



ENGR 020

Introduction to Professional Practice

Written By

**Natalia Heilke
Megan Jameson
Cindy Lowe**

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SECTION I
GETTING THE JOB

INTRODUCTION TO PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

◆◆ INTRODUCTION

This course is designed to provide you with the skills and confidence needed to be successful in your work search. In addition, it will help you to develop a sense of professionalism to complement your academic education. Along the way, you will be introduced to topics relevant to understanding the duties and responsibilities of a professional engineer.

This Co-op degree program is mandatory for students pursuing a degree in Electrical, Computer, Mechanical or Software Engineering. All undergraduate students must complete four work terms to graduate from the Faculty of Engineering. An optional program is available for graduate students: Master's students must complete two work terms and PhD students must complete three to graduate with Co-op distinction.

◆◆ GREATEST ENGINEERING ACHIEVEMENTS

Engineering is a challenging area of study, but also a highly rewarding one. Engineers have been responsible for many of the greatest achievements of the past century. These advances have changed the world in many ways, improving the quality of life for countless people and altering the way we travel, communicate and live. According to the National Academy of Engineering, the top ten engineering advances of the twentieth century are:

- Electrification
- Automobile
- Airplane
- Water Supply and Distribution
- Electronics
- Radio and Television
- Agricultural Mechanization
- Computers

- Telephone
- Air Conditioning and Refrigeration

◆◆ COURSE OUTCOME AND GOALS

This course will introduce you to the Co-operative Education model. You will learn how to use our on-line job posting system, how to write a well designed web-based resume and the fundamentals of writing a cover letter, and you will gain interview skills and techniques. In addition, we will present you with topics related to your work search and job skills. By the end of the course, you will have developed the skills necessary to be an effective employee, and will know what is meant by professionalism.

We will explain how our office works, introduce you to the staff who are here to help you, and detail the process you will follow to successfully attain and complete your work terms.

Throughout your degree program you will, of course, develop numerous technical skills by way of your course work. All engineering students acquire technical expertise in one of the engineering disciplines, a defining characteristic of students in the program and professionals in the field.

Along with technical expertise, engineers must be skilled in effective communication, teamwork, ethical decision-making, leadership and project management. These "soft" skills, necessary for your career as a professional engineer, will be developed through your Co-op work terms.

For this reason, it is recommended that you seek a Co-op job that will provide skills to complement your education. Try to think beyond salary and location. Those factors are important, but the duties and skills

you'll be taught on the job should be critical to your decision to apply.

◆◆ COURSE OUTLINE

This course is divided into the following units:

- Co-op as a Learning Model
- Skills Assessment
- Constructing Your Resume
- Constructing Your Cover Letter
- Interview Techniques
- Job Acceptance: Letters of Offer and Contracts
- Networking
- Ethical Decision Making
- Issues of Harassment and Discrimination
- Equity
- Work Safety
- Logbooks
- Portfolios

◆◆ A REMINDER

Please keep in mind that the Co-op office cannot guarantee you a job each work term. We will do our best to assist and give you all the necessary resources to find a job, but it is up to you to do the work to ensure that you have employment.

CO-OP AS A LEARNING MODEL

◆◆ CO-OP'S PURPOSE

Co-op at UVic involves alternating academic coursework with time in paid employment. However, UVic's Co-op is not simply a work experience program – it is also a learning model. Some characteristics of this model are:

- A basis in the philosophy that students learn best through active engagement in meaningful activities.
- Viewing students as active learners and producers of knowledge.
- Use of contextual learning and the application of knowledge to real world situations.
- Building partnerships between the University, students and outside entities.
- Integration of university experiences and external experiences.

As a UVic engineering student undertaking a Co-op work term, you will be engaged in a cutting-edge educational experience that is designed to give you a competitive advantage in the wide and volatile world of the workforce.

◆◆ CO-OP STRATEGIES

The UVic Co-op learning model draws upon the following educational strategies:

- Experiential learning
- Reflective practice
- Competency-based learning
- Situated learning and learning communities
- Evidence-based approaches to competence

People learn best by developing methods of learning that suit their environment and personality. Years of

studying various educational methods has shown that experiential learning is one of the most powerful ways for adults to pick up new knowledge and skills.

Think back to the last time you learned something really well – a time when you felt you understood a particular lesson at a deep level. What factors contributed to your success at acquiring that knowledge or skill? Did someone explain what you needed to know or do? Did someone show you how to do it? Did you spend time experimenting or try it for yourself? Did you pick it up quickly or did you have to persevere over time? Were there environmental factors that aided your learning at that time (i.e. quiet, music, other people, etc.)?

Your Co-op work term is an experiential learning strategy. It is founded on the belief that direct practical experience (i.e. knowledge by acquaintance) is just as important as knowing about something (i.e. classroom learning).

◆◆ REFLECTION

You may have noticed that experiential learning is a cyclical process. Reflection on the intended and unintended outcomes of learning is key to your ongoing personal and professional development. The Co-op learning model will provide you with strategies for engaging in useful reflection while undertaking your work term. Reflection is a key skill that you will use during your work term to:

- monitor how you are performing in your new role
- identify what tasks/roles you might perform in order to maximize your development opportunities
- relate your work term experience to your ongoing studies
- link your work term to your career building

Reflection is an active process. It is a way of witnessing your own experiences and exploring them in greater depth and detail. Reflection can be done in the midst of an activity or as an activity in and of itself. The key to reflection is learning to examine your experience, rather than just live it.

In Co-op, reflection is meant to support and foster learning through your work term experiences. Such experiences may include meetings, projects, mistakes and successes, challenging relationships, or any other internal or external events.

When reflecting on a particular experience, ask yourself the following questions:

- What have you learned from the experience? (Think in terms of challenges you have faced, clashes of values, skills or knowledge that you lack, the nature of success.)
- How has your experience changed how you might respond to a similar situation in the future?

◆◆ THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Although your engineering studies are extensive, they cannot hope to cover all of the competencies deemed important by the groups and communities with an interest in your professional development. This is why UVic offers the Co-op program. Work terms give you an opportunity to acquire some of these additional skills and competencies through direct interaction with the relevant learning communities.

Work terms will also help you to identify the skills and competencies that are important to a specific employer. You will be able to develop those skills through careful course selections or other education and training.

Involvement in multiple learning situations also exposes you to numerous and varied perspectives on the same issues. This will help you to develop critical thinking skills, which are highly regarded by most employers.

It is possible to be a passive participant in Co-op; you can simply apply for whatever jobs are available that have the highest salary, and accept the first job you are offered. However, you are more likely to enjoy and

benefit from Co-op if you take a more active role in the program.

◆◆ WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM A CO-OP JOB?

Students who have undertaken Co-op work terms in the past have indicated that it is important to decide up front what you want to gain from your work term. Past students have suggested that you ask yourself the following questions before getting started:

- What kind of industry do I want to work in?
- What skills do I want to develop?
- What would fit best with my interests and career plans?
- What would complement the courses I have taken and plan to take?
- What are my priorities in terms of location, type of work, learning opportunities, salary?

Once you have clarified what you want to gain from your Co-op work term, you should discuss the existing Co-op opportunities with your Co-op Coordinator. Do they fit with what you want? If you need more information about the nature of a specific work term opportunity, you may be able to consult with other students or alumni who have undertaken a work term in that area in the past, or with faculty who have worked or have an interest in the area.

In some cases you may, on your own initiative, find and negotiate a work term with an employer. While arranging your own work term position is encouraged, these jobs must be discussed with, and approved by, your Co-op Coordinator before they can be accepted as an official Co-op work term. Approval is contingent upon three elements, which apply equally to jobs identified within the mainstream program:

- The work term must represent a learning situation appropriate to your engineering discipline.
- You must be engaged in productive, paid work rather than merely observing others.
- Your performance must be supervised and formally evaluated by the employer in addition to the Co-op program's evaluation.

We hope you will enjoy your time in the Co-op program, and that you will work hard to receive the greatest possible benefit from your studies and your work terms.

SKILLS ASSESSMENT

◆◆ INTRODUCTION

Consider carefully: what do you know how to do? Are you trained in customer service? Do you have experience working as part of a team? Do you speak another language, know how to change the oil in a car, hold a First Aid certificate or have practice working with small children? These are all examples of skills.

Your cover letter and resume need to be positive portrayals of your background and what you know how to do; they need to communicate your skills, experience and education. They should “sell” you to an employer. So before you start writing either of those documents, sit down and make a list of all the marketable skills you have developed. These may come from previous jobs, university coursework, or even your hobbies and extracurricular activities.

It’s helpful to have these skills written down and close at hand while writing your cover letter and resume. Otherwise, you might find yourself staring at a blank screen in frustration, unable to remember all the specific skills you possess, or you may forget to list skills that could apply to a specific job. Either way, it’s important to have given the matter some thought beforehand.

Remember to keep your list updated with the new skills you acquire from classes and Co-op terms.

◆◆ SKILLS VS KNOWLEDGE

When applying for jobs, it’s important that you are able to differentiate between skills and knowledge.

Knowledge is something that can be acquired over time – learned. For example, understanding how to drive a car, or how to design and build a bookshelf.

Skills are the practical application of knowledge. They require attention, experience and feedback, and are developed over time, through practice. For example, actually driving a car or building a bookshelf.

You will acquire knowledge during your academic terms as you attend lectures, read your textbooks, complete labs and study for exams. Skills will be developed during your work terms as you apply your knowledge in the workplace.

◆◆ TYPES OF SKILLS

There are three main categories of skills that most interest employers and are transferable from job to job. The following list was adapted from The Conference Board of Canada’s Employability Skills 2000+.

1. Fundamental Skills

These are skills that provide the basic foundation for

getting, keeping and making progress in a job. They will help you achieve the highest possible results in your work.

Communication. This means the abilities to:

- Understand and speak the languages in which business is conducted.
- Write effectively in the languages in which business is conducted
- Listen, and understand and learn from what you hear
- Read, comprehend and use written materials, including graphs, charts and technical manuals

Thought. This includes the abilities to:

- Think critically and act logically to evaluate situations, solve problems and make decisions.
- Understand and solve mathematical problems and make use of the results
- Make effective use of the technology, instruments, tools and information systems available to you
- Access and apply specialized knowledge from various fields (i.e. skilled trades, technology, physical sciences, arts and social sciences)

Learning. This means that you:

- Continue to learn new things in a never-ending process of acquiring new knowledge and skills
- Access, analyze and apply knowledge and skills from various disciplines

2. Personal Management Skills:

This is the combination of skills, attitudes and behaviours that will be needed to get, keep and progress in a job.

Positive attitudes and behaviours. You will need to exhibit:

- Self-esteem and confidence
- Honesty, integrity and personal ethics
- A positive attitude toward learning, growth

and personal health

- Initiative, energy and persistence in order to get the job done

Responsibility. You must demonstrate:

- The ability to set goals and priorities in work and personal life
- The ability to plan and manage time, money and other resources
- Accountability for actions taken

Adaptability. This means showing:

- A positive attitude toward change
- The ability to identify and suggest new ideas to get the job done; exhibiting creativity

3. Teamwork Skills:

These are the skills necessary for working with others on a job. Employers look for someone who can:

- Work with others
- Understand and contribute to the organization's goals
- Understand and work within the culture of the group
- Make plans and decisions with others and support the outcomes
- Respect the thoughts and opinions of others in the group
- Compromise when necessary in order to achieve group results
- Seek a team approach, as appropriate
- Lead where appropriate, inspiring the group to perform well

◆◆ SKILLS ASSESSMENT

Now that you know a bit about the different kinds of skills, it's time to assess your own abilities.

This shouldn't be too difficult an exercise: you've done plenty of self-assessments before. Any decision you make based on your personal needs involves self-assessment: deciding what to eat for lunch, whether or not to sleep in on the weekend, or whether or not to

read this paragraph.

What we're asking you to do now is a similar kind of self-assessment, but one that involves your professional needs and abilities. Here is a systematic method of self-assessment that involves five major steps. We will discuss each of these steps briefly below.

- Understand your personal traits.
- Identify your personal values.
- Identify your personal interests.
- Recognize your abilities.
- Establish your long-term goals. (This includes recognizing what skills you want or need to develop, or develop further.)

Personal Traits

Are you social, reserved, curious, artistic, intellectual? These are all personality traits, and it's important when doing a job search to recognize your own traits and look for work that is in keeping with them. If you aren't particularly social, you're probably not well suited for a customer service job. If you're highly artistic, you may do well with design work.

Not surprisingly, research shows that those who find jobs in line with their personal traits will feel happier and more fulfilled. Finding a job that suits your traits will also make you more likely to enjoy and succeed at it.

Personal Values

What do you believe in? We're not talking about religion, necessarily, but about the principles that guide your actions, the qualities you feel are important and desirable. It is often difficult to pin down exactly what your personal values are, but it's an important step for a job search. Clarifying your own personal values will help you to find a job in line with those values, explain your

values to an employer, and will lead to greater career satisfaction.

Personal values may include things such as family, relationships, love, spirituality or religion. They may also include principles more commonly associated with the workplace, such as cooperation, knowledge, fiscal responsibility, attention to detail, autonomy and achievement.

Personal Interests

You may be noticing a bit of a pattern here. These steps all involve identifying the things you know, do, and value that already shape your personal life and the way you wish to do things. They identify important aspects of your personality that should be considered when looking for work.

Personal interests are exactly what they sound like: what do you like to do? What are you interested in learning more about, or in pursuing?

Work doesn't always fit exactly with personal interests, but that's part of what weekends and evenings (or whatever times you are not at work) are for. If you are an outdoors type of person but your job involves only indoor work, you may be able to spend your free time hiking, kayaking, or doing whatever outdoor activities

interest you. You will, however, want to make sure that your job allows for the free time you need for those kinds of activities. If you have a traditional family dinner every Sunday afternoon that you feel strongly about attending, but a particular job will require that you work Sunday afternoons, you may want to consider looking for a different position.

Abilities

This is more of what we talked about earlier:

skills assessment. You need to recognize both your

The website, as Karen scrolled down it, was full of job listings. She read each one carefully before deciding whether or not to apply. There was one position listed with a company in Montreal that looked perfect for her. The company valued cooperation, and the position fit with Karen's creative interests and desire to work as part of a design team. The only trouble was that, since it was in Montreal, Karen would be a long ways from her family, and the salary wasn't high enough to allow her to fly back very often. Karen's family was more important to her than anything else, especially now that her grandmother was so elderly, and plagued by health concerns.

