

Sample Personal Statement

Co-op Student of the Year Award
Co-operative Education, Trent Lane, Building #54
University of Guelph
Guelph, ON
N1G 2W1

Dear Selection Committee,

My name is Jane Doe and I am a third year Bachelor of Commerce Co-operative Education student at the University of Guelph. Co-operative Education has been very beneficial in helping determine my career and academic goals. My Co-op terms have provided me with the opportunity to learn many skills that have helped in determining my strengths and areas of interest in Business. During my third Co-op work term, as a Communications Assistant with XYZ Company, the pieces of the puzzle that would reveal my future career began to fall into place. It was here that I could honestly envision a future as a Communications professional. I had found my passion.

Thanks to Co-operative Education, I now have a variety of new skills and experiences in my repertoire. The program has provided me with essential employment research skills. My Co-op work terms have also exposed me to the diversity of the Communications industry, from advertising to web design, and allowed me to network with and develop numerous contacts. My position at XYZ Company provided me with a solid foundation in effective communication, including writing, public speaking, research, and design skills. It involved a variety of team dynamics, from a small marketing team to the entire corporation. I learned a great deal about communication, flexibility and the give and take required in ensuring the success of any team.

In addition to enhancing my career development, Co-operative Education has vastly improved my academic experiences at the University of Guelph. Having previously felt cut off from the world outside academia, the program has added depth and meaning to my education by bridging the disparity between the academic and working worlds. With a broader range of real-world experience to draw from, I can now relate to issues and concepts discussed in class at a more practical and personal level, and I have returned to classes with a renewed interest in my education and degree.

I also find that Co-op has had another positive impact on academics that is less apparent. The Co-op infrastructure changes the academic setting by allowing students to be more involved with defining the school curriculum. My classmates and I all try to let our professors know what kind of knowledge is valuable in the workplace, and they in turn try to build on what we may have learned over our Co-op work terms. This furthers the circular knowledge building process, and has made me more conscious about my education and how I can make the most of it.

Beyond my academic and career aspirations, Co-op has also added to my personal growth and development. During my first Co-op position, I went through a major organizational restructuring process when regional boundaries were realigned in the province. This experience taught me crisis communications and, more importantly, it taught me how to deal with constant uncertainty and change. Interacting and working with people from across the Region, all with their own worries and fears, I learned to be sensitive, professional and flexible at all times.

My first Co-op supervisor recommended that I join the ABC Association. Joining this association has been particularly valuable. Through my participation with the association, I have gained a good understanding of the local Communications industry, met many professional communicators, judged professional Communication Awards, and received the local chapter's Student member of the Year Award. Both directly and indirectly, Co-op has helped me connect with and start making a name for myself in the Communications Industry.

The skills I have gained through Co-op not only help at school, but in my volunteering also. Just this past December, I was able to use my Project Management Skills to help the OOO foundation, a non-profit organization, plan out how they would develop their short-term volunteer projects. Even further, Co-op has been the financial enabler of my volunteer work. Tuition, room, and board cost approximately \$16,000 each year, and because of this, many students go into debt, a debt that sometimes forces them to use their free time to earn money. With Co-op, however, I have been able to support myself, and have both the extra time and money to attend various national and international communication workshops and also participate in many community activities to improve neighborhood safety.

Furthermore, Co-operative Education has also provided me with the opportunity to see more of our country. It gave me the opportunity to live in Ottawa during my first Co-op work term, which was an amazing experience, and now Vancouver. I took the opportunity to visit the many museums, galleries, historic sites, and participate in special events in both cities.

In all honesty, I cannot quite imagine what I would be doing right now if it was not for the Co-operative Education Program. Co-op has not only enhanced my career development, academic experience, and personal growth, it has helped me end my ongoing quest for a decision. I am no longer afraid of the future and what lies beyond graduation. Co-op has prepared me for what is to come, and I am eager and excited to pursue my passion for communicating.

Sincerely,
(*Include Signature)

Jane Doe

Sample Student Portfolio



Toronto Star/Real Estate News Ad Relay

During my work term, the Toronto Star completed an agreement to share Real Estate ads with the Real Estate News publication. I was in charge of the web-based application that facilitated the transfer of these ads from our salespersons to the REN employees. I was fortunate enough to be 100% responsible for this project and have just been told that it will remain in use for quite some time.



ipgeeks.unixshot.com

In an effort to promote inter-department innovation (as well as some entertainment), I worked with one of my department's full-time employees to start a web-based contest within my group. "ipgeeks.unixshot.com" was my entry to the contest (the goal of which was to drive traffic to a specific type of website), and I received just under 2000 unique visits during the month the contest ran.

