# forestry
university of british columbia

# Co-op Program
## Student Handbook

## Please refer to the Student Handbook during all workshops

Workshop 1 Preparation (online and in-person): Chapters 1 to 8

Workshop 2 Preparation (online and in-person): Chapters 9 to 10

Workshop 3 Preparation (online and in-person): Chapters 11 to 12

# Contents

# Introduction 1

## Welcome to the UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-operative Education Program

This handbook is designed to be used in conjunction with the UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op (also referred to as the 'Co-op Program', 'Co-op' or 'the Program') workshops as your guide to a rewarding Co-op experience. The handbook contains information that will prepare you for both your Co-op work terms and your professional career. We hope you enjoy your time in the Co-op Program and we look forward to working with you.

### History

Co-operative education was introduced to Canada in 1957 at the University of Waterloo and has grown steadily since that time. The University of British Columbia officially initiated cooperative education programs in 1980 and has programs available in all faculties. The UBC Faculty of Forestry Coop Program began with our Wood Products Processing program in 1996. Now we have Co-op options in each of our five bachelor degrees.

**Legend:**
- BUF Urban Forestry
- BSc Forest Sciences
- BSc Natural Resources Conservation
- BSF Forestry
- BSc Wood Products Processing

# of students (y-axis, 20 to 200), by year 2007–2017
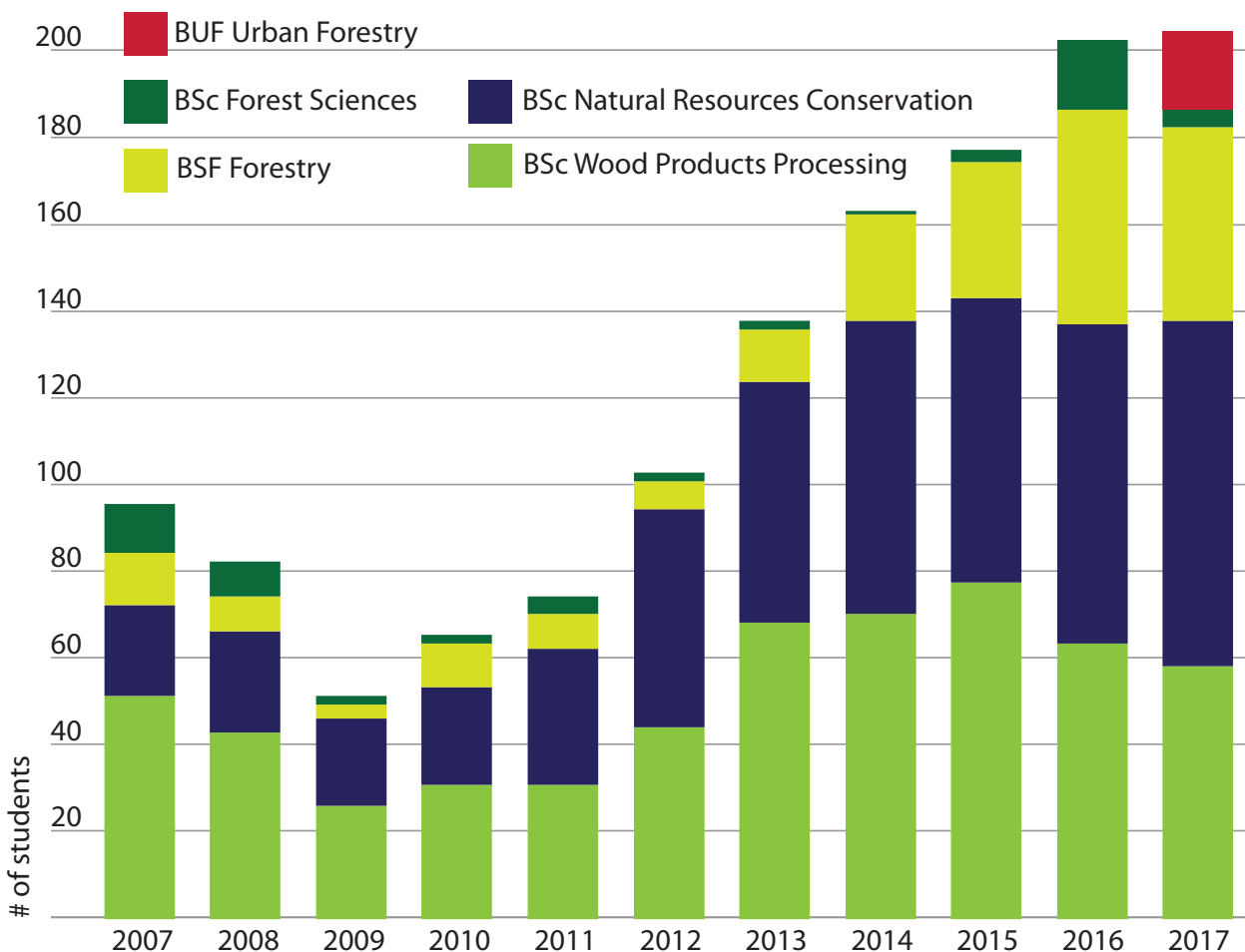
# UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op – Helping You Achieve Your Career

The UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Program enhances students' education with paid, relevant, technical work experience and launches their professional careers. The Co-op Coordinators are here to assist you during your Co-op career and to facilitate your development of skills that will help you secure Co-op employment. The Program liaises between Co-op students actively seeking employment and prospective employers who can benefit from the skills of Forestry students. The services we provide to Forestry Co-op students include:

- Extensive pre-employment training during your first year of Co-op
- Continued training as needed during your entire Co-op career
- Personal consultation in preparing for interviews and presenting yourself professionally
- Ongoing support during your Co-op work terms, including assistance in resolving workplace issues
- Exclusive access to job postings and advance notice to employer events
- Access to telephone and meeting room facilities for interviews
- Coordination of job applications and interviews on behalf of students and employers
- Evaluation of Co-op work terms through E-Visits, on-site visits or telephone visits with you and your work supervisors
- Marketing the benefits of Co-operative education, the strengths of UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op students and developing relationships with prospective local, national and international employers

Our office facilities are open year-round and staffed full-time to provide continual service and support for the administration of the Co-op Program. The UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op office is responsible for covering all costs directly related to the effective management and promotion of the Program. These expenses include staff salaries, office equipment and technology infrastructure, travel costs for site visits and marketing, publicity and promotional materials, and costs related to copying, printing, postage, courier, fax and telephone.

If you take advantage of the services and support offered by the Co-op Program, you may benefit greatly from the cooperative education experience. By proactively participating in the Co-op Program, you have opportunities to:

- Develop a well-rounded educational experience by applying your classroom learning to relevant professional work environments

- Acquire up to 20 months of technical work experience with diverse employers in a variety of locations
- Develop a network of professional contacts
- Refine existing strengths and develop new professional skills
- Experience professional development and personal growth
- Earn money to finance your education while gaining valuable experience

# Conditional Acceptance and Participant Assessment Review

In late September you were admitted into the Co-op Program with "conditional acceptance" status. What exactly does conditional acceptance mean? It means that over the next three months, you have to work toward full acceptance into the Co-op Program and demonstrate that you have what it takes to be a Faculty of Forestry Co-op student. You will not have access to Co-op job postings nor ability to apply to jobs unless you are fully accepted into the Co-op Program.

In order to be fully accepted into the UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Program, you must:

- Maintain a satisfactory cumulative academic average (at least 64%) at the time of admission
- Achieve at least 16 out of 25 points in the Participant Assessment Review (commonly known as PAR)
- Demonstrate sufficient effort, enthusiasm and professionalism

The Participant Assessment Review (PAR) outlines our expectations of students in the following areas:

- Verbal and written English communication
- Resumes
- Cover Letters
- Mock Interviews
- Professionalism and effort

In early January, Co-op Coordinators review Term 1 academic grades and individual PAR scores. The combined marks determine which of the following scenarios applies to each student:

- Full Acceptance: A satisfactory cumulative academic average and a score 16 or higher on the PAR. Students will begin applying for jobs immediately.
- Withdrawal: A score below 16 on the PAR and/or an unsatisfactory academic average. In this case, students will be permanently withdrawn from the Co-op Program.

# UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Program – **Participant Assessment Review**

**Student Name:** _____     **Program:** _____

**Date** _____

*Expectations – To receive 5 out of 5, students must meet the expectations stated below*

### 1  2  3  4  5   **Communication** *Verbal is based on general interactions during cover letter/resume reviews, workshops, mock interviews and individual meetings; Written is based on UBC English 100 level course and cover letters, resumes and emails*

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Verbal: Speaks clearly, is easy to understand, has no difficulty constructing complex, fully-developed sentences, has no difficulty with English comprehension

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Written: Above 80% in university English courses, is able to fully and correctly express themselves in a professional manner, appropriate use of grammar and vocabulary

☐ **Overall Assessment**

### 1  2  3  4  5   **Resume Assessment** *Based on the overall assessment of the resume determined by the components listed below*

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Format: sections consistent, everything aligned, proper spacing, organized, correct section order, reverse chronological order, consistent verb tense

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Professional tone and style of writing, reader-centered, free of spelling and grammatical mistakes

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Profile/summary: education and technical/soft skills that must be proven in rest of resume

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Education/courses/technical projects: relevant for job application

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Work/volunteer experience: full accomplishment statements, appropriate/various use of action verbs, transferable skills

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Other (awards/certificates/extra-curricular): include transferable skills in descriptions that are relevant for job application

☐ **Overall Assessment**

### 1  2  3  4  5   **Cover Letter Assessment** *Based on the overall assessment of the cover letter determined by the components listed below*

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Proper cover letter format: aligned, proper spacing, company address, date, salutation, closing signature

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Professional tone and style of writing, reader-centered, content flows logically and easily, no spelling or grammatical errors, more in-depth writing than the resume

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Introductory paragraph: captures attention, discusses reason(s) for interest in position/company, top qualifications briefly summarized, connection created between student and position and/or company

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Body paragraphs: explains top 3 to 6 qualifications most relevant for the position using details and examples

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Directly linked and discussed how their transferable skills meet the requirements or will benefit the position and addresses all key requirements

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Conclusion: reiterates interest, more qualifications mentioned if applicable, employer thanked

☐ **Overall Assessment**

### 1  2  3  4  5   **Mock Interview Assessment** *Based on the overall assessment of student's mock interview determined by the components listed below*

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Clearly and concisely answers questions confidently and professionally, avoids rambling and story-telling

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Provides specific, relevant examples of skills and experiences that directly relate to questions using START technique

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Answers demonstrate that student has sufficiently prepared for the mock interview

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Proper body-language: smile, no slouching/fidgeting, confident, speaking voice/tone/eye contact, firm handshake

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Insightful closing question(s)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Provide a list of 2-3 appropriate references, properly formatted

☐ **Overall Assessment**

### 1  2  3  4  5   **Professionalism and Effort**

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Attends all workshops and related sessions: cover letter, resume and mock interviews, on-line etc.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Meets all required deadlines and is always on time

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Demonstrates an ability to make improvements based on feedback

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Professional communication with the co-op office and staff

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Possesses skills and attitude to appropriately represent UBC, enthusiastic and proactive

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Exhibits/models career readiness and professionalism

☐ **Overall Assessment**

☐ 0 **Total PAR score out of 25**

# UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Program Terms and Conditions

The following terms and conditions of enrolment in the UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Program are in addition to those policies and regulations listed in the UBC Co-op Student Handbook.  If there is a conflict among these documents, the order of precedence will be as follows: (1) these UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Program Terms and Conditions and (2) the UBC Co-op Student Handbook.  To participate in the Co-op Program, you must agree to the terms and conditions in The Hub before the start of each co-op work term.

The UBC Forestry Co-op Program reserves the right to update, modify or revise these Terms & Conditions as necessary and without notice.  Questions about being required to sign these Terms and Conditions may be directed to the Director of Student Services at chiara.longhi@ubc.ca.

I understand and agree to comply with all of the following Terms and Conditions:

## 1. Registration

1.1 To be registered by the Co-op Program in one co-op course for each four-month work term I am scheduled to complete.

1.2 To pay the co-op course tuition for every co-op four-month work term (consecutive or not) by the due dates specified in the UBC Calendar whether I secure a co-op placement through the Co-op Program or through an independent job search.

## 2. Information Release

2.1 That the Co-op Coordinator will access my academic records for the purposes of the Co-op Program.

2.2 To give permission to UBC to release my resume, cover letter, transcripts, and other relevant information to prospective employers for placement during co-op work terms while I am enrolled in the Co-op Program.

2.3 To keep the co-op job posting information, employer lists, contacts, etc., confidential.

2.4 To consent to have my contact information (including name, email and IP address) stored on the MailChimp server, located in the United States, so that I may receive the Forestry Co-op Newsletter each month.

2.5 That the Co-op Coordinator may record meetings and site visits.

2.6 To give The University of British Columbia ("UBC") permission to use images of me (including any motion picture or still photographs of my likeness, poses, acts and appearances or the sound records of my voice) ("Images") for any purposes in connection with promoting the UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Program and its activities (the "Purposes"), which may include advertising, promotion and marketing. UBC may crop, alter or modify Images of me and combine such Images with other images, text and graphics, without notifying me. I understand that my personal information, including Images of me, is being collected pursuant to section 26 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 165. I consent to my name being displayed in connection with the appearance of my Image. I consent to my name and images being stored, accessed or disclosed outside of Canada.

## 3. Co-op Workshops/Pre-Employment Training/Co-op Presentation Nights

3.1 To pay the co-op pre-employment workshop fee by the deadline set by the Co-op Program, and understand that this fee is non-refundable and does not guarantee acceptance to the Co-op Program.

3.2 To attend all the co-op workshops on pre-employment training, which are prerequisites to full acceptance in the Program.

3.3 To attend all the Co-op Presentation Nights associated with my degree program unless I am on a co-op work term or enrolled in a UBC field school course located outside of the Lower Mainland

## 4. Academic Performance

4.1 To maintain a minimum, cumulative grade average of 68% to remain in the Co-op Program (64% at the time I apply to join the Co-op Program).

## 5. Communication with the Co-op Coordinator and/or Student Services

5.1 To respond within 36 hours to all messages from the Co-op Coordinator and/or Student Services on behalf of the Co-op Coordinator.

5.2 To notify the Co-op Coordinator of any changes regarding my work eligibility, work status or current contact information within 36 hours of any change.

5.3 To inform the Co-op Coordinator, immediately or no later than 36 hours, of any inappropriate, unsafe, and/or unethical behaviour or treatment during the Co-op Program, including work experiences.

## 6. Job Search Process

6.1 That it is ultimately my responsibility to secure co-op work term employment and that the Co-op Program does not guarantee employment during a co-op work term.

6.2 To apply to the minimum number of positions (set each year by your Co-op Coordinator) posted on The Hub and/or through my own, simultaneous, independent job search.

6.3 To discuss my independent job search with the Co-op Coordinator and keep them updated on my progress.

6.4 To allow the Co-op Program to solicit positions on my behalf.

6.5 Not to directly solicit positions from a current or previous co-op employer on my own (or any other student's) behalf without prior permission from the Co-op Coordinator, even during employment witha a co-op employer.

6.6 To provide the Co-op Program and prospective employers with accurate and appropriate information regarding my qualifications and interests.

6.7 That I will not falsify information in my application packages, during interviews or meetings with prospective employers.

## 7. Interviews

7.1 To attend all interviews with employers who have selected me as a candidate, and to conduct myself professionally throughout the process.

7.2 That the Co-op Coordinator may, if necessary, select interview times on my behalf.

7.3 That interviews will only be rescheduled at the sole discretion of the employer, for exams, health reasons or emergencies and I will notify the Co-op Coordinator immediately of any interviews I am unable to attend for any of these reasons, or if i am late to an interview.

## 8. Job Offers

8.1 To consult with the Co-op Coordinator before accepting a job offer and allow them to contact the employer to ensure the position satisfies the criteria of a co-op work term and to inform the employer of the co-op guidelines.

8.2 That participation in the Co-op Program will very likely require me to accept positions outside the proximity of campus and that, although many companies subsidize relocation expenses, I may be required to pay the associated travel expenses. If I have any restrictions concerning location and travel, I will discuss them with the Co-op Coordinator prior to applying for jobs. I am aware that geographic location is not a valid reason for turning down a job offer and that I may be assigned a 'Fail' grade for the co-op course and/or withdrawn from the Co-op Program as a result of doing so.

8.3 To be prepared to accept all the position(s) for which I have interviewed.

8.4 To allow the Co-op Coordinator to accept or reject job offers on my behalf at any time during the placement process.

8.5 That I may only request to reject one job offer during one of my senior co-op work terms and that in order to do so, I must arrange a meeting with the Co-op Coordinator to discuss my rationale and seek approval.

8.6 To accept the salary offered by employers and will not attempt to negotiate it.

8.7 That if I return to a co-op employer for any subsequent co-op work term, I will be registered in the co-op course and pay the co-op course tuition.

8.8 That once I have accepted in writing or verbally an offer of employment, if I break my contract of employment, I will not be satisfying the conditions of the Co-op Program and may be assigned a 'Fail' grade for the co-op course.

8.9 That I will respond to job offers within 72 hours (unless otherwise specified by the employer or Co-op Coordinator).

## 9. The Work Term

9.1 That while on a co-op work term, I will be supervised by the employer and not the University.

9.2 To inform my employer immediately or no later than 36 hours of any inappropriate, unsafe, and/or unethical behaviour or treatment during a co-op work term.

9.3 To comply with all policies and procedures of my employer, including any regarding confidential/proprietary information, both during and after a work term.

9.4 To behave appropriately and according to all UBC policies, procedures and guidelines for the duration of my participation in the Co-op Program.

9.5 To follow the procedures as outlined in The Hub and UBC Co-op Student Handbook.

9.6 That prior to enrolling in any academic course during any work term, I will seek approval from the Co-op Coordinator and work supervisor.

9.7 That I am required to submit Work Term assignment(s) for every four-month co-op work term (whether or not any of my placements span multiple consecutive work terms) and that I am aware that each assignment is due as outlined in the UBC Forestry Co-op Student Handbook. A late assignment will result in being assigned a 'Fail' grade for the Co-op course and/or withdrawal from the Co-op Program.

9.8 That I must meet the minimum requirements on the evaluation from my employer, a satisfactory grade on my work term assignment, submit all required work term forms on The Hub and present at Co-op Night if selected in order to receive a 'Pass' for the co-op work term.

9.9 That if I am unable to complete a co-op work term in progress for ill health or personal reasons, I am eligible to receive a 'Pass' for the work term if all of the following occur:

- notify the Co-op Coordinator, to confirm the employer is aware that I am unable to complete the work term;
- I provide the Co-op Coordinator, if appropriate, with a supporting letter from my doctor or medical certificate;

- The Co-op Coordinator determines that my performance and learning process on the co-op work term to date have been satisfactory; and
- My employer evaluates my initial work term performance as meeting the minimum requirements.

## 10. Completion of the Co-op Program

10.1 To complete a minimum of four (4) scheduled work terms in the Co-op Program, with at least one in the winter or fall term (students in the 3+2 program must complete three (3) co-op work terms and may not be permitted to complete more than three (3) work terms through co-op. Other transfer students should consult with their Co-op Coordinator regarding the number of work terms required.

10.2 To follow the co-op work term schedule for my degree program; except where changes to the co-op schedule have been discussed with the Co-op Coordinator, followed by a formal written request and written approval by the Co-op Coordinator.

10.3 That I must complete my degree on an academic term.

10.4 That Co-op designation on my degree will only be awarded upon successful completion of all Co-op Program requirements.

## 11. Scheduling and Withdrawal from the Co-op Program

11.1 That any requests to withdraw from a job search period and/or deviate from the standard co-op work term sequence for your degree program, must be received by the Co-op Program by the following dates:

- For Winter work term (January to April) – by October 15th
- For Summer work term (May to August) – by February 15th
- For Fall work term (September to December) – by June 15th

That if my withdrawal/deviation request is received by the date listed above I will be allowed to withdraw without penalty or notation on my transcript.

That if my withdrawal/deviation request is not received by the required date as noted above, I may be assigned a "Withdrawal" standing on the co-op course and responsible for paying 100% of the co-op tuition fee for the term in addition to all other student related fees.

That if I fail to complete the formal withdrawal or deviation procedures I may be responsible for all assessed fees and assigned a 'Fail' grade for the co-op course.

11.2 That I will not be permitted to withdraw from the scheduled co-op course associated with my co-op work term if I have obtained a job through my independent job search. Enrolment in the co-op course will be required and I will be responsible for all associated fees.

## 12. Work Term Failure

12.1 That I may be assigned a 'Fail' grade on a co-op course for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to honour a signed job offer;
- Failure to report for work at the location specified by the employer;
- Ending a work term early without permission from the Co-op Program and the employer;
- Dismissal by the employer for cause;
- Failure to complete and submit required documents and assignments on The Hub.
- Failure to make a presentation during Co-op Night if requested to do so by the Co-op office.

12.2 That acceptance of a job offer spanning consecutive four (4) month co-op work terms necessitates my completion of all requirements for each four (4) month work term and that if I terminate the work agreement early without the consent of the Co-op Program, I may be assessed a failing grade for each work term.

12.3 That the Co-op Coordinator may assign a 'Fail' grade on a co-op course or remove a student from the Co-op Program for failure to comply with any of these UBC Forestry Co-op Terms and Conditions or the co-op procedures outlined in the UBC Co-op Student Handbook.

## 13. Student Appeals Procedures

13.1 That I may, at any time, request a meeting with the Co-op Coordinator to discuss concerns over a decision made pertaining to my standing in the Co-op Program.

13.2 That if I am unable to reach an agreement with the Co-op Coordinator, I may appeal their decision as per the Student Appeals Procedures in the UBC Forestry Co-op Student Handbook.

13.3 That if a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved within the Co-op Program, I may formally request a meeting with the Faculty of Forestry, Associate Dean, Academic, for a decision in the appeals process.

13.4 That if a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached with the Associate Dean, Academic, I may appeal the decision of the Associate Dean, Academic to the University Senate, Committee on Appeals on Academic Standing in accordance with the procedures listed in the University Calendar.