Karen decided to keep looking.

own skills and those the employer is looking for, and be able to match them up. Figure out what skills you have that are specifically listed in the job description, and then determine which other skills you possess that, although they are not specifically asked for, may suit the job and benefit the employer.

Long-Term Goals

When looking for work, you need to be aware of what you want from a job in the short-term, but also further on down the road. If you want to one day design jet engines, you wouldn't try to land a job writing for a newspaper or doing web page layout. That's an extreme example, of course, but you get the idea. Look for a job that will send you in the right direction for what you want to do later on. Think of each Co-op job as a stepping stone to your future career.

In order to achieve long-term goals, you need to recognize what short-term goals must first be reached. What skills do you need to develop? Where and how can you develop them? What knowledge do you need to acquire, and how can you do this?

This is especially important in the current job market, which is increasingly volatile and detailed. There are few one-job, one-employer careers these days, and research suggests that today's graduates can expect to change jobs 10 to 40 times during their lives. This means that you need to be crystal clear about your career goals and how to achieve them, or they may be lost in the shuffle.

◆◆ LAST WORDS

Once you have finished your skills assessment, you'll be ready to get started with your job search and with writing your resume and cover letter. The more thorough you are about your self-assessment, the more likely you are to find a job that suits you and to write a strong resume and cover letter that will best help you to get that job.

◆◆ FURTHER RESOURCES

For further information and helpful tips on skills assessment and work search techniques, visit the UVic Career Services website at: <http://www.careerservices.uvic.ca/resources/index.html>.

The Co-op Curriculum website also has further information on these topics at <http://mycoop.coop.uvic.ca/curriculum/welcome.html>. There, you will explore each of these steps in more detail. As you work through the modules, you might like to record your reflections, as well as any decisions that you make in relation to your Co-op work term preferences or your broader career planning. A worksheet, Word/Excel document or journal divided into sections with headings similar to those shown below would be ideal for this purpose.

RESUMES

◆◆ INTRODUCTION TO RESUME WRITING

A strong, effective resume is pivotal to a successful work search. It is a self-marketing tool that you use to get an interview and ultimately, a job. Your resume presents your academic background, skills, relevant knowledge and prior work experience to potential employers; it should be an honest reflection of yourself and your experiences.

Your resume is meant first and foremost to tell an employer who you are and what you know. In effect, it's an advertisement;

it should attract attention, create interest, and encourage the viewer to contact you. The ultimate goal of a resume is to get you an interview.

A well constructed and effective resume should put you in your best light, while also focusing on the needs of the employer. To continue with the analogy of a resume being an advertisement, we all know that people generally buy the best advertised product, not necessarily the best product. If your resume is poorly presented, it may be discarded without being read.

Here's something worth remembering: the average employer takes only 15 to 30 seconds to initially scan a resume. So you've got 15 to 30 seconds of their attention to make a strong positive impression and get them to keep reading. You need to make that strong

impression since, on average, out of every 200 resumes an employer receives, they will only grant an interview for one of those resumes.

◆◆ CREATING YOUR RESUME

Begin by doing a self-assessment. Make a list of your strengths, values, skills and experiences.

Obtain detailed information on the types of jobs you are looking for, and make sure that your skill set

matches these jobs. You will need to tailor your resume to the particular job you are applying for, highlighting your best points generally, along with those aspects of your personality and background that best match the needs of the specific employer.

Decide what type of resume you are going to write: chronological, skills-based chronological, or functional. (These

types will be detailed later on.)

Prepare a template resume using these basic headings:

- Contact Information
- Objective
- Summary Statement
- Education
- Project Work
- Skills (Technical and Transferable)

Mei flipped through the stack of papers beside her computer. She had pulled out her file folder of information about past jobs, performance reviews, letters of reference and old awards and certificates before she started, so she wouldn't have to get up and look for things. She needed to get this resume written so she could start on her cover letters. It was a bit of a chore, sorting through all this stuff and figuring out how to translate it into two pages of glowing self-advertisement. But Mei thought about the part where she wouldn't be working at Safeway anymore, and that was enough to get her going. The prospect of a job that was in line with her studies and interests, a job that would never require her to remember the product code for bananas ever again, was exciting.

- Work History
- Volunteer Experience
- Activities/Hobbies
- References

Contact Information

This includes your name, local and permanent addresses, telephone number, cell phone number and email address. Be sure to use an email address with a professional format. Some addresses (i.e. Accounts for hottie3000@hotmail.com or baby_bumblebee@yahoo.com) don't give a good impression to prospective employers.

If you include your personal website, be sure that the material on your site is suitable for an employer to see. Students have been turned down for jobs because material on their site was considered inappropriate by the employer who viewed it. If in doubt, simply don't include the website on your resume.

Objective

This is an optional heading. Some employers like to know a student's specific job interests. Others feel it adds nothing to the resume and is unnecessary.

Should you choose to include your objective, state your goal in terms of what you can do for an employer, not what you want an employer to do for you.

Avoid expressions such as "...where I can use my knowledge and skills to expand my expertise in..." Focus instead on the skills you can bring to the employer. For example: "...where I can use my recent academic skills and knowledge to help the company keep up with current technology in the area of..."

Summary of Qualifications / Skills Summary

This section is also optional. It can provide a concise overview of your qualifications as they relate to your objective. This is where you want to interest the employer in the competitive advantage you bring. Include four to six points outlining your most relevant strengths. Describe your competitive advantage – the value you offer. Consider:

- A summary of experience that relates to your

job objective (i.e. one year's experience in web design).

- A description of your working knowledge of specific components of the job (i.e. project planning, Java, C++).
- An outline of skills you possess that will help you to perform the job effectively (i.e. problem-solving, communication, time management).
- Any academic background that complements your practical experience (i.e. computer graphics).
- Personal characteristics and attitudes required for the position you are seeking (i.e. reliability, creativity, ability to work under pressure, attention to detail, flexibility, enthusiasm).
- Your work experience, volunteer and/or extracurricular activities in terms of duration, scope, accomplishments, etc. If you lack relevant experience, emphasize such skills as interpersonal, organizational, supervisory, etc.
- Fluency in a language other than English.

Education

Always start with your most recent term at UVic.

As you progress through your degree program, indicate your anticipated graduation year. Employers like to know when you will finish your degree.

Any other degrees and/or schools should be listed in reverse chronological order. High school records should be removed after a couple of years at university, as they are no longer relevant unless you received a prestigious scholarship towards post-secondary education.

Project Work

- Technical reports, proposals and professional presentations
- Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint
- Lab assignments related to the position you're applying to

Skills (Technical and Transferable)

This section is critical to students in engineering and computer science. You want to list the skills you have that will match the employer's needs.

Here you will list your computer skills, including programming languages, databases, and skills in hardware, web design and development.

Engineering students should add skills in shop work, design, CAD and electronics. If you are including a skills summary section as well, be sure not to duplicate information here.

Here are some examples of information you may include:

Electronics & Electrical:

- Analog/digital circuit design, analysis and assembly
- Digital signal processing
- PID controls
- Canadian Electrical Code
- Single phase and three phase Wye and Delta circuit analysis
- Power factor correction

Computer & Database:

- Object Oriented Analysis and Design Principles
- Java, Swing, C, Perl, C++, HTML
- Programming and design software: AutoCad, ProCad (AutoElectric), Matlab, Eclipse, RSLogix5, RSLinx, ETAP, PSpice, Multi-Sim, Substation Explorer, ASE2000
- Windows and Linux operating systems

Mechanical Skills:

- SolidWorks 2006, 2007 and add-ons
- AutoCad 2000, 2004, and 2005 in 2D and 3D
- VectorWorks 7, 8, 9 and 10
- AutoDesk Inventor R9 and Ansys Workbench 10
- Trained in geometric dimensioning and tolerancing standards
- CNC milling and turning, including 4 and 5-axis milling and live tooling
- Laser scanning (ranging and triangulating)

and calibration

- Stress/strain field analysis, CAM, FEA, fluid mechanics, heat/mass transfer, linkages, cams, bearings and gear trains in ongoing studies

Here are some examples of transferable skills:

- Leadership
- Customer Service
- Bookkeeping / Reconciling Cash
- Supervision
- Training / Teaching
- Managing
- Analyzing
- Research
- Teamwork
- Presentation

Work Experience

This is a key section for every resume. This is where employers look for experience and skills relevant or related to the position. For each entry in this section, always include:

- The name and location of the company
- Your position title
- The period of employment
- A brief summary of the duties you performed
- Your level of responsibility
- Any noteworthy achievements on the job

When summarizing your job duties, avoid using a large amount of technical jargon; initial resume screenings may be done by a Human Resources representative without technical expertise and knowledge of acronyms.

The way you describe your work experience depends on the type of resume you have chosen: chronological, modified chronological or functional. These three styles are detailed in the next section.

Important aspects of your work experience list include:

- Visual appeal, easy to read: your resume should present a positive professional image and be easy and inviting to read.

- The most important and relevant information is placed on the first page.
- No errors! Edit to ensure there are no mistakes in spelling, punctuation or grammar. Some employers will immediately discard a resume with these errors.
- The format is concise, well-organized, focused and results-oriented. Your resume will expand over time, but keep it down to two pages.
- Key points can be picked up with a quick skim.
- Skills (job-specific and transferable) and accomplishments are stressed. Explanations of results or successes are provided where possible.

In addition to the key elements listed above, consider the following:

Content: Does the resume speak to the employer's needs? Does it support your stated objective? Be sure to stress skills and accomplishments, especially as they apply to the specific job!

Language: Use professional language that is clean, concise, and free of any errors. Employ action verbs and use short phrases and succinct points rather than long sentences.

Volunteer Experience

Employers like to know that you have a human side, that you do useful, positive things in your free time. Unpaid work can be a key factor in getting an interview. Students with few or no technical skills often volunteer for organizations in need of computer help desk staff in order to gain the experience needed for that first step into paid employment.

Activities and Hobbies

Do you have a life? Employers look at this section to search for high-energy employees. They want to know if you do anything besides studying and surfing the internet.

This is the place to list any sports you play, particular interests and passions apart from or related to your field of study. Don't include your passionate interest in Seinfeld or Canadian Idol.

James fidgeted at his computer. He wanted to get this done. Let's see, name and contact info, education, skills, work experience, references – that was it. He ran a quick spell check and saved. His resume was just one page, but that was good, right? And he'd gotten the pertinent information down. It was nice and plain and simple and James was sure it would be fine, and anyway now he had time to play some Halo before he met up with his girlfriend for dinner. Oh, and a cover letter. Oops, he'd forgotten that part. Well, he could just use the cover letter template he'd written for class and fill in the employer's name and all that stuff. No need to get fancy. Probably employers got tons of these a day, and really what more did they need to know than his name and that he was part of the Co-op program? That should be enough to get him hired.

Some recruiters will look at this section to see if a student is enthusiastic about their field. For example, if they want to hire a mechanical engineering student, they may look for someone who works on cars or engines. Employers may look for indications of creativity, mathematical ability, etc. Do you play a musical instrument? Paint? Bake pies from scratch?

Be sure to list any associations or clubs you belong to and, if relevant, your position within the club.

◆◆ ONE LAST REMINDER

It can't be emphasized enough: you must tailor your resume to the job you are applying for.

Each job review requires a specific set of skills and competencies. By focusing your resume on the individual job, you will be able to present yourself more positively to your potential employer. You will also indicate to them that you have done your research and know some of the specific requirements of the particular job.

Tailoring your resume may require something as minor as re-ordering your technical skills list or your headings to place the focus on those aspects of your resume most pertinent to the job. Or it may require more in-depth editing, possibly a complete rewrite of

your duties at a former job.

The more you can do to highlight the skills and experience that match the employer's wish list, the more likely you are to be put on the shortlist of candidates.

◆◆ FINAL STEPS

Go through your resume, making sure you haven't left out anything important. Have you presented the information clearly? Is it concise and to the point? Remember: your resume should be brief: no longer than two pages.

Be sure that you have told the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Leaving out important information can greatly decrease your chances of being hired. Similarly, any deceptions are likely to be discovered and when they are, they will lose you the job.

If you are submitting your resume electronically, the formatting may be altered. You can avoid this by saving your resume as a pdf. The pdf format also ensures that your resume cannot be altered.

Always proofread your resume for grammatical and spelling errors!

Assignment

◆◆ THE JOB: WRITING A RESUME

Stadacona Engineering, a local company, is looking to hire a junior engineer for a four month Co-op term. The position has been posted by Chris Lawrence, the company's hiring manager. Mr. Lawrence is accepting resumes by mail, fax or email until the end of the week, at which time he will review all submissions and begin the interviewing process.

Read the job posting on the next page for details about the position.

◆◆ THE APPLICATION

You decide to apply for the position with Stadacona Engineering. In MyCoop, design a resume and submit it as part of your application for the position of Junior Engineer at Stadacona Engineering.

At the end of the week, Mr. Lawrence has received five resumes, one of which is yours. Mr. Lawrence intends to shortlist three of the candidates for interviews. Because you have some kind of awesome psychic power, you are able to see the resumes Mr. Lawrence has received (pp. 18-23), and read them for yourself.

Review your resume and the other four resumes using the chart on the following page and the template on page 17. Rate each student on the qualifications outlined in the templates, then determine which students you would interview.

Stadacona Engineering Major Projects Group

Junior Engineer: 4 month Co-op position

Stadacona is a leader in the engineering industry, made up of a talented team of dedicated and energetic professionals. We are a company with global connections and a commitment to ethics and sustainability, and we offer our employees opportunities for career advancement worldwide.

The Position

We are looking for an engineering student who has completed at least one year of engineering studies to join the Major Projects Group based in our Vancouver office. The position would be of interest to students who wish to pursue a career in Project Engineering/Management.

The position will provide exposure to various aspects of project execution including engineering, procurement, contracts and construction.

Duties and Responsibilities

The position will provide support to the current

efforts of the Vancouver utilities project team with mentorship/leadership being provided by the area Project Manager and Project Engineers.

Duties will be varied and could include:

- Support preparation of month-end and adhoc reports.
- Evaluation and progression of various technical problems to recommendation/resolution.
- Coordination of various programs or activities as assigned by the Project Engineer.
- Various duties assigned by the Project Engineer.

