Learning Assessment

## FOCUSED PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT (FPD) TITLE PAGE AND EVALUATOR WORKSHEET

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Location: Winooski  
Semester: Summer 2013  
Instructor: Lisa Williams

James F. Pierce  
23 Riverside Road  
Crosstown, VT 05123  
Date of Birth: November 6, 1974

[Jimpierce@gmail.com](mailto:Jimpierce@gmail.com)  
802-456-7890

### Portfolio Permission Release

As a student enrolled in the Focused Portfolio Development course, I understand and agree to the following conditions:

- Copies of my portfolio will be released to evaluators and other authorized specialists so that it may be evaluated.
- My instructor will be informed of the outcome of my evaluation for the purpose of improving instruction and advisement.

Signature

*James Pierce*

Date

*June 20, 2013*

AREA OF REQUEST: Business

AREA OF STUDY Please type no larger than 12 point	CREDIT REQUEST	CREDIT AWARD	COMMENTS
Introduction to Business	3		
Small Business Management	3		
Small Business Marketing	3		
Principles of Supervision	3		
Business Practicum	4		

Name: James Pierce

Area of Study: Introduction to Business

Credits Requested: 3

Source of Learning	Learning Components	Documentation
Pierce's Pieces Catering 1993 - 1995	Define organization and operational skills needed to establish and manage a business.	15
	Analyze and compare the characteristics of different types of businesses.	17
Home Team Sports 1995 - 2000	Organize the daily operations of a business in order to operate a financially viable operation, including staffing, sales, tax requirements, inventory, promotions, and proper financial record keeping/statements.	18
		19
Agway, Inc. 2000 - 2004	Negotiate with vendors and suppliers in order to maintain and increase profit margins.	20
		21
Home Team Sports 2005 - present	Incorporate the use of information technology and data in order to manage knowledgeably.	
	Employ computing skills with spreadsheets, databases, accounting software, word processing skills in order to handle finances, business communications, record keeping and planning.	
	Hire and supervise employees and be aware of human resources issues and ethics in the workplace.	
	Demonstrate the use of an appropriate business vocabulary and employ positive verbal and written communication skills with customers, employees, community members, financial institutions, etc.	
	Evaluate and employ a variety of marketing strategies.	
	Explain the nature of supply and demand in today's business world and be aware of basic economic theory.	

Name: James Pierce

Area of Study: Small Business Management

Credits Requested: 3

Source of Learning	Learning Components	Documentation
Pierce's Pieces Catering 1993 - 1995  Home Team Sports (Employee) 1995 - 2000  Home Team Sports (Owner) 2005 - present	Develop a business plan that includes a company description, marketing and sales plan, services and products offered, and a financial plan.	15
	Appraise the financial and legal status of a business and prepare financial statements in order to have data regarding business growth.	17
	Create and complete business financial documents in order to comply with regulations required by banks and tax departments.	19
	Define other significant documents, benefits and insurance needs including employee handbook, business and health insurance, licences and permits, in order to adhere to state and federal regulations and maintain employee satisfaction.	20
	Determine cash flow, market analysis, marketing and advertising approaches, and pricing and sales opportunities in order to maintain financial feasibility of the business.	
	Describe opportunities for community involvement by businesses.	
	Hire, train, evaluate and let go of employees as needed in order to provide excellent customer service and smooth business operations.	
	Comply with state and federal information returns, tax filing, and employment taxes in order to satisfy state/ federal requirements.	
	Attend local and national industry fairs and sales presentations in order to be knowledgeable about products.	
	Develop and continuously review an on-going strategic vision for the business that includes the necessary steps and defined outcomes in order to forecast growth for the business.	
	Employ business skills to manage inventory.	
	Determine accounts receivable.	

Name: James Pierce

Area of Study: Small Business Marketing

Credits Requested: 3

Source of Learning	Learning Components	Documentation
Pierce's Pieces Catering 1993 - 1995	Demonstrate knowledge of marketing concepts and examine several successful marketing concepts through case studies and personal experience.	15
Home Team Sports 1995 - 2000	Examine the marketing components of a small business to acquire and retain customers for products and services available.	17
Home Team Sports 2005 - present	Research customer behavior and needs within a defined market as well as a more global market development and gather information about target markets in order to develop an effective marketing strategy.	19
	Examine features, benefits and uses of products in order to determine the target market.	
	Determine a workflow for a marketing campaign that includes product pricing, promotions, and a variety of strategies such as newspaper ads, television commercials, internet marketing, radio advertisements, special events, direct mail, and the like.	
	Define steps in marketing research to determine the development of a successful marketing plan.	
	Use and employ strategic and tactical skills to execute and later evaluate a marketing plan and campaign.	
	Describe industry regulations about unethical marketing that include truth in advertising, spamming, telemarketing in order to follow guidelines for good marketing practices.	
	Differentiate between marketing, sales promotion, advertising and public relations.	