**By accepting below, you are confirming that you understand and agree to comply with all of the statements in these Terms and Conditions.**

# Co-op Procedures

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## Communicating with the UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Office

Maintain contact with the Co-op Office as much as possible, and as required. Coordinators can provide guidance, direction and feedback during your participation in the Co-op Program.

- You are encouraged to contact your Co-op Coordinator whenever necessary; please make an appointment to speak with your Co-op Coordinator. Co-op Coordinators offer student office hours for you to schedule an appointment via e-mail or phone to arrange a mutually convenient meeting time.

- **Keep current** – Whenever your contact information changes, please update your UBC Student Services Center (SSC) account and your Co-op Coordinator immediately. It is important that we are able to reach you quickly due to the time sensitivity of our work.

- **Voicemail** – The Co-op Program highly recommends that you activate voicemail on both your home telephone number and your mobile phone. Interviews are often arranged with very little notice, and we will need to provide you with interview details during our business hours.

- **Respond to all Co-op e-mail within 24 hours** – Co-op Coordinators will send you important e-mails, announcements, job details and interview requests throughout the year. Please ensure that you read and respond to all Co-op-related messages within 24 hours if a response is requested. Being on a Co-op work term does not absolve students of this requirement.

## Academic Requirements

- You are responsible for ensuring you meet all the faculty and program requirements applicable to your degree and year, in addition to the requirements of the Co-op Program.

- If you have course-related inquiries, including scheduling questions, please contact your specific program director or the Faculty of Forestry Students Services office (604.822.1834).

## International Students

- If you are an International Student enrolled in the UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Program, you require a valid Employment Authorization visa (co-op work permit) to work in Canada.

- You will receive an e-mail from the Faculty of Forestry Co-op Coordinators with instructions on applying for your Canadian Employment Authorization. Please submit your application immediately, as you must receive your work permit prior to commencing your first co-op work term. Please submit a copy of your co-op work permit to your co-op coordinator as soon as you receive it.

- It is your responsibility to ensure you are legally able to work in Canada throughout the time you are enrolled in the Program.

- International Student Advisors are all Regulated Citizenship and Immigration Consultants (RCICs) or Regulated International Student Immigration Advisors (RISIAs) and can help with your questions about life as an international student.  Contact isa@students.ubc.ca

- Once you have obtained your first co-op job offer and have received the offer letter from the company, you must apply for a Social Insurance Number (SIN) from any Canada Employment Centre. General information can be found at **here** and more specific information can be found **here** and **here**.

- Apply for a SIN immediately after receiving your offer letter.

- If your immigration status changes at any point during your participation in the Co-op Program, please notify your Co-op Coordinator immediately, as this may affect your eligibility with a number of government agencies.

- Please note that some job postings are limited to Canadian citizens only. International students are not eligible for National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) awards, or some government positions. Job postings will specify eligibility requirements.

- International Students are assessed the same co-op work term tuition as Canadian citizens and landed immigrants/permanent residents.

## The Hub

The co-op office uses a database system called the Hub to centrally manage all co-op related information. The Hub is only accessible by those that have authorization to log-in and includes:

- Co-op job postings and student documents (ie. resumes, cover letters, etc.)
- Student and company information
- Co-op interview scheduling
- Co-op work term information
- All co-op forms students are required to submit
- Co-op event calendar
- Other co-op resources

You can access the Hub at hub.forestrycoop.ubc.ca and login using your CWL (Campus Wide Login). Only students that are fully accepted into the co-op program will have special permission that enables them to view all the relevant co-op information. The student manual can be found in The Hub.

## Applying for Jobs

Below is a brief summary of the process for applying for co-op jobs.

### Create a Resume using Co-op Header- in Consultation with a Co-op Coordinator.

**Submit job applications**

- The job search term generally begins four months prior to your scheduled co-op work term. This process may however begin earlier in some cases.

- Job descriptions will be posted to the Co-op Jobs Website called The Hub starting in the middle of September (for winter work terms), January (for summer work terms), and May (for fall work terms). Provided you meet the requirements for full acceptance into the Co-op Program (see page 8), you will be made eligible to apply for summer jobs beginning in January.

- Apply for a job if you have at least 50% of the technical skills required.

- You must write a separate cover letter for each job, unless otherwise stated in the job posting. The maximum length for a cover letter is one page.

- There are a variety of ways to apply for jobs, depending on how the employer would like to receive applications. The application process will be indicated under "Application Instructions" on the job description. The possibilities include submitting your application to The Hub, submitting an online application directly to an employer's website or both.

- Each job has a closing date and time. Most jobs posted in The Hub close at 11:59 pm, but please read all postings carefully for closing information, as they will automatically close at the specified date and time. Once the job has closed, you will no longer be able to submit an application.

- If technical difficulties arise to prevent you from applying to a posting before the job closes, please immediately e-mail your cover letter, resume and the co-op job code to your Co-op Coordinator. We may be able to assist you in submitting your application the next day if the job has closed.

- It is strongly encouraged that you submit an application for all positions for which you are qualified. During each job search term, you are expected to apply to the minimum number of jobs specified in the Terms and Conditions, as outlined in chapter one of the student handbook.

## NSERC Eligibility

Occasionally you will see that some jobs require students with NSERC eligibility. The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) subsidizes eligible professors and companies to hire students for research projects. To be eligible to apply for an award, you must:

- be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada
- be registered (at the time you apply) as a full-time undergraduate student in a bachelor's degree program at an eligible university (exception for graduating students: see number 5, below)
- have obtained, over the previous years of study, a cumulative B- (68%) average or above
- have completed all the course requirements of at least the first year of university study (or two academic terms) of your bachelor's degree
- not have started a program of graduate studies

## Job Search Processes

### What is the Job Search Period?

The job search period usually one term (4 months) before the job start date. Students apply to all jobs they are at least 50% qualified for and can have interviews with any number of companies. During the job search period, companies may present job offers to students and students are expected to accept job offers.

One advantage of actively applying to various jobs is that you may have the chance to interview with more than one company, giving you the opportunity to practice your interviewing skills and giving you a greater selection of jobs to choose from.

## Co-op Job Search Calendar

- Summer jobs: January to June
- Fall jobs: May to September
- Winter jobs: September to January

For specific work term dates, please see the UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op website (**www.forestry.ubc.ca/students/Co-op/students/work-term-schedules/**).

## What is the Job Search Process?

The job search process is a continuous recruitment and hiring period when student-employer matches are confirmed on an ongoing basis. Students who have not secured Co-op employment offers will apply to jobs and may be interviewed at any time during this period. You will receive confirmation of a job offer by phone or e-mail and you will have 72 hours to confirm your acceptance.

The job search begins immediately 4 months prior to your scheduled work term and runs through the first month of the scheduled work term. The expectation is that a four-month Co-op work term should entail 16 weeks of full-time work. Since students may secure a late placement during this process, Co-op credit will be applied as long as the work term period meets the minimum requirement of 12 full-time weeks or 420 hours of work, and has been pre-approved by the student's Co-op Coordinator. For example, most jobs for the summer work term begin in May; however, students can still apply and commence summer positions until late May./early June

## Job Search Requirements

- You are strongly encouraged to apply for all posted jobs for which you have at least 50% of the technical qualifications. Additionally, a Co-op Coordinator may send your resume directly to employers who request them. Make sure your resume in The Hub is always up-to-date and properly labeled (see chapter 7: "Resume Naming Tips") so a Co-op Coordinator can forward the most appropriate resume to interested employers.
- Once you receive a job offer from an employer, you are expected to accept that position – unless you already have an offer from another employer.
- Once you accept a job offer, you will no longer be permitted to apply to other jobs.
- If you receive a job offer through your independent job search, please inform a Co-op Coordinator as soon as possible.

## Interview Process

You are expected to check your e-mail and voicemail daily to see if companies have requested an interview with you. Employers will often contact the Faculty of Forestry Co-op office to schedule interviews on very short notice, so it is very important to have voicemail on your main telephone number and/or mobile phone. If you receive an interview request, the Co-op Coordinator or Program Assistant will send you an e-mail with interview information. Please respond immediately to secure your preferred interview date and time.

- If interviews are held during a time when you have an exam scheduled, please let your Co-op Coordinator know immediately and suggest at least a few other times when you may be available. We do not provide letters for you to miss a quiz, exam, or lab meeting. We will do our best to arrange times that are convenient for both you and the employer. Since the majority of interviews are conducted during business hours, and you must attend all interviews for which you have been selected, you are expected to miss class in order to attend interviews, if necessary. You are advised to make alternate arrangements with your instructor if you have an interview scheduled during class time.
- Be prepared. See "Interview Preparation" in chapter 11.

## Confirmation of Job Offers

Once you have verbally accepted a position, the employer should send an offer letter to the co-op office. You will be required to provide a signed copy of the offer letter to your Co-op Coordinator without delay. If you do not have a scanner, your co-op Coordinator can assist you by scanning the signed offer letter and e-mailing you a copy to be forwarded to the employer.

**NOTE**: If you receive an offer directly from an employer, you must consult with a Co-op Coordinator before making a decision to ensure it is eligible for co-op.

- If you receive an offer letter directly, please ensure the Co-op office has received a copy as well.
- If your offer letter contains a confidentiality agreement, please see a Co-op Coordinator if you have any questions or require a witness to your signature.
- Fulfill all other employment requirements, such as: completion of a medical exam, background check, criminal records check, driver's abstract, purchase of protective clothing, and so forth.
- E-mail your signed offer letter to your employer; you are welcome to use the services at the Co-op office to return the letter.
- Once you have signed the offer letter, you should contact your new employer to confirm your start date, location of orientation, start time, dress code, etc.
- When signing or submitting your offer letter at the Faculty of Forestry Co-op office, please also complete a Work Term Record in The Hub for the relevant semester.

## Guidelines for Submitting Student Stories

While you are on a co-op work term, you will remain in close contact with your Co-op Coordinator. As part of your commitment to the Program, you will be submitting pictures and a written account of every work term for use in promotional materials, the TreeRings newsletter and the Faculty of Forestry Co-op webpage.

**Pictures:**
* Should feature you in action at work (measuring a tree, taking soil samples, safely performing typical tasks, surveying, etc.),
* Whenever possible take the picture outside and ensure your face is visible,
* Do not wear sunglasses or headgear which may obstruct your face (if this is not possible due to safety regulations it is recommended you take the picture elsewhere),
* Ensure no one else is visible in the picture,
* Ensure you are close enough to the camera to be recognizable,
* Upload pictures in the largest size possible to The Hub. High quality, high resolution are preferred.
* Attach pictures separately in The Hub – not inserted into a Word document.

**Text:**
* Describe in one paragraph what you have been working on during your work term, what you have learned, what co-op means to you and/or why others should consider joining co-op.
* Write in first person – "I have been working on…"
* Be professional as these stories can be read by the employers, faculty and your peers.

For examples of past student stories, visit the Faculty of Forestry Co-op webpage and click "Students" then "Student Stories" or by clicking "Read all student stories" at the bottom of the co-op landing page: **www.forestry.ubc.ca/students/co-op/**.

## Co-op Presentation Nights

Co-op Presentation Nights showcase presentations from intermediate and senior co-op students who have returned from co-op work terms along with posters from junior co-op students who have just completed their first work term. Typically 8 to 10 intermediate and senior co-op students will present for 10 minutes followed by a 5 minute question period. Junior co-op students will answer questions about their posters before and after the presentations as well as during networking.

These events are *mandatory* for all students in the Co-op Program and are attended by employers, work supervisors and UBC faculty members. Co-op Presentation Nights are an important way for industry, government and community organizations to connect with the students they are looking to hire. These nights are also a great way for employers to connect with the Faculty of Forestry and provide feedback about our programs.

For more information on upcoming Co-op Presentation Nights visit
**www.forestry.ubc.ca/students/co-op/about-co-op/events/**

# Workshop Summary

**3**

## Life-Long Job Search Skills

The pre-employment skills taught in the online and in-person Co-op workshops have been identified by employers as essential in the workplace. Online workshops are delivered via Canvas, an online course delivery tool. As each workshop is mandatory, please contact your Co-op Coordinator at least one week before the scheduled in-person workshop if you are unable to attend so that other arrangements can be made.

Upon completion of the workshops, you will have learned:

- Self-assessment skills to help you set personal objectives in terms of education, work placements and career choices
- Accomplishment-based resume-writing
- Components of a targeted, compelling cover letter
- Job search skills that will assist you in successfully gaining employment
- How to analyze job descriptions to predict interview questions

- Interview preparation skills and key factors for succeeding in interviews
- Ethics and confidentiality rules and how to apply them during your Co-op career
- The requirements for Co-op work term assignments; and
- Fundamentals of the Human Rights Act, Employment Standards Act, and collective agreements that apply to you in the workplace

Mandatory workshops will be conducted throughout the fall and winter terms.

# Additional Information and Resources 4
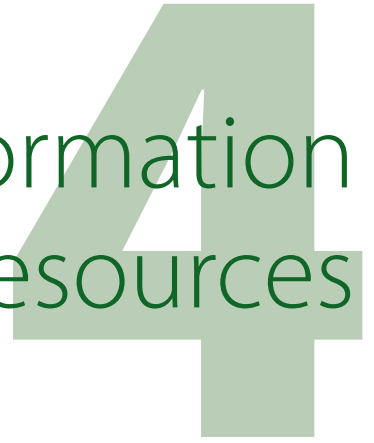
## The UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Websites

The Faculty of Forestry Co-op website (**www.forestry.ubc.ca/students/co-op/**) is a key source of information for students and employers and is accessible by anyone, and includes:

- Co-op Coordinator contact information
- Key dates and Co-op reminders
- TreeRings Co-op Newsletter links
- A copy of the most current Student Handbook
- Salary statistics
- Links to Co-op student stories from their work terms
- Employer testimonials; and
- Co-op publications and news

## Information specific to UBC Co-op students

### U-Pass

While you are on a Co-op work term, you are eligible for the U-Pass, and you will automatically be enrolled in the U-Pass program. More information is available **here**. If you wish to opt out of the U-Pass program, please review the exemption process under Eligibility & Exemptions.

### Medical and Dental Health Benefits

As of September 2007, UBC students enrolled in the Co-op Program are automatically assessed student-levied fees including all of the benefits provided by the Alma Mater Society (AMS). Students who are enrolled in a co-op work term will be enrolled in the health and dental plan. For more information on coverage, please **click here**.
If you are covered by another plan through your current employer or family, you can elect to opt out of the extended health plan. To do so please follow the instructions listed by your health care provider **here.**
If you're an international student, you must be covered by the British Columbia Medical Service Plan (MSP) or have equivalent coverage. Without MSP or equivalent coverage, you cannot make claims for health plan benefits. For more information on iMED, or provincial health care (MSP), please contact International House at 604.822.5021 or by e-mail at isa@students.ubc.ca.

### For Students Working Outside British Columbia

You will need to ensure you have adequate medical coverage for the period of time you are away from British Columbia. Most students are covered under a provincial health plan, but you must still contact your health insurance agency before commencing your co-op work term. If you do not, any claims you make may be invalid. Make arrangements to maintain your provincial insurance while you are away, and be sure to reactivate it when you return, if necessary.

Check to ensure you will be covered while residing in the country/province of your work term. Please see the Medical Services Plan website at **www.health.gov.bc.ca/msp/** as it will describe what coverage you have (and do not have) while you are outside the province.

## Extended Medical Insurance

Extended medical coverage is required; some employers will require co-op students to purchase a specific medical insurance plan before beginning employment. If you are enrolled in the AMS/GSS Health and Dental Plan, you can request to extend your Travel Insurance to cover you while you are on your work term. For more information **click here**.

If you are not enrolled in the AMS/GSS Health and Dental Plan, you will need to purchase your own medical insurance.

While many students are covered under their family's insurance policy, this is something you will have to look into for yourself. Carefully read each insurance company's coverage to understand what will and will not be covered while away from Canada.

## Scholarships

UBC offers a number of scholarship award programs to students entering undergraduate programs, as well as those continuing their studies at UBC. Renewable entrance scholarship payments normally span a four-year period; however, the payments may extend over a five-year period for co-op students.

Co-op status does not affect eligibility for renewable scholarships; however, it does affect the amount received. Scholarship amounts relate to the previous year's credit course load and academic average; therefore, finances should be budgeted and allocated accordingly. For more information on how co-op affects scholarship funds **click here**.

## Student Housing

Co-op students who are first-time housing applicants do not receive special assignment priority. However, if a student becomes a resident and has a work term that is out of cycle with the residence term (which runs from September to April), UBC Housing may be able to make special arrangements to reinstate a residence room, depending on the availability of space and receipt of advance notice. Co-op students residing in the UBC single student residences during the winter session may require special services for reinstatement after their work term.

Co-op students on a Fall work term wanting to return to residence at UBC for January must:

- Apply for housing in February as a returning resident for the following September.
- Contact UBC Housing by April 30 to confirm you do not want a room assignment for Term 1, but want the offer deferred to Term 2.
- Check **http://vancouver.housing.ubc.ca**
- One week before the application period, arrange for the

Faculty of Forestry Co-op office to send a letter on your behalf to UBC Housing in support of your request for deferment.

Co-op students on a Winter work term and wanting to return to UBC residences for September must:

- Have a current residence assignment for the upcoming academic year
- Give 30 days' written notice to the UBC Housing office that you are terminating your contract at the end of Term 1. Please refer to your residence contract for specific details.
- Contact the Housing office before the end of the re-application period (the first week of February) to reapply for housing for the applicable Winter Session and to ask for reinstatement as a returning co-op student.
- One week before the application period, arrange for the Faculty of Forestry Co-op office to send studentship letter on your behalf to UBC Housing in support of your request for deferment.

Please note that residence assignments are not guaranteed and are based on availability. Contact UBC Housing and Conferences at Marine Drive Residence, 2205 Lower Mall – Building 6, by phone at 604.822.2811 or by accessing their website at **http://vancouver.housing.ubc.ca.**

## Student Loans, Financial Assistance and Awards

You can apply for a Canada Student Loan and/or a British Columbia Grant or Student Loan. To qualify for a loan you must be a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident (landed immigrant) and you must have had residency in BC as established according to federal-provincial criteria.

University loans are available to students who have exhausted all other means of finance. Students must arrange to meet with an Awards and Financial Aid Advisor to apply for these loans, which require a guarantor (co-signer). Terms of repayment are determined on a case-by-case basis. For the most up to date information on Co-op eligibility for student loans and interest free status, please refer to the following website **here**.

UBC offers a range of merit-based academic awards for undergraduate studies, as well as financial need-based awards for both undergraduate and graduate studies.

## Maintaining Interest-Free Status

While on a Co-op work term, a student is eligible for interest-free status and can obtain the appropriate forms from the Student Services office. If the student cannot get to campus during working hours, these interest-free documents can be requested over the phone and may be picked up by a friend from Student Financial Assistance and Awards office in Brock Hall. Please call or email your Enrolment Services Professional (ESP) if you have any questions.

## Revenue Canada

Please do not contact the Co-op Office for information or to get answers to specific tax questions. Instead, please visit the Canada Revenue Agency website **here**.

NOTE: International students must file a Canadian income tax return when on a Co-op work term. For more information, visit the Canada Revenue Agency website **here**.

When you are on a Co-op work term, Revenue Canada does not consider you to be a full-time student. Therefore, you cannot claim full-time education tax credit for the months that you work as a Co-op student. However, you can claim the tuition fee tax credit for Co-op work term tuition paid.

## Moving Expenses

Co-op students may claim certain costs related to relocation for Co-op work terms that are more than 40 km from their homes as tax deductions. To claim these costs, students must complete a T1-M Claim for Moving Expenses form from Revenue Canada which can be found **here**.

## Working Internationally

All students (including Canadian citizens, permanent residents and international students) who secure Co-op work terms internationally are required to secure the appropriate legal work and travel documents prior to departure. The UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Coordinators may be able to assist students with the various processes, but the Program is not a legal authority on international documentation. It is it each student's sole responsibility to ensure legal documents are attained in order to work in the country of the Co-op work term.

If you are working outside Canada, you may be required to submit and pay taxes in the country in which you are employed. You must also report your earnings to the Canadian government and may be required to pay additional taxes.

## Student Safety Abroad Program

UBC's Student Safety Abroad Program supports safe experiences abroad. The Program is based on the requirements outlined in **UBC's Student Safety Abroad Policy**.

## Career Services

Career Services offers UBC students a number of career-related services, including career consulting and planning, job search and interview skill development, and resumé workshops. For more information **click here**.

## Health and Wellness Services

Health and Wellness offers various self-help and support resources for everything related to student health including support related to studying, stress, sexual health, counselling, medical issues, mental health, etc.

Counselling Services provides UBC students with confidential counselling. Professional counsellors and psychologists are available to assist students to address personal, relationship, career or educational concerns. Counselling Services offers group sessions and workshops throughout the year. Personal counselling is also available for students and their partners, and/or families. Contact Counselling Services at Brock Hall, Room 1040, by phone at 604.822.3811 or by accessing their website: **http://students.ubc.ca/counselling**. For more information visit **students.ubc.ca/health-wellness.**

# 5 Roles and Responsibilities

## The Student

As a UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op student, you will partici-pate in a program during which you will have the oppor-tunity to acquire valuable work experience that relates to your degree. You are expected to treat others (Co-op Coordinators, office staff, employers and colleagues) with professional courtesy in all forms of verbal and written communication.

### During the Job Search Term

- Review the Faculty of Forestry Co-op Terms & Conditions.
- Attend all meetings that have been scheduled with your Co-op Coordinator.
- Initiate an independent job search for an appropriate work term, using personal contacts while also applying for jobs posted by the Co-op Program. If you receive an offer letter directly from an employer, please ensure you send a copy to the Co-op Office for our records.
- Do not contact any co-op employers directly. You may contact employers that are not on our list after you check. with your co-op coordinator
- Prepare for interviews by researching both the company and the job posting.
- Accept work term placements as the job search procedures.
- Create a Work Term Record in The Hub with your place-ment details
- If you are an International student, you must ensure you have a valid work permit prior to commencing your co-op work term.

### During Your Work Term

- Within the first two weeks of each four-month work term, update your current home address by updating your Work Term Record in The Hub. Be sure to include your direct supervisor's name, phone number and e-mail address.