Qualifications

The successful candidate is a first or second year engineering student who is a proactive team member and demonstrates superior interpersonal skills, as well as analytical and problem solving capabilities. The candidate should have excellent writing and computer skills, including experience with common office application software. Preferred disciplines include mechanical, electrical, software and computer engineering.

NAME	Professional Format	Spelling and Grammar	Appropriate Headers	Bullets Use Action Verbs	Technical Skills Section	Maximum of 2 pages
YOU						
James						
Liam						
Mei						
Shelly						

JAMES FLANNERTY

Email: jamesflann@uvic.ca
3423 Empress St.
Victoria BC
V8W 3P4
Phone: 250-472-5009

EDUCATION

Computer Engineering
University of Victoria
Victoria BC

WORK EXPERIENCE

Service Attendant
Shell Gas Station, Victoria BC
May 2007 - present
Fill customer's gas tanks, checked oil levels and tire pressure
Fix flat tires
Wash windows
Handle cash
Train new staff

COMPUTER SKILLS

MS Word and Excel, Windows 97-2004
AutoCad
Java, C++
Troubleshooting experience in Windows systems

ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS

Downhill skiing
Aikido
Sports journalism

REFERENCES

Adam Soykut
Phone: 250-585-3881

Kathy Lang
Phone: 250-473-8939

LIAM TOWNSEND

E-MAIL: LITOWNSEND@UVIC.CA
201-1142 PEARSON RD, VICTORIA BC, V8R 4W7
PHONE: (250) 721-1721

EDUCATION

Electrical Engineering, 1st year: September 2008 - present

University of Victoria

Victoria BC

Oak Bay High School: September 2004 - June 2008

Victoria BC

Honors student

> G.P.A. – 9.00

AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

- Passport to Education: 2007
- Dean's Entrance Scholarship

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Electronics & Electrical

- Microsoft Office suite, including Word, Excel and Powerpoint
- Technical report writing
- Proficient in C and C++ programming
- Website Development
- AutoCAD

WORK EXPERIENCE

Sales Associate at Rogers Wireless

July 2008 - present

Victoria BC

Duties include:

- Customer service
- Detailed knowledge of Rogers Wireless merchandise
- Troubleshooting; helping customers solve technical problems
- Handling/reconciling cash
- Keeping the store clean and organized at all times

Builder for Deitrich's Decking

July – August 2006, July – August 2007

Victoria BC

Duties included:

- Building decks as part of a team
- Ensuring the highest quality of work
- Ensuring safety at all times in the workplace

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Students for Literacy

September 2007-present

Victoria BC

Responsibilities:

- Help kids with reading and other homework
- Lead activities with kids, one on one and in groups

ACTIVITIES & INTERESTS

I enjoy reading and photography, and have had several of my photos displayed in local exhibits of student photography. I am also an experienced kayaker.

REFERENCES

Steve Landen

Store Manager

Rogers Wireless

Victoria BC

Phone: (250) 984-0861

Elizabeth Waters

Professor of mechanical engineering

University of Victoria

Victoria BC

Phone: (250) 721-1277

Email: ebwaters@uvic.ca

Mei Lau

Email: mlau@uvic.ca

Current address:

Margaret Newton 017
UVic Student Residences
PO Box 2100 STN CSC
Victoria, BC
Phone: (250) 577-0891

Permanent Address:

967 Prospect Ave. V7R 2M5
Qualicum Beach, BC
Phone: (604) 985-3042

Education:

- Sept. 2008 – present: University of Victoria, Electrical Engineering

Relevant Studies & Skills:

- Proficiency in MS Office
- Experience with AutoCAD
- Programming in Java
- Technical report writing
- Website development

Transferable Skills:

- Customer Service
- Teamwork
- Organizational skills
- Strong oral and written communication skills
- Fluent in Mandarin
- Competent oral and written French

Work Experience:

Cashier / Busser

Grouse Resorts Ltd, Qualicum Beach, BC
Nov. 2006 – Aug. 2008

- Handled and reconciled cash
- Provided strong customer service
- Ensured cleanliness in the restaurant

Cashier

Safeway, Qualicum Beach, BC

July 2006 – October 2006

- Handled and Reconciled cash
- Provided strong customer service
- Memorized product codes
- Performed cleaning duties

Desk Clerk

SunLand Tanning Salon, Qualicum Beach, BC

July 2005 – August 2005

- Handled and Reconciled cash
- Kept store clean and tanning beds sanitary
- Provided strong customer service

Hobbies & Interests:

- Competitive swimming
- Debate (Captain of my high school debate team)
- Travel and international studies

Volunteer Experience:***BMO Vancouver Marathon Volunteer***

BMO Bank of Montreal, Vancouver, BC

May 2005, 2006, and 2007

- Worked at a water station and handed out food to runners

References:***Patty McCallister***

Restaurant Manager, Grouse Resorts Ltd.

Phone: (250) 752-2022

Email: patmccal@shaw.ca

Sylvia Perkins

Front End Manager, Safeway

Phone: (250) 752-9306

Shelly Gordon

(250) 588-8410 · shgordon@uvic.ca

165 Linden Ave. · Victoria BC V8V 3C1

Profile

I am a first-year student looking for an engaging and rewarding Co-op term. I have experience in busy work environments. I am good with at taking initiative and multi-tasking. I am highly organized and have an eye for detail.

Education

- First-year standing in mechanical engineering at UVic
 - Graduated with honors from St. Margaret's School
 - Some written and spoken German
-

Work Experience

Store clerk, Reitman's, Victoria BC June -- August 2008

- Kept the store clean and organized
- Helpd customers find things
- Ran the cash register

Store Clerk, Ian's Ice Cream Parlour, Fergus ON June – August 2007

- Served customerss
- Cleaned all areas of the store
- Ran the cash register

Babysiter, various employers, Fergus ON September 2004 – May 2008

- Took care of children of all ages
 - Made up craft projects and played games
 - Made meals
-

Refrences

Janelle Flint
Tel: (250) 881-4438

Ian Moores
Tel: (519) 321-4590
Email: ianmoores@hotmail.com

COVER LETTERS

◆◆ INTRODUCTION

They may seem a nuisance to write, but cover letters are pivotal in the job search process – a key to getting interviews. Your cover letter is your first contact with a potential employer, and is meant to convince them that you have the skills, experience, and enthusiasm they are looking for. With your cover letter, you want to convince employers to read your resume and consider you for an interview.

The trick to writing an effective cover letter lies in understanding what the employer is looking for. Figure this out before you start writing and incorporate into your letter information and experience pertinent to the specific job. You should be able to determine the tasks and skills required by doing a careful read-through of the employer's job listing. You can also look for online information about the employer; find out what the company does and for whom, what kinds of people they hire, what their values are. Look for a mission statement.

Even if your skills are not an exact match for the position, you can still choose to apply. Employers generally ask for the skills and qualities of an ideal candidate, but they know that there is rarely a perfect match, and are prepared to interview the best fit.

Depending on the field, interest in the position and willingness to learn can make up for a lack of specific qualifications.

◆◆ THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Your cover letter should be formatted as a formal business letter.
- Your opening paragraph should indicate why you are writing the letter.
- The body of the letter should let the employ-

er know what skills you will bring to the job (as opposed to what you will learn).

◆◆ COVER LETTER STYLES

There are two different ways to format a formal letter: block style and modified block style.

Block Style

With this format, all text is justified to the left.

Your Street Address
City and Province
Postal Code

Date

Employer's Name
Employer's Address

Dear Employer,

Introduction: why you are writing.

Body of Letter: what makes you special.

Closing: thank the employer, provide your contact information.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Your Name Here

Modified Block Style

With this format, the header and valediction (closing) are centered on the page.

<p>Your Street Address City and Province Postal Code Date</p>
<p>Employer's Name Employer's Address</p>
<p>Dear Employer,</p>
<p>I am writing to apply for X position...</p>
<p>This is why I would be an excellent fit for the job....</p>
<p>Thank you for taking the time to look at my application...</p>
<p>Sincerely,</p>
<p>(Signature)</p>
<p>Your Name Here</p>

◆◆ PARTS OF YOUR LETTER

Organization is pivotal when writing a cover letter; you need the employer to know that you can order your thoughts and present yourself well. Your cover letter should be written in a series of short paragraphs that present the pertinent information in a neat and clear manner. Follow these guidelines for the various sections of your letter:

Introduction

This is where you explain why you are writing. Name the position you are applying for, the company and how you heard about it.

The season of job hunting had begun. Alissa Ralston's fingers tapped out a meandering sort of rhythm on the wood of her desk while she thought about how to start her letter to Davis Electronics. She had found this job on the MyCo-op website, and she thought it looked perfect for her first Co-op term. Maybe that was all she really needed to say. Alissa typed:

Dear Sir or Madam,

Please accept my application for the Co-op position of Junior Engineer with Davis Electronics. As a first-year engineering student at the University of Victoria, I saw your job posting on the MyCo-op website, and am highly interested in this position.

Body of the Letter

The body of your letter should be two or three paragraphs long, and should tell the employer about the skills and abilities you possess that match their job description. This is your opportunity to advertise your best and most applicable skills and qualities.

Do not use this section to tell the employer what you will learn if you get the job. (They can probably figure that out themselves anyway.)

Prepare for writing your letter by going through the job posting and underlining the key skills and tasks described. The most important of these are usually listed first. Then begin writing about your academic and work background, highlighting skills that match those from the job description.

Be sure to give specific examples from your previous work experience. Don't just say you have particular skills without providing an example.

Keep in mind that if you don't have technical work experience, you can list examples from your university course work and labs.

You may also want to use examples from volunteer work and hobbies, or activities and associations you are involved in (i.e. ESS or a sports team). These can

demonstrate specific knowledge, as well as an interest in using your time well or the ability to work as part of a team.

Read the job description carefully: If you don't have a particular skill the employer has listed, don't talk about it. Keep your letter positive and focused on the job – write only about the skills you have that apply to the specific job, and don't mention anything negative.

Brendan frowned as he scanned the job posting for a computer programmer. There was a long list of requirements, a number of which he lacked. For one thing, he didn't have two years of professional experience. But he had logged a lot of hours in the lab at school, and maybe that would count for something. He also had a few abilities that weren't listed that he thought could pertain to the job. Several of the requirements he did meet, like knowledge of C++ and Java and experience with website development. He'd mention the programming he'd done on the side for the bookstore, where his boss hadn't known the first thing about computers. Brendan had only been hired on as a desk clerk, but he'd ended up spending about half his time in the back, working on putting inventory into the computer and writing a new program to access all the necessary information.

Closing

Tell the employer what happens next. It is completely appropriate and even recommended to request an interview, and suggest that you would like to meet in order to further demonstrate the skills and qualities you have talked about in your application. Do this tactfully and tastefully, of course.

Be sure to mention how the employer can most easily contact you. If you give them your phone number, you may want to say when you will be available to answer their call.

Sign Your Letter

Finish the letter with "Yours Truly," "Sincerely" or "Respectfully Yours."

Leave four line spaces for your signature (unless you are sending the application by email), and type your name at the bottom.

◆◆ ALL ABOUT "I"

This is one of those tips for writing well that can be difficult to follow, but will drastically improve the quality of your cover letter. Avoid using "I" over and over again. It's hard not to do, since in a way the letter is all about you: what you can do for the company, why you want to work for them, etc.

You want to avoid overusing "I" for a couple of reasons. For one, it may make the employer think that you are more interested in your own needs than in being a good employee for the company. The second reason is simply that it's poor writing. The sound of that repeating "I, I, I" is annoying, a bit like an alarm or a whiny child. Also, it demonstrates a lack of creativity and strong writing skill on your part, an inability to write something different or rephrase a sentence.

It's not always easy to eliminate "I"s from a cover letter, but here are a couple of ways to go about it:

Talk about things a bit more abstractly. This doesn't mean be vague, it just means removing yourself a little ways from what you're saying. For example: instead of saying, "I want to be an engineer because I feel it is a fascinating field of study that can benefit the environment," try, "Engineering is a fascinating field of study that has potential for great environmental benefits."

Another trick is simply to rephrase. Take out the "I" and find a new subject for your sentence. For example, instead of "Due to my university studies, I have been trained in technical report writing," say, "My university studies have provided me with training in technical report writing."

You're still there, in the "me" form, but at least there's a visual and audio change from that "I," and you demonstrate varied and adaptable writing skills.

◆◆ THINGS TO CHECK

Here is a list of important things to go over once you have written your cover letter:

- Have you addressed a specific person at the beginning of your letter? Whenever possible, it is best to address a person rather than a title, particularly a person who is in a position to make a hiring decision. For example: "Dear Mr. Lawrence" instead of "To the Hiring Manager."
- Does your letter say why you are writing – to apply for a job, follow up on an interview, etc?
- Have you tailored your letter to the specific job, the specific reader? This shows that you have done your homework, and know what the job is about.
- If the job is for four or eight months, have you indicated in your letter what length of time you are available for?
- Have you included information relevant to the job you are applying for? Make sure your most qualifying experience is highlighted. On the flip side, have you avoided listing irrelevant responsibilities or job titles?
- Did you mention your education, and is it relevant to the job description? List specific courses that relate to the job.
- Have you mentioned your achievements, problems or conflicts you successfully solved in your academic or work background?
- Have you asked for the next step in the process (such as an interview) clearly and without sounding either arrogant or apologetic?
- Does your letter avoid sounding stuffy while still maintaining a professional air? You want to come across as friendly and approachable, while keeping within the boundaries of a formal letter.
- Have you kept it concise and to the point? A one-page letter is sufficient – don't go overboard.
- And last but absolutely not least: Have you proofread your letter and eliminated all errors in grammar and spelling?

Ask a friend, roommate, parent or teacher to look over your cover letter and resume. They may find mistakes you didn't notice.

◆◆ PROOFREAD YOUR LETTER

We've said it before and we'll say it again, because it's that important: make sure that your letter has no grammatical or spelling errors. Everyone makes them, so edit every time to ensure that your letter is clean and correct. After all, it's hard to take someone seriously when they don't spell things correctly, and you wouldn't want a potential employer to discard your application just because you forgot to proofread.

Tips for Editing and Proofreading

- Have someone else look over your cover letter and resume. Sometimes a second, fresh set of eyes will notice errors that you don't. They may also have useful formatting suggestions.
- Print a hard copy. You will often notice errors on the printed page that your eye skips over when reading on the computer screen.

