

Learning from Experience! Reflective Comments on the Placement Experience

Four times during the semester (see your calendar for exact due dates), you are required to write a reflective journal about your experiences at your placement. There are eleven topics and **FOUR** scheduled journal weeks so you can choose which four you wish to complete and you can complete them in any order you'd like. Give 'em some thought and do a thorough job!

Journals must be at least 500 words. They will each be marked **out of 20** for completeness, depth, detail, organization and insightful reflection. Submit your journals using your Hour Republic Co-op Dashboard.

A. Reflecting on Issues, Specific Experiences or Problems related to your Placement

1. "So, when do I start..."

Have you *previously* gone through a job interview? How did this very first interview help prepare you for this Co-op interview?

Regarding your Co-op interview:

(How did you prepare, who interviewed you, and would you consider it a formal or informal interview? What questions were you asked, how did you feel before/during/after, and what would you do differently if you got to do the interview again?)

2. "It all starts with you..."

What does the word *accountability* mean to you?

You've often been reminded that 'YOU play the biggest role in how well your Co-op placement goes'. Fully explain what this statement means to you and how you plan to play this important role.

3. "Goooooaaaaalllll..."

Why is it important to set goals for yourself? Describe the process of a goal you set and achieved in the past.

Name at least four Co-op-specific goals (2 short term – within the first few weeks; and 2 long term – by the end of the semester) that you set for yourself before you started your placement.

Are these goals SMART? (specific, measureable, attainable, realistic, time-based) Prove that they are SMART or modify them so they are.

How do you plan to meet each goal?

4. "Did you ever know that you're my hero..."

Identify the characteristics of a good role model. Describe someone in your **non-Coop** life who is a role model for you.

The people at my Co-op placement who are role models for me...

(Explain who they are, what they do, and why they are a role model for you by identifying the characteristics from your definition that they display)

Do you think you have the qualities to be a role model for someone? Explain.

5. "It doesn't even feel like work..."

What do you think is meant by the person who, upon retiring from their job, said 'I've never worked a day in my life?'

What do you find satisfying and rewarding about the work at your Co-op placement...

(Describe the work place, atmosphere, your responsibilities, new things you are learning, contributions you have made, what you like most about the placement)

Continued...

6. “How do I handle this?”

How do you tend to handle stress in your life? Describe a situation or problem that has come up at your Co-op placement. When did you realize there was a problem? How did you decide on a strategy and what was it? Who did you involve to help you attempt a solution? Did things work out the way you hoped? Explain. What did you learn from the situation?

7. “An issue related to my career field...”

Even great jobs and fields have issues they have to deal with. After having a conversation with your supervisor and/or co-workers, describe a particular issue or challenge that is facing this career field. Why it is a concern? What could be the consequences if it's not addressed? What do you and they think should be done to improve the situation?

8. “Stop running with those scissors...”

Look around your workplace. Talk to your co-workers. Now, what are some safety concerns that exist in and around your workplace? Has anything been done already to address the issue(s)? What do you think could be done to make your Co-op workplace safer? What are at least three things that you do to help ensure that each one of your Coop days is a safe one?

9. “Do I feel ‘accomplished’? / Look what I did...”

Inspired by a journal entry from a past co-op student, describe whether you ‘feel accomplished’ at your co-op job placement. If you do, describe how you ‘feel accomplished’. Describe a time in your life when you felt truly and utterly proud of something you did. Now, describe your proudest moment at Co-op so far. Did you tell someone? Were you complimented? Are you someone who needs praise or are you satisfied by just doing the good deed? How important do you think it is for a boss to praise his employees?

10. “Lots on my plate...”

How important do you think ‘being organized’ really is? What are three strategies that you use to improve your organization? What is one more thing you keep promising yourself you’ll do and why haven’t you done it yet? How have you learned to balance Coop, school, your part-time job, a boy or girlfriend and other responsibilities?

11. “I think I’ve suffered an attitude adjustment...”

Co-op has certainly provided you with a change in your life. How have the experiences, people and/or challenges at your placement had an impact on your attitude towards work and working? Do you look at ‘the real world’ the same way you did before Co-op? What changes have you noticed in your attitude towards school? Your part-time job? Have others noticed a change in you? What have they said? Why do you think you have changed?)

Complete your journal entry using the above guidelines but please also feel free to add to your entry with any concerns, problems or joys at your placement.