- Complete your *Learning Objectives* within the first two weeks of your work term and review them with your supervisor. You must also complete the Learning Objectives form in The Hub under your Work Term Record within the first two weeks of your placement.
- Honour your commitment to an employer by fulfilling the terms of your employment. Respect the policies, procedures, confidentiality and proprietary information of your employers. Assume information is confidential unless informed otherwise.
- Adhere to all conditions and rules that apply to employ-ees in the organization. These may include working hours, union membership, income tax reporting and suitable attire.
- You will be contacted by your Co-op Coordinator to arrange a site visit between you, a Co-op Coordinator and your supervisor, and you are expected to facilitate these arrangements.
- Immediately advise a Co-op Coordinator of any concerns or problems you have with your work term assignment or working environment before taking matters into your own hands. A Co-op Coordinator will work with you and the company to reach a mutually beneficial solution.
- Submit a work term poster, written report and/or presen-tation for each four-month work term. Include a signed Written Report Release form with your submission. Written report assignments will not be accepted without a release filled out by your supervisor in The Hub.
- If your report is confidential, your employer will have to assess the report and complete the Report Assessment form. Forms must be received by your Co-op Coordinator in order for a grade to be assessed.
- Complete the *Student – Final Co-op Evaluation* form in The Hub by the assigned deadline for each four-month work. Ensure that your manager or supervisor completes the online *Employer – Final Co-op Evaluation* before the deadline. The employer will receive a link to the evalua-tions directly from the co-op office.

### After Your Work Term

- Please ensure you submit all the necessary forms. These forms can be found in The Hub under the relevant Work Term Record.
- Assignments are submitted to your Co-op Coordinator via The Hub.
- A Co-op Coordinator will contact you after your return to campus to have you participate in a debriefing session.

## Co-op Coordinators

Co-op Coordinators are here to help you with all co-op matters and your liaison with employers. They work closely with you and employers to develop suitable Co-op work term opportunities. Co-op Coordinators have several responsibilities, including:

- Marketing Co-op education to prospective employers to maximize the number of job opportunities
- Selecting students for the Program, monitoring progress and advising students to help them develop and refine career goals
- Providing you with appropriate pre-employment training for your career development
- Advising and assisting employers through all aspects of the Co-op recruiting process
- Conducting site visits, phone visits and administering E-Visits during work terms to assist in the evaluation of the student and employer, and to identify future work terms for Co-op students
- Marking poster work term reports, and hosting Co-op Presentation Nights
- Ensuring fair and equitable treatment of students and employers throughout the placement process
- Working with employers, students and faculty to evaluate the students' work terms, ensuring the needs of employers, students and faculty are met
- Providing students, employers and faculty members with information about the Co-op Program
- Communicating important Program deadlines to students (Please note that it is ultimately your responsibility to meet all deadlines)
- Reviewing job descriptions and posting positions for Co-op students
- Accepting employer interview requests and organizing interview schedules
- Collecting, copying, filing and distributing offer letters from employers
- Receiving student Work Term Report packages, recording their receipt, and distributing reports for marking; and
- Obtaining the marked Work Term Reports, recording the marks, reviewing the evaluations, and submitting the work term grades

*NOTE: To help the Co-op Coordinators fulfill their responsibilities, you must update your work term information (including the precise work location, telephone number and e-mail address for yourself and your supervisor) in a timely manner each four-month work term in The Hub.*

*Co-op Coordinators act as a resource and are your representatives throughout your Co-op career whether you are in school or on a work term.*

*If you face challenges during your work term (e.g., unsafe working conditions, difficult co-workers or managers, excessive overtime, non-technical work, personal issues, etc.), contact your Co-op Coordinator immediately! They can help you determine productive ways to address your challenges, and will keep anything you share confidential.*

## The Employer

The employer provides you with program-related work experiences. You will be paid, supervised and evaluated as a regular employee during your work term. The employer has several responsibilities, including:

- Providing the Faculty of Forestry Co-op Coordinators with an offer letter outlining salary and benefits, hours of work, and start and end dates (not all employers send official offer letters)
- Providing safety training on the work site
- Providing a supervisor who will oversee your work and discuss expectations with you
- Advising you of confidentiality in the workplace and ensuring that you sign required non-disclosure agreements prior to commencing work
- Participating in the site visit and E-visit completing the Employer – Final Co-op Evaluation form
- Providing you with guidance, reviewing the Work Term Report, and completing the Written Report Release form in the Final Evaluation form in The Hub.
- Marking the report if it is deemed confidential; and
- Adhering to Employment Legislation and the Human Rights Act

## The Faculty Advisor

The Faculty Advisor has several responsibilities which may include:

- Providing technical and professional support throughout the work term as needed by discipline-specific co-op students
- Assisting in topic selection for your Written Report to meet the guidelines of the Co-op Program and the needs of the employer, as requested; and
- Providing a link between the Co-op Program and its associated Faculty of Forestry departments

# Assessing Yourself and Your Skills

The first Co-op workshop, including online modules and one in-person workshop, will provide tools and insights that will form a foundation for writing resumes and cover letters. The tools provided assist you in finding and securing Co-op work terms; please refer to this handbook throughout your Co-op job searches. This information will also help you with your lifelong career planning.

## Self-Assessment and Your Co-op Career

Self-assessment is the first step in career planning. An assessment of your interests, skills, accomplishments, personal attributes and values will provide a foundation from which you can identify the kinds of work you will find most rewarding. It will also help you to clearly communicate the skills you have that employers are seeking, and to identify areas for development.

Industry knowledge is the second step in career planning. Understanding the labour market helps ensure that your decisions are in sync with current marketplace demands and trends. You will learn how to identify what skills and knowledge are currently valued in the marketplace that you may wish to emphasize or develop.

## Assessing Yourself

You have a unique combination of interests, abilities, and preferences to offer prospective employers. Being aware of your personality is the starting point for almost all change and growth, as it is a core aspect of your true self. Preferences are an important component of self-assessment and self-discovery. They guide our decisions and determine how we feel about different aspects of the world. Understanding your values and preferences can help you to determine:

- Personal and Career Goals
- The position and working environment that best matches your needs
- The kinds of people you enjoy working and associating with

During your Co-op career, you will have opportunities to work in various environments with different organizational structures with a diverse range of people. You will be able to challenge and further define your values and preferences.

**Personal Attributes Assignment**

What personal qualities or strengths do you have to offer a potential employer? Refer to the online module and review the appendices for a list of words outlining attributes that may apply to you.

## Skills and Experience Inventory

Taking stock of your experiences will greatly assist in the development of your Co-op resume and content for cover letters. Consider previous employment experience, volunteer/extracurricular activities and technical projects accomplished in class in order to provide specific details about the type of work you have done to highlight the skills you have gained.

During Co-op Workshop 1 Module 2, you will create several examples of skills and experience inventories to use when building your Co-op resume. An example has been provided for you below; please also refer to the online resource for additional information.

## Example: Skills and Experience Inventory

| | |
|---|---|
| **Company Name** | McDonald's |
| **Position** | Team Leader |
| **Start and end dates?** (Month and Year) | May - September 2018 |
| **What did your duties include?** | • Managed a crew of five customer service representatives<br>• Prepared menu items<br>• Responsible for making sure that customers received their orders within the allotted time frame and as requested<br>• Accepted orders and handled cash at the front counter<br>• Dealt with any issues regarding team members, including time off, overtime or personal problems |
| **What were your major achievements?** | • Promoted from crew member to Team Leader within two months of starting<br>• Won Employee of the Month |
| **With whom did you interact? (e.g., Peers, Management, Supervisors, Juniors, Customers, Team Members, Suppliers, Vendors, etc.)** | • Customers<br>• Co-workers and Senior Management<br>• Delivery crews |
| **What did you like most about your work?** | • Managing a team of employees<br>• Dealing with customers |
| **What did you like least about your work?** | • Having to resolve issues of incorrect orders<br>• Early morning start time |
| **Adjectives/phrases your manager would use to describe you and your work** | • Good team leader<br>• Focused<br>• Enthusiastic<br>• Hard worker |

# Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are highly valued by employers as you can apply them to a range of roles in a variety of settings. Some examples of transferable skills include:

- Administrative
- Change Management
- Communication
- Conflict Resolution
- Customer Service/People Skills
- Delegation/Time Management
- Financial
- Leadership & Initiative
- Knowledge Acquisition
- Knowledge Application
- Management
- Negotiation
- Organization
- Policy & Procedure Development
- Problem-Solving
- Project Management
- Public Speaking & Presentation Research & Analysis
- Resource Management

- Sales & Marketing
- Strategy Development
- Teaching & Coaching
- Teamwork Skills
- Technical/Hands-On

NOTE: A more comprehensive list of transferable skills is available in Co-op Workshop 1 Module 2.

**The more transferable skills you can demonstrate, the more competitive you are in the marketplace.**

## Examples: Transferable Skills

*Customer Services and Organization Skills* – As a Sales Associate at The Gap, I helped several customers at once with different requests and I made sure that I met my hourly sales quota which was quite stressful. From this experience, I know that as the Summer Conservation Field Technician I would be able to maintain a positive, friendly and helpful attitude while managing multiple projects and collaborating with researchers to acquire the samples required within set timeframes.

Teamwork – Working at McDonald's, I learned that without a strong team behind you, along with a positive attitude and good communication skills, it is hard to work efficiently. I would apply these same skills to the team environment at Forsite.

Communication Skills – I developed my communication skills as a math and physics tutor. I spoke confidently and directly with parents about their child's performance and when I was tutoring. I also made sure I was speaking clearly and appropriately for 10-year-olds when explaining difficult concepts. I learned how important it is to change my style of communication depending on who I am speaking to. I am confident that I would also be able to communicate effectively with the public while guiding tours through the Vancouver Aquarium.

### Other Resources

Collection of Information & Resources on Transferable Skills **click here**.

Emphasizing your Classroom Marketable Skills **click here**.

# Accomplishments

Accomplishments are occasions where you recognized a problem or a situation that could have been improved and you acted on it. Accomplishments illustrate your abilities and skills, and are indicative of your potential for taking initiative and solving problems. They prove you were successful in what you undertook. The following questions can be used to trigger your memory of accomplishments:

- Did you receive some form of recognition (award, title, trophy, etc.)?
- Did you intervene in a situation that could have become a serious problem had you not?
- Did you make a suggestion that was adopted by your classmates, team or coworkers?
- Did you accomplish a task using less than the usual resources?
- Did you satisfy a particularly difficult client?
- Have you trained or taught people?

## Method 1: Four Steps to Building an Accomplishment Statement

### Step 1

| Write down, in simple terms, the duties and responsibilities that you had in a given job. | *Greeted customers and took food orders.* |
|---|---|

### Step 2

| Add details describing the nature of the employer or the work environment. What was the purpose of your role or responsibilities? Why was what you did important? | *Greeted customers in a friendly manner, took food orders and processed cash register transactions in a busy fast-food restaurant.* |
|---|---|

### Step 3

| Add quantitative details and professional terms (when possible) to expand on your experience.<br>What were your major achievements? What were you really proud of accomplishing?<br>Focus on how you did the job cheaper, faster and better than the current standard or than was expected of you. | *Greeted up to 50 customers each hour in a friendly manner, took food orders and processed cash register transactions very quickly in a busy fast-food restaurant, ensuring a 75% customer satisfaction level.* |
|---|---|

### Step 4

| Add phrases that contain transferable skills to demonstrate how you met or exceeded expectations to provide prospective employers with insight into your soft skills.<br>This step is optional but you should try to have at least one "Step 4" phrase per job. | *Greeted up to 50 customers each hour in a friendly and helpful manner while taking food orders to ensure a 75% customer satisfaction level*<br>*Worked quickly and accurately to process cash register transactions in a busy fast-food restaurant so that customers could receive their orders within three minutes* |
|---|---|

## Steps to Developing Accomplishment Statements

| Action Verb | Steps 1 & 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 or Transferable Skill |
|---|---|---|---|
| Wrote | a quarterly Q&A news bulletin for a local volunteer program | which reduced the number of routine queries by 15%. | Took on leadership role when manager was seeking volunteer to spearhead initiative |
| Informed | customers about the benefits of a new line of health food supplements | that resulted in a 7% increase in sales for this product | and helped me to win "Employee of the Month" |
| Greeted | customers in a friendly manner and showed them to their table | which helped to create a friendly and welcoming dining atmosphere. | Customer Service |
| Planned | student meetings and events for the largest club on campus | to assure meetings and events were scheduled and on time. | Delegated tasks to club members so that everyone was involved and responsibility was shared equally |
| Visited | seniors at a local retirement community to assist them in planning and completing their daily activities | making their day more enjoyable. | People Skills |
| Planned and executed | our fraternity fundraising events | which raised more than $5,000 and involved almost 100 volunteers in the events. | Utilized effective planning and project management skills |
| Tutored | students and provided instruction on Math and Physics | which helped them to succeed in their studies and increased their grades by almost 10%. | Coaching & Training |
| Delegated | responsibilities for the creation and writing of a PowerPoint presentation | amongst four group members so that we could complete the project on time | Project Management Skills |
| Operated | forklift, bobcat, chain saw and other heavy equipment | and learned to strictly follow company's safety procedures. | Technical |

NOTE: Accomplishment statements do not have to follow this exact order. As long as content from Steps 1 to 4 are included and the accomplishment statement makes grammatical sense, you can switch the order.

**Complete accomplishment statement examples**

- Working with a group of three Co-op students, reviewed original schematic drawings, compared them to existing orientation in the field and then updated drawings using AutoCAD
- Working as Team Leader for a group of five civil engineering students, designed a truss (under certain restrictions) capable of withstanding a load of 1,000 lbs.

**As you develop your Co-op resume, remember to:**

- Include quantitative details and examples from your work experience to highlight the skills you used and gained
- Avoid using "I" or "me", and do not include periods at the end of accomplishment statements

## Method 2: Accomplishment Statement Formula

| Verb | + | Task | + | Result |
|------|---|------|---|--------|

### Verb

- Start each statement with an action verb to describe your responsibility. What did you do?
- Be sure to use a variety of action verbs: Consult the list of action verbs included below.

### Task

- How did you do what you needed to? Include transferable skills or descriptions.

### Result

- What was the outcome of completing that task?
- Why did you do what you did? There is always a desirable outcome/result when we perform any action/task at work
- There are two kinds of results you can have:
    1. A skill that you gained through completing the task
    2. A concrete end product, something you produced

### Quantifiers

- Where possible, you need to quantify your experience using numbers to highlight your accomplishments
- There is a big difference between presenting to a group of 5 students vs. presenting to a class of 500 students
- Using quantifiers demonstrates your level of experience and impact to the employer

Examples Include:
- Water conservation outreach -"Collaborated (V) with faculty and staff to coordinate and participate in various public outreach initiatives (T) to promote water conservation (R)"
- Led tours - "Conducted (V) friendly and informative tours (T) increasing the comfort level of new students (R)"
- Interacted with children - "Developed (V) excellent supervisory skills (R) while engaging in daily activities with 30 children (T)

## Action Verbs

Action verbs describe what you did in your job; they are your duties. Begin each accomplishment statement on your resume with an action verb. Keep this list available for easy reference whenever you are working on your resume or preparing for an interview.

Example: What do you think sounds better to a prospective employer?

Worked with a team to make changes to an existing database

– OR –

**Managed** a team to **uncover** and **analyze** bugs within an existing database; **recommended** and **executed** upgrades to **improve** database functionality

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Accelerated | Expedited | Redesigned |
| Accomplished | Explained | Referred |
| Achieved | Fabricated | Rehabilitated |
| Acted | Facilitated | Remodeled |
| Adapted | Familiarized | Reorganized |
| Addressed | Fashioned | Repaired |
| Administered | Formulated | Reviewed |
| Advised | Founded | Revitalized |
| Advocated | Generated | Scheduled |
| Allocated | Guided | Serviced |
| Analyzed | Headed | Shaped |
| Appraised | Illustrated | Simplified |
| Approved | Implemented | Solved |
| Arbitrated | Improved | Specified |
| Arranged | Improvised | Spearheaded |
| Assembled | Increased | Spoke |
| Assigned | Influenced | Strengthened |
| Attained | Informed | Stressed |
| Audited | Initiated | Succeeded |
| Authored | Innovated | Summarized |
| Awarded | Inspected | Supervised |
| Balanced | Installed | Systematized |
| Calculated | Instructed | Tabulated |
| Catalogued | Integrated | Traced |
| Clarified | Interpreted | Tracked |
| Classified | Introduced | Traded |
| Coached | Invented | Trained |
| Collaborated | Lectured | Transferred |
| Collected | Led | Transformed |
| Communicated | Maintained | Translated |
| Compiled | Managed | Tutored |
| Completed | Mediated | Uncovered |
| Computed | Moderated | Undertook |
| Consolidated | Monitored | Unified |
| Contracted | Motivated | Updated |
| Controlled | Negotiated | Upgraded |
| Converted | Operated | Utilized |
| Coordinated | Organized | Validated |
| Corresponded | Originated | Verified |
| Delegated | Overhauled | Weighed |
| Delivered | Oversaw | Widened |
| Demonstrated | Performed | Withdrew |
| Designed | Persuaded | Won |
| Developed | Planned | Wrote |
| Devised | Presented | |
| Directed | Prioritized | |
| Dispatched | Produced | |
| Edited | Programmed | |
| Eliminated | Promoted | |
| Encouraged | Provided | |
| Engineered | Publicized | |
| Evaluated | Recommended | |
| Executed | Reconciled | |
| Expanded | Recruited | |

# Values

Values are beliefs we develop early in life shaped by our family, culture, education, religion, and different socialization processes, and that we continue to maintain throughout our lives. They make up our fundamental beliefs about what is right and wrong, good and bad.

There are countless values, including being healthy, having a family, having material possessions, following your religious beliefs, having job security, etc. Take the time to think of what is most important to you and list them. Once you have listed your values, identify those:

- that you must have at work;
- that you would like to have at work, but are not necessary
- that are least important to you.

Sometimes we take our values so much for granted that we are not even aware of them, and mistakenly assume that others hold the same values we do. Behaving in ways that are inconsistent with our values may lead to frustrations and/or depression. It is important to become aware of one's values and seek environments that are compatible with them.

# Areas for Improvement

Thus far, the focus has been on positive attributes, but everyone has areas of weakness that need to be strengthened and developed. One frequently asked question during interviews is: "Tell me about your strengths and weaknesses." Most students do well on strengths but are stumped when asked about their weaknesses. Answering this question is tricky because you have to be honest, but you do not want to hurt your chances of getting the job. Keep in mind that a weakness in one situation can be perceived as strength in another context. It is especially important to focus on specific ways you are working to improve your weak areas.

### Example: Professional Weakness

*Typical Answer:* I have trouble managing several tasks or projects at once.

Superior Answer: I have trouble managing several tasks or projects at once. Instead, I'm good at focusing my energies on one task or project and as a result, I always see things through to completion and often finish before the deadline. One of the things I'm doing to try and overcome my weakness is scheduling various tasks throughout the day and sticking to the schedule I arranged.

As you go through the online workshop modules, and during the second in-person workshop, you will develop methods and examples to have an answer prepared to highlight your strengths and illustrate a weakness you have overcome.

# The Resume

**7**

## Anatomy of a UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Resume

Workshop 1 Module 3 will focus on developing your Co-op resume in a format that will best serve your needs as a Co-op student. Remember, you already have a lot of content from your current resume; the online module and this section of the handbook will help you develop the existing information.

## Steps in Writing a Resume

The purpose of a resume is to get an interview. Think of it as a promotional brochure. Its main purpose is to illustrate skills and experience relevant to the type of work you are seeking. The resume highlights those things about you that are the most interesting, impressive and unique, without giving away all the details. It should help employers determine whether your skills match their needs. It should also persuade the employer to invest another 30 to 60 minutes of their time in interviewing you.

The purpose of a resume is to get an interview.

There are five steps to writing an effective Co-op resume:

1   Finding a suitable employer
2   Choosing the right format
3   Writing your resume
4   Customizing your resume for each application
5   Go through the checklist

This section explains these five steps in further detail. Remember that Faculty of Forestry Co-op Program has a wide variety of resources to help you prepare your resume. You may also want to make an appointment with a Co-op Coordinator. Your resume should always target each type of job or position you are seeking. (Generic resumes are far less effective and will result in fewer interviews, if any.)

**Resume length:** The standard length for resumes is two pages.

*Your resume must focus on how your skills, past experiences and education can directly benefit the potential employer.*

### Creating a Professional Image

There are various perspectives on what constitutes the "right" resume, and there is not just one correct way to present your information or write a resume. Whatever the opinion on format, most professionals agree on certain characteristics. A well- written, professional resume:

- Highlights the best accomplishments and contributions at work, school and in the community
- Reflects your hobbies, activities and interests to show you are a well-rounded person
- Connects your qualifications with the qualifications outlined in the job description
- Is free of spelling and grammatical errors
- Is clear, concise, complete and correct

## Step 1: Finding a Suitable Employer

Once you have compiled a list of your interests, skills, achievements and values, it is time to tailor them to your industry/job of interest.

First, think about what kind of employer you would like to work for. The following are important considerations, however we expect students to be open-minded in co-op and apply to as many positions as possible.

- **Size and type of organization**
  ex. local, national, international, non-profit, service-oriented, unionized, etc.
- **Position characteristics**
  ex. challenging, solitary, part of a team, prestige, responsibility, variety of tasks, project-oriented work, opportunity for advancement, etc.

- **Geographic location**
- **Type of supervision**
  ex. formal supervisor, causal supervisor, set own schedule, autonomous, etc.
- **Working hours**
  ex. regular, flexible, long, shift work, company scheduled vacation, opportunity to work from home, etc.
- **Salary and benefits**
  ex. financial security, health insurance, dental insurance, pension plan, child care, educational support, company car, etc.
- **Travel**
- **Work environment**
  ex. indoors, outdoors, fast-paced, dress code, etc.

Using the considerations listed above, make an "ideal job profile," identifying the kind of organization you would ideally like to work for. As you begin researching employers and job postings, consult your list of values from Step 1 (Making an Inventory) and your ideal job profile. Are your values compatible with characteristics of the organization? If not, you may want to consider looking at other possibilities. You may also want to meet with your Co-op Coordinator to have them approach companies you would like to target for a work term.