Assignment

◆◆ THE JOB: WRITING A COVER LETTER

You recall the job posting from Stadacona Engineering for which you wrote a resume? It's now time to write a cover letter to complete your application for the position. Remember to tailor your letter to the specific job description and company. See the pages following this assignment for a cover letter template and for information on Stadacona Engineering, their mission statement and address. Also, here is the job description once again for you to refer to:

Stadacona Engineering Major Projects Group

Junior Engineer: 4 month Co-op position

Stadacona is a leader in the engineering industry, made up of a talented team of dedicated and energetic professionals. We are a company with global connections and a commitment to ethics and sustainability, and we offer our employees opportunities for career advancement worldwide.

The Position

We are looking for an engineering student who has completed at least one year of engineering studies to join the Major Projects Group based in our Vancouver office. The position would be of interest to students who wish to pursue a career in Project Engineering/Management. The position will provide exposure to various aspects of project execution including engineering, procurement, contracts and construction.

Duties and Responsibilities

The position will provide support to the current efforts of the Vancouver utilities project team with mentorship/leadership being provided by the area Project Manager and Project Engineers.

Duties will be varied and could include:

- Support preparation of month-end and adhoc reports.
- Evaluation and progression of various technical problems to recommendation/resolution.
- Coordination of various programs or activities as assigned by the Project Engineer.
- Various duties assigned by the Project Engineer.

Qualifications

The successful candidate is a first or second year engineering student who is a proactive team member and demonstrates superior interpersonal skills, as well as analytical and problem solving capabilities. The candidate should have excellent writing and computer skills, including experience with common office application software. Preferred disciplines include mechanical, electrical, software and computer engineering.

◆◆ THE APPLICATION

At the end of the week, Mr. Lawrence has received five resumes, which you have already looked at. Along with each resume, he received a cover letter (pp. 33-36), one of which is yours. Look over each letter and rate it using the chart on the following page, along with the cover letter template on page 30.

Consider the application of each candidate, combining your reviews of the resumes with your reviews of the cover letters, and decide which students should be called in for an interview.

NAME	Professional Layout	Letter Targeted to Job	Opening: Why you are writing	Spelling and Grammar	Demonstrates Relevant Skills	RATE OUT OF FIVE
YOU						
James						
Liam						
Mei						
Shelly						

Your street address
City and Province
Postal Code

Date of writing

Employer's Name (If this isn't in the job posting, you may be able to get the
Company Name information online or by phoning)
Address
City and Province
Postal Code

Dear Mr./Ms. (insert name of employer),

Introduction: State your reason for writing. Name the company and the position for which you are applying, and say how you heard about the job.

Body of the letter: Tell the employer what you can do for them. This is the place for you to outline your skills as they apply to the job. Be specific. Demonstrate that you know something about the position for which you are applying. Show the employer why you are the best candidate for the job.

Use action verbs (i.e. planned, organized, completed) to describe your skills. These are stronger words that will stand out and give your letter life.

When answering an advertisement, be sure to make it clear (by specifically talking about them) that you have the qualifications listed in the ad (i.e. academic specifications, skills, qualities, etc.).

Refer to your attached resume; you don't want it getting lost in the shuffle.

Closing: Tell the employer what happens next. Express your interest in an interview, ask for an application form (if applicable), give your phone number* or email address. In short, offer a suggestion for an immediate and favourable reply.

Yours Truly / Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your Name (Typed)

Enclosure (indicates your resume is attached)

*If you tell the employer to contact you by phone, you may wish to indicate the times you will be available to answer calls.

WELCOME TO STADACONA ENGINEERING!

Based in Victoria BC, our company designs, manufactures and distributes specialty engineered products to clients worldwide. We are a dynamic team of talented and energetic professionals working globally to make a difference.

Working for Stadacona Engineering

Our employees enjoy the benefits of working for a company with global connections. We collaborate with other companies in order to share best practices, foster business development, and provide employees with broad career advancement options.

What we believe

Stadacona Engineering places great emphasis upon the following areas:

Safety Leadership

We have a responsibility to protect ourselves and others from harm; safety should never be compromised for any reason. Personal accountability and prevention practices are the first steps to ensuring the safety of all.

People & Relationships

Open communication, respect and integrity are the keys to creating a positive workplace environment. Employee interactions are based on mutual trust and respect. This helps our employees to interact in an effective and constructive manner, encouraging them to do their best.

High Performance

Never satisfied with the status quo, we continually strive to set a new standard that exceeds our own past performances.

Sustainability

It is our responsibility to protect the planet. To that end, we seek a balance between long-term economic and social benefits to our stakeholders, and minimal impact on our environment.

Accountability

We understand that we are part of a whole; our actions impact co-workers as well as our business partners and stakeholders. Willingness to take responsibility for the results of our work will add value to our company and allow us to make a difference.

Contact Us

Stadacona Engineering
2188 Fort St.
Victoria BC V8V 3K5
Phone: (250) 480-5772
Fax: (250) 372-5772

March 20, 2009

Stadacona Engineering
2188 Fort St.
Victoria BC V8V 3K5

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm applying for the junior engineer Co-op job with your company. I'm a great candidate for the job. I'm taking computer engineering at UVic, and I have a lot of experience with computers, as you can see from my resume. I'm always willing to learn new things and I'm a hard worker and always help do things as a team.

Thanks for looking at my application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Flannerty', with a stylized flourish at the end.

James Flannerty

Resume attached

201-1142 Pearson Rd.
Victoria BC
V8R 4W7

12 March 2009

Chris Lawrence
Stadacona Engineering
2188 Fort St.
Victoria BC V8V 3K5

Dear Mr. Lawrence,

I am writing to you in regard to your job posting of a four month Co-op position for a junior engineer. As a first year student in the University of Victoria's electrical engineering program, I am highly interested in this position.

My studies in electrical engineering have provided me with training technical report writing and in C and C++ programming. I am also proficient in MS Office and AutoCAD, and have experience in website development. Past job experience has helped me to develop skills in customer service, organization, teamwork and effective communication. I have an eye for detail, am good at taking initiative, and enjoy a fast-paced work environment where value is placed on high quality work.

My ability to work as part of a team and my interest in acquiring new knowledge and skills would make me a strong part of your team. I feel that this job would both utilize my current skill set as well as help me to develop new abilities.

I look forward from hearing from you at your convenience. I can be reached by email, or at (250) 721-1721. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liam Townsend', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Liam Townsend

Find my resume enclosed.

Margaret Newton 017
Victoria BC
STN CSC

March 10, 2009

Chris Lawrence
Hiring Manager
Stadacona Engineering
2188 Fort St.
Victoria BC
V8V 3K5

Dear Mr. Lawrence,

I have always had a deep interest in technology, and am now a student in the field of mechanical engineering. It is with this background that I submit my application for your position of Junior Engineer, as posted on the University of Victoria Co-op site. I believe with my enthusiasm and motivation for success in my area of study, I would be an excellent candidate for this job.

I am currently in my first year of studies at the University of Victoria, where I have developed skills in AutoCAD and C programming, and expertise in MS Word and Excel. My previous work experience as a cashier has provided me with strong organizational and communication skills, as well as experience in busy work environments. My position as captain of my high school debate team taught me excellent interpersonal skills and how to work as part of a group.

With my experience in computer applications, combined with my studies in the field of engineering, I would be an excellent candidate for this position. I feel that my personal and academic background would be a good match with Stadacona Engineering's focus on high performance and strong working relationships.

Thank you for taking the time to view my application. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future, and can be reached evenings and weekends at (250) 577-0891.

Yours Truly,



Mei Lau

Please find resume attached.

165 Linden Ave.
Victoria BC
V8V 3C1

Monday, March 16, 2009

Stadacona Engineering
2188 Fort St.
Victoria BC V8V 3K5

Dear Sir or Madam,

Please accept my application for your job for a Co-op position, as advertised through the UVic Engineering Co-op office. I am a first year mechanical engineering student looking for my first work term.

I am very interested to work in the field of sustainable energy systems; I believe they are the future of the world. I have experience with ProE and Solidworks, and Labview. I have taken classes requiring me to become familiar with machine shop practices.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you through the UVic Engineering Co-op office about the possibility of an interview.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shelly Gordon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Shelly Gordon

INTERVIEWS

◆◆ WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AND EXPECT

An interview is the goal of all the work you put into writing your resume and cover letter, so you want to be prepared. Success in an interview depends on how well you know yourself, and how well you are able to present that knowledge in person. Communicating your skills and expertise to the employer is critical. In order to do this, you must be prepared and composed.

◆◆ PREPARATION: 4 BASIC STEPS

1. Know Yourself

Give thought to your hidden talents, strengths, skills, etc. to figure out what they are. Refer to the self-assessment exercises for help with this.

No matter how excellent your resume or how stunning and expensive your outfit, you will fail to impress if you don't know what you want, what you have to offer a specific employer and why you are interviewing with them. Not only do you need to know these things yourself, you need to be able to express them to your interviewer.

2. Know the Employer

This is where most students fail in an interview.

To do well in an interview, you need to be prepared for the kinds of questions an employer is likely to ask. In order to do this, you must know something about the employer and the particular job. Conduct research on the organization and the industry. Find out about

the company's products, services, locations, projected growth and future prospects. You might also discover problems with the company or industry, or what competitive threats there are.

This will help you in your interview, of course, but it's also worth knowing something about a company you might be working for. If there are any problems, wouldn't you rather know about them before you accept a job?

The best place to do this research is, of course, the internet. Nearly all companies have a website, which should give you much of the information you need. Do an internet search for other information on other sites.

Some companies arrange information sessions for Co-op students in the evening or first thing in the morning before interviews. If this is the case, there will be a notice on the interview sign-up sheet. If you are short-listed for an interview, it is extremely important that you attend these sessions.

Here are some specific areas you might want to look at:

- Company size, number of employees
- How the company is structured, what its divisions are
- Products and services
- Affiliates and subsidiaries
- Past history or growth
- Future growth potential
- Internal professional development, training and career paths
- Reputation of the company
- Profits, revenues and sales – performance
- Present market situation for the company's product
- Competitors within the industry

3. Know the Job, Study the Job Description

Read through the job description and pick out the most important points -- the key features the employer is looking for. This is the same thing you did for your cover letter. Look over the skill requirements and see how your own skills measure up.

Be prepared to answer questions about your skills. Where and how did you acquire them? What is your level of expertise? Can you demonstrate your knowledge of databases? Can you describe a past experience working in a team situation?

Liam Townsend was out the door at 10:00 a.m. to get to his 11:00 a.m. interview. An hour was far more time than he needed to bus downtown and find the right office, but he was determined to take no chances. He desperately wanted this job. Good thing he left early, since in his distraction he had forgotten his wallet. Liam had to dash back to his apartment and get it, then wait for the next bus. Still, he would be early. He might have time to grab a coffee before the interview and go over his notes again.

Liam had practiced answering interview questions in front of the mirror last night. He felt idiotic as he stared at his reflection and attempted to look serious and professional. But going over what he wanted to say had helped it to stick in his mind. The first several times he had stumbled and ended up babbling out lengthy and rambling answers. After a few tries, though, he figured out what he wanted to say and how to say it in just a sentence or two, and that had to be worth a little extra time. Liam supposed he'd rather feel like an idiot at home in front of his mirror than at the interview in front of his (hopefully) future boss.

4. Practice Answering Questions

This may seem silly or unnecessary, but it is important. You should be able to give brief and to-the-point answers that still give a thorough response to the question. For a question about a specific past experience where you took initiative or demonstrated a particular

strength, you want to have an answer right away. You don't want to have to sit and think about it for long, nor do you want to begin with an answer, then decide it doesn't really work, and start over. That's why practicing can be so helpful.

Here are some basic categories (and examples) for the types of questions you may be asked:

- Factual: Describe your most recent job.
- Probing: Can you tell me more about the projects you worked on?
- Technical: Explain how a relational database works.
- Problem-solving: If you were in this situation (interviewer describes a specific situation), what would you do?
- Role-play: The interviewer describes a scenario and gives you a role.
- Stress: How do you respond to stressful situations?

◆◆ QUALITIES YOU SHOULD DEMONSTRATE DURING AN INTERVIEW

- Intelligence: This seems obvious, but have you made it clear in your application, your behaviour? It can be proven by the quality of your resume and cover letter, and by your GPA and standardized test scores. You can also demonstrate intelligence during the interview through your ability to organize your thoughts quickly and put them into cohesive sentences.
- Communication Skills: Demonstrate strong verbal skills during an interview, as well as in your resume and cover letter. Be articulate and to the point.
- Interpersonal Skills: Use descriptive examples to show how well you have handled group situations, group projects and work situations.
- Maturity: Show how you have accomplished tasks despite adversity (i.e. balancing work and school, and budgeting time to accomplish both tasks).
- Confidence: Provide confident responses to questions and maintain a relaxed demeanor during the interview.

- **Leadership:** Have you been involved in student organizations, class projects, work projects, other extra-curricular activities or coaching? Tell the employer.
- **Flexibility:** Be sure to show that you have positive reactions to your changing environment, for example, when responding to unexpected work or school experiences. Do the same with any unexpected interview questions.
- **Enthusiasm:** Show this through your voice and body language (but don't get carried away).
- **Technical Skills:** Explain in clear language those technical abilities you possess that dovetail with the employer's needs.

◆◆ CREATING A POSITIVE FIRST IMPRESSION

We all know about the importance of first impressions, and it's more true during an interview than at any other time.

Studies have shown that the interviewer forms an impression of the applicant within the first four minutes of the interview. So you've got about four minutes to make the interviewer see you as you wish to be seen.

If the interviewer's impression of you is favourable, your chances of being offered the job are enhanced. If, on the other hand, the impression you create is negative, you will have great difficulty reversing it.

Tips to Help You Create a Positive Impression

This is pretty much what we all learned from our mothers and elementary school teachers: be kind, be polite, be honest, and mind your manners.

- **Look good.** A clean and neat appearance is important; it reflects your personality and habits. Make sure your outfit is appropriate for a professional interview. If in doubt, dress more up than down.
- **Be on time.** Arrive approximately ten minutes before your scheduled interview time.

This gives you extra time should you have trouble finding the interview location, and gives you a chance for a few quiet deep breaths if you're feeling nervous.

