Advantage U Syllabus Document

**Overview:** The Advantage-U syllabus has been designed by TalentEase specifically for University students to prepare them both to be employment-ready and life-ready. The goal of the program is to give students the career skills they will need to be successful in the work place and to give them the life skills and values that will help them live meaningful lives and be leaders who can make a difference in their families and the communities they live and work in.

**Approach:** The program is designed to be delivered over three years progressing from Level 1 to Level 2 and finally Level 3. The sessions are delivered by TalentEase Certified Facilitators. Sessions are made interesting and activity driven so that students engage with the learning and absorb the skills and values in their everyday lives.

Focus of Level 1 is to give students a strong foundation on taking Personal Responsibility, building the basics on Communication, helping them pick up important relationship skills and an appreciation that values and character matter as much as skills and competence

Level 2 continues to build on Confidence and Communication, while building their confidence and communication through presentation skills and decision-making skills.

Level 3 gets them ready for the Placement process and key skills that will help them build successful careers. Each session includes inputs that help them understand the concepts or principles of the skill, activities and games that both build awareness and give them the opportunity to practice the skill, video or movie clips that enable them to either see the skill in action or the challenges in using it and practice time that reinforces the learning. Every session closes with the VIP or Values In Practice – where a specific value is introduced, reflected on and students are encouraged to put it into practice and report back on progress.

**VIPs – Values in Practice** – Each session covers both a skill and a value. Each Value is visited twice in each Level to help students understand the value and then practice and see it in action. Usually the Value\_001 will focus on introducing the value and helping participants understand its importance. Value\_002 uses a movie clip, activity or game to see the value in action and how it can be practiced. The specific value being covered is mentioned under each session segment and is self-explanatory.

**First Year - Semester – I**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Course Title** | **Advantage U Level 1** |
| **Total Hours** | **16** |
| **Course Type** | **Theory/ Activities/ Video** |

**General Objectives:**

**Session Objectives:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SO No.** | **Session Objectives** |
| SO-1 | Accept Personal Responsibility for one’s actions and growth |
| SO-2 | Understand the critical relationship between beliefs and behavior |
| SO-3 | Learn SSS-Silence-Stillness-Solitude as an important tool and habit for their lives |
| SO-4 | Understanding the eight types of Multiple Intelligences |
| SO-5 | Overview of Self-confidence |
| SO-6 | Introduction to non-verbal communication |
| SO-7 | Learning to articulate clearly and correctly |
| SO-8 | Select and prepare a challenge theme |

Session1: Skill: Personal Responsibility

Value: Gratitude\_001

This module gets students to accept Personal Responsibility for their actions and growth. The goal is to help them identify the typical habit of making excuses and blaming other people or circumstances and start taking responsibility to make a difference in their own and other’s lives. What are rackets? How can we identify and overcome them? Why is the leader different in the way they take personal responsibility?

Session 2: Skill: Personal Beliefs and a Personal Code

Value: Honesty & Integrity\_001

This module helps students understand the critical relationship between beliefs and behaviour. All behaviour stems from beliefs and the way to create lasting behaviour change in themselves and others is to focus on building the right beliefs. The module also urges them to avoid behaviour that is driven by external factors such as punishment or reward or a need for approval and be driven by a Personal Code. Psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg’s – Level 1 to 6 model is used

Session 3: Skill: SSS and Self Awareness

Value: Listening & Silence\_001

The students learn SSS – Silence-Stillness-Solitude as an important tool and habit for their lives. Every session going forward begins with a few minutes of SSS so that students are able to embrace this as a habit. The next skill covered is Self-Awareness and helping them understand different aspects of their strengths, weaknesses and personality. The better we know ourselves the better we can pursue a journey of growth and development.

Session 4: Skill: Self Awareness- Multiple Intelligences

Value: Kindness & Concern\_01

Understanding the eight types of Multiple Intelligences – Linguistic Intelligence; Logical Mathematical Intelligence; Spatial Intelligence; Bodily Kinesthetic Intelligence; Musical Intelligence; Interpersonal Intelligence; Intrapersonal intelligence; Naturalistic intelligence- Which are my intelligences- How can this awareness help me learn better and perform better?