CAREER SPOTLIGHT:
nanotechnologist

Nanotechnologists according to the Oxford Canadian Dictionary, work in "the branch of technology that deals with dimensions and tolerances of less than 100 nanometres, esp. the manipulation of individual atoms and molecules."

According to Statistics Canada, in 2005, there were 65 firms that reported involvement in nanotechnology. The vast majority were active in research and development (R&D) and just over a quarter reported they were in the production or market stage. Firms reported the greatest involvement in nanomaterials and nanobiotechnology, followed by nanomedicine, nanophotonics and nanoelectronics. Some reported activity – primarily R&D – in more than one category.

Quebec accounted for the majority of research, followed by Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta. Expenditure on nanotechnology R&D totalled just over \$40 million in Canada in 2005, a 12% increase from 2004.

Although it is a relatively small sector at the moment (totalling approximately 280 people), nanotechnologies are believed to hold the ability to develop into the next transformative—or emerging—or disruptive—or platform—technology.

University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada

An article I researched and wrote for my Career magazine to help readers discover new career paths they may not have considered.


Soak Up Hunger

CH2M HILL

DESCRIPTION

Soak up hunger by eating nutritious meals
Choose building blocks from the four basic food groups

- * choose condensed milk and milk products for calcium and vitamin D to build strong shirt sleeves
- * choose ham, tuna, salmon, and crab for protein and omega-3 fatty acids to build solid eyes, mouth, shirt, pants, belt, and shoes
- * choose whole wheat pasta for energy boosting iron and fiber to build a regular spatula
- * and, choose corn for it's sweetness and minerals to build a huge sponge



Sample Employer Letter

Co-op Student of the Year Award
Co-operative Education, Trent Lane, Building #54
University of Guelph
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Dear Selection Committee,

It is my pleasure to support Jane Doe for the Co-op Student of the Year Award. Jane was a pleasure to work with during the past work term. Her demonstrated interpersonal skills, positive attitude, work ethic, ability to work independently and in a team environment, were very beneficial to our company.

Jane came to our company to work as a Communications Assistant. Her duties were diverse and challenging, as our intent was to have her experience as much about daily life as a Communications professional in the demanding world of software development as quickly as possible. This meant being prepared to carry out duties ranging from newsletter writing and production, to preparing and implementing Communication strategies, coordinating our regional promotional campaigns, and producing various confidential briefing notes and backgrounds for specific internal and external audiences.

For someone with limited Co-op experience and still in the early stages of her academic studies, it was expected to be a daunting task. However, she displayed enthusiasm, commitment and maturity that enabled her to handle these challenges with confidence. Jane quickly demonstrated that she is not only a quick learner, but that she is also an intelligent and skilled individual whose professional approach and attitude far exceed her age and education level. She was responsible for many achievements, including:

- Her first media strategy resulted in extensive international-wide media coverage, thanks to her creative approach and ability to identify key media hooks
- After only a few weeks, becoming familiar enough with our software to voluntarily take on the writing and production of our monthly staff newsletter, "*Enhance Your Team*". She enhanced the look and feel of our four-page document and, bringing the task in-house, saved the organization around \$2000 a month on consultant and design fees
- Participated in judging of awards for entries for our "Most Inventive" employee award alongside Communications professionals many years her senior
- Volunteered to head up the organization's 2007 software development investment campaign. Her efforts resulted in an increase of 100% in investments (\$16,000 up from \$8,500 the previous year)

Jane made an outstanding contribution to our company during her Co-op. Not only did she help us to achieve a number of efficiencies, such as those outlined above, she also earned the respect of many senior executives, department managers, and administration staff in our company.

Her fellow provincial Communicators also recognized her talent and achievements by naming her Student of the Year for their provincial association. This prestigious honour was the result of an extensive evaluation process by senior Communicators and others, and it is a testimony to her value to her Co-op employer.

Our confidence in her abilities is demonstrated by our willingness to welcome Jane into our Communications & Public Affairs team, should the opportunity arise. She is a bright, enthusiastic, and self-motivated individual who represents her employer in a proud and professional manner. Co-operative Education enhances our business by bringing new energy into our offices and our purpose in being a Co-op employer is to make Co-op experiences diverse and challenging so that it provides an honest look into the business in a demanding world.

We wish Jane well in this nomination, and believe she is certainly worthy of your prestigious honour.

Sincerely,

(*Include Signature)

Bob Nominator