- **Be respectful.** If you don't have the name of the person interviewing you, ask for it before going in.
- **Be confident.** Stand tall, walk with self-assurance and authority. Try to look calm and relaxed, whether or not you feel that way.
- **Be professional.** When exchanging greetings with the interviewer, smile, make direct eye contact and shake hands firmly.
- **Be polite.** Use the formal address of Mr. or Ms., unless the interviewer indicates otherwise.
- **Wait for invitation.** Do not sit until you are invited to do so. Sit straight and forward and look alert and enthusiastic.

◆◆ STAGES OF THE INTERVIEW

Most interviews last 30 to 60 minutes. They may be a one-on-one dialogue, or possibly a panel interview with two to four interviewers asking questions. Either way, all interviews proceed through variations of the basic stages described below.

1. Breaking the Ice

This is when the tone for the interview is set. The interviewer will try to put you at ease with small talk about the weather or current events, or they may ask about your hobbies and interests.

The interviewer will try to make you comfortable, since they want you to be at your best.

While these small talk topics may seem irrelevant to the job, keep in mind that you are still being evaluated. Be positive and enthusiastic. Don't ramble.

Be sure to keep your conversation appropriate. Some hobbies and interests are better kept private, or at least shouldn't be discussed at work. Use your discretion.

Chris Lawrence had been the hiring manager at Stadacona Engineering for five years. He had looked at thousands, probably millions, of resumes, rejected nearly as many, and hired many good employees for his company. It didn't take Mr. Lawrence more than a few seconds' glance at a resume to decide whether or not the applicant interested him.

This morning, Mr. Lawrence took his coffee straight to his office and pulled out the resume of Mei Lau, who was scheduled for an interview with him at 9:30 a.m. Mr. Lawrence settled into his well-worn office chair, sipped his coffee, and scanned Ms. Lau's resume. The two-page document was well formatted, without any errors in spelling or grammar, and it came with an excellent cover letter. Ms. Lau detailed why she wanted to work for Stadacona Engineering, and listed the characteristics and experiences that made her well-suited to the position Mr. Lawrence was looking to fill. She had obviously done her research, and knew the basics about Stadacona Engineering: what the company did, what its principal goals and values were. Mr. Lawrence was impressed. While Ms. Lau did not have any previous experience with this sort of work, she presented herself very well on paper. He waited to see how she would come across in person.

Mr. Lawrence finished his coffee and checked his email. When he looked up the clock read 9:35, but his secretary hadn't called to say anyone had arrived. Mr. Lawrence poked his head out of his office and looked around, but the chairs outside his door were all empty. His secretary looked up from her desk. She knew who he was looking for.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Lawrence." She shook her head. "Your nine-thirty hasn't arrived yet."

Mr. Lawrence ducked back into his office and sat down again. He checked his day calendar to be sure; yes, he had a meeting at 10:15. He couldn't be late. But it was now 9:40 and still Ms. Lau had not arrived, and he would need a full 30 minutes for the interview. He tapped his fingers on his desk in irritation. Ms. Lau would have to be very impressive indeed to convince him not to discard her application immediately.

Tips:

- Allow the interviewer to set the tone, whether it be formal or informal, humorous or no-nonsense.
- Respond in a warm, conversational manner and avoid one-word answers; the interviewer wants to see and hear how well you communicate.

2. Getting Down to Business

At this point, the interviewer will usually provide a detailed description of the job and/or company.

Tips:

- This is a chance to reveal to the interviewer that you have researched the company and

the position; do not let the opportunity slip by.

- If the interview seems to be getting off to a slow start, you may want to ask a question about the position or organization.

3. Gathering Information

This part of the interview is all about you. The interviewer will ask questions to determine if you are the right person for the job and you will ask questions to establish whether the job is right for you. The bulk of the interview will be spent on this process.

Tips:

DO

- Make eye contact. This demonstrates attention, interest, honesty and self-confidence.

In a panel interview, be sure to maintain eye contact with the person asking a question, but also remember to look at the other panel members periodically in order to include them in your answer.

- Sound and look confident and in control; your tone of voice and body language are important.
- Use good grammar. As much as you can, avoid fillers such as “all right,” “ok,” “you know,” “um” and “uh.”
- Concentrate on the questions being asked - if you need clarification, ask. This does not make any kind of bad impression.
- Take your time answering (within reasonable limit); think through your answers so they are organized and clear.
- Answer logically and be prepared to explain the rationale behind your responses to technical, problem-solving and role-playing questions.
- Keep your answers concise and to-the-point. Where appropriate, support your responses with concrete examples from past experiences.
- Use action verbs when describing your past experiences (i.e. planned, organized, programmed, etc.).
- Phrase your answers to questions in a positive way. For example, say: “I will be graduating next year” instead of “I’m still not finished school.”
- Remember: employers hire people with enthusiasm and a positive attitude, so act and speak as though you want the job. After all, you do want the job, right? If not, why are you interviewing for it?

DO NOT

- Fidget or exhibit nervous mannerisms. These are a distraction.
- Respond inappropriately. Don’t answer a question about your skills by talking about your interests.
- Volunteer negative information about yourself or criticize previous employers.
- Ask questions about salary. This gives the impression you are only interested in the monetary aspect of the job. Salary should be

discussed if and when you are offered the job.

- Give up because you think you are performing poorly in an interview. Look at each question as a new opportunity to market your qualifications. Besides, you never know how the other candidates have done.

4. Closing the Interview

The interviewer usually wraps up the interview by asking if you have any questions, and thanking you for your time.

Tips:

- If the interviewer answered your prepared questions during the interview, briefly describe what they were and thank the interviewer for his or her comprehensive answers.
- Shake hands firmly (make eye contact) and thank the interviewer for his or her time. Tell them you are looking forward to hearing back from them.

By the time Liam got to Chris Lawrence’s office, his stomach was fluttering so badly he thought it might fly right out of his body. He took a few deep breaths and let his hands fall to his sides, though he felt like clutching them together in front of him.

The secretary showed him in to Mr. Lawrence’s office. It was a big room with kids’ artwork framed and hung on the three walls that weren’t taken up with windows. Mr. Lawrence sat behind a large wooden desk covered with photos. He stood as Liam entered, and held out his hand.

“Liam Townsend? Welcome, thank you for coming. I’m Chris Lawrence.”

Liam gripped Mr. Lawrence’s hand firmly and shook. He wondered what his voice was going to sound like. “Nice to meet you,

Mr. Lawrence. Thank you for having me in." Liam breathed a little easier as he let go of Mr. Lawrence's hand. His voice had come out fine after all, barely any squeak to it.

Mr. Lawrence sat and gestured for Liam to do the same. Then he smiled and gestured at the artwork on the walls. "Compliments of my children. I'm told they have an excellent eye for colour, but I'm colourblind myself. Only doodle black and white stick figures. Do you draw?"

Liam considered the drawings. "They're very nice. I used to draw cars when I was a kid, but I mostly just read these days."

"Oh?" Mr. Lawrence leaned back in his chair. "What sort of reading do you do?"

Liam felt himself relaxing as he answered Mr. Lawrence's questions about his hobbies, his favourite hockey team, where he was from. He remembered to sit up straight, though, and look Mr. Lawrence in the eye as he answered. After a few minutes, Mr. Lawrence got down to business and talked a bit about the job and about Stadacona Engineering. Liam listened carefully and asked a few questions of his own.

By the time they were into the questions about Liam's education and work experience, he was having a good time with the interview, thinking about the best answers and sometimes discussing points with Mr. Lawrence. They agreed on the importance of teamwork and positive attitude, as Liam described what he'd seen it do for students in the Kids for Literacy program.

After about 30 minutes all the questions had been asked and answered and clarified on both sides. Mr. Lawrence stood and offered Liam his hand once again.

"Well, thank you for coming in, Liam. I'm hoping to have all the interviews done by Friday, so I'll be getting back to you either

way sometime early next week."

Liam stood and shook the extended hand. "That would be great. Thank you so much, Mr. Lawrence. I'll look forward to hearing from you."

As he left, Liam felt a floating sensation, as though he'd been suspended from reality for the past half hour. This interviewing stuff was intense. He was glad to have it done with, though, and he even thought it had gone well. Liam found his way back downstairs, through the lobby, and out the door. He could really go for a hamburger.

◆◆ TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS:

Interviewing over the phone is the same process as a normal interview, except that it lacks the element of "in person" communication. You may have to work a little harder to create a unique and personal impression.

Here are some tips to help you sharpen your telephone skills prior to an over-the-phone interview:

1.

Remember that the person on the other end of the phone may be just as uncomfortable as you are. Concentrate less on your feelings of inadequacy and more on how to make the other person feel at ease. Most people do not like the telephone interview process, including the interviewer.

2.

Smile over the phone. It may sound corny, but smiling as you talk will actually affect the quality of your voice, making you sound friendly and open. Speak clearly, enunciate, and don't mumble or speak too quickly.

3.

During the telephone interview, you are judged by the same criteria used in an in-person interview. For example, self-confidence. Obviously, self-confidence must be judged differently over the phone than in person, where eye contact and body language can be taken into account. Instead, you will be judged by a much more subtle set of factors: the sound of your voice, your level of friendliness and enthusiasm, etc.

4.

The ability to speak succinctly about your past experiences and accomplishments will be critical. Many technical professionals launch into long, drawn-out answers to telephone interview questions. Don't be too long-winded in your answers to technical questions; without the benefit of being able to see the interviewer, you will not be able to judge as easily whether the person on the other end of the phone is still listening.

5.

Many people find that the most uncomfortable scenario in a telephone interview is the occasional "dead air" during the conversation. Take your time answering questions. Don't rush into answering just to fill in the gap. Have a list of questions prepared about the company and the position that you can refer to when caught in one of those dead spots. Although good communication is up to both of you, typically it will be your responsibility to fill that dead air.

6.

Although you are always judged on your ability to listen well, nowhere in the recruiting process do listening skills become more important than in the telephone interview. You'll find that your nerves will sometimes make this very difficult. It is important that you close off all thoughts about whatever is going on around you and concentrate on the words and voice of the interviewer. You may want to sit with the phone in the most sparsely furnished room of your house, away from distractions such as the TV, computer, or even the visual distractions of a bookshelf or a messy room. If you are accepting an employer's call on a cell phone, be sure to find a quiet space in which to conduct the call.

Assignment

◆◆ THE INTERVIEW

After going through all five applications, Mr. Lawrence has chosen you as one of the three candidates to interview. When he calls to arrange an interview time with you, Mr. Lawrence explains that the interview will take about 30 minutes, and he will be asking you some questions about your past experiences and actions.

Using your unexplained psychic powers once again, you are able to see Mr. Lawrence's desk, and the lists of questions he will ask you. Since he already knows what technical skills first year students have, his questions are about important transferable skills. He is looking for the following:

- Communication skills
- Teamwork skills and experience
- Initiative
- Energy and enthusiasm for the job
- Demonstrated problem-solving abilities
- Leadership qualities

Mr. Lawrence will give you a mark for each of these categories. A mark of one is poor, two is average, and three is good. He will total the marks for all the categories to see how well you "scored" in the interview overall.

Mr. Lawrence will also give you a mark for each individual question. Again, if your response is strong and demonstrates the qualities Mr. Lawrence is looking for, you will receive a three for that question. An average response receives a two, and a poor response receives a one.

Before reading the questions below, make notes about how you will prepare for your interview. List the things you want to talk about: specific experiences you have had, relevant training, instances in which you demonstrated leadership qualities. You may want to practice answering questions, or write down possible

responses.

Now look at the questions below, and write down your responses to them. Be mindful of the criteria Mr. Lawrence is basing his marks on. In addition to your responses to specific questions, Mr. Lawrence will grade the general quality of your answers using the following checklist:

- Good listening skills. Asks for clarification when needed.
- Speaks fluently and articulately.
- Gives understandable, clear responses.
- Uses appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
- Answers questions concisely and does not ramble.
- Nonverbal communication (body posture, eye contact and mannerisms) was appropriate.

As you answer, keep in mind also that Mr. Lawrence will be checking your references to verify your past experience and work performance.

Interview Questions

Write out your answers to the following questions:

Teamwork: Tell me about a time when you worked as part of a team.

- 1) Vague answer. Doesn't clarify his/her role or what the situation was. Prefers to work alone.
- 2) Does just enough within a team to get by, and waits to be told what to do.
- 3) Good team player. Takes initiative to achieve goal, works with others and helps teammates along.

Notes:

Initiative: Give me an example of a time when you did more than was required for a job or at school.

- 1) Shows little to no initiative to take on extra work. Waits to be told what to do.
- 2) Identifies a specific example where initiative was taken, with successful results.
- 3) Gives specific examples of self-initiated work, shows perseverance, determination and focus.

Enthusiasm / Energy: What do you do during the course of the day? What do you do on your evenings and weekends?

- 1) Expends low level of energy toward constructive, goal-oriented activities.
- 2) Expends moderate level of energy toward constructive, goal-oriented activities.
- 3) 50-hour week spent on constructive, purposeful, goal-oriented activities.

Problem Solving: How do you determine priorities when faced with multiple deadlines and equally important projects? How do you decide what to do first?

- 1) Spends very little time determining priorities and allocating time for different tasks.
- 2) Stays organized using various methods: To Do lists, daytimer, computer and sticky notes. Doesn't like wasting time.
- 3) Recognizes priorities and works on them as such.

Leadership: Tell me about a time when you took a leadership role. What were the challenges and how did you overcome them?

- 1) Indicates that he/she prefers no leadership roles. Little or no initiative to take on extra work.
- 2) Has taken on leadership roles.
- 3) Expresses enthusiasm for a leadership position and is involved in career industry and organizations.

SECTION II
ON THE JOB

JOB CONTRACTS & LETTERS OF OFFER

◆◆ BEGINNINGS

Congratulations! After a successful interview, Mr. Lawrence calls to offer you the job with Stadacona Engineering. In addition to his phone call, Mr. Lawrence sends you a formal letter of offer from the company, which you will need to sign in order to accept the job. The letter includes a list of the terms and conditions of your employment, just like the one sent to Liam Townsend. Read this letter and the attached contract carefully before signing.

It's always important to read anything you sign your name to, but in a case like this it's more important than ever. By signing, you are agreeing to being held accountable for specific actions in your workplace. You may even be agreeing to be held accountable for actions outside of, but relating to, the workplace. Some contracts specify what you may or may not discuss with various people. The consequences for breaking such contracts can be severe, and can have long-term ramifications. It is therefore important that you know what it is you are agreeing to do or not to do.