Session 5: Skill: Self Confidence

Value: Respect for Women\_01

What is real self-confidence? What it is not? Self-confidence is not my looks, my qualities, my talents or my possessions- it comes from within. I must learn to focus not on the externals but the internal choice I make to be self-confident.

Why is self-confidence not an innate quality but a skill that can be acquired? How do we build our confidence? How do we handle our fears?

Session 6: Communication-Non Verbal Communication and Listening Skills

Value: Cleanliness & Orderliness\_01

Introducing students to the importance of non-verbal communication- why it matters – what signals do we send? How this will be important in the placement process, in typical work situations and even in the home. The importance of listening – How can we be better listeners- Why this is a critical skill – what are the barriers to effective listening- how does poor listening cause poor communication and poor outcomes - Listening to Understand vs. Listening to respond

Session 7: Communication Skills- Speaking Clearly

Value: Patience\_001

Why speaking clearly matters? Typical speaking mistakes and errors – consequences of poor speaking skills- Learning to articulate clearly and correctly- The power of words – how poor choice of words can lead to bad outcomes - learning to use the right words.

Session 8: Challenge Session

Value: Responsibility & Self-Discipline\_01

In this session students will select a challenge theme which they will then commence preparation on. They will need to present on the challenge theme in the last session of the academic year. In Level 1 students are expected to create a mock-up of a Special Edition Newspaper which highlights themes from the skills and values they have learnt in the preceding sessions. The challenge is prepared for and presented in teams. Students will need to display and practice all the different skills and values they have absorbed.

**Text Books:**

Student Manual

**First Year - Semester – II**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Course Title** | **Advantage U Level 1** |
| **Total Hours** | **16** |
| **Course Type** | **Theory/ Activities/Videos** |

**General Objectives:**

**Session Objectives:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SO No.** | **Session Objectives** |
| SO- 9 | Focus on critical people skills |
| SO-10 | Introduction to the power of Teaming |
| SO-11 | Acting vs. Reacting |
| SO-12 | Critical barriers to better relationships |
| SO-13 | Building bridges in our relationships |
| SO-14 | Understand creative collaboration |
| SO-15 | Introduction to Emotional Intelligence and Empathy |
| SO-16 | Presentation of challenge theme |

Session 9: Skill: People Skills- The Golden Rule

Value: Gratitude\_002

One of the biggest challenges employers face is the lack of people skills. This affects effective working of teams, often results in poor client relationships and can cost the employer both money and reputation. This session and the following ones focus on the critical people skills that the students will need. While the work space is a focus area, these skills will be extremely important in their personal and family lives too. This session introduces them to the Golden Rule and has them practice in through an intense activity that highlights why this is such an important attitude to have.

Session 10: People Skills- The Power of Teaming

Value: Honesty & Integrity\_002

In this session students are introduced to the Why, What and How of Teaming. Students learn how collaboration acts as a force multiplier and how they can work effectively together

Session 11: People Skills – Acting vs. Reacting

Value: Listening & Silence\_002

A key failing in humans is the instinct to react instead of act. This leads to poor outcomes, emotional turmoil and stress and has both work place and life implications. Students are shown the dangers of the unconsidered response and are taught the ‘art of the pause’ so that a stimulus does not lead to an instinctive and often destructive reaction but they are able to choose a constructive and positive response.

Session 12: People Skills- Barriers to Relationships

Value: Kindness & Concern\_02

Both at work and elsewhere, we are as effective as our relationships - What are the critical barriers to better relationships- How do they affect the outcomes we seek- How can we understand the barriers and so identify them in ourselves. We can then act to prevent these barriers taking hold. Students are walked through the STUCK model to help with this process.