Once you have found a suitable organization or job posting that matches your values, think of the employer's needs and match them with your interests, skills and achievements. You may want to consider making a chart similar to this one:

| Employer's needs | Your qualifications |
| --- | --- |
| Able to work in a team | Past work in a team, school project work in teams, sports... |
| Able to live in remote area | That time you worked in a remote area, lived in a small town – your desire to live far away |
| Physically fit | Past work that was physically challenging, backpacking in nature, sports, etc... |
| Strong computer/ software skills | Past work related, courses taken with computer labs and software skills |

# Step 2: Choosing the Right Format

Resumes can be either targeted or untargeted and formatted in three distinctive ways: chronological, functional or combined. Students most often choose a combined resume, but the most important factor is that your resume highlights your accomplishments and abilities, as well as your personal career objectives.

## Targeted or Untargeted

An untargeted resume is used when you do not have a clear idea of what job you are seeking or do not want to limit your application; whereas a targeted resume is used when you know what area you want to work in and/or have some career-related experience you can highlight.

Example of a targeted resume is provided in the Sample Resume section of this publication.

## Chronological

This type of resume organizes employment and volunteer experiences chronologically with the most recent information first. This format is good for demonstrating growth in a single profession: job titles and organizations are emphasized and responsibilities and accomplishments are described in detail. This format is suitable for individuals with continuous work experience who have not had frequent job changes or prolonged periods of unemployment. It is not always the best choice for students right out of school.

## Functional

The functional resume highlights the skills you have developed over the years and their application to the job for which you are applying, and focuses less on job titles and employment history. The attention is always on the skill acquired and less on the context of its acquisition.

For any resume to be effective, it should be composed with a target industry or position in mind, but this is especially true for functional resumes. This format clusters skills and qualifications under specific headings. What is critically important when writing a functional resume is to match your skill and qualification clusters with the employer's needs.

## Combined (used in co-op)

More often than not, the combined resume is the format of choice. It has flexibility that comes from combining both the chronological and functional formats. This format stresses your skills and accomplishments, but also provides a chronological work history.

The combined resume is particularly suitable for students because it lists your relevant work experience, but also highlights your abilities and transferable skills that may have been learned in the classroom or non-paid environments.

For the purpose of your Co-op resume, you will use a combination resume format since it is most commonly preferred by current Co-op employers.

Now it is time to start composing your resume. by organizing and laying out the information you have compiled in Steps 1 & 2.

# Step 3: Resume Structure

All students are required to use the UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Resume header. It is available on The Hub. If you apply to Co-op positions with a resume that does not include the header, your applications will not be sent to employers.



**A good resume will not get you a job. But it can help you get an interview.**

Students should create a personalized resume format that best represents their unique style, personality and employment/educational background. Each student's resume should be different from the other students. There are some basic structural rules that should be followed but aside from these, we encourage students to be creative and create a unique resume for themselves. You will see the necessary elements that we are looking for in a resume in the Resume Assessment section of the Participant Assessment Review (PAR) form on page 9.

## Your Contact Information

Use only the standardized Forestry Co-op Header. Typically, a candidate would include their name, address, phone number and email address at the top of the resume so that the employer can easily reach the candidate for an interview. In co-op however, given that the students are not permitted to contact employers directly, you should include your name, availability (example: September to December 2018), program and the academic year that you are currently in (example: 2nd Year Wood Products Processing Student). Also ensure your voice mail message and e-mail addresses are professional; avoid funny or strange nicknames (ex. bubblegum@hotmail.com).

A few popular options for the fist section of your resume is including either a summary of qualifications, career objective or particular skills highlights.

## Summary of Qualifications

A Summary of Qualifications highlights your strongest selling points and the most relevant qualifications and experiences (specifying duration, responsibilities and accomplishments). The Summary should directly follow your contact information.

A Summary is:
- A list of short, concise sentences summarizing your qualifications; and
- includes skills and experiences you have to offer to the organization
- matched to the qualifications listed on the job posting

## Career Objectives

An alternative section to include instead of or in addition to the Summary of Qualifications would be to specify what your objectives are for the application you are sending. Typically, co-op students do not need an objectives section because it is clear from your application that you are seeking a co-op position. Career Objectives sections are useful for individuals that are doing a very large career shift in job positions or industry. For example, if you have worked in Urban Forestry for 10 years and now you are wanting a career in Photography, it would be good to state an objective and explain why you are doing such a big change.

## Skills Highlights

Another section you could include is a Skills Highlight section instead of the Summary of Qualifications. This section is more useful for someone applying for a particular position when they have lots of experience with specific key skills required for that position. This section can be broad (example: Skills Highlights that lists many different skills) or it can be targeted (example: Marketing Highlights that lists skills and experiences related to that particular skill only).

## Career-Related/Volunteer Experience

A Career-Related and Volunteer Experience section can be included in a targeted resume, which is normally used when you know what area you would like to work in and/or have career-related experience you can highlight. Your targeted resume should then have two experience sections: one that is "career-related" and one for "other work experience."

In this section:
- List your experience in reverse chronological order starting with the most recent on the top.
- Include the period of employment (season, month and/or year).
- Specify the position titles (create one if need be; ex. "Office Worker" if you had a general position in an office environment).
- Include the name and location of the organization (city, province; country if not in Canada).
- Describe your responsibilities and write specific examples to demonstrate your soft and transferable skills such as communication, leadership, and organization.
- Emphasize the elements of your previous jobs that relate to your career objective.
- Write using action verbs and full accomplishments statements, 2 lines max.

You may combine entries where appropriate. For instance, if you worked for the same company for the past couple of summers, but held different positions, you can bring them together under one entry. This will save space, but also highlight career growth within the positions you have held.

### Education

For students entering the workforce for the first time, and who have less work-related experience, this section is extremely important and deserves a lot of attention. In it:

- list your degrees and years of study in reverse chronological order (if you have not yet received your degree, you can put the Expected date with "expected" next to it;

- include the name and location (city, province/state, country) of the institutions where you studied, as well as scholarships and educational awards (if you have many of these, you may want to create a separate section called Awards and Scholarships); and

- include any specialization (major, minor), authorships, thesis, or honours work if relevant to the job for which you are applying.

If you are working on a post-secondary degree, it is not necessary to list your high school unless the school is prestigious, you studied in another language relevant to the job, or you want the employer to know what city or country you grew up in.

After you have listed your schooling, you may wish to consider listing any other educational training you have received, including certifications, workshops or seminars attended, etc. under the subheading "Certification and Additional Training" or "Professional Development."

### Relevant Course Work

Students with little career related work experience will want to highlight the knowledge they have acquired through course work. This is done by listing the course title (not the internal course code – FRST 201) followed by the specific proficiencies achieved in each course. Tailor each resume by only listing courses that are relevant to the job.

### Extra-Curricular Activities, Interests

While these sections can be very important for students, especially if your work experience is limited, they may also appear trivial and/or overly personal. A laundry list of leisure activities is not valuable information. Be specific. For instance, state "Elected Team Captain of community hockey team" as opposed to just stating "Hockey."

If you would like to highlight skills acquired while participating in student clubs or community work, describe these in the same way you would for paid work (remember to use action verbs and achievements) and place them in a separate section under the title "Extra-Curricular Activities".

### Possible Additional Sections

Honours and Awards: If you have been recognized for excellence or for an important contribution, you may include an Honours and Awards section. However, be selective in putting down awards: they should be significant, relevant and current. Another option is to create a sub-section. For example, in Education you could include a sub-section that lists your academic honours.

Professional Associations: If you belong or have belonged to one or more professional associations that are relevant to your career goal, list them. Your participation in an association demonstrates your interest in and commitment to the field. You may also include specific information about your role.

### Technical Projects Section

If you have taken at least a few courses that have involved group/team assignments and work then you should consider adding a Technical Projects Section. This section should be formatted just like a work experience section. You should list your role in the group project and the course name and institution where you took that course just as you would a company name (course name/institution) and a job title (your role in project; ie: Team Leader, Designer, Coordinator, etc). You should then describe in full accomplishment statements what you did for the project. Please be sure to highlight your own contributions to the group, not what the group did as a whole. This is because the employer is interested in hiring you, not your whole group.

### References

Unless the job posting requests it, do not include references on your resume. Be prepared to provide three references to a potential employer at any time. The best references are supervisors or professors who know you well, or people you know from volunteer or extra-curricular activities. List your references on a separate sheet, using the same type of paper and font face you have used for your resume. Include:
- Name
- Title
- Connection to you
- Name of organization
- Address
- Phone number
- E-mail

This list is to be handed to a potential employer only when it is requested (usually at the interview).

Make sure you have approached each contact before listing them as a reference. A poor reference can eliminate your chances of securing employment. When in doubt, ask each contact if they feel comfortable providing you with a positive reference.

## Step 4: Customizing Your Resume

Congratulations! You have now prepared a basic resume, but there is still work to be done. You cannot send the same resume to each employer. It is important to take the time to customize each application. An employer will most likely spend only 20-30 seconds scanning your resume. In that time you need to convince the reader you are a candidate

with the skills and background suitable for the job being offered and deserve an interview. Your resume should be well-organized and visually appealing.

Here are some suggestions you should keep in mind when preparing your resume for an employer:

## Content

- Make sure your resume is targeted to the specific job. Do not include irrelevant information.
- Review, review and review. There should be no spelling or grammatical mistakes. (Do not rely solely on spell check because a word may be spelled correctly, but used incorrectly.)
- Use action verbs and transferable skills to describe your skills, accomplishments, responsibilities in all sections.
- Keep your statements short, 2 lines max.
- Be concise! Eliminate "fluff," such as "responsibilities include..."
- Be positive – do not include negative information.
- Update your resume regularly as you acquire new skills and experiences.
- Start every accomplishment statement with an action verb first
- Summary of sections you can include: Summary of Qualifications, Objective (for career shifts), Skills Highlights, Work Experience, Volunteer Experience, Education, Relevant Coursework, Technical Projects, Extracurricular Activities, Honours and Awards, Professional Associations
- Be sure to use the same verb tense throughout, present tense for current work/projects and past tense for any past work/projects
- If you have a summary of qualifications or skills highlights section, make sure that everything you have in those sections is proven in the rest of the resume (for example: if you mention AutoCAD in your skills highlights, make sure AutoCAD shows up under another section like work experience, volunteer experience or coursework, etc.)

## Organization and Layout

- Your resume should be approximately two pages in length. The first page is the most important so present your most compelling information first.
- Organize your sections in an order that best supports your employment objective. If your education is your strongest selling point, put it first; if your work experience is your strongest selling point, put it first instead.
- Use the standardized Co-op header at the top of each page.

## Format and Design

- Your resume should be cleanly formatted. Use a common type face (Arial, Verdana) and do not change fonts throughout (changing fonts decreases readability). Use a legible font size (preferably 11 point).
- Section headings should stand out: use capital letters, a bold typeface, or underline boxes to emphasize section headings.
- There should be at least a bit of margin around the pages.
- Ensure that everything is aligned properly and consistently throughout your application with proper spacing
- You can use different tools to highlight different aspects of your application: bold, capitalize, underline, colour, boxes, symbols etc. Just be sure not to use more than one or two of these at one time so that it does not look too busy.
- You can use colour in your resume but please do not use more than one or two colours maximum and make sure you use a colour that will show on black and white printed paper (print your resume to check what it looks like as some employers will print them). Resumes with colour especially can look very different on a computer than on paper.

## Presentation

**Print copy**
- Print a copy of your resume so you can see what the employer would see if they print your application. If you use colour is it visible in black and white? If they misplace pages, is your name on each page?

**The Hub/Email**
- You will either email your resume to your coordinator or submit it in The Hub. Please submit in PDF format unless otherwise instructed by your co-op coordinator.

# Step 5: Checklist

Before submitting your resume to a Co-op Coordinator for review, please ensure that it represents your best effort. On a point-by-point basis, you should ask yourself these questions:

- Is this information important to a potential employer? Why?
- Will this information help me get an interview?
- Have I provided as much relevant information as I can?
- Have I avoided using clichés, acronyms and slang?
- Have I quantified and qualified details whenever possible?
- Have I avoided writing a list of job tasks?
- Have I included accomplishments and results?
- Have I started my phrases with a variety of action verbs?

Appearance and inclusion of vital information
- Is it tailored to the job I am applying for?
- Does my resume match the qualifications in the job description?
- Are all your dates lined-up with the right hand margin?
- Is the resume neat, attractive and reader-friendly?
- Is it no longer than two pages?
- Have I used the standard Co-op Header?

Writing style
- Is my resume clear, concise, correct and complete?
- Am I consistent in my spelling? (e.g., If you use international English spellings, such as 'favour', do not revert to American English spellings, such as 'favor', later in your resume)
- Are my spelling and grammar perfect?
- Is the information presented in reverse chronological order?
- Are all my experiences, except my current roles, written in past tense?
- Have I avoided the use of "I" or "me"?
- Have I refrained from writing in sentences?
- Have I refrained from using periods at the end of phrases?

Enhancing the value of your resume
- Have I quantified and given examples of accomplishments that demonstrate my skills?
- Have I made the most of my university experience and relevant extra-curricular activities?
- Have I ensured that my resume is not too skimpy?

Avoidance of common resume mistakes
- Does the resume speak to the requirements of the position?
- Did I include my expected graduation date?
- Did I save my files using the proper format?
  - "Document Name – Position Title – Your Name"
- Did I remember not to use abbreviations (e.g., UBC, BSc, FRM, BSCW, etc…?)
- If sending a resume for a job – did I send a PDF document?

## In Conclusion...

You should consider your resume as a marketing tool: its main purpose is to advertise your experience, education and skills to a potential employer. Your resume should demonstrate that you would be a valuable member of the organization. As such, it is important to tailor your resume to the organization and the industry. Do your research! Develop a list of keywords and skills required for the position and consider how your own skills match the needs of the employer. Your resume should present information in sequence and in a manner that best connects your background with the requirements of the employer. A strong, coherent resume will help you secure an interview.

## Tips

1. Soft skills that all employers look for in potential employees include:
   - Communication skills
   - Creativity
   - Initiative
   - Interpersonal skills
   - Leadership skills
   - Organizational skills
   - Problem-solving skills

2. Remember, relevant skills may include both the hard skills and soft skills you have acquired through work, volunteer, extra-curricular, internships and school experiences.

3. If your G.P.A. is high, you may want to consider mentioning it. You may organise the components of your career-related and work experience differently. For example, if you feel that your job title will have more impact on the reader, you may want to list it first. If, however, the employer's name is relevant, you might want to list it first. What is important is that you are consistent. Do not alternate between these formats on one resume.

4. Your resume must focus on how your skills, past experience and education can directly benefit the potential employer

5. A good resume will not get you a job but it can help you get an interview

# 8 Effective Cover Letters

## Steps in Writing a Cover Letter

A cover letter is your opportunity to introduce yourself and to demonstrate the match between an employer's job requirements and your skills and qualifications. It customizes your application for a particular position, organization and industry and should always accompany your resume.

A cover letter should add nuance to your resume by highlighting specific abilities, experiences and talents that make you an ideal candidate for the job. It is also an opportunity for you to demonstrate your ability to write, communicate and articulate your ideas effectively. A good cover letter will show the employer why they would benefit from hiring you.

### Participant Assessment Review

Please see the cover letter assessment section of the (PAR) form to see what necessary components of the cover letter are required.

**Cover letters must not exceed one page**

## Step 1: Know Yourself

Consider what interests/experiences, skills, achievements and values you want to showcase to a potential employer in your cover letter. Your cover letter should not simply reiterate information from your resume, but should highlight your most relevant activities and experiences for the position for which you are applying and add detail where appropriate.

## Step 2: Know the Employer and the Job

A cover letter is not only a tool to highlight your most notable qualifications, relevant course work, experiences and achievements, but also for capturing the reader's inter-est in you, your resume and your readiness to work for the Industry Partner. It should motivate the employer to call and schedule an interview. Therefore, when writing your cover letter, keep the employer's perspective in mind. He/she is interested in what value you would add to the organization (not in how the position would benefit you).

### Examine the Job Posting

**Company name:** This may or may not clearly indicate the nature of the company's operations. Research each company you apply to in order to relate your skills appropriately and answer the following questions:

- In which business sector does the company operate?
- In what type of activities is it engaged?
- Has there been any recent company news?
- Where is the company and its office(s) located?

**Take the time to review the job description to gain an understanding of the position you are applying for.**

**Job title:** If a specific job title is listed, it will give you an indication of what the job involves.

**Job description:** In order to prepare examples of your relevant experience, prioritize duties and skills in order of importance to effectively perform the job. Make sure you understand what the work will require.

**Skills required/qualifications:** Most job postings will list specific skills, education and experience needed to perform the job available. Consider the following:

- What combination of skills, education and experience do you have that would meet the employer's needs?
- What qualifications are "hidden" within the job description? For example, if a posting says "You will be working with a group of exceptional researchers to prepare tech-

nical presentations", you can infer the employer is looking for someone with writing skills that is able to work in a team setting.

- Can you provide specific examples that relate to the skill set required?

Research the industry, employer and position for which you are applying. Your cover letter should demonstrate that you know something about the organization – and not just superficial details. Use the job description as a starting point for writing your cover letter and draw as many connections as possible between yourself and the position

# Step 3: Cover Letter Structure

## Developing the Body of Your Letter

Applying for jobs takes a lot of time and effort; you may be tempted to use one standard cover letter for all employers and jobs to save time. However, you are required to prepare a unique and directly-related cover letter for each job application. Tailor each cover letter so it addresses the specific requirements of the job.

> **Employers know when you have taken the time to tailor your cover letter to the position.**

Your cover letter should contain the following elements in the suggested order:

## Your Contact Information

Use the standardized Forestry Co-op Header

## Date

Place one line of space before the date.

## Recipient's Contact Information

Place two lines of space before the recipient's contact information, which includes:

- Recipient's full name
- His/her title and/or department
- Organization's name
- Organization's street address
- Organization's city and province
- Organization's postal code

## Reference Line

Place one line of space before the reference line. Including a reference line (ex. "Re:" or "Subject:") indicates the purpose of the letter. For a job application, your letter may include the job title or the employer (not Co-op) competition number.

## Salutation

Place one or two lines of space before the salutation. It is always preferable to address your application and letter to a specific individual.

If you have been in contact with someone who is in a position to hire you, address it to him/her. Alternatively, if you have been referred to someone else in the organization, be sure to ask for the person's name, their title, mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address so you can address your letter appropriately. This is only applicable for contacts outside the co-op database.

If you do not have a contact in the organization, contact the receptionist or Human Resource department. They may be able to provide you with the name of the appropriate individual and his/her contact information. Ask for the correct spelling of his/her name.

As a last resort, you may address your letter "Dear Hiring Committee" or "Dear Hiring Manager".

## Introductory Paragraph

The opening paragraph of your cover letter should answer the question; who are you and why are you sending the letter? Why are you interested in the position? Why are you the best candidate? Include your top 3-4 qualifications for the job.

- If you are applying to a specific position, refer to it here. Mention the job title or competition number, if applicable, and how you learned about the opening. If someone referred you to the posting or the organization, you may mention their name. For example, "Mr. Owen Thomas in your department recommended I apply for the Reclamation position for which I am extremely well qualified."

> **Your cover letter should capture the reader's attention by the end of the first paragraph.**

## Body Paragraph(s)

In this section, select your key skills, experiences and achievements and convincingly illustrate how they can be an asset to the employer. Be sure to draw connections between your background and the job description. Throughout, incorporate references and information that reflects your knowledge of the industry, the organization and pertinent issues.

Do not restate the content of your Resume. Pull out the most relevant information. For example, if a job posting does not mention post-secondary education as a requirement, do not waste space explaining your program of study, awards, etc. (after all, that information is still contained in your Resume). Instead, expand on the points the employer has identified as important (ex. Ability to work outside).

There are a few methods you can use to write the body section of your cover letter. You can either write two to three body paragraphs, or a detailed bullet point list of four to eight of your top qualifications that match what the company is looking for, or list four to six top qualifications in short paragraph form.

Sample layout of paragraph format:

In this format you need to write complete sentences with full punctuation and business professional language. Make sure that the length is not too long or too short, so aim between four to eight full lines of text. If it is too long, the reader will not want to read it. If it is too short, then you are likely not using enough details, examples and results to illustrate your skills and experiences. When you write about examples be sure to follow the START technique and include the Situation, Tasks, Actions, Results and Transfer much like you would in an interview question. See page 54 for more information on START.

Sample layout of detailed bullet points (you can leave the skill as it, bold it, underline it, capitalize, etc.):

- List one skill – here describe in detail what you mean by this, where did you obtain and practice that skill? How well do you know this skill? How did you use it before?
- **List another skill** – be sure not to write more than two or three lines for each skill. More than that would be more appropriate for a paragraph format.
- LIST A SKILL – you can bold the skills listed or you can leave it just as it is. Please create your own style and format and just be sure that it is consistent throughout the cover letter.

Sample short paragraphs (you can leave the skill as it, bold it, underline it, capitalize, etc.):

List one skill or LIST ONE SKILL or **List One Skill**

This format is similar to the bullet points list except without using the bullets. Instead you could indent them all and make sure there are only four rows of text maximum.

> *Address the requirements of the job posting in the body of your cover letter. Provide specific and relevant examples of your qualifications.*

Just as the employer's tone in the job posting influenced your impression of the company and position, the tone you use in your cover letter will influence the employer's impression of you. Your tone results from word choices, sentence length and structure, and stylistic devices.

You should present yourself as business-like and competent. To do this, pay particular attention to the clarity, meaning, precision and creativity of your word choice. Ensure grammatical accuracy. Vary the length and structure of your sentences and paragraphs.

**Example: Writer-centered statement (do not use)**
*I am seeking a position with a leading forestry firm which will aid me in developing the skills necessary for the industry and give me experience working with a leading company.*

**Example: Reader-centered statement (use this approach)**
*Your company is one of the leaders in the forestry industry because it emphasizes research and development as well as promotes innovative ideas. As a UBC Forestry student, I could contribute fresh thinking and ideas to your company, previous work experience in research and development, and significant hands-on skills.*

## Concluding Paragraph

Conclude your cover letter by summarizing attributes you offer that make you an ideal candidate for the job. You may include a few more skills you didn't discuss in the cover letter but without as much detail as in the body paragraphs. Finally, thank the reader for his/her time and consideration.