Name: James Pierce

Area of Study: Principles of Supervision

Credits Requested: 3

Source of Learning	Learning Components	Documentation
Home Team Sports 1995 - 2000	Interview, choose, hire, orient and let go of staff in order to fill positions with appropriate and qualified candidates for both temporary and permanent employment.	15
Agway, Inc. 2000 - 2004	Perform staff training in specific job responsibilities including professional protocols in order to create a professional work atmosphere and work ethic.	18
Home Team Sports 2005 - present	Design and conduct employee orientation both on and off site facilities to cover job specific, general and facility specific material.	21
	Guide employees through continuous feedback in order to maintain employees' knowledge of professional responsibilities and specific work requirements.	
	Implement and monitor employee goal setting and cross training plans to optimize staff competence, development, coverage and schedules.	
	Plan and facilitate weekly staff meetings to cover sales figures, employee concerns, projections, legal and ethical issues, etc. and produce weekly and biweekly staffing schedules.	
	Discuss issues such as diversity, harassment, accommodations as related to workplace supervision and report appropriate incidents to Human Resources staff for follow-up and describe effective conflict management skills.	
	Delegate tasks to staff in order to efficiently complete work and make use of staff strengths and talents by employing several styles of supervision.	
	Assess employee work through semi-annual performance appraisals in order to recommend staff for merit raises, disciplinary actions, individually designed training plan creation, and	
	Upgrade supervision skills through appropriate literature, researching legal and management approaches, and attending trainings.	

Name: James Pierce

Area of Study: Business Practicum

Credits Requested: 4

Source of Learning	Learning Components	Documentation
Pierce's Pieces Catering 1993 - 1995	Establish credit accounts for a small business.	15
	Manage cash and bank accounts daily.	17
Home Team Sports 1995 - 2000	Produce monthly and quarterly income statements.	20
	Hire, train and supervise staff and organize work schedules for staff.	
Agway, Inc. 2000 - 2004	Analyze competitive market prices and manage inventory.	
Home Team Sports 2005 - present	Use appropriate communication skills to enhance the business and strive for good customer relations.	
	Advise customers and recommend purchases that fit their needs.	
	Carry out marketing plans and choose from various marketing strategies.	
	Communicate with bankers, lawyers and other professionals to ensure smooth business operations and compliance.	
	Advertise and display products.	
	Employ business ethics and policies to assure positive business interactions and outcomes, and to encourage repeat business.	
	Organize daily work schedules.	
	Attend professional fairs and be knowledgeable about products.	
	Pay quarterly taxes.	
	Stay abreast of business issues and developments beyond own business	
	Use and continuously upgrade technology skills.	
	Supervise and administer all business procedures.	

Degree Plan

## Community College of Vermont

## A.S. in Business

<b>Core Competencies</b>	<b>Credits</b>	
Dimensions of Work	3	CCV, SP 2012
Computer Applications	3	CLEP TEST to be taken
Effective Workplace Communication	3	CCV, SP 2012
English Composition I	3	CCV, SP 2012
College Mathematics	3	CLEP TEST to be taken
Introduction to Research Methods	3	CCV to be taken

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<b>Areas of Inquiry and Integrative Approaches</b>	<b>Credits</b>	
Human Anatomy and Physiology	4	CCV to be taken
Introduction to Adobe Creative Cloud	3	CCV to be taken
Human Growth and Development	3	CCV to be taken
Natural History of Vermont	3	CCV to be taken
Seminar in Educational Inquiry	3	CCV to be taken

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<b>Program Requirements</b>	<b>Credits</b>	
Introduction to Business	3	<i>requested from PLA</i>
Financial Accounting	4	CCV to be taken
Small Business Marketing	3	<i>requested from PLA</i>
Small Business Management	3	<i>requested from PLA</i>
Macroeconomics	3	CCV to be taken
Computer Applications	*	(Core Competency above)
Business Analysis & Decision Making	3	CCV to be taken

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<b>Electives</b>	<b>Credits</b>	
Principles of Supervision	3	<i>requested from PLA</i>
Business Practicum	4	<i>requested from PLA</i>
Focused Portfolio Development	1	CCV Currently Enrolled

8

**TOTAL CREDITS IN PLAN:****61**

## **Essay: James Pierce**

My name is James Pierce and I am taking the Focused Portfolio Development class to gain college credits in business. I am hoping that these credits will help me finish my degree faster so that I can get on with my career. For now, let me give you some history about myself.

I am now 38 years old, having been born in 1974 as the middle child with three siblings. My parents are hardworking, enterprising individuals who believe in the value of hands-on learning along with formal education to fill out your personal development. As we grew up books, music and various craft projects were always available, along with the chance to get your hands dirty in the garden, kitchen or toolshed. When I was very young my parents made their living by selling pottery and baked goods and they moved a few times searching for a community to settle in. By the time we were in high school my parents had settled on a small town in northern Vermont. My mom started a catering business and my dad worked as a high school coach. We kids settled in and were active in sports and helped out occasionally with cooking and serving for my mom.