Session 13: People Skills – Bridges to Relationships

Value: Respect for Women\_02

Once the barriers are understood how we can go about building bridges in our relationships. How can we get people we work with, aligned with the team or organizations goals and desired outcomes? How can we deal with conflict harmoniously, how can we understand others and their interests, how can we use the right communication to build rather than break relationships.

Session 14: Creative Collaboration

Value: Cleanliness & Orderliness\_02

While collaboration is an important skill often the lack of creativity in our collaboration results in less than optimal work and outcomes. The Creative collaboration session gets students to participate in a high energy and intense practical exercise that simulates the typical pressures and pulls of the work place. In a limited time they have to deliver outcomes while learning to communicate, create and collaborate together.

Session 15: Emotional Intelligence and Empathy

Value: Patience\_002

Most employees in organizations especially at the managerial and leadership level fail not because they lack an intelligence quotient but because of a poor emotional quotient. This session introduces students to what emotional intelligence is and practical ways they can develop their EQ. The session also helps them build the key skill of empathy.

Session 16: Challenge Presentation

Value: Responsibility & Self-Discipline\_02

In this session students will present the Challenge theme they have chosen. In level 1 they are given the assignment of creating a Special Edition Newspaper that reflects the leadership skills and values they have learnt. Teams will in turn present the outcome of their Challenge work.

**Second Year - Semester – III**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Course Title** | **Advantage U Level 2** |
| **Total Hours** | **16** |
| **Course Type** | **Theory/ Activities/Videos** |

**General Objectives:**

**Session Objectives:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SO No.** | **Session Objectives** |
| SO- 17 | Importance of Winning Attitudes |
| SO-18 | VUCA – Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity |
| SO-19 | Engage the mind before the mouth |
| SO-20 | Foundation of Good Presentations - the 4 Ps |
| SO-21 | Structure & Flow and Presentations High Impact Delivery |
| SO-22 | Problem solve creatively |
| SO-23 | Introduction to the important pillars of good time management |
| SO-24 | Select and prepare a challenge theme |

Session 17: Winning Attitudes – IMP

Value: Generosity\_001

In this session the focus is on the first part of important Winning Attitudes

It All Begins with Me – success begins with me

Make Meaning- strive to find and make meaning in what we do

Positive Power – look at things and people positively rather than taking a negative approach

Session 18: The VUCA Ready Leader

Value: Balance and Equanimity\_001

Change will be constant in the work place of the future and students will have to learn to not just handle change but harness it. They will learn the elements of VUCA – Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity and how they can deal with each in a positive and constructive way.

Session 19: Thinking Before Speaking

Value: Sincerity\_001

Engage the mind before the mouth. This is the focus of this session. Students are taught to develop clarity of thinking as the foundation skill that precedes the skill of speaking. Poor communication often has its root sin muddled and confused thinking. Students are encouraged to be systematic and disciplined in their thinking process and then appropriately translate that to speaking.

Session 20: Public Speaking- Myths/ Foundation of Good Presentations - the 4 Ps

Value: Waste Not\_001

What are the myths behind public speaking – why are great speakers not born but made- how do I go about preparing a talk or presentation – what is the process I should follow- the four P s take students through Purpose- People or audience- Preparation and Practice. A great presentation depends on what we do BEFORE the presentation.

Session 21: Structure & Flow and Presentations High Impact Delivery - BEST formula

Value: Forgiveness\_001

Students will learn the importance of an interesting beginning, an engaging and persuasive middle and a compelling end in the delivery of their presentation. They practice their delivery and are urged to make eye contact, standing confident and talking clearly and slowly. They also view role models in action to help them identify the important qualities that make a presentation more effective.

Session 22: ZAP your way to Creativity

Value Humility\_001

Problems solving is an important skill that employers not only look for but that employees will need throughout their careers. In this session they explore ways to problem solve creatively- what are typical problem solving dead ends and how can we get past them. Students learn to Zoom Out- Abandon Assumptions- Pose Different questions

Session 23: Time Management

Value: Simplicity\_001

A fundamental difference between effective and ineffective employees, managers and leaders is how they manage their time. In this session students are introduced to the important pillars of good time management. They learn to distinguish between urgent and important through the time management matrix and are taught how Pareto’s law can make a significant difference in the way they manage their time and create results.