> *Important: Do not direct the employer to contact you by inserting your phone number or e-mail address. If you do your application will not be sent to the employer. (For jobs in The Hub.)*

## Closing and Signature

Use "Sincerely," "Truly," or "Regards" to close your letter. Leave three lines of space and type your name. Scan your signature and paste it above your typed name.

## Enclosure(s)

Indicate any enclosures by writing "Encl." below your typed name if you are including other documents, such as a resume, transcripts, letters of reference, etc. This is typically if employers make a request for additional documents

A cover letter is a bridge that connects your resume to a specific job description

# Step 4: Formatting

- Your cover letter should be no more than a page in length and be formatted like a typical business letter.
- Text should be aligned to the left and be cleanly formatted. Use a common type face that matches the type face of your resume. Use a legible font size (11 point).
- Always use the standardized header that matches the one on your resume, references etc. be consistent!

# Step 5: Proofreading

It is critical your cover letter be error free. Review, review, review! Spelling, grammatical and formatting errors will make your cover letter stand out in a negative way and will not create a favourable impression. You may wish to have a friend or colleague proofread your letter for errors.

# Step 6: Sending Your Letter

- To receive feedback from the Co-op Coordinator, attach your cover letter and resume in one document in pdf format.
- After the Co-op Coordinator's approval, upload your application in The Hub in one PDF document, cover letter first.
- Name documents using the following format:
    - Student Name, Company Name, Job Title

# Step 7: Checklist

Be sure you have written the most dynamic and powerful cover letter possible by using this checklist:

Appearance and inclusion of vital information
- Is it an original letter rather than a mass-produced copy?
- Is the letter in a standard business letter format?
- Is the letter neat, attractive and reader-friendly?
- Is it no longer than one page?
- Have you inserted your scanned signed name (is it signed boldly and confidently)?

Writing style
- Is your spelling, grammar and syntax correct?
- Does the letter tell the employer why you are writing, as well as grab his/her attention in the first paragraph and let them know why your are the best candidate?
- Have you used transferable skills?
- Is the letter concise and to the point? Have you avoided needless detail and autobiographical ramblings?
- Does it avoid clichés and have you minimized the use of phrases such as "I feel" and "I believe," which tend to weaken and dilute the statements you make about yourself?

Tone appeal to the reader
- Is it interesting? Have you read it from the employer's perspective?
- Does it project the image of a person the employer would like to get to know better? Is it confident without being arrogant?

Enhancing the value of your cover letter
- Have you quantified and given examples of accomplishments that demonstrate your skills wherever possible?
- Have you demonstrated your knowledge of the organization you are writing to?

- Have you made the most of your university experience and relevant extra-curricular activities?
- Have you ensured that your letter is not too skimpy and depend too much on your resume to do the work for you?

Avoidance of major cover letter mistakes
- Is it addressed to a named individual (unless it is a response to a blind ad)? If it is a response to a blind ad, is the salutation non-gendered?
- Have you left out everything negative?
- If it is a response to an ad, does the letter speak to the requirements of the position?
- Have you told the employer what you can do for the organization rather than what the organization can do for you?
- Have you used caution with "willing to learn" statements so the employer is not reminded of training time and expenses?
- Have you avoided pleading for favours or sounding desperate and "willing to do anything"?
- Have you avoided rewriting/rehashing your resume in your cover letter?

## Tips

1   When researching an employer, begin by consulting their website. For more of an "in- sider's" view, you could meet with someone familiar with the industry or the organization.

2   An employer will typically spend 20-30 seconds scanning your resume. If they like what they see, they will then read your cover letter. Do not assume they will look at it first.

3   The header makes your application look professional and cohesive and identifies you as a UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Student.

4   Never make assumptions about an individual's gender. If you are unsure, avoid using "Mr." or "Ms."

5   Proofread your letter from bottom to top. This technique helps identify errors more easily.

6   Focus on what you can do for employers rather than what they can do for you.

7   Use action verbs to summarize your experience, skills, and qualifications.

8   For clarity, eliminate unnecessary words.

9   Aim for paragraphs approximately 5 to 7 sentences long, or 4-7 bullets with details or 4-7 mini paragraphs.

10  Keep your tone professional, but also interested and friendly.

11  Be positive and enthusiastic, but avoid sounding overeager or apologetic.

# Independent Job Search Techniques

## Co-op Success Lies in Your Efforts

One characteristic of highly successful Co-op students is that they own the responsibility for their success. They do not wait for things to happen; instead, they make things happen.

The Co-op Coordinators have helped you prepare a great resume and cover letter. What is your next step? You need to get out there and find a job! Obviously, jobs posted through the Faculty of Forestry Co-op office/The Hub are a great source of potential employment opportunities, but we cannot possibly be aware of all postings at all times. This section will explore the following aspects of your independent job search:

- Personal and Professional Networks
- Strategic Cold Calls
- Internet Job Boards
- UBC Career Services
- Company websites

> **Plan to spend at least 2 to 4 hours weekly on your job search**

Before you start the process of your independent job search, you need to understand the steps involved in finding your own job. These include:

1  Developing a list of network contacts

2  Researching and targeting employers

3  Getting approval from a **Co-op Coordinator** prior to contacting target employers

4  Creating your '30-Second Personal Summary'

5  Making the contact (by phone or e-mail)

6  Tracking contacts and managing the follow up process

> **Networking is the single most effective strategy for finding your own job**

## Steps for a Successful Independent Job Search

### Step 1: Developing a List of Network Contacts

Networking is a focused method of developing contacts. These are people who can provide career information that could lead to a job. Networking is the single, most effective way of finding your own job.

It has been estimated that almost 80% of available jobs are not advertised. The hidden job market includes all positions that have not yet been communicated through visible channels such as the Internet. These positions are filled by – and sometimes created for – candidates who come to the employer's attention through employee recommendations, referrals from trusted associates, recruiters, or direct contact by the candidates.

Your family, friends, neighbours, former employers and co-workers, faculty and acquaintances all form the foundation of your network. Who is part of your network?

### Step 2: Creating Your 30-Second Personal Summary

If you want people to help you find employment, you have to be able to clearly communicate via phone or e-mail exactly what you are looking for.

Your 30-second personal summary is a concise description of why you are contacting the person, what type of job you are seeking, what skills you have to offer (including technical and transferable skills) and how you hope the person can help. Use your resume, personal attributes and accomplishment statement assignments to develop content for your summary.

**How to use your 30-second personal summary**

The following are samples of the types of networking communication (telephone, e-mail) you can expect to use during your independent job search. You can see how the 30-second summary is the key content message of these conversations.

**Personal reference call**

Hi Mrs. Chan,

My dad, Frank Bloom, suggested I call you. I'm currently looking for a forestry-related position for my UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op work term and my dad thought you might be able to help me. Do you have a few minutes to talk?

[wait for response]

I'd like to find an operations position but would be happy to consider silviculture positions as well. I have strong field skills, including XYZ, and I am comfortable working in all weather conditions. I have also worked with data collection surveys and helped to enter the results in the database, and I will be available in May for a four- or eight-month placement. My personal strengths include initiative, teamwork and communication skills.

Do you think your company would be looking for a student with my skill set?

**Yes?** Could you tell me who I should contact to pursue this opportunity, and may I use your name as a reference?

**No?** Do you know of any other companies or contacts that might be able to hire a UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op student?

**Family or friend e-mail**

Hi Auntie Sue,

As you probably know, I am currently a Co-op student at UBC and I am starting to investigate different options in order to find a technical position for my upcoming Co-op work term.

Do you have any friends or business contacts who would be looking to hire a student like me this summer? I would appreciate if you could forward this e-mail to them, or if you prefer, I could contact them directly. I've attached my resume in case any of your contacts are interested in reviewing my qualifications in more detail.

In addition to my knowledge of plant identification and soil composition, I have very strong lab skills that I developed through course work, and I would be interested in working in a research and development capacity or testing position. Any help or suggestions you could offer would be of tremendous help to me.

**Cold call to hometown employer**

Hi. I'm a UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op student from the Kamloops area and I am trying to find out about employment opportunities with your company. Could you recommend the best person to speak to about possible conservation Co-op positions that you may be hiring for this summer?

[Receptionist forwards you to Mr. Tellier.]

Hi Mr.Tellier. My name is George and I'm a UBC Conservation student from the Kamloops area. Would you have a few minutes to talk to me about possible Co-op employment opportunities with your company?

[Wait for response.]

From the research I've done on your company, I think you might be able to use someone with my skills.

I enjoy working in a manufacturing environment with PLCs, but I would also be happy to consider other opportunities. I have experience with machining tools, including lathes, drill presses and table saws, and through my courses at school I have been involved with microcontroller programming and electronic circuitry construction and repair. I also know AutoCAD, HTML and some Java.

Based on my skills, do you think there might be an opportunity with your company? I am available for four or eight months beginning in May.

## Step 3: Researching and Targeting Employers

- Look around your hometown or any location you are interested in working. There are plenty of employers who could use the skills of Forestry and Wood Products Processing students. Quite often, companies in smaller communities like to hire local students. If you are going home for a term break, this is the perfect time to research and contact potential employers.

- Monitor trade and business magazines. Attend events organized by professional organization such as ABCFP (Association of British Columbia Forest Professionals). By monitoring industry magazines and attending events you will learn about companies, industry overviews and market conditions.

- Visit Career Services (refer to chapter 4 for contact details), as they offer directories listing employers by industry. Career Services also organizes employer Information Sessions and Career Fairs and maintains employer information files.

## Step 4: Getting Approval from Your Co-op Coordinator

The UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Program works with hundreds of employers within a well-established recruitment process. Before you contact companies, particularly if you are cold-calling, **you must have your Co-op Coordinator review your list of target employers**. This will ensure that you are not overlapping with initiatives currently being conducted by the Faculty of Forestry Co-op Program.

# Step 5: Making the Contact

**Use the internet:** Many career websites offer databases with advanced search engines covering a wide variety of industries and employment situation. Maximize your time! Many of these job boards allow you to set up automatic job alerts when jobs with your specified criteria appear. Set these up and then you do not need to keep checking back - you can use your time elsewhere.

- Government of Canada, Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP): **www.indeed.ca**
- Workopolis: **workopolis.com**
- GoodWork: **www.goodwork.ca/**
- ABCFP: **www.abcfp.ca/job_centre/job_opportunities. asp**
- Forestry Jobs In Canada: **www.canadian-forests.com/ job.html**

**Attend career fairs:** These events are excellent opportunities to meet employers. You can gain valuable information about a specific employer, industry and obtain contact names. Do your homework; talking to an employer at a Career Fair is like a real interview – be prepared:

- Take an updated resume, your Co-op student business cards, a note pad and pen.
- Dress appropriately; you are being interviewed.
- Visit and try to talk to someone at every booth.
- Collect business cards, and follow up with a call or e-mail.

**Create business cards: (only for independent job search)** Consider producing your own personal "business card". Your business cards should include your name, discipline, e-mail address and telephone number. Be sure that the phone number that you provide is one where messages can be left for follow-up. Please do not hand these out at co-op nights. You should only hand out your cards to employers that are not familiar with UBC Faculty of forestry Co-op. Ask them first if they are familiar. Ask them to contact the co-op office or pass their info to your coordinator.

You can distribute these cards to contacts you meet through your networking efforts, including one-on-one meetings, job interviews, career fairs, and other networking events.

Always keep several business cards with you as you never know when you will have the opportunity to meet a potential employer!

**Please note:** The UBC crest is copyright protected, therefore, you cannot use it on your business cards.

**Telephone techniques**
An important tool in developing your network and tapping into the hidden job market is the telephone. You will almost certainly talk to a potential employer on the phone at some time during the hiring process. In a comprehensive job search you will be using the telephone to conduct research, make cold calls, establish network contacts, schedule meetings, and conduct interviews.

**Be prepared**
Preparation is critical for effective telephone communication:
- Have an objective for the call, such as gathering information or arranging an appointment.
- Know the name of the person you are seeking. If you don't know the person's name, start by obtaining this information.
- Use your 30-second personal summary.
- Be prepared to leave a message. Before you call, think about what you will say if you reach the person's voicemail. If someone referred you to this person, use this information as part of your message.
- Remember to follow up.

**Practice**
Like any other skill, mastering telephone skills, requires practice. Practice your presentation with a friend and read your 30-second summary out loud. Start with calls to people to whom you have been referred.

**Be professional**
It is strongly recommended that you have voice mail on your own phone if you are leaving messages for employers and expect them to return your call. Be sure that your message is polite and professional. Be sure to return all messages promptly.

**Telephone tips**
- Ask the person you are speaking with if this is a convenient time to take your call.
- Smile as you speak into the phone and your tone of voice will brighten.
- Be optimistic. Assume most people will be willing to speak with you if you demonstrate a genuine interest in their organization.
- You are more likely to connect with someone if you call first thing in the morning, immediately before or after lunch, or late in the afternoon. Monday is a good day to place a call.
- Speak with clarity and be straightforward about the purpose of your call.
- Keep well-organized records of your telephone calls, contacts, and upcoming meetings and interviews.
- If no interview is possible, suggest dropping off your resume and introducing yourself in person at the same time.

# Step 6: Tracking Contacts and Managing the Follow-up Process

Organization and a good tracking system are critical to an effective job search.

# 10 Interviewing Skills

## Interview Basics

For many people, interviews may cause some anxiety. When you are selected for interviews, try to remember that the employers/recruiters are already impressed with your skills and experience. If they did not think you could do the job, they would not take the time to meet with you. To succeed in an interview, you must be able to demonstrate your abilities face to face.

Please see the Mock Interview Assessment section of the Participant Assessment Review (PAR) for list of all requirements for interview assessment.

### Purpose of the Job Interview

Interviews allow for an exchange of information between you - the prospective candidate - and the employer. This meeting provides the employer with an opportunity to obtain more detailed and/or additional information not provided in your cover letter or resume. The employer is able to compare candidates and select the individual best suited to the job. It is also an opportunity for you to learn more about the job and the employer.

> *An interview is a two-way exchange of information*

### Components of a Job Interview

#### Structure
The form and content of job interviews can vary depending on the experience and background of the interviewer. Some interviews may be formal and structured, with all candidates being asked the same questions in the same order, while others may be informal and unstructured. Each interviewer brings a distinct approach and personal style to job interviews.

#### Length
The typical Co-op job interview ranges from 30 to 60 minutes in length. Do not be alarmed if you finish earlier than

the appointed time. Alternately, some interviews may last as long as 1½ to 2 hours if you meet with more than one interviewer.

> *A short interview is not an indication of failure. The employer may feel you have answered all the questions adequately and may not require additional information.*

#### The interviewer
Personnel Officers - These professionals are from the human resources field and usually have significant training and experience in conducting interviews.

Technical Managers/Forestry Professionals - These interviewers have technical backgrounds and are most often interested in your technical skills as well as how quickly you can become productive on the job.

#### Format
Just as interviewers vary, so do interview formats. You may be interviewed by one or more company representatives, receive a telephone interview, or be asked to complete a technical assignment.

#### One-to-one interviews
This is the format most commonly used by Co-op employers. You may be asked to have two interviews in succession with different representatives from the same company.

#### Panel/group interviews
During these interviews, two or more interviewers will be present. When answering questions, try to maintain eye contact primarily with the person whose question you are answering. Be sure to include the other(s) with occasional glances; you do not know who will make the final hiring decision.

> *Make sure you address all interviewers during a group or panel interview*

**Telephone Interview**

Your verbal communication skills are especially important during telephone interviews as the employer cannot acquire information from your appearance, facial expressions or gestures. Your tone of voice and word choice must communicate interest and enthusiasm to the employer.

**Tip:** Smile while you talk, as your interest will be heard.

**Skype/Video interviews**

The video interview, e.g. Skype, is very similar to a face-to-face, on-site interview; however, there are a few extra details you need to prepare before commencing your interview. Before any video interview, ensure your computer equipment (camera, microphone) is functioning well and levels are set correctly. Test the camera and your positioning to ensure you will appear in the centre of the screen and the background is appropriate and not distracting. For the interview, you must:

• dress as though you were meeting the employer at the office

• be at eye level with the camera – not looking up or staring down at the camera

• ensure there are no friends, family members, or pets in the room

• have a quiet, well lit environment, free of loud noise or music

• turn off your cell phone and all alerts on any devices

As with an on-site interview, try to maintain eye contact with the interviewer, speak clearly, and feel free to smile. To make eye contact you may need to look at the camera not the screen.

**Employer tests**

Some employers will ask you to complete a technical test - either prior to the interview date or as part of the interview process. Tests are usually used as an indication of your level of technical aptitude and to identify potential training required.

**Interview questions**

An interviewer may assess your abilities in a wide variety of ways; the most common is through direct questions. You will be asked different types of questions relating to your technical skills, academic achievements, and personal qualities. There are four common types or categories of questions: Traditional, Situational, Technical and Behaviour-Based.

**Traditional:** These questions are often general and are asked to discover information about your history or communication skills. For example, "Tell me a little about yourself".

**Situational:** These questions focus on hypothetical situations. They answer "What If" questions. Situational questions are meant to draw out your analytical and problem-solving abilities and allow the interviewer to assess how you would handle a particular situation if presented in the workplace. For example, an interviewer may ask "What would you do if the priorities on a project you were assigned suddenly changed?

> *Use technical, work and academic experiences, as well as personal examples that highlight your abilities*

**Technical:** Employers ask technical questions to assess your technical skill set, analytical and problem solving skills. These questions are used to assist in determining if you have the right skills and knowledge required for the position. The types of questions are specific to each discipline.

**Behaviour-Based:** Behaviour-based questions are used to assess your past actions to predict your future behaviour. You will be asked to provide specific examples from your past experience(s) that demonstrate a particular criterion an interviewer is seeking. An example is "Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a difficult customer." More information about Behaviour-based Interviews is provided in detail on page 54.

> *Be prepared to provide specific examples of your experiences*

The following are examples of questions used to learn about particular areas of your skills, interests and your potential fit with the company and/or position:

**Skills/abilities** – Employers may need specific technical or quantitative skills. If so, they may ask you a variety of skill-based questions, such as:

• How have you developed and applied your programming or problem solving abilities?

• When have you demonstrated initiative to learn a new skill?

Employers will also screen for transferable skills such as your ability to communicate effectively, work as part of a team, or organize a project and meet deadlines:

• Can you tell me about a time when you demonstrated effective communication skills?

• How do you plan your day?

**Education/training** – Employers may want to know more specific information about your academic program:

• What courses have you enjoyed the most/least, and why?

• How have you applied what you have learned in your classes?

**Experience** – You will often be asked for more details about your work or other experience such as volunteer activities, extra-curricular involvement, hobbies and community work:

• What were your main duties in your previous job? What did you learn?

• What has been the most challenging aspect of your volunteer activities?

**Extra-curricular activities** – Many employers are interested in your extra-curricular activities as they can provide excellent demonstrations of transferable skills and give insight into your non-academic interests. Always be prepared to answer questions about the interests and activities you have listed on your resume.

**Company fit** – Employers may wish to assess your ability to fit into their corporate environment. They may need employees who can work long hours, manage a variety of responsibilities, or work effectively in an unstructured setting:

• How would you describe your relationship with your past supervisors? With co-workers?

• Tell me about some activities you were involved in that required teamwork.

• Under what conditions do you work most and least effectively?

**Personal qualities** – Employers will not only evaluate the content of your answers, but also the way you present yourself during the interview. Personal qualities such as self-confidence, enthusiasm, determination and motivation are highly valued by employers. Interviewers may ask about extra-curricular interests in order to help them gauge your personality and priorities:

• What are your future career goals?

• How would you describe yourself?

**Interest** – During an interview, it is essential that you express your interest in the position and company. You cannot expect an employer to hire you if you do not appear interested in what the company does or has to offer. Employers may inquire about your goals and future plans, or pose specific questions pertaining to the job, company or industry:

• Where to you see yourself in five years? How does this job contribute to your goals?

• Why did you apply for this job?

You can also show interest in the position by asking the employer job-related questions. For example:

• What major projects will Company X be working on in the next 12 months?

• What kind of environment will I be working in?

**Unconventional questions** – Be prepared for unusual, innovative or non-traditional questions. Most interviewers will use questions to assess your skills but some companies will also use psychological tools to screen candidates when they recruit.

You may be asked questions to assess your ability to handle the unexpected, solve problems, or think under pressure. Such as:

• Why are manhole covers round?

• How many windows are there in Vancouver?

• How are M&Ms made?

It is important when answering these types of questions to keep in mind that you are being assessed in your ability to think your way through the problem posed, and not the answer itself. There are often no "right" answers to these types of questions. Your answer should demonstrate your thought process; what assumptions you are making, and how are you arriving at your conclusion? It is your thought process itself that often interests the interviewers. Therefore, thinking the problem through inside your head and only stating your final answer does not give them what they are looking for.

**Illegal questions**
The Human Rights Act prohibits questions pertaining to age, race, ancestry, colour, sex, marital status, physical/mental disability, place of origin, political beliefs, family status, and sexual orientation. If an interviewer asks for this information and you are comfortable answering the questions, you may choose to do so. If you feel uncomfortable answering a question of this nature, politely request clarification as to the relationship between the question and the job requirements.

**Examples: Appropriate and inappropriate interview questions**

| Question Regarding | Appropriate Interview Question | Inappropriate Interview Question |
|---|---|---|
| National or ethnic origin | Are you legally entitled to work in Canada? | Where were you born? |
| Age | Have you reached the minimum or maximum age for work as defined by law? | How old are you? |
| Sex | How would you like to be addressed during the interview? | What is your sexual orientation? |
| Marital status | As travel is part of the requirements of our position, would you foresee any problems meeting this obligation? | What does your spouse do for a living? Is there travel involved? Who takes care of the children when you are away? |
| Disabilities | Do you have any conditions that could affect your ability to do the job? | Do you use drugs or alcohol? |
| Address | What is your address? | What were your addresses outside Canada? |
| Religion | Would you be able to work the following schedule? | What are your religious beliefs? |
| Criminal record | Our job requires that our employees be bonded. Are you bondable? | Have you ever been arrested? |
| Affiliations | Are you a member of the ABCFP? | To what religious or political associations do you belong? |

## The Behaviour-Based Interview

The basis of the Behavioural-Based Interview (commonly referred to as BBI) technique is that an individual's past performance most accurately predicts their future performance.