Many of these contracts are similar, and we can tell you what to expect generally from such documents. However, you should still read any specific contract over before signing it, just to be sure there are no unusual items or surprises.

Some signing contracts are quite generic, and describe general company policies and procedures only briefly. Other contracts will be more specific, and may detail the duties, requirements, and expectations for your particular position.

◆◆ COMMON CONTRACT TOPICS AND SECTIONS

Here are some common topics addressed in work contracts. You may or may not see all of these in the

contracts you will sign, depending on how detailed and extensive they are.

Vocabulary

Contracts sometimes have one or two brief sections clarifying the language and terms used in the contract. For example, it may explain that the period of time that the employee is hired by the employer will be called the "Term." These sections can seem silly or unnecessary, but will often help you to sift through the contract's formal and convoluted language.

Salary, Term of Employment, Relocation

Somewhere in either the letter of offer or the attached contract, there should be details as to how much you will be paid and how long your term of employment is to last (if it is for a fixed amount of time, as is the case for Co-op jobs). There may also be details provided about other work benefits (medical, dental, pension) and vacation time and pay. If you have to relocate in order to take the job and the company is offering to cover your moving expenses, those details (how much they will cover, how the funds will be given to you and when) will be outlined here as well.

Confidentiality

This is a big one. Sections on confidentiality state that the employee must not disclose any of the company's or their clients' confidential information. There may be a list specifying what constitutes "confidential information" (i.e. marketing and sales information, procedures and policies, source code, design details, customer information, etc.).

Some jobs have a greater need for confidentiality than

others, and you will want to know if you're accepting a job that you're not allowed to talk about to anyone. This is, therefore, a part of the contract you should read with particular care.

Documents

There may be sections detailing your agreement to return all work-related documents, correspondence, etc. to the company once you are no longer working for them.

Conflicting Employment

During your time with a specific employer, you are agreeing not to get any other job that is directly related to the business conducted by the original employer. You will, in general, avoid any activities that conflict with your obligations to your employer.

Other Employees

There are also, sometimes, parts of a contract that ask you to agree not to encourage other employees to quit their jobs with the company in order to work for another competing company, or for a new business that you put together. This sort of thing is unlikely to come up for Co-op work terms, but you may see it in future jobs.

Consequences

These terms of employment are reasonable and fair, don't trample anyone's rights, and are considered to be mutually beneficial. In addition, there will be consequences if you don't adhere to the terms, having agreed to them. That's basically what this section says, and it should also mention that the employer has the right to take appropriate action against any employee who breaks their contract, including taking legal action.

General Provisions

This section usually states that the above contract is governed by the local legal system (province or state and country) and is in compliance with all laws. It may also discuss the possibility of future changes to the contract, explaining that you, the employee, will be shown and asked to sign any changes, and that any one particular change does not alter other areas of the contract.

◆◆ READ BEFORE SIGNING

Hopefully this has given you some idea of what to expect in your average job contract. While it may serve as a useful outline or reference, you still need to read each individual contract through. Be sure you are not agreeing to anything that you find morally objectionable, or anything that you do not want to deal with.

If a job is highly confidential and will penalize you for discussing your work with anyone, you may decide that's more responsibility and hassle than you want to deal with. Apart from not signing the contract, discuss your objections with the employer. It is possible that they will be willing to renegotiate. If not, you may be better off with another less constraining job.

Stadacona Engineering
2188 Fort St.
Victoria BC
V8V 3K5

April 14, 2009

Liam Townsend
201-1142 Pearson Rd.
Victoria BC
V8R 4W7

Dear Mr. Townsend,

I am pleased to offer you the position of junior engineer with Stadacona Engineering for a 4-month co-operative work term, from May 4, 2009 until August 29, 2009.

Your salary will be \$2,350 a month, subject to statutory deductions payable in monthly installments. Standard working hours are 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

As a contract employee, you are not eligible for the company's health or dental programs. You are, however, eligible for the employee flexible benefit program.

I have enclosed our terms of employment with this letter. To confirm your acceptance of this offer, please sign the bottom portion of this letter and read and sign the enclosed Proprietary Agreement. Return one copy of each to me by mail or fax by Monday, April 27, 2009.

We are pleased to have you join our team, and look forward to working with you in May.

Sincerely,

Chris Lawrence
Hiring Manager

I have read and accept the above terms.

Signature: Liam Townsend

Date

EMPLOYEE PROPRIETARY INFORMATION AGREEMENT

This offer of employment is conditional upon your signing and complying with the enclosed Conduct Agreement which requires, among other provisions, the assignment of patent rights to any invention made during your employment at the Company, and non-disclosure of proprietary information.

We also ask that, if you have not already done so, you disclose to the Company any and all agreements relating to your prior employment that may affect your eligibility to be employed by the Company or limit the manner in which you may be employed. It is the Company's understanding that any such agreements will not prevent you from performing the duties of your position and you represent that such is the case. Moreover, you agree not to bring any third party confidential information to the Company, including that of your former employer, and you agree that in performing your duties for the Company, you will not in any way utilize any such information.

A further condition of your employment is that you agree not to disclose or discuss any confidential information obtained from the Company, either during or after employment with the Company. This includes, but is not limited to, intellectual property, proprietary trade information, or personal information relating to employees or customers.

The Company may terminate your employment at any time for cause without notice or payment of compensation of any kind. The Company may terminate your employment without cause by providing to you notice, base salary in lieu of notice, or a combination of notice and base salary in lieu of notice.

You understand and agree that such notice or base salary in lieu of notice will be full and adequate compensation to you in respect of the termination of your employment, notwithstanding your age, position, length of service, manner of termination or any other factor.

Please indicate your agreement with the terms and conditions of employment with Stadacona Engineering, as outlined above, by signing and dating this agreement and returning it to our HR office. Please retain copies for your records.

Date: _____ Employee's Signature: _____

Name (printed): _____

ETHICS IN ENGINEERING

◆◆ INTRODUCTION

As a Co-op student, it is unlikely that you will have to deal with any serious ethical dilemmas during your work term. Still, you should be aware of the importance of these issues. You also need to know about issues of confidentiality and what constitutes a conflict of interest, so that you can avoid getting into any ethical dilemmas. These topics are very relevant in the engineering and high tech field and will be of importance to you in the future as you progress in your academics and in your career.

To start with, you should make sure that you are working for a company whose morals you generally agree with and can abide by. Companies expect a certain standard of behaviour from their employees; they can't set your personal values, but in hiring you, they expect you to comply with company standards.

Trouble arises when you find yourself at odds with what is expected of you and what you feel is right. Of course, it's best to avoid these situations as much as possible by working for a company whose values match your own.

Obviously your choices in such situations can have an impact on your success with a company, your relationship with other employees, and your general peace of mind. Making ethical decisions will foster trust between you and your coworkers and help build your company a positive image. It also reduces the possibility of problems with the products you work on. If you make all the right decisions in building a bridge, take all the necessary steps to make it strong and safe, it's far less likely to collapse. That's an extreme example, but you get the idea.

◆◆ YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS A CO-OP STUDENT

It is your responsibility to behave ethically in the workplace during your Co-op term, both to build yourself a strong job future, and also to reflect well on the UVic Co-op program.

As an employee with any company, you are responsible for protecting your company's interests. This includes being responsible for keeping company information confidential. Be sure you familiarize yourself with any specific responsibilities and restrictions before signing a confidentiality agreement. If you are unclear on any points or have questions about the agreement you are asked to sign, speak with your supervisor.

You may also contact your Co-op Coordinator if you come up against a decision in the workplace that you feel is wrong or goes against your values, and are unsure of how to respond.

Remember that you are considered a full-time UVic student while on a work term, and as such you are bound by the University's Standards of Professional Behaviour. These can be found on the faculty website at: <http://www.engr.uvic.ca/policy/professional-behaviour.php>.

◆◆ RESPONSIBILITIES AND ETHICAL CODES FOR ENGINEERS

There are at least 15 engineering accreditation bodies in Canada, each of which has a specific code of ethics. These can be found, prominently displayed, on the websites for each accreditation body. Each body requires its engineers to adhere to its code of ethics or risk losing his/her engineering license.

These accreditation bodies have come together to articulate an engineer's duties. They have agreed on the

following six points:

- Engineers must protect the safety, health and welfare of the public.
- Engineers must practice only in the areas of their competence.
- Engineers must develop their professional skills throughout their careers and help other engineers under their supervision to do the same.
- Engineers must be “faithful agents” for each employer, client, or trustees, yet they must avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest.
- Engineers must build their professional reputation based on their merit and must not compete unfairly with others.
- Engineers may associate only with reputable persons or organizations.

In addition to these accreditation bodies, each province has an association of professional engineers, which is a self-regulating body and has developed their own bylaws and Codes of Ethics. The Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC (APEGBC) is the licensing and regulatory body responsible for BC’s more than 25,000 engineers and geoscientists.

APEGBC has written bylaws and a Code of Ethics for engineers under its jurisdiction.

◆◆ DUTIES TO YOURSELF AND OTHERS

When conducting your work, you should bear in mind factors such as your responsibility to act fairly and loyally towards your employer and to keep their information confidential, your duty to do the same for your clients, your duty to act fairly and respectfully towards your coworkers, and your duty to yourself to find a job that suits you and will allow you to follow your desired lifestyle. (Within reasonable limit, that is. It is not a duty to yourself to own two Ferraris and a house in the south of France.) Also remember your duty to society: to protect the public and provide the greatest possible benefit to everyone.

ENGINEERING DISASTERS

◆◆ ETHICAL APPLICATIONS

All the ethical codes we have discussed are designed for the protection and well-being of both the engineer and the public who will be using the engineer's designs and products. It is important for everyone that the codes are followed faithfully, in order to avoid any kind of disaster.

Engineering disasters (bridge collapses, engine failures, crashes) do happen. You want to do all you can to reduce the risk of being responsible for, or involved in any such disaster. Like all bad things, we imagine that these things will happen to "someone else." But we are all "someone else" to the rest of the world. Don't believe yourself immune to disaster; be proactive in avoiding it.

As a practicing engineer you should exhibit not only advanced and specialized knowledge in your field, but also continual study and preparation, sound judgment, high standards, and strong leadership. These are all part of ethical conduct and following your duty to protect the public interest.

◆◆ WHAT CAN HAPPEN

Engineering is not always an exact art, and while there have been countless engineering victories over time, there have also been numerous failures. Think of such famous examples as the Titanic, Chernobyl, the Space Shuttle Columbia. Engineering disasters often occur on a large scale, and can involve deadly consequences.

It is important to be aware of what can go wrong, the possible consequences of unethical practices, general inattention and work that is rushed or inadequate.

Let's take a look at some examples of engineering troubles and catastrophes a little closer to home.

Collapse of the Second Narrows Bridge

Vancouver, BC is home to the Ironworkers' Memorial Second Crossing, formerly called the Second Narrows Bridge. It was renamed in 1994 as a tribute to the 25 workers who died during its construction.

The Second Narrows Bridge was begun in 1957. The structure was intended to carry six lanes of traffic, replacing the older, smaller bridge already in place. During construction of the new bridge, four separate incidents claimed the lives of 25 workers. The worst of these incidents occurred on June 17, 1958, when a section of the bridge collapsed. Men were drowned, crushed by falling iron beams, and one diver lost his life in the following rescue attempt.

In the aftermath, the disaster was found to be due to a faulty calculation made by one of the engineers, also killed in the catastrophe. One of the temporary arms holding the bridge's fifth span had been too light to hold the weight and gave way, sending that section of the bridge crashing into the inlet.

To date, the collapse of the Second Narrows Bridge remains the worst engineering disaster to occur in BC in terms of the number of lives lost.

Radiation Poisoning in Hospitals

In the 1980s, Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) and a French company called CGR produced the Therac-25, a radiation therapy machine. Between the years of 1985 and 1987 the Therac-25 was blamed for intensive burns and ensuing medical complications (including partial paralysis and comatoseness) suffered by six cancer patients who were given massive overdoses of radiation. Three of the six patients subsequently died.

Many of the central causes of the machine's malfunctions were due to oversights and shortcuts taken by engineers involved in development of the machine. These design flaws were not discovered or rectified until after the accidents.

The Therac-25 was built to be entirely computer controlled. Its design engineers decided to make the machine's software solely responsible for safety control in an attempt to save money, not realizing that the software was flawed and incapable of properly monitoring safety under all conditions. In addition, they employed recycled hardware from older models of the machine – hardware that was later found to be faulty.

Due to human error and inattention, the Therac-25 ended up taking the lives of those it was intended to help. Less tragically, but still troublesome, the machine cost a million dollars to design and build, and its faulty construction wasted funding that could have been put to more effective, and certainly less lethal, purposes.

The Therac-25 incidents were some of the most serious computer-related accidents ever to have occurred, and drew a great deal of media attention and public outcry.

Please keep in mind, we tell you about these incidents not to scare you, but to make you aware of the responsibilities it is possible to take on in your field, and to ensure that you take your work seriously and do everything in your power to avoid such disasters.

On the brighter side, it may encourage you to think of the benefits engineers are able to provide to the world. Countless lives have been saved with early storm warning systems, the provision of clean drinking water in poverty-stricken areas and disaster relief efforts following storms, earthquakes, floods, etc. Lives are further improved by secure shelters and workplaces, safe and reliable systems of transportation and communications technology. All of these are direct results of the inventions and efforts of engineers.

◆◆ REDUCING THE RISK

Accidents will always happen, but you can do a great deal to reduce the possibility of them happening to, or because of, yourself. It is your ethical responsibility as an engineer to follow all proper procedures, communicate clearly and fully and use the proper materials, workers and techniques for any given project in order to ensure that your work and the people it affects are safe.

Do your job properly and with care and dedication. You don't want to become part of a newspaper headline: "Bridge Collapse Kills 47, Design Flaws Deemed Cause."

HARASSMENT & DISCRIMINATION

◆◆ WHAT IS HARASSMENT?

Harassment is defined as any behaviour towards an individual that is unwelcomed by the recipient.

This can mean any kind of behaviour at all, whether or not it is intended to harass. For example, imagine that you work with someone who is very affectionate, likes to give people hugs. You don't like being hugged by them, and while it is a perfectly innocent gesture on their part, it makes you uncomfortable. Although your coworker does not intend to harm or harass you in any way, this can still be considered harassment, since the gesture is not welcomed by you.