Session 24: Challenge Selection and Preparation and Leadership Role Models

Value: Trustworthiness\_001

In this session students select a Challenge theme and have to commence preparation. They will be expected to present on their challenge theme at the end of the academic year. In Level 2, teams will use the format of a creating a TV ad on a topic they pick. Again, these reflect the skills and values they have learnt and they will be expected to demonstrate those skills and values in action.

**References**

**Text Books:**

Student Manual

**Second Year - Semester – IV**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Course Title** | **Advantage U Level 2** |
| **Total Hours** | **16** |
| **Course Type** | **Theory/ Activities/Videos** |

**General Objectives:**

**Session Objectives:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SO No.** | **Session Objectives** |
| SO- 25 | Winning Attitudes-ACT |
| SO-26 | Skill -Resilience & Grit |
| SO-27 | Types of Choices & Decision Making Traps |
| SO-28 | Decision Making Models |
| SO-29 | Create an innovation mindset |
| SO-30 | Introduction to the SMART goals framework |
| SO-31 | Social Skills and Etiquette |
| SO-32 | Challenge Presentation |

Session 25: Skill: Winning Attitudes-ACT

Value: Generosity\_001

In this second part of Winning Attitudes students focus on the next three

Adapt – in a world filled with change learn to adapt rather than be rigid

Challenge First-Reward Later – Delayed gratification, learn to first deal with the challenges, problems issues and only then enjoy the rewards

Target the Stars- aim high in life. Don’t have small dreams and operate only in your comfort zone

Session 26: Skill- Failure as a Stepping Stone to Success- Resilience & Grit

Value: Balance and Equanimity\_001

Failure is not final. Failing at something does not mean that I am a failure- Failure is an event not a person- learning to bounce back from failure- developing resilience and grit – Leader role models who have demonstrated perseverance and determination in the face of failures and setbacks.

Session 27: Skill: Types of Choices & Decision Making Traps

Value: Sincerity\_001

Why is decision making so important? What are the short and long term consequences of the choices I make? Looking at some types of decisions and understanding decision traps that cause us to make poor decisions. Once we are aware of these decision traps we can learn to be more conscious of them and avoid them.

Session 28: Skill: Decision Making Models

Value: Waste Not\_001

Students are taught a few decision models that they can practically use at work and in life. They learn why the decision models are important, how a decision can weighed and how a more effective decision made. The activities help them practice a few of the models.

Session 29: Skill: Improving to Innovate and Continuous Improvement

Value: Forgiveness\_001

Success at work is rarely the result of dramatic transformations. It is the discipline of continuous improvement. Students are taught to build an innovation mindset and introduced to examples of innovation at work.

Session 30: Skill Goal Setting and Stress Busting

Value Humility\_001

Students are taught the importance of goals and how this can be a powerful driver of their success. They are introduced to the SMART goals framework and taught to translate their goals into SMART goals. They are also taught how big goals can be tackled by breaking them into smaller more manageable pieces.

Session 31: Skill: Social Skills and Etiquette

Value: Simplicity\_001

This session focuses on social skills that will make a difference to way the students are perceived in the work place. Poor social skills can lead to poor impressions and very often are career-limiting. In this module students are taught a suite of social skills and etiquette ranging from dressing right to dining right.

Session 32: Challenge Presentation

Value: Trustworthiness\_001

In the Challenge Presentation session, the students will present the outcome of their work together in teams. For Level 2 they will be using the format of a TV advertisement. They need to ideate, design, create, collaborate and then effectively communicate their idea to their peers. This again simulates many of the things they will encounter in the work place and it helps reinforce the importance of the skills and values they have learnt in the program so far.

**References**

**Text Books:**

Student Manual