In 1992, I graduated from high school and that fall I went off to Castleton State College. Long story short –I discovered college was not the right place for me as nothing seemed to fit who I thought I was. So about mid-semester I dropped out and decided to take some time and travel – hopefully finding more of myself along the way. I went back home, went to work at the local Ethan Allen plant and saved almost all my money. After a few months I took what I had and set out on my travels. Along the way I met great people and had some great adventures. I returned home before the holidays in November 1993, feeling quite a bit more at ease with myself and ready to find a place for myself in my hometown.

My mom's catering business had really grown so I was able to jump in and work for her. She now had two part-time employees and a number of servers for special events. She had also started selling some of her specialties locally. I took on the bookkeeping and kept her accounts. I helped her determine the budget and made sure she was on track. I did the payroll and kept everything in order for the accountant to prepare her taxes. With the time she gained, my mom was able to spend more



James Pierce

time cooking – and to grow both the catering and the retail sales. The additional income made up my salary and increased her profits by a small margin. It was a great hands-on learning opportunity for me. I took advantage of adult education classes, used QuickBooks, and sought out advice from the accountant. Working for my mom also led me to discover how much I enjoyed working for a small business. After about a year, I was ready to leave the nest and look for an opportunity on my own, outside of the family.

In January 1995, my dad learned of an opening for a retail manager in the local sporting goods store. This establishment had been a cornerstone of the small business community in our town for a number of years. It had an excellent reputation and served our town and all the smaller communities surrounding us. Most of the school and community teams as well as individual families did business there. It seemed like an excellent next step and I jumped at the chance to apply. Since the owner knew my family, he took a chance on me and gave me the job.

I worked at Home Team Sports from 1995 – 2000. As the retail manager I expanded my skills to include not only understanding the budget and accounts but also to understanding inventory, sales, marketing, and supervising the small sales staff. Joe Gonyaw, the owner, was a true mentor. He guided me along the way and taught me how to handle the business, the people who worked there, and how to be an upright business member of the community. For Joe, helping the community prosper was as important as earning a living for himself and his employees. To this day, Joe is the one I continue to look to as a model businessman.

When I started, Home Team Sports had 3 full-time employees - Joe, Ellen, and me - plus a number of part-time sales help. Joe continued to oversee the finances as well as keep an eye on the entire operation. Ellen worked behind the counter and kept the store stocked and looking good. I supervised all the staff, which included hiring and training part-timers plus writing up yearly reviews for Ellen and setting weekly, monthly and annual performance goals for all of us. Once in awhile there

James Pierce

would be conflict with the mostly high school aged part time staff and I was looked to for settling any disputes. My supervisory skills grew, to say the least.

As the retail manager I worked closely with Joe in developing the business and making sure we were making good progress toward our plans. Each year we sat down to review the formal business plan and then took steps throughout the year to make sure we were on track. Marketing also played a big part in my responsibilities. We marketed through the normal routes of advertising in print, on radio and occasionally on the local TV channel. We also sponsored and participated in any and all community events that came our way. Getting the name Home Team Sports out there as a solid and viable member of the business community was always a priority. In addition to marketing the name, I had to stay current on the product line as well.

Once again, I took courses offered in the adult program at the high school and through our local bank as well as soaking up all I could from Joe. I read books about running a small business and trade journals about sporting goods, as it is a fast growing and well-researched retail area. I always took advantage of learning opportunities offered by our sales reps.

In 2000, the local Agway manager, who was getting ready to retire, approached me. He wanted to know if I was interested in applying for his position. While still in retail, this would be mostly managing the staff of a much bigger store. As you can imagine, Agway carried a wide variety of inventory: some sporting goods but mostly lawn, garden, pet, and feed supplies. The store employed eight full-time staff and about a dozen part timers. My job would entail making sure everything ran smoothly staff wise. I would hire, fire, train, evaluate, schedule, and maintain a safe, productive atmosphere. As at home Team Sports, employees were encouraged to participate in community events so that thread would carry over. Although the focus was narrower the scope of responsibility was much bigger and a larger salary came along with the position. I applied and was offered the job. I hated saying goodbye to working directly with Joe but we would still be a part of the same community and he

James Pierce

continued to be a mentor to me.

Another reason I accepted the job was that I was planning to marry Amy. We met while serving at one of my mom's events and our relationship had grown over the years. Amy's career at the Union Bank was taking off and with my new prospects we were feeling good about the future. I started work at Agway in August 2000 and in October we were married.

I worked at Agway from 2000 – 2004. During those years I took advantage of all training Agway offered its personnel managers. My skills as a supervisor increased and I became known as a fair, competent supervisor. I even began to mentor some of the teens on staff. It felt good to have their respect and to start paying back some of the help I had been given on my way.