◆◆ WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

As the one being harassed, it is your responsibility to take the first step towards making the harassment stop. You must make it clear that the behaviour of your coworker is unwelcomed.

With the hugging example, your coworker won't know that he or she is making you uncomfortable unless you tell them. Make it clear, politely and tactfully, how you

feel, and ask them to stop. Most likely they will feel bad about their mistake and will not repeat the action. If, on the other hand, the behaviour continues, then you should speak to a supervisor.

Remember that any unwelcomed behaviour can be considered harassment. It is up to the person being harassed to speak up and make it clear that they do not appreciate the behaviour.

Alissa was happy with her new Co-op job. The only thing she didn't like about it was how early she had to be at work each morning. She had never been a morning person, never truly woke up and became productive until after nine or ten, and these 8:00 a.m. start times were killing her. But she was trying, and two weeks into her job she had a perfect record: on time every day. Maybe she wasn't overly cheerful, but she was there, on time, doing her job.

The only trouble was her co-worker, Jonathan. He was a morning person, full of life and playfulness. He seemed to think that Alissa just needed a little cheering up, so every morning when she came into the office he would bound over and poke her in the arm a few times. "Hey there, sunshine! Anyone alive in there? Hellooo? It's gonna be a great day, you should wake up and join us for it!"

This had happened every day for the past two weeks. Alissa's teeth ached from gritting them too hard each morning as Jonathan playfully poked her. She had thought about telling her supervisor, but was there anything to tell? Jonathan was annoying, sure, but he hadn't actually done anything wrong, hadn't hurt her. Alissa wasn't sure what to do.

◆◆ THINK BEFORE SPEAKING

Everyone likes to exercise their sense of humor in the workplace, have a little lighthearted fun during the day. There's nothing wrong with making people laugh, if it's done at the appropriate time, and with consideration for the audience in mind. It's important to be aware of who you're speaking to. Have respect for their life, their beliefs and background.

It is important to remember that your specific sense of humor is not necessarily shared by all. You might consider something to be hilarious, while someone else finds it offensive. Just be careful what you say and to whom, consider who you are speaking to, and if you

do accidentally offend someone, then apologize and don't repeat the error.

On the other hand, if you yourself are the offended party, keep in mind that the offense may not have been intentional. Make it clear to the person speaking how you feel about what they have said, but be polite about it. Accept their apology and let everyone move on.

◆◆ TYPES OF HARASSMENT

There are many different kinds of harassment. Two of the most commonly encountered are racial and sexual. However, harassment can also be based on gender, age, looks, disability, birthplace, religious beliefs, family or political beliefs. Or it can be an arbitrary thing, one person picking on another simply because they think it's entertaining, or because something about the other person has rubbed them the wrong way. What matters most is that the harassment is stopped.

◆◆ THINGS TO REMEMBER

When dealing with harassment, it is important to keep in mind that maintaining a healthy and respectful workplace where everyone feels comfortable is paramount. To that end, you should deal tactfully with these matters, rather than immediately turning the situation into a full-blown out and out confrontation. Handle the situation professionally, with respect and consideration for everyone involved. But above all, do deal with the situation. Left unchecked, harassment will only get worse, until your workplace becomes a place of daily torment and discomfort, rather than a safe space in which to communicate and get things done.

◆◆ WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?

When one person is treated differently from everyone else due to their background (race, ancestry, nationality), beliefs (faith, political opinions), lifestyle (sexuality, family, marital status), age, gender, mental

or physical disability, or any other such characteristic, that is discrimination. The word has a pejorative slant, so obviously we're talking about cases in which someone is treated in an abusive, unfair, or demeaning manner. This creates a hostile environment for that individual, and may interfere with their work performance.

Discrimination of this kind is considered a violation of the BC Human Rights Code and of UVic's Discrimination and Harassment Policy. Should you find yourself the victim of discrimination, you can contact the UVic Equity and Human Rights Office or a Co-op Coordinator for confidential information and guidance.

◆◆ WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

As with harassment, it is important to remember that discrimination will not stop or go away if you ignore it. Discrimination can cause feelings of anger, embarrassment, humiliation or fear in its victims, and sometimes it seems easier to ignore the problem than to act.

Keep in mind that everyone has the right to a safe and friendly work environment where they are fairly treated and made to feel welcome. Discrimination is not something anyone should tolerate, and it must be dealt with.

If you feel safe in doing so, tell the person doing the discriminating to stop. Keep a record of the incidents. Talk to someone in a position of authority about the problem, citing your records of when the discrimination occurred. This may mean talking to your boss, or to your Co-op Coordinator, or to an outside party.

If someone else comes to you with accounts of their own experiences of discrimination or harassment, make sure you are supportive and take the problem seriously. Encourage and, if they wish it, assist them in taking the same steps of confronting the person doing the discriminating or harassing and talking to an authority about the issue.

You may want to look into ways you can support initiatives on campus and in your workplace that create a welcoming, non-discriminatory environment.

EQUITY

◆◆ WHAT IS EQUITY AND WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

Equity can be one of those sticky issues that people avoid like a mosquito-infested swamp. In general terms, equity ensures that everyone is treated equally and given the same opportunities for success. It is meant to guarantee that all people are treated with dignity and respect, and to eliminate discrimination.

In terms more specific to the workplace, equity often translates into companies trying to balance their workforce with an even mixture of gender and race. Canada's Employment Equity Act, designed to address barriers to employment faced by groups such as women, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities, governs such matters.

Certain government-funded jobs may have specifications as to gender, race, or ability. It is entirely possible that there is a job out there for which you are perfectly qualified, but it is given to someone else because they belong to an ethnic minority or have a disability. These things happen, and there's not much you can do about them. Such situations are simply our nation's attempt to achieve balance and make sure that all peoples are represented as equally as possible in the workforce – that all people are given an equal opportunity to achieve their career goals.

In terms of handicaps and disabilities, it is your employer's job, once they have hired you, to accommodate any special needs you may have in this regard, should you choose to disclose that information.

◆◆ FURTHER READING

The entire Employment Equity Act can be downloaded as a pdf file. Simply do an internet search for "Employment Equity Act" and click on the first listing in the results.

SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

◆◆ WHAT TO EXPECT

Every job you have will likely have its own session, seminar, or bad video from the 80s about safety in the workplace. You will probably get tired of hearing the same obvious things and watching the same bad videos at each new job, but it is important to pay attention to these things. The safety rules are there to keep everyone from harm, and while those safety videos may be old and badly acted, they do still contain worthwhile information.

Since every job is a little different and uses a variety of equipment, the safety guidelines will vary, so you need to pay attention to the specific safety issues at each job.

◆◆ BASIC SAFETY

The very basics of workplace safety are pretty much the same at any job. A great deal of trouble and danger can be avoided if you pay attention, communicate effectively with your coworkers and managers, use your common sense, and take issues of safety into consideration above all else.

Make sure that you are familiar with any and all hazardous materials you will be using for a job, and that you know the correct procedures for handling them. It is your employer's responsibility to educate you on these subjects when starting a job, but it is your responsibility to pay attention and follow the safety procedures.

The most important thing to remember is that it is your right as a worker to refuse unsafe work. If you feel that your work conditions present a hazard, you should report it to a superior.

◆◆ RESOURCES

WorkSafeBC is an organization that determines and defends workers' safety rights. Their website, <http://www.worksafebc.com/>, houses information on safety in all industries, insurance, claims, forms and much more. WorkSafeBC administers the Worker's Compensation Act for the BC Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, which gives them the right to set and enforce safety standards and assist injured or disabled workers.

For more condensed information specific to students, do a search on the UVic website for "Health & Safety for New and Young Workers" and you will find a pdf file listing general safety tips and outlining your rights and responsibilities as a worker. The file also discusses first aid, emergency procedures, and WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System).

NETWORKING

◆◆ WHAT IS IT?

Networking is the process of establishing relationships in order to obtain career-related information or get your name to potential employers. This is something you will start to do more and more as you continue with your Co-op work terms and meet new people -- make new contacts. It's a lot like enlarging your social circle, meeting your friend Justin's friend Mike, and then Mike's friend Sarah. In the case of networking, though, it's all for the purpose of furthering your career and becoming more familiar with the people and businesses in your line of work.

Statistics estimate that only 15 to 20 per cent of all jobs are advertised. The rest are filled via informal networks, such as personal contacts, which is one of the big reasons it is beneficial to be part of such a network. Employers have been known to fill a position by asking their own contacts if they can recommend someone. People like to hire their friends, and the friends of their friends, because it feels less risky. That way they know something about their new employee, feel there's a connection and less chance of the new hire not working out.

◆◆ HOW TO GET STARTED

The first step in networking is establishing relationships with people who are already a part of the network you want to tap into. Once that relationship is established, maintain it, keep in touch, ask them if they know of any job openings in your area. Networking is all a matter of knowing someone who knows someone who knows someone.

People that you network with will expect you to have some background information on the occupation or industries of interest to you. Do some research, know what you want. This ties into the self-assessment skills we talked about at the beginning of the workbook; be aware of your interests, strengths, skill set, and charac-

teristics.

Here are some examples of people and groups with whom it might be a good idea to network:

- University professors
- School teachers
- Your friends' parents
- Organizational groups
- Professional associations
- Social groups or clubs
- Church groups
- Church leaders
- Current and former employees
- Fellow employees
- Professional contacts, such as: doctors, dentists, lawyers, hairdressers, financial planners, real estate agents, builders, electricians, etc.

◆◆ KEEP RECORDS

As you build your network, it will become impossible to keep all the information about your contacts in your head. You may want to write things down in a notebook, or create a Word or Excel document to keep track of contact information, when you talked with someone and what about, follow ups (it is often a good idea to send a short note to a contact thanking them for their time and help) and any other pertinent information.

◆◆ WRITING LETTERS

There are a number of ways to exchange information with your contacts: phone, email, and letters. With any of these methods, it is important to know ahead of time what it is you want to learn from your contact and what you need to tell them. Communicate this information clearly to your contact: don't waste their time.

If you write a letter or email, it should use the follow-

ing format:

Begin by establishing rapport. Open your letter with "Dear Emily," or whoever you are writing to, and then recall your relationship, your history. So: "Dear Emily, I have missed seeing you around campus these past few months."

Follow your opening by explaining your situation. "In just two months I will finish my Bachelor of Engineering. With that day drawing rapidly closer, I have put together a resume in order to start looking for work in the 'real world.'"

Continue by detailing what it is you want, what you are looking for. "I'm interested in finding employment as a junior engineer with a small company, one that will give me the opportunity to do a variety of tasks, rather than specializing in one specific area."

Next, tell your contact exactly what it is you are asking them to do for you. Ask for advice, assistance, ideas. "If you hear about any such opportunities through your work or friends, could you please pass on my resume, or send me their names so I can make direct contact?"

Finish by thanking them warmly and with enthusiasm. Show respect and gratitude for their time and efforts on your behalf, and exhibit a positive attitude. It's much easier and more appealing to help someone who is positive and enthusiastic. "Any assistance you can provide would be greatly appreciated. Thank you so much for your time!"

Don't forget to sign your letter and list any attachments (such as your resume).

Obviously the examples above would need some filling out to become a full-fledged, ready-to-send letter, but this should give you a clear idea of where to start.

◆◆ FACEBOOK AND PHONE MESSAGES

No, we're not going to tell you that Facebook is evil. What we are going to tell you is that employers have been known to look up potential employees on Facebook, MySpace, and other sites where personal information is displayed. Recent surveys have shown that 26 per cent of hiring managers do background checks on potential employees using the internet. While on a job search, you might want to consider taking down those pictures of the kegger you attended

last Friday, or eliminating "The Drunken Text Society" from your list of groups. At the very least, block outside viewers from seeing your page.

Keep in mind that it's not just party pictures and lewd or profane remarks that will turn employers away. You also don't want to be seen as negative, overly sarcastic, disparaging or irresponsible.

Apply the same consideration to your personal webpage (if you list it on your resume), your answering machine message, and your email address. Make sure that any employers who call you and get your answering machine hear a polite and professional request for them to leave a message. Use an appropriate email address – your UVic email is probably best. Sexykitten19@hotmail.com is not a good option.

Essentially, be mindful of any information about you that potential employers may come into contact with. It might be a good idea to do an internet search on your name to see what a potential employer might find. Remember, you want to give the impression of an intelligent and professional adult who would make a good employee, not an irresponsible kid whose weekend adventures end up on First News at 5.

◆◆ LAST REMINDERS

Networking is not only about gathering information, but also about stimulating curiosity and creating opportunities. You may use networking to generate interest or funding for a specific project.

Whatever use you make of your network, remember to do the same for those who ask for similar assistance from you. This will build your network further and maintain those important contact relationships.

Show appropriate gratitude to those who help you out, and always be up front and honest about what you are asking them for. Networking is a direct and purposeful activity, a means to an end. It does not mean you are "using" people, so long as you are honest with them. Plus, the more up front you are about what you want, the more your contacts can help you. In return, offer to help those who have helped you.

LOGBOOKS

◆◆ WHAT IS A LOGBOOK?

A logbook is a record of your engineering work and projects. The point of a logbook is to provide a chronological record of your work experience and professional development. Your logbook will have an impact on your application for professional registration as an engineer.

◆◆ WHY KEEP A LOGBOOK?

Most Canadian engineering associations strongly recommend the practice of keeping logbooks. More importantly for your immediate purposes, the University of Victoria requires all BENG and BSENG students in the Faculty of Engineering to keep logbooks while on a work term.

The Association of Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia (APEGBC), the licensing and regulatory body for the over 25,000 BC engineers and geoscientists, encourages work summaries and some form of work experience documentation (such as logbooks) to be applied towards your four-year Engineer-In-Training (EIT) experience – a step towards the requirement for a Professional Engineer application.

While APEGBC has recently adopted an Online Experience Reporting System, it is still recommended that you keep your own logbook, whether in a hard or soft copy format.

The University of Victoria's Faculty of Engineering requires its students to keep logbooks for the following reasons:

- To ensure that students have a chronological written record of their workterm experiences
- To ensure that students have experience in maintaining a logbook prior to EIT registration

- To ensure that students have the documentation that will allow them to apply workterm experiences towards the required work experiences for APEGBC registration

For further information on APEGBC, please visit their website, <http://www.apeg.bc.ca/>.

◆◆ THINGS TO REMEMBER

As previously stated, all UVic BENG and BSENG students must keep logbooks covering all of their UVic Engineering workterms.