In an interview, the aim is to gain evidence that the applicant possesses the particular combination of selection criteria an employer is looking for. Interviewers will accomplish their aim by asking candidates to give specific examples of what they have done that demonstrates they possess the particular selection criteria required for the position. The questions are usually quite detailed and the questioning will often be persistent.

Here are some examples of behaviour-based questions:

- Tell me about a time when you had to manage multiple projects and conflicting deadlines.
- Give me an example of when you dealt with a difficult customer.
- Think about a time when you made a mistake in calculations. What happened? What was the result?

## START Technique

Although this is a very simple method, the best way to answer a behaviour-based question is to use the START Technique. The way you respond to behavioural-based interview questions makes the difference between an average answer and a great answer. In other words, employing the START technique could make the difference between successfully securing a job and being the runner-up.

- **S**ITUATION – Provide a very brief description of the situation so the employer has some context for your answer.
- **T**ASK – Summarize what your tasks and responsibilities were as related to this situation.
- **A**CTION – Explain what action you took to remedy, improve, or change the situation.
- **R**ESULT – In as much quantitative detail as possible, explain the results of your actions.
- **T**RANSFER – Explain what personal or professional insights or skills you gained that you will transfer to the position you are being interviewed for.

**Example:** Here's a question with an average answer and then the corresponding START answer below.

**Question 1 – We're looking for a student who is willing to work hard, can jump in and help the team in any way they can. Can you give me an example of when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to help a team?**

Question 1 – Average Response

When I was working at Milestone's as a waiter, I often had to take responsibility for extra tables or work longer hours when co-workers did not show up for their shifts. It was really hard work but it helped keep the customers happy and took the pressure off other servers who were new to our restaurant and couldn't handle any more tables.

Question 1 – START Response

I'm definitely not afraid of hard work and I like helping out my team when it comes to work and school. When I was working at Milestone's as a waiter (SITUATION), I often had to take responsibility for extra tables or work longer hours when co-workers did not show up for their shifts (TASK). I developed a system so I could take the same parts of the order for different tables at the same time. For example, I got all the drinks orders at once so I'd

only have to go up to the bar one time (ACTION). Because of this system, I was able to handle a section that had three more tables than other servers (RESULT). Whether it's working extra hours to make sure we get a game out the door on time, or helping a co-worker debug difficult code, I am prepared to work hard to get the job done (TRANSFER).

**Question 2 – How do you get your peers to accept your ideas and contributions?**

Question 2 – Average Response

I try to present my ideas as convincingly as I can by focusing on the facts of my ideas and persuading people that my idea or solution is the best. If there are people who have different ideas about the way things should be done, I don't ever put their ideas down but instead I focus on my ideas being better suited to the problem at hand.

Question 2 – START Response

Last year, I was responsible for fund-raising at my local Church because I was President of the Youth Group (SITUATION). My team and I were responsible for coming up with a new way to raise at least $2,000 within our congregation for a village we wanted to sponsor in Africa (TASK). Many in the group wanted to sell tickets to a raffle but I didn't think this was the best idea because there were so many up-front, fixed costs that we could possibly lose money. I went to talk to the pastor and learned that four years ago the church ran a raffle and lost money. I then updated my team at the next meeting, provided financial reports from the last raffle and presented them with my fundraising idea (ACTION). Because I used facts and had the support of my pastor, everyone decided to go with my idea instead (RESULT). Although I am still developing in my work experience and forestry knowledge compared to more senior workers, my team members at XYZ Company will expect me to contribute ideas, and I will have to support my suggestions with facts to help establish credibility with your company (TRANSFER).

# Seven Key Performance Skill Dimensions

Employers consider at least seven key performance skill areas when conducting behaviour-based interviews. The seven key areas listed below detail attributes employers are looking for when they ask you behaviour-based questions.

**Ability to influence others**
- Communicate effectively to convince others of your point of view
- Initiate action through direction, negotiation or collaboration
- Project a confident attitude without offending others

**Interpersonal skills and competence**
- Convey self-assurance and professionalism
- Build strong relationships with work associates, peers and clients
- Demonstrate consideration of client and work associates' opinions, needs and concerns

**Ability to grow and adapt**
- Cope with the demands of work
- Respond to new challenges and changing expectations

**Communication skills**
- Demonstrate clarity and fluency in oral and written communication
- Listen and convey a genuine interest in the opinions of others
- Able to influence others

**Level of commitment and motivation**
- Demonstrate initiative and commitment to a high standard of excellence
- Consistently meet and exceed employer expectations

**Organizational ability**
- Set and adjust priorities; create and implement strategic plans
- Follow through with and meet responsibilities

**Problem-solving and decision-making**
- Work independently to solve problems
- Make and follow through on decisions
- Use a team approach to solve problems and maximize productivity

# Examples of Behaviour-Based Interview Questions

**Your ability to influence others**
- Tell me about a time when you were able to overcome resistance to your ideas. Describe the situation. Who was involved? What was the outcome?
- How do you get your peers to accept your ideas and contributions?
- Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.

**Interpersonal skills**
- Tell me about the most frustrating person with whom you have worked. What made this experience difficult? How did you resolve the situation with this person?
- Tell me about a positive experience you had whilst work-

ing in a group. Why did the group work so well?

- Describe a team project that was unsuccessful. What problems were encountered and why did they arise? What did you do to try to solve the problems?

**Ability to grow and adapt**

- Tell me about the last time you were criticized by a supervisor/professor? How did you respond to the criticism? Do you feel the criticism was valid? What did you learn from the situation?

- Describe a high-pressure situation you had to handle at work or school. Who was involved and how did you relieve the pressure?

- Give me an example of a time in which you had to make a relatively quick decision about an important issue.

**Communication skills**

- Tell me about a time when you had to work hard in order to fully understand what another person was saying to you. What was the situation? What was the outcome?

- Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person who did not like you (or vice versa).

- Tell me about the most difficult customer service experience you ever had to handle – perhaps an angry or irate customer. What did you do or say to try calming the person down? What was the outcome?

**Level of commitment and motivation**

- Describe a time when you faced obstacles in reaching your objectives. What were the obstacles you encountered? What did you do to surmount or remove them?

- What specific goals have you established for your Co-op career? What will it take to attain your goals and what steps have you taken toward attaining them?

- Tell me about a time when you had to go "above and beyond the call of duty" in order to get a job done.

**Organizational ability**

- What do you do to ensure that you meet project deadlines? How do you monitor and track your progress? How satisfied are you with your system of controls?

- Describe a project that was unsuccessful because of bad planning or organizing. What did you learn from this experience?

- Have you found ways to make school or a job easier, more rewarding, or to make yourself more effective?

**Problem-solving and decision-making**

- Tell me about the most difficult problem or decision you have faced at work. How did you decide what action to take? What was the outcome?

- Solving problems requires more than good plans; it takes action. Give me an example of a time when you were able to take meaningful action to solve a practical problem.

- We can sometimes identify a small problem and fix it before it becomes a major problem. Give an example of how you've done this.

# Interview Preparation

## Develop Examples of your Accomplishments

Refer to Workshop 2 Module 3 where you are asked to prepare an Accomplishment Example Bank. The examples can be used to demonstrate your skills and experiences when answering interview questions. It is easier to think of various situations ahead of time, rather than when you are sitting in the interview. Be sure to utilize examples from various environments, so you are not always referring to the same team project experience with each interview question.

## Prepare References

For many organizations you will need to provide names and contact information for at least 3 people who can act as references for you. This means they must be willing and able to speak about the work you have done for them, and answer questions about your skills and character. The best references are those from work and volunteer experience, but if these are difficult for you to obtain, please speak with a Coordinator about other possibilities. A Co-op Coordinator cannot act as an employment reference for you, but they may help you consider people in your life who would be appropriate contacts. Long-time family friends may be effective as character references, and it is best to choose working professionals – particularly if they are involved in fields related to your job search.

Ask your references well ahead of time if they are willing to be contacted during your job search, and confirm the contact information you are providing is correct. Make sure you have approached each contact before listing them as a reference. A poor reference can eliminate your chances of securing employment. When in doubt, ask each contact if they feel comfortable providing you with a positive reference.

You should prepare a formal reference list to take with you to each job interview in case references are requested. List each reference including his/her name, when and where you worked for him/her, and the person's phone number and/or e-mail address. Be sure to use the same format as you did for your cover letter and resume, with the Forestry Co-op header.

## Know Yourself

Take the time to evaluate your goals, interests, strengths and weaknesses. Refer to the self-assessment you completed during the first workshop. Understand and be able to communicate why this job and the company appeals to you.

### Some ways students struggle during interviews

- They can't communicate their strengths or weaknesses
- They don't know about the company
- They don't have a genuine, well-prepared answer for "why do you want to work for this company?"

### Know the job and the company

Do you understand the responsibilities of the job? What kind of work will you be doing? Research the company on the Internet.

### Know the location

Be clear on the location of your interview, as well as the duration of the meeting and the name of the interviewer. If the interview is off-campus, write down the company's telephone number and the name of the interviewer.

### Plan for unexpected situations

If you are late for an interview for any reason, call the employer as soon as you become of aware of the possibility that you will not arrive on time. Then call your Co-op Coordinator to inform them of the situation. Make sure your mobile phone is fully charged. If you do not have a mobile phone, make sure to take quarters for a public pay phone, and consider in advance where one can be found along your route. Always leave extra time to arrive at a job interview in case you lose your way or get stuck in traffic. This is especially necessary if you rely on public transportation.

### Prepare examples in advance that demonstrate your unique skills and experiences

### Anticipate questions

Try to anticipate some of the questions you may be asked during an interview. Put yourself in the employer's position. If you were interviewing someone for this job, what questions would you ask to identify the best candidate for the position?

### Consider points to stress

Outline the skills or qualifications you think the employer should know about you. What skills do you have that the company really needs? Cite specific instances when you have demonstrated personal initiative or achieved distinctive results. In order to determine what points to stress:

- Analyze the job description for which you are being interviewed.
- Break down the job description into skill areas.
- Rank the skills in order of importance.

*End the interview by asking at least 2 to 3 intelligent, relevant questions.*

### Prepare questions to ask

Be sure to end your interview by asking some intelligent questions of the interviewer. Prepare at least 5 questions ahead of time but ask only 3, but be careful that you do not ask for information that has already been provided. Avoid asking about salary; you can clarify this with a Co-op Coordinator when you receive a job offer. Not sure what to ask? Talk to a Coordinator or look on the internet for ideas.

### Focus on your interview

Do not waste time or energy worrying about who else is being interviewed for the same position as you. Sometimes you will be competing against many students from other universities across Canada, other times you may be the only candidate. In both situations, the way to succeed in the interview is to adequately demonstrate that you have the skills and experience the employer is looking for.

### Practice

Interviewing is a learned skill. Take the time to practice responding to a variety of typical interview questions. Ask the people around you for help (e.g., friends, roommates or family members).

# Job Interview Tips

First impressions leave a lasting impact. Be prepared and dress the part. Dress professionally and ensure you are well-groomed for every interview as discussed in this section. See a Co-op Coordinator if you have questions about industry-specific standards.

### Female attire – business casual

- Blouse and coordinating skirt or pants
- Dress shoes
- Conservative jewellery, accessories and make-up (if any)

### Male attire – business casual

- Cotton dress pants – no jeans
- Button-up dress shirt (with tie if desired)
- Dress shoes, worn with socks to match the colour of your pants
- Conservative jewellery or accessories (if any)

Avoid wearing perfumes or colognes. Many people have allergies, and fragrance-free zones are becoming more common, but be sure to arrive clean.

### Interview preparation

- Take the interviewer's name and telephone number, and the Forestry Co-op office telephone number with you in case you run late. Make sure your mobile phone is fully charged. Take quarters for a pay phone if you don't have a mobile phone.

- Bring an appropriate number (the number of interviewers) of copies of your resume, references and examples of your work; also bring a notepad and a pen.

- Brush your teeth and wash your hands right before the interview, especially if you smoke.

- Do not chew gum or keep candy/mints in your mouth.

- Ensure that your hair is well groomed.

**If you think you are going to be late for an interview, contact the interviewer first and then your Co-op Coordinator**

**Arrival at the interview**
- Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early, but do not arrive earlier than 15 minutes.

- If your interview is in the Faculty of Forestry building, inform your Co-op Coordinator of your arrival and wait until the employer invites you in to the meeting room.

- If your interview is at the company's location, let the receptionist know you have arrived, or follow any other specific instructions you receive.

**The interview**
- Introduce yourself to the interviewer(s) with a firm handshake. Establish eye contact.

- Try to relax and remember to smile.

- Interviewers will often introduce themselves at the beginning of the interview and they may ask questions about your day, if you had difficulties finding their office, etc. These questions are to help you relax and for them to get to know you a little bit. It is polite to ask how they are doing in return, but you should refrain from asking detailed or personal questions.

- Interviewers may tell you about their company and the position. Listen closely and consider questions you may want to ask later.

- Be aware of the positive and negative body language you may be conveying. Maintain eye contact with the interviewer(s). Sit up straight and project your voice, using a positive tone. It is important to be enthusiastic.

- Maintain a professional and courteous manner at all times.

- Avoid yes or no responses; instead provide specific examples of your skills, qualifications, and experience.

- Answer questions honestly.

- Avoid using casual expressions such as "yeah", "ya know", "stuff", and filler words such as "like" or "umm".

- Prepare well-formed phrases, in case you find yourself stumped (e.g., "I'd like some time to consider that carefully", "Could you please repeat the question?", "Pardon me? I didn't catch that last part", or "I've had experiences with this sort of situation before, and I wonder if we could come back to this question once I've had time to think it over", etc.).

- Listen carefully to the questions. If you're not sure what they're asking, request clarification. Take a moment to mentally prepare your answer before you begin speaking.

- Stay focused on the question and avoid long meandering responses. If you get off-track during your response, stop and tell the interviewer you would like to start your answer over again.

- Do not chatter needlessly in order to fill silences.

- When an employer asks if you have any questions, never respond "No"; instead, ask the two or three questions you prepared in advance. If some of your questions have already been covered in the interview, you may let the interviewer know you had prepared more questions by saying "We've already covered some of the things I'd hoped to discuss, like the dynamic of the team, and future research opportunities within the company. I was wondering if you could also tell me about…" before asking your final question.

- At the end of the interview, thank the interviewer(s), and leave them with a positive impression by confirming that you are interested in the position they are offering.

- Shake hands before leaving. Thank the office staff on your way out, since the impression you leave with others in the work environment may influence the interviewers.

**After the interview**
- After your interview, complete an Interview Contact Sheet (below) to keep a record of your interviews and evaluate your performance. Always update your Co-op Coordinator after an interview.

- If you did not perform well in the interview, arrange to meet with a Co-op Coordinator to discuss and evaluate your performance.

- Send a thank you email.

Here is a sample paper version of an interview contact sheet to complete after an interview for your reflection and preparation for future interviews. You can also create a version in Word or Excel as well as capturing e-information e.g. v-card or scan of the interviewer's business card on your smart phone.

## Interview Contact Sheet

Company Name: _____

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Interviewer's

Job Title:

Interview Date:

Thank-you note

Notes: What did you do well during the interview? In what area(s) could you improve? What issues, facts or general information arose during the interview that you would like to keep in mind for future interviews?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

**Attach your interviewer's business card here
(if you have one)**

# 11 Understanding the Workplace

## Timeline for Your First Three Weeks in the Workplace

For many of you, your first work term will be your first experience in a professional environment. Some professional environments are less formal than others but are nevertheless very different from the academic surroundings you are accustomed to. In this section, we will discuss some of the guidelines for workplace behaviour, introduce you to the concept of professional ethics and responsibility and briefly examine workplace legislation.

In order to be successful in the workplace, it is crucial to make excellent first impressions. Furthermore you will need to have a thorough understanding of the company and your role within it, and your supervisor's expectations of you during the work term. The following table outlines the action items that you must take prior to commencing each Co-op work term, as well as action items for the first three weeks:

| **Action Item** | |
| --- | --- |
| **Before starting the work term** | • Research the history of the company and division/unit employing you. This should include the products and services the company produces/provides. Take detailed notes on your findings and sources. This should have been done before your interview as well. |
| | • Review the following items with your company Human Resources (HR) contact or other primary contact: |
| |    - Start date and time |
| |    - Dress code and required safety equipment (if applicable) |
| |    - Your expected hours of work |
| |    - What you need to bring with you on your first day |
| | • Organize transportation to the worksite (look up the bus schedule and stops, if applicable). |
| | • If you will be driving to work, determine the parking situation. Is there street parking? Is on-site parking restricted? |
| | • Ensure you have the relevant contact details for your employer. |
| | • Create a Work Term Record (WTR) in The Hub and complete the Domestic or International Waiver as applicable) |
| **Week 1** | • Obtain an overview of the company and division/unit. |
| | • Review your job responsibilities with your supervisor for your four-month work term, and discuss your supervisor's expectations of you. |
| | • Call your employer if you are unable to get to work or are delayed, eg. transit outage. |
| **Week 2** | • Review your Learning Objectives with your supervisor |
| | • Complete your Learning Objectives form in The Hub |
| **Weeks 3 & 4** | • With your supervisor's permission, arrange meetings with other employees in your unit to discuss the department's responsibilities and where they see you fitting into the organization. |
| | • Take note of people in the organization you would like to meet with to discuss your career development, e.g. people you would like to conduct mini-informational interviews over coffee to learn about their career development. |
| | • Take detailed notes during every meeting, including names and job titles of participants. |
| | • Begin thinking about how you will approach your work term report (poster, written report or presentation) |

# Guidelines for the Workplace

**Greetings** – In business situations, a firm (not crushing) handshake with good eye contact is appropriate when you are first introduced.

**Titles/forms of address** – Using just people's first names has become the standard form of address in most North American organizations. However, if someone is introduced using a more formal standard (e.g., Mr. Jones, Dr. Chan, Prof. Darb, Ms. Becker), then you should address that person as they are introduced. If you're unsure, use the formal standard until you are invited to call a person by their first name.

**Punctuality** – Different organizations value punctuality differently. Some companies may start meetings exactly on time and everyone may begin their day promptly at 8:30 am, while other companies may have more flexible approaches to timeliness and hours of work. As a professional standard, you should always arrive early for work and meetings. Standards may differ for co-op students versus permanent employees.

**Body language** – Be aware of your body language and the message it communicates to your colleagues. Avoiding eye contact is seen as a sign of disrespect, lack of interest, dishonesty or lack of confidence. Poor posture (slouching, lounging or sprawling) at your desk or at meetings is a sign of unprofessionalism, immaturity and boredom.

**Dress and hygiene** – Acceptable dress codes range from casual (e.g., jeans and T-shirts) to business casual (e.g., khakis and button-down shirts) to business (e.g., suits). Once you have accepted the employer's job offer, check with your contact about the company's dress code. If in doubt, opt for business casual. Be aware of your personal hygiene and ensure your clothes are clean and neat. If t-shirts are appropriate, avoid printed t-shirts and/or ensure there is no offensive print. Cologne or perfume is not appropriate in the workplace, as many people have allergies to fragrances.

**Religious holidays** – Many Canadian statutory holidays are linked to Christian traditions. If you need time off for other religious celebrations, speak with your supervisor at least three weeks in advance to make arrangements.

**Vacation** – Co-op students do not generally get vacation days during their work terms, but instead receive 4% vacation pay. If you need to take time off, you should speak with your manager well in advance to see if this is possible. If you know you will need time off before you begin your work term, you should discuss this with your employer when a job offer has been extended.

**Work term end dates** – End dates are usually specified in your offer letter and you are expected to work until then. If you wish to end your work term early, you should speak with your supervisor well in advance to see if this is possible. You will also need to obtain approval from a Co-op Coordinator.

**Sick days/personal appointments** – If you are unable to work due to illness, be sure to inform your manager or an HR representative before your shift begins. For planned absences, be sure to request permission from the appropriate supervisor well in advance.

**Extended illness** – For illnesses that last for more than three days, you must inform a Co-op Coordinator about the extended time you will be away from work. This practice must be followed in addition to informing your workplace supervisor and an HR representative about the implication the extended illness will have on your employment (which may affect payment of your income depending on the company's policies).

**Injuries on the worksite** – It is imperative that all injuries in the workplace, however minor, be reported to your supervisor immediately. The company's policy and procedures for reporting injuries must be strictly adhered to, and WorkSafe BC (or equilvalent provincial agency) will need to be informed through your employer (**www.worksafebc. com**). You also need to inform a Co-op Coordinator about the injury when it occurs.

**Telephone and computer use** – A company's position on employees' personal use of the telephone, Internet and computer, varies from organization to organization. Avoid using your computer and telephone for personal use, even during assigned break times until you have learned about your employer's policy. No matter what your employer's policy may be, viewing sites with adult or otherwise inappropriate content is never acceptable. Also, carefully consider what you may want to Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, etc. about your work term in mentioning your company's name, the post may be picked up by company staff monitoring social media sites.

> **Make sure you know your employer's Internet policy. Improper use of the Internet can result in your dismissal.**

**Teamwork** – When working in a team environment, input is expected from all members and it's important that you actively participate by contributing your ideas and comments during discussions or meetings. If you are shy or uncertain of your ideas, start slowly to build your confidence. Aim to contribute one good idea per meeting and work up from there. If you feel strongly about an idea or position, don't be afraid to present your viewpoint with conviction.

**Problem solving** – In an educational environment, you are rewarded when you are able to solve problems on your own, regardless of the time it takes. In the workplace, you are rewarded for solving problems quickly, either on your own or with help from others. When facing a problem you don't know the answer to, you should invest a reasonable amount of time and make a distinct effort to solve the problem on your own. However, don't be afraid to ask your manager or co-workers for assistance.