In February 2004 Amy and I experienced a miracle – the birth of our beautiful daughter, Grace. Amy was happy to be a mom but was also happy in her career and things were really moving for her. She was now a loan officer at the bank. We talked it over and decided that I would take a year off to stay home and give Grace a good start. In March 2004, I gave notice to Agway and began the best adventure of my life so far. For a year I got to be full time stay at home dad. What a gift! Grace and I have a special bond that will last forever. Again – I did a lot of reading, spent time at the Family Center, and counted on my playgroup friends for guidance. There is no other learning experience quite as hands on as being a parent!

However, after a year we needed the second income and I looked for an outside job. In an amazing stroke of luck Home Team Sports came on the market. In June 2005, Joe Gonyaw decided it was finally time to let go of the business. Amy and I knew we were rooted in the community and we also knew we wanted to help make sure our community was viable. After sitting down with my old mentor and examining all the details, Amy and I put in an offer and bought Home Team Sports. That was seven years ago and I have never looked back. It has been a true pleasure to own and run the

James Pierce

store and be part of my community as a parent, a homeowner, and a business owner.

But with the economy of the past few years it has been a struggle to stay afloat and make the income I need. Plus as I have gotten older I am realizing the importance of the benefits and stability of working for a larger organization. In looking around at the opportunities that would be of interest to me I also realize that I will not only need to draw on my past experience but I will also need to have the credentials of a college degree. It comes full circle back to my parents' belief in joining hands-on learning with formal education to round me out and let me take advantage of all there may be out there. Finally, in a most astonishing turn of events, Joe Gonyaw's grandson has approached me about buying Home Team Sports to bring it back into the family. I couldn't ask for a better resolution!

So here I am taking the first steps toward earning a business degree. I appreciate your time and your help with my quest for getting a jump start on the process.

## **James F. Pierce**

23 Riverside Road, Crosstown, VT 05123- (802) 456-7890

[James.Pierce@gmail.edu](mailto:James.Pierce@gmail.edu)

**Career Objective:** A management position in a socially responsible, growing organization using my extensive supervisory, marketing, problem solving, and multi-tasking capabilities.

**Summary of Qualifications:** Over 17 years marketing and management in retail sales, adept at developing strong community relationships. Excellent communication, math and computer skills.

### **Professional Experience:**

Owner/Manager, Home Team Sports – Central, VT. 2005 - Present

Personnel Manager, Agway – Central, VT. 2000 - 2004

Retail Manager, Home Team Sports – Central, VT. 1995 - 2000

Office Accounting, Pierce's Pieces Catering – Central, VT. 1993 – 1995

### **Professional Highlights:**

#### ***Leadership & Management***

- ~ Provide vision and leadership to maintain viable retail establishment, which has been a cornerstone of local business community for over 17 years
- ~ Manage all aspects of retail sales, inventory, personnel, marketing and sound fiscal policy
- ~ Stay abreast of current and developing industry trends and adapt product line as necessary to meet needs of customer base
- ~ Responsible for supervision, training, professional development of all staff

#### ***Staff Training & Development***

- ~ Responsible for determining staffing needs. Hiring and firing part- and full-time permanent staff as well as contracting temporary services as needed
- ~ Conduct regular, periodic performance reviews to identify strengths, weaknesses, and performance improvements and determine training needs and compensation adjustments
- ~ Ensure all staff under my supervision are provided a range of professional development experiences

#### ***Social Responsibility***

- ~ Recognize importance of being a responsible community partner and forge strong relationships with local service organizations, non-profits, and schools
- ~ Uphold annual service goal by monetary and equipment contributions and staff time
- ~ Conduct annual sporting goods community swap to keep goods in use as long as possible

### **Education:**

Green Mountain Tech & Career Center, Community/Adult Education. 1993 - Present

Community College of Vermont: 2012-14 – Degree Program in Applied Business Practices

**Other:** 2003 Supervisor of the Year Award from Agway employees

Member of the Chamber of Commerce, serve on Scholarship Committee

Member of the Rotary Club

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Community College of Vermont  
PO Box 489, 660 Elm St  
Montpelier, VT 05601

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TRANSCRIPT OF: LAST: FIRST MIDDLE: ID: SSN: DOB:  
Pierce James F 1318632 XXX-XX-5231 11/06/19XX

Mr. James F. Pierce  
23 Riverside Rd  
Crosstown VT 05123

DATE ISSUED:  
Jan 10 2014

COURSE	TITLE	CR	GR	GR PT	COURSE	TITLE	CR	GR	GR PT
SPRING 2012									
COM-1010-V	EFF WORKPLACE COM	3.00	A	12.00					
EDU-1225-V	FOCUSED PORTFOLIO DEV	1.00	P						
ENG-1061-V	ENGLISH COMPOSITION	3.00	A-	11.10					
INT-1050-V	DIMENSIONS OF WORK	3.00	A	12.00					
	ATT EARNED GPA-CR								
Term:	10.00 10.00 9.00								
Cum:	10.00 10.00 9.00								
		35.10		3.90					

