**Work Specification Document**

The Hydrogen Properties for Energy Research (HYPER) laboratory at Washington State University (WSU), founded in August of 2010, *continues the mission to advance the technology readiness level of cryogenic and/or hydrogen systems*. To fulfill this mission, members of the laboratory must endeavor to *continuously improve* the professionalism of both themselves and the lab community. Professionalism, much like trust, can only be earned. However, the need to communicate expertise often arises when transitioning between careers. This Work Specification Document is structured to

1. Focus your lab work efforts on value added to you, your project, and the lab.

2. Structure these efforts in an easily communicable format for use in resumes and in interviews.

3. Serve as a contract that defines the scope of your work between you, your Product Manager, and the Laboratory Director.

**Your Origin Story**

Every comic-book superhero has an origin story – a defining moment that reveals both their abilities, their weaknesses, and what they are driven to do/accomplish. What’s your Origin Story?

**Your Dream Team**

Nearly all comic-book superheroes end up in a complimentary Dream Team serving a clientele with recurring needs. What’s your Dream Team? What team do you want to be working with 5 years from now? What specific accomplishments/achievements will this team view as evidence of your ability to perform amongst their ranks?

**The Story-arc of a Freakishly Awesome Achievement**

Let’s make a plan for creating those accomplishments and achievements. We’re hard-wired to like a good story – including during interviews and discussions with family and friends. The long-term value of your work in the lab is ultimately related to the quality of the story you are able to tell about the work *you* did. Good stories have a few key elements that can guide your work:

1. Challenge/Problem/Need/Motivation: Why should we care about you and your problem? Why is it seriously challenging and hard?

2. Background/Insight/Prior Art: You’ve got to do some research to understand the problem and what has been previously done. Why is there a persistent gap in understanding that prevents the problem from being solved?

3. Theory/Insight/Hypothesis: When presented with a problem and the pressure and resources to solve, there is often a stroke of genius/insight that allows you to formulate your technical skills into a new or novel solution. Do enough back-of-the-envelope analysis to help us believe the idea has a chance.

4. Application/Experiment/Work: Now comes the difficult part – doing something new. Tell us the struggle. Use quantifiable metrics like number of trials, parts, etc.

5. Results/Findings/Improvements/Conclusions: Show us how the end result of your efforts solves or improves the problem. Why did this matter? Who does it help? How much does it help? What did you take away from the adventure?

You should try to have only one immediately convincing sentence in each of the above areas by the end of lab work. Do your best to draft examples now.

**Making it Real**

Now is the hard part – bringing this story to life by making it real. You need SMART Goals and Objectives (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bounded) supported by credible and quantifiable metrics (e.g. publications, external support, presentations to peers at conferences, etc.).

The overall goal/hypothesis for my work is:

I will succeed in fulfilling/answering this goal/hypothesis through pursuit of the following objectives:

(Please enumerate)

I will demonstrate completion/achievement of these objectives via the following credible deliverables:

(Please enumerate)

**Closure**

We’ll work together to get this document close at the start of your work. At the end of your work we’ll review this document, check to see if you fulfilled/answered your goal/hypothesis, and whether you completed your objectives in credible ways. We’ll then ask to hear your story. Better get started.

Name Signature Date

Product Manager Name Signature Date

Laboratory Director Name Signature Date