# Ethics and Confidentiality

In your role as a Co-op student, it is unlikely that you will have to deal with a serious ethical dilemma, but it is important to be aware of potentially challenging scenarios. Ethical dilemmas arise due to conflicts of interest between different parties, and you may find yourself in a situation in which your principles and those of your employer may not always coincide. You may encounter a variety of ethical dilemmas or potential conflicts in the workplace, including the following situations:

- You may be presented with an employment opportunity at a company that competes directly with your previous employer, or a business in which either yourself, or a close friend or relative is employed.

- You may have access to information about a company that is not known to the general public and you could use that information to increase your personal wealth.

- There may be racism or other prejudices exhibited within the workplace.

- You or your colleagues may be subjected to unprofessional and generally unacceptable behaviour by managers or fellow employees.

**If you're not sure how you should respond to an ethical issue, contact your Co-op Coordinator.**

There are rules and principles available for reference at various levels when trying to determine the appropriate approach to resolving ethical dilemmas. The most basic level is formal policies, standards or codes of ethics developed by your employer, your professional association, and/or the University. Your employer may ask you to sign an agreement about a code of ethics or confidentiality before your work term commences.

It is your responsibility to know these written guidelines and to abide by them. If you find yourself in a situation which is in conflict with your own personal beliefs and you're not sure how to address the situation, consult your Co-op Coordinator.

## Unacceptable Behaviour

As a UBC student you should be familiar with the Academic Regulations described in the UBC Calendar (**www.calendar. ubc.ca/vancouver/** for students at the Vancouver campus). While you are on a Co-op work term, these regulations are applicable to everything you produce for your employer and the University. For example, if you use the work of others as a basis for your own creations and submissions, the authors should be acknowledged and appropriately referenced. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Other unacceptable behaviours and related penalties are described under the Student Discipline section of the Academic Regulations.

## Confidentiality

During your work term, you may have access to proprietary information or techniques. You should determine the nature of your responsibility and the restrictions on your future activities before familiarizing yourself with confidential and/or sensitive information. The following are examples of situations that involve confidentiality issues:

- You may be placed in a private organization undertaking a research project similar to one pursued by UBC faculty; furthermore, any release of information may be detrimental to one or the other party.

- You may have acquired knowledge on an earlier work term that is of great interest to a current employer, but which may place the previous employer at a disadvantage (e.g., plans for new products or services, details of projects that you were working on).

- You may be given access to sensitive internal information that could cause employee disruption or ill-feeling if circulated (e.g., compensation arrangements, plans for downsizing).

**You can be held liable for damages an employer might suffer if you improperly release information.**

## Legal and Ethical Responsibilities

As an employee, you have specific legal and ethical responsibilities in the workplace. You must protect the interests of your current and previous employers to the best of your ability, and prove that you are worthy of their trust. Here are some general rules to guide your behaviour in the workplace:

- Protect the interests of your current and previous employers. Be worthy of their trust.

- You do not have the right to access or disseminate information, unless those rights are specifically granted.

- Access to a part of the organization's system or information does not give you the right to browse through all of it or to try breaking through to test security systems.

- The details of projects, structure, operations and financial condition of an organization are confidential and are not appropriate topics of conversation with friends, family or other organizations.

- If you generate reports or computer printouts for an employer, ensure they are adequately secured. It is not advisable to leave confidential or sensitive material lying around.

- Your Co-op work term assignments may be assigned one of a number of levels of confidentiality by your employer. In some cases, UBC staff may not even be authorized to review it.

## Intangible and Intellectual Properties

You may end up working for several competing companies, or potential competitors; therefore, you should be aware of

restrictions upon the use of information you may gain as a result of your employment for any company.

Intellectual property laws state that, under most circumstances, the firm you are employed by legally owns ideas, printed materials, programs and/or techniques and products you develop as an employee. The fact that you created or invented something does not give you the right to use it, especially if you were hired in a creative or inventive position.

You and your future employers could be liable for damages if you copy, transport, recreate, disclose or use intellectual property in a way that dilutes the value of the creation to its original owner. If you are in doubt as to your right to use or apply knowledge gained in a previous work term, contact your Co-op Coordinator before taking any action that may put you or your employer at risk.

> **The fact that you may create or invent something on your work term does not necessarily mean you own the legal rights to it.**

## Employment Legislation

The Provincial Employment Standards Acts (ESA's) cover employee rights in all jobs, including Co-op work terms. These Acts ensure workers receive at least the minimum standards of wages and terms of employment. Furthermore, they establish basic rights for employees as well as the obligations of employers.

Most Co-op students fall under the jurisdiction of the Act corresponding to their province of employment, and although the Acts may vary slightly from province to province, they all encompass the same basic principles. Other Co-op students fall under the jurisdiction of the Federal Standards Act, depending on their industries of employment.

The British Columbia Employment Standards Act can be found clicking **here**.

### Minimum Wages

The minimum wage varies from province to province, based on individual Employment Standards Acts.

### Paydays

All employees receive pay at least twice monthly. Employers must pay all money earned in a pay period within eight days after the end of the pay period, except annual vacation pay and wages credited to an employee's time bank. The duration of a pay period may not exceed 16 days.

### Forms of Payment

Employers must pay wages in cash, by cheque, bank draft, money order, or by direct deposit to an employee's bank account. The employee must authorize, in writing, payment by direct deposit.

### Wage Deductions

Provincial and Federal laws allow employers to make specific deductions from an employee's wage, without the written agreement of the employee.

### Wage Statements

On paydays, an employer must give each employee a written wage statement for the pay period (paper or electronic copy), which includes the following information: the employer's name and address; number of hours worked by the employee; the employee's wage rate (whether hourly, salary, flat rate, piece rate, commission or other incentive basis); the employee's overtime rate(s); hours worked at the overtime rate(s); and, any money, allowance or other payment that the employee is entitled to.

# Human Rights Legislation

Human rights legislation protects all citizens from offensive treatment and discrimination. In Canada, our domestic human rights laws operate in two jurisdictions: the federal and the provincial. At the federal level, the Canadian Human Rights Act (**click here**) is administered and enforced by the Canadian Human Rights Commission and Tribunal. At the provincial level, the British Columbia Human Rights Code (**click here**) is administered and enforced by the BC Human Rights Tribunal.

If you are working in a different province, the Human Rights Code of that province may apply. Both pieces of legislation are similar in the protections they provide, although slight variations do exist. Neither the federal nor the provincial legislation supersedes the other. Rather, the appropriate legislation is determined according to which level of government regulates a specific area (**click here**).

The Canadian Human Rights Commission also oversees the Employment Equity Act (**click here**). The purpose of the Act is as follows:

"to achieve equality in the workplace so that no person shall be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability and, in the fulfillment of that goal, to correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment experienced by women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities by giving effect to the principle that employment equity means more than treating persons in the same way but also requires special measures and the accommodation of differences".

## Canadian Human Rights Act as it Pertains to

### Employment

The Canadian Human Rights Act specifies the following as grounds for discrimination ("prohibited grounds of discrimination"):

- Race
- National or ethnic origin

- Colour
- Religion
- Age
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marital status
- Family status
- Disability
- A conviction for which a pardon has been granted

The Canadian Human Rights Act specifies the following as discriminatory actions as they relate to employment:

- To refuse to employ or continue to employ any individual, or in the course of employment, to differentiate adversely in relation to an employee.

- To use or circulate any form of application for employment, or in connection with employment to prospective employment, to publish any advertisement or to make any written or oral inquiry that expresses or implies any limitation, specification or preference.

- To establish or pursue a policy or practice, or to enter into an agreement affecting recruitment, referral, hiring, promotion, training, apprenticeship, transfer or any other matter relating to employment or prospective employment, that deprives or tends to deprive an individual or class of individual of any employment opportunities.

- To establish or maintain differences in wages between male and female employees employed in the same establishment who are performing work of equal value.

**The BC Human Rights Code restricts the following actions with respect to employment:**
- A person must not refuse to employ or refuse to continue to employ a person, or discriminate against a person regarding employment or any term or condition employment because of:
  - Race
  - Colour
  - Ancestry
  - Place of origin
  - Political belief
  - Religion
  - Marital status
  - Family status
  - Physical or mental disability
  - Sex
  - Sexual orientation
  - Age of that person
  - Because that person has been convicted of a criminal or summary conviction offence that is unrelated to the employment or to the intended employment of that person

**Every person has the right to be free from workplace harassment by an employer or by another employee.**

The previous statement does not apply as it relates to age, to a bona fide scheme based on seniority, or as it relates to marital status, physical or mental disability, sex or age, to the operation of a bona fide retirement, superannuation or pension plan or to a bona fide group or employee insurance plan. Furthermore, the previous statement does not apply with respect to a refusal, limitation, specification or preference based on a bona fide occupational requirement.

## Harassment in the Workplace

Harassment, a type of discrimination, refers to unwarranted comments or conduct that humiliates, intimidates, excludes, isolates and undermines the self-esteem of its targets. Harassment may be a single incident or a pattern of repeated incidents directed against an individual or group. Harassment is often a subtle or an overt abuse of power by someone in authority. Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- demeaning remarks about a particular group
- disrespectful, dismissive or degrading jokes or comments
- hate letters or graffiti
- racist comments or insults
- unnecessary touching
- leering or suggestive remarks
- reprisal for rejection of sexual advances
- sexually explicit pin-ups and graffiti

**Contact a Coordinator immediately for advice and assistance if you feel you are being harassed.**

Most Co-op employers have their own harassment policies and will usually give new employees guidance on the policy and how to interpret the policy in their organization. Understand how this policy affects you in terms of your own behaviour and how to judge the behaviour of others. In many cases, the policy outlines additional resources.

## WorkSafeBC

WorkSafeBC (**www.worksafebc.com**) is a no-fault accident insurance system for work-related injuries or diseases. Workers are eligible for workers' compensation benefits for on-the-job injuries or illnesses arising because of the work or the workplace. In return, Workers' Compensation protects employers from being sued in the event of an employee injury. The employer assumes the entire cost of this benefit.

You are eligible to receive Workers' Compensation for a work-related injury or illness. The maximum value changes periodically. In addition to this payment, any medical costs such as doctor, hospital and medication bills are covered.

## Health and Safety on the Job

Both the employer and employee have certain responsibilities and duties under occupational health and safety regulations. The supervisor must provide access to the necessary equipment, protective devices or clothing and must advise employees of potential or actual danger. Employees must report any accidents as soon as possible.

If there are hazardous materials in the work environment, the employer must inform employees about the **WHMIS** program (Workplace Hazardous Material Information System) and provide workplace-specific training on safety issues.

**Note: As an employee, you have the right and the responsibility to refuse any work that could endanger the health and safety of yourself and/or others.**

# Work Term Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

**12**

## Overview

This section reviews the UBC Faculty of Forestry Co-op Program's requirements for each Co-op work term assignment. Students must complete the Learning Objectives at the beginning of each work term and complete one work term assignment at the end of each four month work term, as described below.

## Evaluation

Successful completion of all mandatory Co-op work terms is required in order for you to graduate from the Faculty of Forestry with a Co-op degree designation. Specifically, the Co-op work term evaluation process requires:

1   Submission of Work Term Learning Objectives, Domestic or International Waiver and Work Term Record (WTR) in The Hub.

2   Completed E-Visit form or Site Visit with Co-op Coordinator, or in The Hub (as instructed by coordinator).

3   Receipt of the Employer – Final Co-op Evaluation form with a minimum evaluation of satisfactory.

4   Successful completion of your Work Term Assignment (this will be a poster presentation, oral presentation, written report, and/or other assignment approved by your Co-op Coordinator).

5   Completion of the Student – Final Co-op EvaluationWork Term form.

Work terms will be graded "Pass" or "Fail" and the marks will appear on your transcript. To receive a pass, students must successfully complete all of the above. If you fail a work term, the Co-op Steering Committee will review your case. Students who have failed a work term may be asked to withdraw permanently from the Co-op program.

## Learning Objectives

At the beginning of each work term, students are required to reflect on their objectives for the work term and to review the objectives with the supervisor. These objectives are for the current term; however, these should assist you in your longer term objectives for your career development while being in line with the duties of the Co-op position.

Ensure to review your Learning Objectives with your supervisor before the end of your second week of employment. After you have discussed your Learning Objectives with and received feedback from your supervisor, submit the completed text to The Hub. It is advised to re-review your objectives with your supervisor at least once later in the work term to see how you are progressing and if anything has changed. You will also discuss your learning objectives with your co-op coordinator detailing your site visit, half way through your work term.

## Tips for Creating Learning Objectives

Make them Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely (SMART). Each learning objective should answer the following four questions:

• What is to be accomplished?

• How will it be accomplished?

• How will it be evaluated/measured and by whom?

• When will it be completed?

Example: 'By June 20, I will devise, print and post a safety checklist, following head office and provincial guidelines, which will make safety information readily available to staff working in Section G. I will have my supervisor review this safety checklist for accuracy prior to posting.'

Review the self-assessment and transferable skills section in your handbook. Consider which transferable skills you would most like to develop during your work term. Then compile an inventory of your technical and interpersonal skills and strengths.

Fit these short-term objectives into long-term plans. Always keep long-term career goals in mind, and think about the small steps that are necessary to help get you to where you want to be (caution: the path is not always linear and predictable). Think about skills that you want to develop in the short, medium and long term.

Form a clear vision of your long-term goals and needs. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What are my degree specific interests?
- What are my values and needs? How will my chosen career(s) complement them?
- What do I do well (i.e. manage projects, analyze problems, write, work in a team)?
- What do I not do well (i.e. handle criticism, manage time, work independently)?
- What feedback have I received regarding my skills or performance?
- What would my ideal job look like (consider hours, people, location, introverted/extroverted)?
- What does the job market look like in terms of growth or opportunity in my chosen Forestry field?

When you start your position, make sure that the objectives you have set are in line with the duties of the job. Redevelop your learning objectives in consultation with your employer, if necessary. You may wish to develop a more specific set of short-term and long-term goals with your supervisor.

Review your objectives frequently with your supervisor before the end of your second week of employment. Once your supervisor has reviewed your Learning Objectives, submit the completed text directly to The Hub. It is valuable to review your objectives a few times over the work term with your supervisor.

## Site Visits and E-Visits

Checking in with students at the work place contributes to building closer links and long-term relationships with both the student and the employer. The main purpose of the E-Visit or site visit is to assess the suitability of the work placement. The Co-op Coordinator will review your position, and the progress you have made towards achieving your Learning Objectives, with you and your supervisor. If there are any arising concerns, the Co-op Coordinator can discuss them with you and your supervisor, and assist in resolving them.

The E-Visit or site visit is also a great opportunity to:

- Learn more about the employer.
- Further refine job descriptions with the employer.
- Define the employer's needs for the upcoming work term.
- Obtain feedback from the employer about the Forestry curriculum and the Co-op program.

The Co-op Coordinator will conduct the E-Visit or site visit mid-way through a work term. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their supervisor will be available to meet with the Co-op Coordinator and/or complete the E-Visit form in The Hub. If an in person visit is required – please make a formal request to your Co-op Coordinator.

## Employer Evaluation of Co-op Student

During the last month of the work term an Employer – Final Co-op Evaluation form link will be sent to your employer. The evaluation form is to be completed by your supervisor in The Hub. Employers are not required to discuss the evaluation with you, but it is to your benefit if they do. It is important that you understand your areas of strength and weakness so you can prepare for future work terms. You should set up an appointment with your supervisor within the last 2-3 weeks of the work term to discuss the evaluation of your performance.

A failing grade can be given to students for any of the following work related reasons:

- Failure to report to the employer
- Repeated unexplained absenteeism
- Terminating employment without prior approval of the Co-op Coordinator and the employer
- Student is fired or dismissed with cause
- Inappropriate behaviour on the job
- Unsatisfactory work performance and refusal to take remedial action
- Not completing all required documents/assignments.

## Student Evaluation of Co-op Work Term

Upon completion of the work term students will be asked to provide feedback about their Co-op placement. Students will be invited to attend a mandatory debriefing. This session will consist of a small group of students discussing their work terms and lessons learned from them. Students will be required to complete the Student – Final Co-op Evaluation form in The Hub. Please provide thorough answers on your evaluation form. Your thoughtful answers will assist the Co-op Office to improve its service to students.

## Work Term Assignments

Students must complete the work term assignment specified by these guidelines and submit them by the assigned deadline. Failure to do so will result in a failing grade. Students must submit 1 or 2 assignments (as per instructions from coordinator) for each four-month Co-op work term, according to the following schedule:

Assignments must be completed on the student's own time and not during Co-op work term employment hours.

The work term assignment is equivalent to a homework assignment. On occasion the work term assignment may

| Work Term | Forest Resources Management | Forest Operations | Natural Resources Conservation | Urban Forestry | Forest Science | Wood Products Processing |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Poster | Poster | Poster | Poster | Poster | Poster |
| 2 | Report | Report | Presentation | Presentation | Presentation | Report |
| 3 | Report | Report | Report | Report | Report | Presentation |
| 4 | Presentation | Presentation | Report | Report | Report | Report |
| 5 | Report & Presentation | Report & Presentation | Report & Presentation | Report & Presentation | Report & Presentation | Report & Presentation |

be part of your regular work assignments but this is neither a requirement nor an expectation you can have of the employer.

As students' work term responsibilities increase with each placement, students should expect the complexity and content of their Work Term Assignments to also increase.

Work Term Assignments are graded by a Faculty Advisor, your work term employer and/or the Co-op Coordinator. Students who fail a work term may be required to withdraw from the Co-op Program.

Plagiarism in any form will be viewed as an academic misconduct and will be handled as outlined in the UBC Calendar.

## Importance of Work Term Assignments

Good communication skills are vital to a successful career in the Forestry industry. To communicate well, you need to be able to write and speak effectively. Writing reports is one of the most formal ways of presenting results of professional work; however, you may be required to write:

- Advertisements
- Memos
- Bulletins
- Notes
- Contracts
- Presentations
- E-mails
- Procedures
- Job Descriptions
- Proposals
- Legal Documents
- Reports
- Letters
- Specifications

Faculty of Forestry Co-op students are asked to complete Work Term Assignments for a number of reasons, including practice in the following:

- writing;
- delivering oral presentations;
- choosing a subject of interest to students and employers;
- organizing and presenting a large amount of material;
- presenting information in an interesting and energizing way
- defining the problem;
- forming relevant conclusions which result in recommendations;
- interpreting and following instructions;
- neatness and thoroughness in presentation skills; and
- meeting an established schedule.

Work Term Assignments prepare you for writing reports and delivering presentations, which are major parts of professional work. The written reports also provide you with an example of your work to show to prospective employers, if they are not confidential.

## Topic for Work Term Assignments

Preferably, your assignment will be based on your Co-op project. If your work term does not involve a specific project, you should research a topic that is related to your work or place of employment.

Although topics may vary, a typical Work Term Assignment would include the background of the organization, objectives of the project, materials, methods and technology used, findings, discussion, and recommendations. If you did not have a specific project, you could discuss a technical problem, include observations on potential improvements, and make recommendations.

A Work Term Assignment can have a business, technology, product design, research, or other emphasis; depending on your interests and the work you were given.

Work Term Assignments must be free of confidential material, but have sufficient technical information to meet academic requirements. Be sure to consult with your supervisor regarding your assignment to ensure the topic you select is not confidential. Contact your Co-op Coordinator if you require clarification about the topic, would like to select a different topic different from the one cited above, or want to confirm that your assignment meets academic requirements.

# Poster Report

Poster Reports will remain the property of the Co-op Office.

## General Guidelines

Poster Reports **must** adhere to the following format:

- Create a poster in PowerPoint using a single slide (sized to 30" wide by 20" high for Conservation, Forestry, Forest Sciences and Urban Forestry students. Wood Products Processing posters are sized 28" wide by 44" high).
- Submit this slide via The Hub by the due date.

Include:

- A title at the top of the poster, as well as your name and degree
- Employer logo (top right) and UBC logo (top left)
- Appropriate section headings
- A summary about your Co-op employer. Information to include: company history, location, what they do, product line, and customer base
- A review of your work term project. Follow the same outline as you would for a written report (an introduction, discussion, conclusions, and recommendations; include acknowledgements and bibliography if applicable).

## What Is A Poster Report?

A poster report is a visual presentation that shows rather than tells the viewer about your work. Where possible, you should use pictures, diagrams, tables and charts to convey your message. Posters should be self-explanatory and not require your presence to explain the content.

Approach the poster as you would a written report, with an introduction, body, conclusions, and recommendations, then convert the information into a visual presentation with text and graphics (tables, charts, pictures, diagrams, etc.). A general guideline is to use 30% text, 50% graphics, and 20% white space.

Possible ideas for your poster include:

- An overview of the employer and the mandate of the division/department where you worked.
- An overview of a project you worked on. This should include an introduction, outline of the project and conclusions, and recommendations if applicable.

When preparing your report, keep in mind the audience it is directed towards. Posters will be on display for viewing by faculty, staff, students, prospective students, employers, and other guests.

Poster reports take longer to prepare than one might initially assume. A good poster report can take 1-2 weeks to complete (collecting data, determining layout and design, printing and assembly).

## Presenting Your Poster

You are required to attend Co-op Presentation Night to present your poster and answer any questions people may have about it. Co-op Presentation Night may be scheduled for more than one night. In such cases, students are expected to attend each night.

Posters will be put on display for Co-op Presentation Night. You should prepare a brief overview of your poster report that you can share with viewers; pointing out appropriate sections of your poster when relevant. When presenting your poster, be sure to stand to one side to avoid obstructing the view. Do not simply read your poster.

Checklist

- Is the text large enough to easily read from a distance of 2-3 feet?
- Have you used fonts that are easy to read? For titles, use sans-serif fonts such as Arial, Tahoma or Verdana, for body, use serif fonts such as Book Antiqua, Garamond or Times Roman.
- Is there high contrast between the colours used for the text and background? Have you kept to 2-3 colours?
- Is the order and flow of information easy to follow?
- Is your message clear? Do you need to edit content or clarify any information?
- Did you include a title? Have you included your name?
- Have you avoided the use of abbreviations and jargon that viewers may not understand?
- Is the poster visually pleasing to look at (layout, graphics, colour choice, etc.)?

## Evaluation

Poster Reports will be evaluated by the Co-op Coordinator on technical quality, presentation quality, and appearance.