End of official record. VUG

# HOME TEAM SPORTS

30 Main Street  
Greenville, VT 05724  
802-783-1245

[www.HomeTeamSports.com](http://www.HomeTeamSports.com)



June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Melissa DeBlois  
Director  
Prior Learning Assessment  
P.O. Box 489  
Montpelier, VT 05601

Dear Ms. DeBlois,

My name is Joe Gonyaw. James (Jim) Pierce has asked me to be a documenter for learning he has gained while he was employed by me at Home Team Sports from 1995 to 2000, when he took a position at a larger company.

My own background is in business. I received a business degree from Castleton State College in 1955, worked in a number of small and large businesses as a manager and supervisor as well as a retail specialist, and finally was able to start my own business, a sporting goods store, in 1970. I have been blessed with a business that has become well established and successful and has become a part of our community.

Over the years, I have had many good employees. However, I can say without hesitation that Jim was one of my best employees and co-workers and I was very pleased when he decided to take over the business when I retired.

I am documenting the following areas of study for Jim: Introduction to Business, Small Business Management, Small Business Marketing, Principles of Supervision, and Business Internship.

It has been a long time since I was in school, but I have kept up with developments so I could run my business well. Also, I had employees with business degrees and none of them did any better than Jim did. I have read his "Areas of Study" and I can confidently say that he has shown me that he knows these items. Even after I sold the business to Jim, I continued to check in and visit the store, for old times' sake, and could see how well he was doing. He made some very good changes and made sure everything was updated with computers. It is still a fun place to visit and see all the local team pictures on the walls, many of which I took myself.

Below, I will add some more details regarding my opinion of how Jim has met these requests.

Introduction to Business: Jim knows a lot about business in general. He knows how to establish a business, how to run it, how a small business is different from a larger business. He had experience in all types of these businesses. He often



speaks to me about the general business climate in the U.S. and abroad and has a much better understanding of economics than I ever had. He also knows about using technology for business purposes which I am glad to say I was spared. I had Jim help me set up computers as they came along and he dealt with them and I must say it was helpful. Jim also knows about other businesses in our community and how people manage them. He once explained to me why one of our neighboring stores went out of business very suddenly when everyone thought it was doing well. This was a real eye opener and gaining the understanding of what went wrong behind the scenes, thanks to Jim, taught me a lot. I always appreciated his interest in the larger business picture, not just our own small shop. Jim communicates well with his employees, his customers, and others in the business community. He markets well and understands the financial requirements. He does this much better than anyone else here who has a business degree. He is on top of inventory (supply and demand) and new products. I recommend 3 credits for "Introduction to Business" for Jim.

Small Business Management: Everything I said before about Jim's knowledge of business also applies here. In addition, Jim has a very good handle on the retail side of business. His business plan when buying the store from me was very impressive; even the banker said so. I know that our accountant who does the end-of-year filings was thrilled to have Jim take over the business, since Jim has such a good understanding of financial requirements. Jim complies with all federal and state requirements, including personnel issues and taxes. He supervised many employees and learned a lot when he was a supervisor at Agway. This learning benefitted him when he took over as his own manager. Jim always makes sure to be involved in the greater community, as he knows that this is important for his success and the good will of our neighbors. I definitely recommend 3 credits for Small Business Management.

Small Business Marketing: Jim always has something up his sleeves when it comes to marketing. He has a definite plan and goes with the times, in terms of using the technology and the internet, such as having a website and doing some internet marketing as well as newspaper, radio, and the occasional TV ad. He advertises countywide. I find that Jim's approach to community relations is also a very good marketing tool. He chooses from a variety of marketing possibilities and concepts. His store displays are also enticing and useful – the store is laid out very clearly for the customer to easily find what he or she is looking for. 3 credits recommended.


Principles of Supervision: As I stated above, Jim learned a lot when he became a managing supervisor at Agway. He knows the legal requirements, various approaches to supervision, and has good interpersonal and conflict management skills. This is important because as a supervisor it's not always all smooth sailing with the employees. Jim adapts his style to the situation and the person – a long-time employee needs different guidance from a part time student helper. He is very invested in developing his employees, as he himself is always participating in training. # credits recommended.

Business Internship: All of the above statements cover his learning for a practicum. All the skills and knowledge I described above mean that he is applying these skills on a daily basis. He RUNS a small business. He IS a business man. And he is successful. My grandson is about to buy the business from him and it couldn't be in better shape. He should get not 3, but 12 credits for this business internship!

