

## **Sample Final Paper: CCP Partner**

My Cross Cultural Partner's name is Li Hung , but his friends like me call him Sam. Sam and I have learned a great deal about each other over the last few weeks in our weekly meetings. I learned that Sam grew up in a small town outside of Beijing China, and worked at a university in Beijing before he moved here to the United States two years ago. Sam lives here in the south bay with his wife, who works for a local semiconductor company. Sam spends most of his time on pursuing his education, and in fact, Sam is currently preparing his application for the masters accounting program at San Jose State University. In one of our meetings, Sam and I even reviewed his application to insure accuracy and use of proper grammar. In his spare time Sam plays basketball, enjoys table tennis, and likes to go swimming. He also watches television shows like Friends or That 70's Show. Sam and his wife will spend another few years here in California while she continues to work and he finishes up his masters degree at San Jose State. Sam also said that he and his wife do plan on having children at some point in the future.

In our meetings Sam and I talked about a lot of things, like children, religion, school, work, and family. We actually have quite a bit in common, which really surprised me. I guess I was expecting to meet someone much different, but was pleasantly surprised to be wrong. Sam and I both want children some day...but not too soon, neither of us grew up going to church, and we are both in school in our mid to late thirties. The cultural differences we discovered are probably as what would be expected from two people who lived on opposite sides of the world from each other. Sam grew up eating foods that are traditional in China, most of which I can't even remember or pronounce the names of. Sam relied on public transportation when he lived in China, mostly because of traffic congestion. I grew up driving everywhere I needed or wanted to go. Sam also tells me that school is focused on much more in China than it is here in the United States. He said that as long as he can remember, he was told about college and doing better for his family than what he had as a child. The opposite is the case for me. I didn't have much encouragement to go to school, other than the lecture from my parents about how I'd have to pay rent if I didn't go to college. Sam also tells me that in the culture in China, people show much more respect for each other than they do here in the U.S.

### **Communication**

I was truly amazed at how good Sam's English was when I met him. I thought for sure I'd be assigned to a partner who's English is so bad that I wouldn't be able to understand them. Again, I was wrong! There were very few words or phrases that Sam struggled with, and when he wasn't sure how to say something, he'd explain what he is trying to say, and then I would explain to him the best way to say it in English. Every once in a while Sam would need to write something down in Chinese then try to explain to me what he was saying. This visual of the word in Chinese helped him express his thoughts to me and help me understand what it was that he was trying to say. Writing was just one of the tools, but we would also point at things and he would tell me what the Chinese word was for the object and I would tell him the English word. This was especially effective when he would struggle putting certain words into sentences. I

learned that I should never assume that just because someone is from a different country, doesn't mean they don't speak excellent English. I think that my strengths in communicating with Sam (or any one who doesn't speak English as a primary language) is that I have a great amount of patience, and I try to let Sam know that. This way he doesn't feel rushed to try and explain something when he can't find the right word in English. I also made certain to tell him that his English is MUCH better than my Chinese, this put him at a great amount of ease and I think he could relax more knowing I have a sense of humor too. I also make eye contact and try to pay attention to the person I am with. I think eye contact helps me understand what the other person is trying to say, and lets the other person know that I am paying attention to them. Sam and I got along and seemed to communicate very well, so much that I'm not sure if I can identify something that needs improvement. I'm certain there is, as nobody is perfect, but I'm having difficulty finding something.

### **Evaluation of CCP**

The Cross Cultural Communication Program at DeAnza should be done in every school throughout the world. I believe that this would not only improve our own communication skills, but I feel that this will also help defeat some of the stereotypes that exist and show people that just because someone may be from a different country doesn't mean they can't communicate with you. I enjoyed every aspect of my experience, from the ease of submitting my application, to the ease of contacting and setting up meetings with my partner, it was a very smooth experience for me. The one thing that I wish was done differently is scheduling the CCP events/parties at times that I could attend. With these events being held during the day, it's impossible for me to leave work to attend, and I really would like to attend. Maybe have one of the two events in the evening instead. I know I'm just one person, and they need to cater to the majority, which is fine really, I just wish I could attend. As far as the CCP obtaining and retaining more English speaking partners. My response to this is to make this a required class. Once people get involved with something like this, and are lucky enough to have a partner like I did, they will see the value almost immediately.

I learn something new about Sam each time we get together, which is one reason I've enjoyed the CCP so much. Communicating in this manner was really a great experience. Not only did I learn a lot about someone from another part of the world, but I learned a lot about myself too. Thank you for the opportunity to do something like this, it was truly a pleasure.