# Written Reports

**Written Reports are due on the 15th of the last month of each work term**. A copy will be forwarded for grading if your employer has not already graded your assignment and a copy will be kept on file at the Co-op Office.

**Work term reports cannot be evaluated unless the *Co-op Work Term Report Release* section of the *Employer – Final Co-op Evaluation* form has been completed by your Co-op employer and submitted on The Hub.**

Work term reports on file at the Co-op Office will be kept confidential unless a Student Work Term Report Release has been signed. Reports submitted with a release will be available for review by other Co-op students upon request. Submit on The Hub

**Note: Reports are to be submitted in The Hub.**

## General Guidelines

You are required to produce a formal technical report. The body of the report (introduction, discussion, conclusions, and recommendations) should be 8 to 10 pages in length, excluding figures, tables, and graphics. Particular attention should be given to conclusions and recommendations.

The report should be written for readers at the general level of expertise of the student, but who are not familiar with the specifics of the project. It should be self-contained (explain any terminology particular to the topic the first time you use it), consistent, and to the point. Your report should contain analytical or technical information rather than descriptive information.

- Use standard formal level of English (no slang or colloquialisms).
- Use the first person in the letter of transmittal and in the preface.
- Use a good quality white bond paper when printing.
- Use only one side of the page for all text and figures.
- Start major sections of the report on new pages.
- Number the pages:
  - All pages that come before the body of the report are numbered using lower case Roman numerals. The title page is considered to be page i, but is not numbered.
  - The body of the report begins with the introduction. The pages of the body are given in Arabic numerals. The first page of the introduction is considered to be page 1, but is not numbered.
- Leave margins of 1" on the top, bottom, and sides of each paper.
- Your report should be 8 – 10 pages in length excluding figures, tables, and graphics.

Faculty Advisors Addition

## Faculty Advisors

Each student that needs to complete a written report assignment will be assigned a Faulty Advisor. A Faculty Advisor will be one of our current faculty members in the Faculty of Forestry. The Faculty Advisor is there to answer questions about the report assignment content, provide guidance with any technical questions that might arise during the work term and to grade the written report assignment.

## Style

Your technical work term report is expected to be analytical rather than descriptive. It should contain accurate, factual information together with sound arguments and conclusions. The format of the report should normally follow the guidelines provided in this workshop. If your report is to be used by your employer, you may use their own internal guidelines. However, you must check with your faculty advisor to ensure that the employer guidelines and topic are acceptable for a technical work term report. If your employer has given you specific guidelines for your report, you must advise your faculty advisor. You may need to modify the version submitted as your Co-op work term report.

## Format

The following shows the pattern that should be used for the Written Report:

- Letter of Transmittal
- Title Page
- Abstract/Summary
- Table of Contents
- List of Figures/Tables*
- Introduction
- Materials and methods*
- Results*
- Discussion
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Glossary*
- References/Bibliography
- Appendices"

* Optional but should be included in technical reports.

## Detailed Section Information

The following information explains the purpose and suggested content of each of the Written Report sections. Include only those sections and content that are appropriate for your topic.

## Letter of Transmittal

**Purpose:** A brief covering letter, addressed to the first official reader. For the purpose of your Co-op Work Term Report address the Letter of Transmittal to your faculty advisor or Co-op coordinator.

**Content:**

- Name of manager and department for whom the report was prepared
- Terms of reference of the report
- Authorization, degree of confidentiality of report
- General comments on the nature of and the time involved in the investigation
- A comment on the quality of the recommendations

- Must be written in formal business letter style and signed in long-hand
- First person may be used

## Title Page

**Purpose:** Identifies the topic and ownership of the report.

**Content:**

- Title of the report (clearly identifies the subject of the report)
- Full Name of the addressee or recipient, the University of British Columbia, faculty, and department
- Co-op course number (i.e. co-op work term 2)
- Name of student and student ID number
- Date, place

## Abstract/Summary

The abstract or summary is sometimes called the "Management Summary" or "Executive Summary". The summary is considered by many to be the most important part of a report. It is a difficult part to write and should always be written last. It is often the only part that managers in the work place have time to read, so it is important to state your case succinctly (normally less than one page).

**Purpose:** Provides a brief summary of the report, an information abstract. No reference is made to any part of the report; a summary is complete in itself.

**Content:**

- States the more important information in the report
- The purpose, method, reason for the report
- The findings, conclusions, decisions, recommendations
- All major generalizations or assumptions of the report

## Table of Contents

**Purpose:** Identifies contents and organization of document.

**Content:**
- Section headings
- Page numbers

## List of Figures (optional)

**Purpose:** Identifies any figures, drawings, or photographs shown.

**Content:**
Number figures sequentially, title each figure and list the corresponding page number.

## List of Tables (optional)

**Purpose:** Identifies any tables shown in the report.

**Content:**
Number tables sequentially, title each table and list the corresponding page number.

## Introduction

**Purpose:** Introduces the subject of the report to the reader. Remember that the reader may be from a different branch of the discipline, and will require some orientation to the subject of your report.

**Content:** Subject and purpose of the report: states briefly why the report is being written and what the report is intended to achieve.

- Scope: describes how broad or how limited the treatment of the subject will be
- Plan of development: outlines which areas will be covered
- Thesis of the report: the general conclusion and/or the general recommendation

## Materials and Methods (optional)

Purpose: Informs the reader of the materials and methods used in a study or experiment. This section is optional but should be included any time a study or experiment was involved in your work.

Content: Describe in detail all materials and methods used in the study/experiment, explain how the materials were prepared and the methodology used to perform the experiment, explain if and how measurements and calculations were performed, include any relevant data.

## Results (optional)

Purpose: Presents evidence (facts, details, data, test results, etc.). This is optional but should be included any time a study or experiment was involved.

Content: Describe in detail the findings of your study/experiment without any bias or interpretation (interpretation is for the discussion and recommendation sections), include any relevant data.

## Discussion

**Purpose:** Presents interpretations of the results.

**Content:** Presents the authors arguments, interpretations and general discussion of the results of the study/experiment.

## Conclusions

**Purpose:** States briefly the major inferences that can be drawn from the discussion.

**Content:**
- Must be based on information presented in the materials and methods, results discussion
- Each conclusion should be presented as a separate paragraph, with paragraphs numbered in sequence for easy reference
- Do not suggest or recommend future action in this section

## Recommendations

**Purpose:** Suggests a course of action based on the findings and conclusions.

**Content:**
- Must follow logically from the conclusions
- Must be supported both by the conclusions and by the data in the discussion

## Glossary (Optional)

**Purpose:** Provides definitions of any technical or specialized words, including acronyms, used in the report.

**Content:** Alphabetical listing of technical or specialized words, and their definitions.

## References / Bibliography

**Purpose:**
- References can be collected on one page at the end of the report, or they can be placed as footnotes on the bottom of the page on which the reference occurs.
- Acknowledges use of materials from printed sources in the preparation of your report. Indicate exact source of all quotations and/or results of previous work.

**Content:**
- Author's name, title of book, year published, publisher's name, city, ISBN number, page number
- Bibliographic entries are listed alphabetically by the name of the author or by the first major work of the title. *Example*: Vetterli, C. "Work Term Report Guidelines", Co-op Journal, Vol. 1 No. 1, August 1992
- Common knowledge does not require a reference, e.g. the density of water, the atomic weight of some element. If a new value for a commonly accepted quantity is cited, the source should be referenced.

## Appendices (optional)

- **Purpose:** The term "appendix" applies to only one set of data: for example, program listings would be in Appendix A and technical specifications would be in Appendix B Includes data, which are not necessary to an immediate understanding of the discussion.

**Content:** Appendices can contain raw data, program listings, drawings, extra figures, technical specifications, or other detailed explanations of some aspects of your report.

## Evaluation

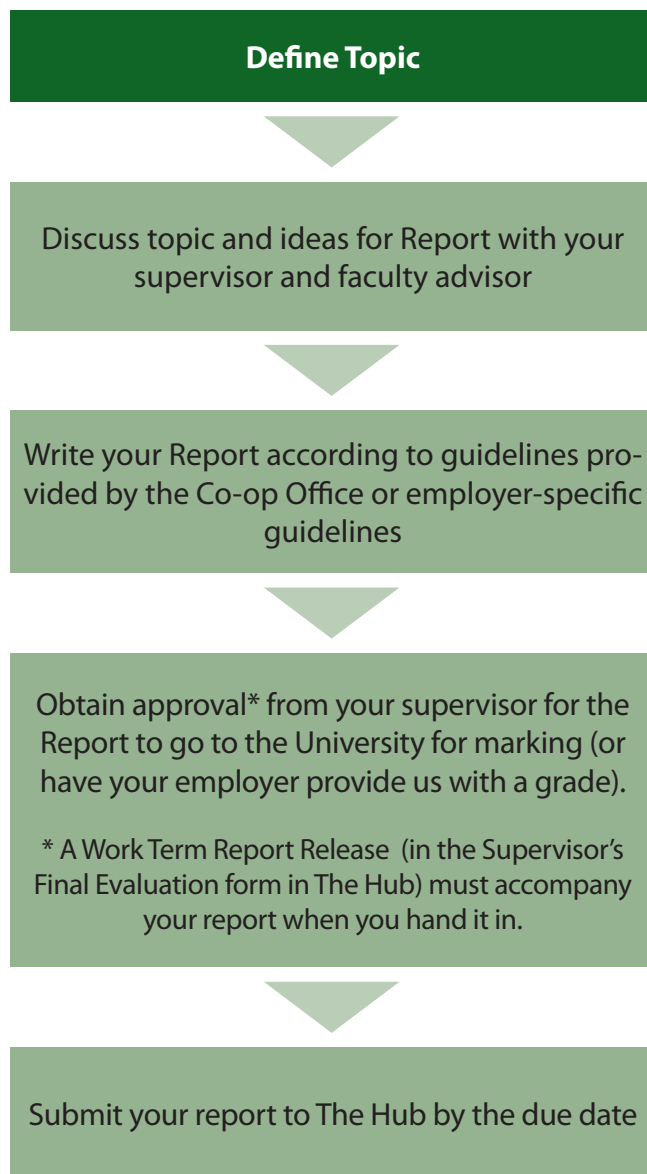Written Reports will be evaluated on technical quality, literary quality, and structure.

## Reference Material

Every writer requires:
- A grammar handbook
- A good dictionary: Oxford is recommended

**Submitting Your Written Report**

Written reports are to be reviewed by your supervisor to determine if the report is confidential. If your report is deemed to be confidential, your supervisor will need to complete the appropriate Report Evaluation form and you must submit the form by the report submission deadline. If your report is not deemed to be confidential, complete the Report Release in the Student Final Evaluation form in The Hub and submit it with your report.

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**Define Topic**

⮟

Discuss topic and ideas for Report with your supervisor and faculty advisor

⮟

Write your Report according to guidelines provided by the Co-op Office or employer-specific guidelines

⮟

Obtain approval* from your supervisor for the Report to go to the University for marking (or have your employer provide us with a grade).

* A Work Term Report Release  (in the Supervisor's Final Evaluation form in The Hub) must accompany your report when you hand it in.

⮟

Submit your report to The Hub by the due date

# Oral Presentations

**Oral presentation slides are due on the 15th of the last month of each work term.** Select students will deliever oral presentations at Co-op Presentation Nights, which are scheduled approximately one month after the completion of the summer and fall work terms. This event is open to all students, prospective students, guests, faculty, employers and industry representatives who wish to attend. Co-op Presentation Nights are an opportunity to share your work term experience with others, an excellent networking event, as well as a chance to sell yourself to prospective employers.

**Will the audience be able to read your PowerPoint slides?**

Print a slide and place it on the floor. Stand and look down at it. If you can read it, the text is large enough for the audience to read.

## General Guidelines

Presentations must adhere to the following format (unless otherwise state by your coordinator):

• 10 minute presentation, followed by a 5 minute question period

• Technical presentation about your Co-op work term

• Free of confidential material

Students are encouraged to use PowerPoint in their presentations. If you choose to do so, please follow these guidelines:

## PowerPoint File

• Maximum file size is 200 mb.

• Save files in PowerPoint XP or 2003.

• Animated graphics (ie: animated gifs, etc.) in PowerPoint animation are okay if saved in an XP or 2003 version.

• Reduce pictures to 16 bit (65k) colours. This will reduce their size and allow slides to load faster. The visual quality will not be impacted as the projector itself is limited in the number of colours and shades it can reproduce.

These guidelines are based on the capability of the equipment available at the Faculty for presentations. Students will not be able to use PowerPoint for their presentations if their files do not follow these guidelines.

## Content and Delivery

• Face the audience, not the projection screen

• Do not read from the slides

• Limit the use of animation – too often it is distracting and takes away from, rather than enhances the presentation

• Explain "jargon" – not everyone in the audience will understand it

• Make sure the text is large enough to read.

# Evaluation

Oral Presentations will be evaluated on presentation skills and content.

**13** Appendices

# DOMESTIC WORK TERM AGREEMENT AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY

I, _____ , _____

(name of student)                                                  (student number)

a student enrolled in the Faculty of Forestry Co-operative Education Program of the University of British Columbia (hereinafter called the "University") accept a work term with

_____

(name of employer)

_____

(address of employer)

(hereinafter called the "Co-op Placement").

In consideration of being permitted to participate in the Co-op placement associated with the Co-operative Education Program at the University of British Columbia, I hereby:

1) ACKNOWLEDGE that I have been informed of the nature of the employment with the Co-op employer, the responsibilities that I may be expected to assume, and the risks known to the University that may be associated with the Co-op Placement.

2) Without restricting the generality of the foregoing, the risks include:

   a) injuries suffered:

      (i) in the course of employment with the Co-op Employer

      (ii) by the acts of third parties including acts that would be regarded as criminal acts under Canadian law, and

      (iii) by being a passenger in or operating a motor vehicle, boat, bicycle or any similar means of transportation or being a passenger in or on an airplane, bus, taxi, boat, or other means of transportation

   b) standards of criminal justice that vary by province.

3) ACKNOWLEDGE that I have informed the University of any physical or medical limitations, allergies, or other conditions that may affect my participation in the activities of the Co-op Placement or that may be associated with the Co-op Placement.

4) ACKNOWLEDGE that I am exclusively responsible for making all travel arrangements that may be associated with the Co-op Placement and that notwithstanding that the University may provide information to me with regard to travel arrangements, the University does not warrant the safety of any carrier and the University is not responsible for the acts or omissions of any carrier.

5) ACKNOWLEDGE that I am exclusively responsible for making all arrangements for my accommodation during the period of the Co-op Placement and that notwithstanding that the University may provide information to me with regard to accommodations, the University does not warrant the quality or safety of

![forestry co-op — university of british columbia](UBC logo)

any accommodation and the University is not responsible for the acts or omissions of the operators of any place of accommodation.

6) AGREE that I will pay all of my travel, accommodation, food and other personal expenses associated with my participation in the Co-op Placement other than those expenses that the University or the Co-op employer has expressly agreed in writing to pay.

7) CONSENT to the disclosure by the University of British Columbia during the period of my participation in the Co-op Placement of any personal information that is in the possession of the University, other than records of my academic performance, that may be necessary in any or all of the following circumstances:

   a) To a hospital, supervising medical personnel, provider of medical treatment or next of kin where a representative of the University is informed that I may require medical attention or treatment,

   b) To an official of the Canadian Government, an airline on which I am booked as a passenger or an agency that is responsible for my travel arrangements where a representative of the University is informed that the information is required to facilitate my travel in conjunction with the Co-op Placement.

   c) To law enforcement authorities where the University is informed that the information is required to assist me.

8) AGREE to abide by all the University and Faculty Co-operative Education regulations.

9) AGREE to assume all of the risks related to any personal injuries to me, or damage to property or loss to my property, of whatsoever nature or kind howsoever arising out of my participation in the Co-op Placement.

10) AGREE that the University reserves the right to terminate my enrollment in the Co-op Placement if the University determines that I am not performing satisfactorily in the placement or if I fail to adhere to the standards of public conduct.

11) I WAIVE, RELEASE AND DISCHARGE THE UNIVERSITY of BRITISH COLUMBIA, the members of the University's Board of Governors and anyone employed by or acting on behalf of the University from any and all claims, causes of action, and any liability for personal injury, death, damage to property or loss of whatsoever nature or kind and howsoever caused which I or my heirs, executors, administrators, or anyone else may have arising out of my participation in the Co-op Placement.

12) If the University is also the Co-op Employer, the waiver set out in paragraph 11 shall not apply to claims that I may have against the University as a sole result of my employment relationship with the University.

13) I acknowledge that prior to signing this form, **I have read and understood this agreement and waiver of liability in its entirety** and I am aware that by signing this document, I am affecting the legal rights of myself, my heirs, next of kin, executors, administrators and assigns.

Dated in _____, Province of British Columbia, this _____ day of _____, 20____.


_____          _____
          Signature of Witness                              Signature of Student

# INTERNATIONAL WORK TERM AGREEMENT AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY

I, _____ , _____
(name of student)                              (student number)

a student enrolled in the Faculty of Forestry Co-operative Education Program of the University of British Columbia (hereinafter called the "University") accept a work term with

_____
(name of employer)

_____
(address of employer)

(hereinafter called the "International Co-op Placement").

In consideration of being permitted to participate in the International Co-op placement associated with the Co-operative Education Program at the University of British Columbia, I hereby:

1) ACKNOWLEDGE that I have been informed of the nature of the employment with the International Co-op employer, the responsibilities that I may be expected to assume, and the risks known to the University that may be associated with the International Co-op Placement.

2) Without restricting the generality of the foregoing, the risks include:

   a) injuries suffered:

      (i)    in the course of employment with the Co-op Employer

      (ii)   by the acts of third parties including acts that would be regarded as criminal acts under Canadian law, and

      (iii)  by being a passenger in or operating a motor vehicle, boat, bicycle or any similar means of transportation or being a passenger in or on an airplane, bus, taxi, boat, or other means of transportation

   b) illnesses and the lack of medical personnel or medical facilities to treat injuries or illnesses, and

   c) standards of criminal justice that are different than Canadian standards.

3) ACKNOWLEDGE that due to the international aspect of the International Co-op placement, circumstances beyond the control of the University of British Columbia may arise including war, civil unrest, or natural disasters that may require a modification or termination of my work term.

4) ACKNOWLEDGE that I have informed the University of any physical or medical limitations, allergies, or other conditions that may affect my participation in the activities of the International Co-op Placement or that may be associated with the International Co-op Placement.

5) ACKNOWLEDGE that I have been advised to arrange for extended medical insurance coverage on my own account that will cover any medical or hospital expenses that I may incur during the period of the International Co-op Placement.

6) ACKNOWLEDGE that I am responsible for obtaining any visas or permits that may be necessary with regard to my travel to foreign countries.

7) ACKNOWLEDGE that I am responsible for obtaining any vaccinations or inoculations that are recommended or required by the government of a foreign country in which I will be travelling or by the Canadian Government for persons entering Canada from a foreign country.

8) ACKNOWLEDGE that I am not required to undertake the International Co-op Placement in order to complete the requirements of my academic program and that I have the option of substituting another Co-op placement in place of an International Co-op Placement.

9) ACKNOWLEDGE that I am exclusively responsible for making all travel arrangements that may be associated with the International Co-op Placement and that notwithstanding that the University may provide information to me with regard to travel arrangements, the University does not warrant the safety of any carrier and the University is not responsible for the acts or omissions of any carrier.

10) ACKNOWLEDGE that I am exclusively responsible for making all arrangements for my accommodation during the period of the International Co-op Placement and that notwithstanding that the University may provide information to me with regard to accommodations, the University does not warrant the quality or safety of any accommodation and the University is not responsible for the acts or omissions of the operators of any place of accommodation.

11) AGREE to notify the Coordinator of my International Co-op Placement of my planned itinerary for the International Co-op Placement including any extended personal travel.

12) AGREE that I will pay all of my travel, accommodation, food and other personal expenses associated with my participation in the International Co-op Placement other than those expenses that the University or the Co-op employer has expressly agreed in writing to pay.

13) CONSENT to the disclosure by the University of British Columbia during the period of my participation in the International Co-op Placement of any personal information that is in the possession of the University, other than records of my academic performance, that may be necessary in any or all of the following circumstances:

   a) To a hospital, supervising medical personnel, provider of medical treatment or next of kin where a representative of the University is informed that I may require medical attention or treatment,

   b) To an official of a Canadian Consulate or the Canadian Government, an airline on which I am booked as a passenger, or an agency that is responsible for my travel arrangements where a representative of the University is informed that the information is required to satisfy the immigration or visa requirements of any country in which I am travelling or plan to travel, or to facilitate my travel in conjunction with the International Co-op Placement.

   c) To law enforcement authorities where the University is informed that the information is required to assist me.

14) AGREE to abide by all the University and Faculty Co-operative Education regulations.

15) AGREE to assume all of the risks related to any personal injuries to me, or damage to property or loss to my property, of whatsoever nature or kind howsoever arising out of my participation in the International Co-op Placement.

16) AGREE that the University reserves the right to terminate my enrollment in the International Co-op Placement if the University determines that I am not performing satisfactorily in the placement or if I fail to adhere to the standards of public conduct that prevail in the geographic area of the placement.

17) I WAIVE, RELEASE AND DISCHARGE THE UNIVERSITY of BRITISH COLUMBIA, the members of the University's Board of Governors and anyone employed by or acting on behalf of the University from any and all claims, causes of action, and any liability for personal injury, death, damage to property or loss of whatsoever nature or kind and howsoever caused which I or my heirs, executors, administrators, or anyone else may have arising out of my participation in International Co-op Placement.

18) I acknowledge that prior to signing this form, **I have read and understood this agreement and waiver of liability in its entirety** and I am aware that by signing this document, I am affecting the legal rights of myself, my heirs, next of kin, executors, administrators and assigns.

Dated at _____, Province of British Columbia, this _____ day of _____ , 20__.


_____          _____
       Signature of Witness                                     Signature of Student

The following sources were used to compile this document:

1  The CAPS Guide to Writing a C.V., McGil University

2  UBC Engineering Co-op Student Handbook

3  Employability Skills Handbook, UBC Forestry Co-op Program