It was good to hear that Jim is now pursuing a credential for his learning. I congratulate you for allowing students to write such a portfolio. It seems like such a good idea to give folks like Jim this opportunity.

Please do not hesitate to call me if this letter is not specific enough.

Sincerely,

  
Joseph Gonyaw, retired  
802-744-5123

Ellen McAdam 24 Robinhood Circle Salsa City, Florida, 03472 274-697-1221

Melissa DeBlois, Director

June 30, 2013

Prior Learning Assessment at the Vermont State  
Colleges P.O. Box 489, Montpelier, VT 05601

Dear Ms. DeBlois,

I am writing by request of Jim Pierce, with whom I worked at "Home Team Sports" in the 1990s and later from 2004 to 2006.. I am now retired. My working life was spent in the business area other than a few years as an independent child care provider, which also required business skills. I have a college degree in Early Childhood Education, which is why I started the day care, but I found out that the business side of the operation interested me more than working with the children. I spent over 20 years as a sales associate and marketer at various small businesses and also worked as a controller and inventory specialist for a few larger companies that were involved with manufacturing.

While I do not have a business degree, I think I can speak knowledgeably to Jim's business skills, as a documenter. I was Jim's coworker when he was first hired at the store, being the assistant manager to Joe Gongyaw, the owner. I was in charge of everything that was necessary to do, especially in Joe's absence. Therefore, I was able to really know how our employees were performing.

I have perused Jim's credit requests and can state with no hesitation that Jim has the skills he mentions to run a small business, including marketing, finance, retail operations, meeting legal and financial requirements, public relations, community relations, knowledge of the products, display, and everything else that is necessary to successfully run a store. Later, when Jim bought the store, and I was still there but now the assistant manager to him, I was very impressed how he updated our technology needs. He really moved the store into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. His business plan and approach was different from Joe Gongyaw, and it fit the times better. The Small Business Administration office in our town asked him to mentor young business people who were just starting out. They had full confidence in him, and with good reason. I can state with conviction that Jim deserves credits for Introduction to Business, the Business Internship, and Small Business Management and Marketing.

I did want to write separately about Jim's request for supervision credit, because that is such a strength of his. I have never had a better supervisor, and have never observed a better supervisor. I worked with Jim and then later under Jim and I have observed his special talent with people. He knows how to approach employees differently from one another – he is very interested in his employees. But he also does not hesitate to let someone go if she or he does not work out for the business. He is aware of all legal requirements, different theories and approaches (he shared some of these with me, as I also have an interest in the supervision/human resources), had excellent conflict management skills, was a good guide to our young folks who worked in the summer, and was just and approachable. Compensation for employees was fair and everyone knew the step increases. He made a development plan with all long-term employees and made sure everyone went to trainings. He had a fund for us to buy books and magazines about sports/equipment and sales techniques and so on. He was an excellent supervisor. Even if an employee was upset over some feedback from him, they knew he was straightforward. I believe he should be awarded 3 credits for his supervisory skills. I took a supervision course at the Community College some years back and I believe Jim would have passed it easily.

Please call me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

*Ellen McAdam*

July 1, 2013

Melissa DeBlois  
Director, Prior Learning Assessment VSC  
P.O. Box 489  
Montpelier, VT 05601

Dear Ms. DeBlois,

This letter is written for Jim Pierce as documentation for his credit requests for "Introduction to Business" and "Principles of Supervision".

My name is Phil Roberge and I was Jim's manager for four years when he and I worked at the AGWAY Corporation from 2000 to 2004. Jim was hired as a supervisor in our retail and inventory departments. My background is the following: I hold a Bachelors' Degree in Management as well as a Master's Degree in Business (MBA), both from the University of Massachusetts. I have participated in a fair amount of training offered through our corporate headquarters as well as outside offerings. I am quite in touch with what today's supervisor must know and be able to do.

I pursued my MBA as an adult student and am very aware of the strength adult students bring to the classroom. I congratulate Jim for his efforts to pursue a college degree. He was one of very few supervisors who did not hold a degree. We hired him because of his background in business and supervision and his good communication skills, and did not regret it. We were sorry to lose him when he bought his own business but wished him the best of luck.

Introduction to Business:

Jim has a strong understanding of business theory and practice. He is knowledgeable about the operation of both small and large business operations. He has a clear understand of legal, financial, economic, human resources, and taxation issues. He is extremely versatile with business technology and uses it to great advantage. He writes a good business letter and can present and communicate well about business matters. His own experience in small businesses was enhanced by his opportunity to work in a corporate setting. Jim occasionally gave presentations about business issues to other staff as part of our in-house lunch series. He was well read and usually had his nose in the Wall Street Journal when on a coffee break. I strongly recommend awarding him 3 credits for "Introduction to Business" as well as a credit for a business practicum.

