**Background and General Information**

The company I work for, Spar, invested in me to go onto the SLDP (SPAR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM) – this is an in-house training program aimed at developing identified talent in our company. The program is prestigious it is an honor to be selected to join the program. I participated in the training program ran from March 2010 to April 2011 – the program runs for more or less a year.

I am based at a smaller division of our company – the program is run by central office. The local Managing Director in conjunction with the relevant department executive identifies and selects people to participate in the program.

I am in the Finance Department, but talent from all spheres of our business attends the training. The training focuses a lot on personal development and includes having a personal coach & a personal mentor. There is focus on emotional intelligence, identifying personality and leadership styles and how to work with different types of people. We also spent a lot of time on developing empathy for people from different cultural backgrounds than you – we live in South Africa and the company is very diverse. The aim of the program is to develop future leaders for our organization.

Some comments I had about the program previously:

‘Yes, I do think that the SLDP learning is supported by the organizational culture. I think a large part of our culture is a family culture, where work can be fun (quoted from commentary on our financial results) – I think the SLDP fits into this culture as it creates an environment uncomfortable enough to stretch individual’s and promote growth and learning, but there was always an element of surprise which could turn out to be a ‘fun’ learning at times. I also think that strong relationships were built amongst participants in the SLDP that underlines respect and teamwork, also strong values in Spar.’

At the time that I attended the program I was at senior management level in our organization but I have been promoted in January 2013 to an executive level.

I, as an alumni to the program, have now been invited to this year’s gala dinner - closure of the 2012/2013 SLDP – to deliver a talk with regards to the following:

* What I’ve done to make sure that I continued my learning from the SLDP. This should be the main theme of my talk. I should be expanding here on what my experience has been like after SLDP, how I stayed disciplined to continue and maintain my learning, what development plan did I have/ follow.
* I need to deliver a message of hope for the future to the current year participants.
* I need to comment on what the SLDP program meant for me – personally and career wise and how it assisted me in my career & personal growth
* I would like to use certain key words such as discipline, commitment and rigorous….
* I may also consider commenting on how great it is that our company is diverse and support this diversity by supporting all cultures and genders to grow.

The presentation will be held at the gala dinner of this year’s closure of the SLDP. The event will take place in the evening at a semi-formal to formal occasion. The presentation will be attended and should be aimed at this year’s participants that completed the program, but will also be attended by other senior members of our company (national executive level).

I would like to leave my audience with a feeling of hope and enthusiasm, but also give them something to think about regarding their own development and destiny – we are all master of our own destiny….

Would it be possible to send me a quote as soon as possible? I would like to have the speech by Saturday!