Principles of Supervision:

Jim has very strong supervisory skills. He not only knows supervisory and management theory, but also theory and applications in related areas such as human resources, ethics, conflict management, accommodations, and diversity issues. He is simply a great staff developer. He participated in over 100 interviews, oriented and trained new hires, did performance evaluations as required, developed staff training and education plans, and participated in or performed disciplinary actions or dismissals when necessary. He knew how to employ the right style of supervision with our variety of staff – some full-time, some part-time, some experienced, some young and new to the work force. He was fair and approachable. His departments (one of which was quite dysfunctional when he took it over) were well run and began to exhibit good team spirit about six month after Jim started with us. He was a good trainer and gave many staff trainings and presentations. He was good as a group supervisor as well as with individuals. His staff trusted him. I trusted him. He would pass a supervision course with flying colors. I recommend three credits for "Principles of Supervision".

Please do not hesitate to call me if you have further questions. My home number is 415-682-9949.

Sincerely,



July 1, 2013

Melissa DeBlois  
Director, PLA  
Vermont State Colleges  
P.O. Box 489  
Montpelier, VT 05601

Dear Melissa,

Enclosed is my evaluation report regarding James Pierce's request for credit for "Small Business Management," "Small Business Marketing," and "Intro to Business." James asked me to be a special evaluator. I did not know James until his request but was willing to help out this very qualified adult student.

My qualifications to evaluate this student are as follows:

B.S. Accounting/Business, Castleton State College  
M.B.A., Phoenix University  
C.P.A. License since 1993  
Business Instructor at CCV since 1995  
Assistant Professor, Business Department, Vermont Technical College, 2010 – Present

I evaluated James' knowledge in business in the following manner:

James and I met three times to speak about his experience managing and operating businesses. Also, I administered a lengthy test which combined the elements of Small Business Management and Marketing and the Introduction to Business courses. I have taught all three courses many times at the college level. Through our discussion and his test results, James has demonstrated to me that he would have passed each of these three courses satisfactorily and should receive three credits for each course.

Specifically, James demonstrated his knowledge by showing me his very solid business plan. He has a clear understanding of managing a business including managing assets, inventory, accounts receivables, and cash transactions. He has a good understanding of marketing principles, product pricing, advertising and different types of promotions. He can describe federal and state laws that impact businesses and taxes, knows business ethics, and can describe the needs and issues of business in general and small businesses in particular.

He understands the relationship between sales, advertising, and public relations, has a marketing strategy, can explain primary and secondary markets and different marketing venues. He also has a strong understanding of supervision theories and clearly is a strong communicator. He is knowledgeable about human resource issues and other workplace issues. He can describe a variety of sales techniques for retail. He has a grasp of economic theory as it affects business in general.

All in all, I was very impressed with James. He would be welcomed in any of my 200-level classes, and he would do well. He will make an excellent student at whatever college he chooses to attend.

In summary, I am recommending nine credits in business for James Pierce.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions. I am on summer break now but can be reached at 802-276-1414.



Lori Zimmerman, Faculty  
Vermont Technical College  
Randolph, Vermont

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June 27, 2013

Melissa DeBlois, Director  
Vermont State Colleges, PLA  
P.O. Box 489  
Montpelier, VT 05601

Re: Documentation for Jim Pierce, Introduction to Business, Business Practicum, and Small Business Management

Dear Ms. DeBlois,

My name is Franklin Heathburn and I am the manager of the Crosstown Bank. I have an Associate Degree in Banking from the Community College of Vermont, a Bachelor's Degree in Business from Johnson State College, and a Master's Degree in Finance from Philadelphia State University. I am a nationally certified financial advisor and have twenty years experience in managing this bank.

I should state at the outset that I work with Jim's wife, Amy. I don't believe this is a conflict of interest for me, as I have known Jim long before he knew Amy and we had business interactions over the past 20 years. Additionally, Jim informed me that he is not letting Amy know that he has requested a letter from me, so I feel quite free to say what I want.

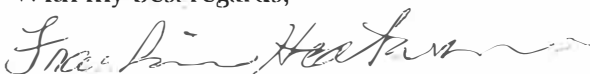
I have studied Jim's "Areas of Study" for the credit he is requesting and can say with conviction that he has the equivalent knowledge, if not much more, of a student who has passed such classes. I met Jim first when he was taking care of the finances for his mother's business, then as he was employed by the local sporting goods store and in charge of much of the finances and the computer conversion, and then finally when he wanted to buy the business and presented me with an excellent and extensive business plan. It was very easy for us to extend to loan to Jim because he clearly knew what he was doing. He is knowledgeable of all financial requirements and management issues involved with a small business, be it marketing, supervision, customer relations, legal requirements, community involvement, record keeping, planning for growth, public relations, or communication skills. Jim also has a special interest in economics and human resource issues. He has met the descriptions on his areas of study. I cannot speak to every single item, but give you my overall impression. I have taken these lower level courses myself and assure you that he has covered the content.

We meet occasionally to check in regarding the business and our products offered for both businesses and individuals. Jim is always organized and well prepared. There has never been a reason for us to worry about Jim's payments. He runs a good store and is an asset to our community.

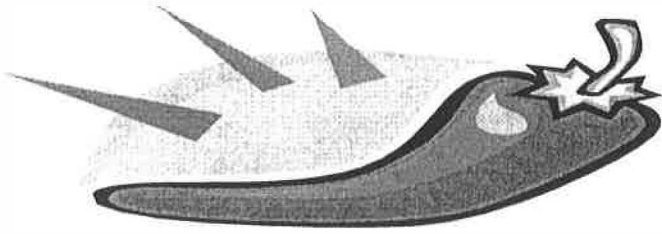
I recommend that Jim receives three credits each for the courses he has requested.

Please call me if you have any further questions or need more documentation,.

With my best regards,



Franklin Heathburn, Managing Director



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June 24, 2013

Melissa DeBlois, Director  
PLA, Vermont State Colleges  
P.O. Box 489, Montpelier, VT 05601

Dear Melissa,

This letter is to provide documentation for Jim Pierce, a student in one of your programs requesting credit for "Principles of Supervision" and "Introduction to Business". I am Dolores Lopez de Silva. I have a background in Personnel and Human Resources Management and have specialized in training entire company staffs or individuals in these areas. Many of my trainees were mid-level supervisors like Jim Pierce. I was an independent consultant for many years and had a training contract with Jim's employer, Agway. My educational background is that I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Human Resource Management from Sacramento College and another Bachelor's Degree, in Communications, from the University of Texas in Austin. I have now retired from consultancies because I wanted to pursue my dream of a small business, specializing in fresh Mexican foods for distribution to high end restaurants.

As I said, I was contracted with Agway to train managers in their New England stores from 2002-2005. Jim participated in eight of my seminars and I remember him well. He was an excellent participant in our trainings which covered supervisory issues, tactics, approaches, theories and applications. The professionals in these courses had to prepare for the seminars and had to hand in homework and projects after each training in order to get graded. Grades then affected levels of responsibilities, salary, and opportunities.

Jim was a very good student. He was an active participant and my records show he received between 90% and 100% completion on all assignments – consistently an "A" level. He was so well prepared and informed that we often spent time after class or during lunch delving deeper into some of the issues.

He participated in the following workshops (16 hours each):

- Introduction to Human Resources
- Supervisory Skills
- Conflict Management
- Disabilities at Work and the Law
- Team Leadership I
- Team Leadership II
- Equity/ADA Issues in the Workplace
- Disciplinary Actions

Jim has much business experience, including a small retail business. I would have no hesitation giving him credits for his business and supervisory knowledge and practice. He knows business inside and out, both large and small. He is an excellent candidate for credit.

Please call me if you have any further questions,



COMPUTER SOLUTIONS 12 MAIN STREET CROSSTOWN, VT 05123 802-457-9999 [WWW.COMPUTERHELP.COM](http://WWW.COMPUTERHELP.COM)

# CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

JAMES PIERCE

HAS COMPLETED THE 14-HOUR COURSE

***"SPREADSHEETS: THE LATEST SCOOP!"***

Millie Martin

Millie Martin, Trainer

3/21/2011

Date

# CROSSTOWN ROTARY CLUB

## CERTIFICATE OF COMMENDATION

TO:

# JIM PIERCE

FOR 23 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO ROTARY AND TO HIS LOCAL COMMUNITY

AUGUST 2009

WITH GRATITUDE:



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Joseph Balinski  
Treasurer

23



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Mary-Beth Laflamme  
Community Committee



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## NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

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James Pierce  
23 Riverside Road  
Crosstown, VT 05123

June 12, 2010

Dear Jim,

I want to take this opportunity to personally thank you for the leadership you have provided our organization. You were the most efficient, conscientious, and dedicated Board President we have had in a long time. Your two terms of service have helped this organization grow immensely and change for the better.

The staff and myself have always appreciated your input and suggestions. Not only did you help us in seeing procedures that were outdated and did not work well, you also helped us to fix them. Your willingness to spend hours here at the office on weekends was a huge help to us all and impressed especially our new, young members.

Again, I thank you so very much for all you have given to this organization.

Please stop by any time when you are in Boston and I will take you out to lunch!

With a collegial WHOOSH,



Melvin Barclay  
Manager

### **Selected Bibliography**

#### **Books:**

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Smart, Bradford D. Topgrading: How Leading Companies Win by Hiring, Coaching, and Keeping the Best People, Revised and Updated ed. New York : Portfolio, 2005.

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- Fast Company (2008-2012)
- Forbes (1995-2012)
- Sporting Goods Business" (1998 –2012)
- NSGA Retail Focus (National Sporting Goods Association) ( 1998 – 2012)