These logbooks must be either available for review with the Co-op Coordinator during their work site visit or submitted to the Co-op office upon completion of the workterm.

◆◆ LOGBOOK REQUIREMENTS

Your logbook must:

- have a left-hand margin for the date,
- have a right-hand margin for your supervisor's signature (this column can be drawn in),
- have your supervisor's name, address, and telephone number clearly labeled at the bottom of each page

See the sample page of logbook entries at the end of this section for specific examples.

◆◆ LOGBOOK GUIDELINES: FORMAT & CONTENTS

1.

Logbook entries should outline all professional and related activities. These include summaries of daily/weekly responsibilities and/or accomplishments, as well as such activities as:

- meetings with clients
- documents produced
- safety issues
- conferences
- budgets/financial work
- courses, seminars, group study
- involvement with technical societies

2.

Entries must be in chronological order, entered weekly, with approximately one page per month.

3.

Entries are to be made by hand, preferably printed, directly on the logbook pages.

4.

Entries are to be in RESUME BULLET FORMAT:

- Start with an action verb,
- describe what you did,
- what you used,
- what the result was (why you did it).

5.

Clearly indicate the start and end of each project.

6.

Have your supervisor initial the entry as correct, and ensure your supervisor is clearly identified at the bottom of each page.

7.

Use the same Logbook for all workterms (logbooks will be returned to the student each term after marking).

◆◆ RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

Here are a few tips to help keep things organized and easy:

- Keep a day book (separate from your Logbook)!
- At the end of each week, summarize your activities for the week, using your daybook as a guide. Write your activities out in bullet format, then copy them into your logbook.
- Keep the logbook up-to-date!
- Be results and responsibility oriented (i.e. ensure your logbook entries show the results you accomplished and what your responsibility was in achieving them).

◆◆ SAMPLE LOGBOOK ENTRIES

The template on the following page demonstrates a selection of specific examples for logbook entries. Each entry should start with an action verb, describing what you did, what you used and what the result was. Remember that you must be job-specific for each of your entries.

This selection is only a guideline: your own work experience may not be organized in defined projects. Overall, the aim is to record your experience in an organized, easily understood format. You may wish to include a few diagrams/drawings/sketches, if applicable.

LOGBOOK TEMPLATE

Date/# days	Record of all work	Supervisor's Verification
Jan 4-7, 2009	<u>VHF Project</u>	
1 day	Researched (internet and IEEE journals) wireless communication technologies as background for VHF Project.	
2 days	Investigated methods/alternatives for optimizing VHF communications in difficult areas. Preliminary results indicated fairly significant optimization can be achieved using new XYZ research.	
1 day	Reviewed/updated maps of nine remote sites and prepared data for VHF report.	
Jan 10-14, 2009		
2 days	Attended wireless communications conference.	
	<u>ABC Project</u>	
1 day	Participated in design meeting with client, R&D, circuit team, and marketing. Compiled list of client needs.	
2 days	Developed product specifications and distributed to meeting participants.	
Jan 17-21, 2009	<u>VHF Project</u>	
4.5 days	Wrote and finalized report on remote site VHF optimization.	
.5 day	Attended H ₂ S safety course.	
Jan 24-28, 2009	<u>VHF Project</u>	
1 day	Prepared Powerpoint presentation.	
1 day	Conducted internal VHF presentation to senior managers.	
	<u>ABC Project</u>	
3 days	Coordinated meetings with R&D and circuit team to develop project schedule.	

Supervisor's Information	
Supervisor's name in full, address and telephone number. Please verify that the work activities recorded in the right hand column are complete and accurate.	Name:
	Address:
	Telephone:

PORTFOLIOS

◆◆ WHAT IS A PORTFOLIO?

A portfolio is a method of collecting and presenting hard evidence of your expanding job competence and experience. In other words, it's a collection of specific examples of your work.

Just as a watercolour artist keeps a portfolio of his paintings to show to potential clients and buyers, you will want to keep a portfolio of your projects, training, awards and prizes, skills and any positive reviews from clients and employers.

Portfolios are a simple and widely accepted method of demonstrating your work competence and experience to customers, clients and potential employers. They are also an easy way for you to keep track of your own work history and accomplishments.

◆◆ DIFFERENT KINDS OF PORTFOLIOS

Portfolios can take several forms. Here are a few of the different types:

Development Portfolio

This includes a record of all of your career-related skills, achievements and experiences. It is where you keep track of all of the positions that you've held, the skills that you've developed, any additional training that you've undertaken, awards or prizes that you've received, as well as feedback and comments (i.e. hopefully positive) that you've received from customers or clients, etc. You may also want to store some examples of your technical and report writing here.

The scope of a development portfolio is large, since it is an archive of your life experiences. Although it may

seem unlikely at this stage that you will forget things you've done or achieved, keep in mind that as time passes your career experiences will increase dramatically, making it more and more difficult to keep track of your expanding competence. This is where a portfolio is so useful.

Selection Portfolio

This is where you collect and present elements taken from your development portfolio that relate to a particular position you are considering. Making these types of selections early in your career is probably not difficult or even necessary. However, as your career develops, you may want to focus potential employers on specific sub-sets of your skills or experiences that make you unique, or that make you appear to the employer to be the ideal applicant.

Presentation Portfolio

This is a set of material selected for presentation to a specific audience, for a specific purpose, using an appropriate medium. Presentation portfolios are highly customized and typically of very high quality. Professionals frequently use presentation portfolios when applying for positions, but they may also be used when making funding/tender submissions or as part of contract negotiations.

◆◆ GENERAL INFORMATION

The individual items included in a portfolio are called artifacts. The types of artifacts included in a portfolio vary depending on your discipline. Your portfolio might include narrative statements of your career

or professional goals and philosophies, examples of projects that you've completed while on a work term, work term supervisor comments, samples of projects you've completed as part of your studies, assignment feedback, journal excerpts, photographs, video clips, and audio reflections.

When it comes to choosing the contents of your portfolio, your Co-op Coordinator can advise you on the types of artifacts most appropriate for your discipline.

◆◆ ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIOS

In this world where technology becomes ever more prevalent, portfolios are now often created in electronic form. The advantages of this are fairly evident. It is easier to keep and review large amounts of material in electronic form. Also, electronic portfolios are considered to be more flexible and dynamic, enabling artifacts to be presented in more integrated ways. And finally, an electronic portfolio gives you the opportunity to develop and demonstrate your technology skills.

In an electronic portfolio, you might consider hyper-linking items on your resume to items in the rest of the portfolio.

◆◆ GETTING STARTED: CREATE YOUR OWN PORTFOLIO

Creating a portfolio is simple: you just need a storage device of some kind (filing folder or cabinet, binder, flash drive) and a few artifacts to put in it. Label your storage device clearly and make sure you know where it is. Then use it as a central place to store your portfolio artifacts.

Don't worry about organizing your artifacts at this stage. Just start collecting and storing items in your portfolio.

As your portfolio grows, you will want to make sure it is organized and geared toward its intended audience. Determine who that audience is. How can you tailor the portfolio towards a particular position?

You should include the following things in your portfolio:

- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Resume – most current
- Letters of Reference
- Performance Reviews
- Degrees, Certificates, Awards
- Job Descriptions from past work - this gives a prospective employer an idea of the responsibilities you had on the job.
- Memos indicating additional projects or responsibilities that may have been added to your job.
- Products or project descriptions you have worked on.
- Schematics or print outs of web pages you are proud of.
- Examples of your programming code, CAD work, design, any examples of your work that pertains to the job you are seeking or something you are particularly happy with.
- A list of your technical skills in more detail than your resume, including all software, hardware, operating systems, databases, webwork, etc.
- Copies of your written work, including your latest work term report and any other technical documentation you have written.
- Log book pages.
- Miscellaneous - letters of thanks, conferences you have attended and stuff that doesn't fit elsewhere.

Be sure to make copies of all the documents in your portfolio, and hang on to the originals.

Remember that with any portfolio, whether it is in electronic or hard copy form, it should look professional. Your portfolio is a reflection of your skills and habits, your personality and work ethic.

CO-OP PROGRAM INFORMATION

◆◆ ABOUT THE CO-OP OFFICE

The Co-op office is located in the Engineering and Computer Science Building.

ECS 204

Phone: 250-472-5800

Fax: 250-472-5801

Email: engrcoop@uvic.ca

Program Manager

Manfred Bultmann mbultman@uvic.ca

Co-op Coordinators

All students in the Co-op program are assigned a Co-op Coordinator based on their discipline. Coordinators will help you with:

- job search/job development
- report writing
- career-related questions
- co-op-related enquiries

Roel Hurkens rhurkens@uvic.ca
Mechanical Engineering

Calvin Tripp ctrip@uvic.ca
Mechanical Engineering

Rhonda Korol rkorol@uvic.ca
Electrical/Computer Engineering

Jonathan Foweraker fowerake@uvic.ca
Electrical/Computer Engineering

Meeta Khurana meetak@uvic.ca
Software Engineering/Computer Science

Duncan Hogg dshogg@uvic.ca
Software Engineering/Computer Science

Susan Fiddler sfiddler@uvic.ca
Computer Science

Jonathan Foweraker fowerake@uvic.ca
Math and Graduate Students

Pamela Welgan pwelgan@uvic.ca
Vancouver-based Coordinator

Expect to receive emails from your coordinator keeping you informed as to Co-op events and information.

Co-op Placement Coordinators

Cindy Lowe clowe@uvic.ca
Megan Jameson mjameson@uvic.ca

Co-op Placement Coordinators are responsible for managing the placement process and the design and delivery of program-related classes and seminars.

They help students with:

- resumes and cover letters
- questions about the seminar series
- placement process and job postings
- questions about using our MyCo-op database

Co-op Assistants

Phone: 250-472-5800

- ❖ Nancy Chan
- ❖ Patti Massey
- ❖ Wendy Phelan
- ❖ Shelley Taje

Co-op Assistants will help students with:

- forms and registration of work terms
- interview scheduling
- job offers
- general enquiries
- finding the right person to help you

◆◆ COMPUTER ACCOUNTS

All co-op students are required to use their UVic NetLink Account to access the MyCoop database. Please visit <http://netlink.uvic.ca> if you have any problems with access to your account.

The Co-op office uses email to contact students. Unless we are otherwise notified, all email will be sent to your @uvic.ca account. Please be sure to check your account regularly.

If you redirect your email to another account, please make sure the forwarding works!

◆◆ CO-OP WEBSITE

One of your main resources for the program is our website: <http://www.uvic.ca/coop/engrcoop>.

Please familiarize yourself with the information provided on the website. This includes:

- links to our office forms
- program regulations
- program information and guidelines
- contact information for Co-op office staff

The other important site for students is MyCoop – our job/application database: <http://www.mycoop.ca>

This site is where you will find:

- our resume and cover letter templates
- job descriptions
- interview sign-up pages

◆◆ STUDENT SCHEDULES

The co-op year is divided into three terms: fall (Sept. – Dec.), spring (Jan. – April) and summer (May – Aug.). Work terms are normally four or eight months long, but can go up to one year.

Upon entering the program, engineering students have an academic/work term schedule arranged for them as outlined below, indicating eight academic terms and six possible opportunities in which to complete four work terms. Variations to this schedule are possible, but students must complete a program modification form with the Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) office or a departmental advisor before course changes are approved, as some courses are only offered once a year and enrollment is monitored to accommodate class/lab space.

	Fall (Sept - Dec)	Spring (Jan - April)	Summer (May - Aug)
Year 1	1A	1B	Work Term
Year 2	2A	Work Term	2B
Year 3	Work Term	3A	Work Term
Year 4	3B	Work Term	4A
Year 5	Work Term	4B	Graduation

◆◆ WORK TERM REQUIREMENTS

Work terms need to involve engineering-related work of an appropriate technical/responsibility level. The minimum duration of a work term is 455 hours, which is the equivalent of 13 weeks of full-time (35 hours per week) work. Normally, a work term is paid work experience; however, some unpaid volunteer positions may also qualify as Co-op work terms.

Types of Work Terms

Regular: This is a full-time paid position that lasts three to four months, for a minimum 455 hours.

Part-Time: With this type of position you will work part-time and attend classes over an eight-month period. You are required to have your course load ap-

proved by the department.

Entrepreneurial: Approval is required should you wish to pursue this type of work term. Speak to your Co-op Coordinator to obtain permission. You will be asked to provide bi-weekly reports during the work term.

- **Paid:** You set-up your own business and contract services to clients.
- **Unpaid:** You work on development of your product, the future income potential of which you will then demonstrate. A mentor is required for this type of entrepreneurial work term.

Volunteer: You will volunteer with a not-for-profit organization, most likely at no salary. You will, however, receive in-kind compensation (e.g., travel, accommodation, food, etc.).

Found Your Own Job? Provide your Co-op Coordinator with the details of your job and get approval to count it as a work term. Once approved, bring in a copy of your offer letter (on company letterhead) indicating your start/end dates, salary and a brief description of your work.

Students who are placed in jobs through our placement process will be registered in those jobs as work terms. This also applies to students doing additional work terms after having completed their minimum required number.

◆◆ **LOOKING FOR A JOB**

You will begin preparation for your Co-op job search four months prior to the start of your work term, normally while you are on campus. Employers typically send job descriptions to our office in the first two or three months of the term. Jobs are evaluated by staff, assigned an appropriate academic level and discipline, and posted on our MyCoop website for students to review. All students in the program have access to this database for viewing jobs, creating resumes and cover letters and applying to posted jobs.

Jobs are normally posted for one to two weeks, but the deadline for applications is left to the employers' discretion. Jobs close at 10:00 a.m. on the posted

deadline date.

Students can view all jobs posted at UVic but may only apply to those within their Co-op program, unless special permission is granted. Many employers will also post their jobs at UBC, SFU, Camosun and the Universities of Alberta and Waterloo. If we are aware of this cross posting it will be indicated on the job description.

Some employers will include a salary scale on their job posting, while others prefer not to disclose this information. Our office keeps records of salaries paid to students and, upon request, can give you an idea of the average levels. Some employers may ask for an eight-month term of employment; students will register for these as two separate work terms. If you are interested in an eight month job or longer, please ensure that your academic schedule is modified to accommodate your intent. This involves talking to the BEng office or a departmental advisor to formally modify your program.

◆◆ **APPLYING FOR JOBS**

To begin applying for jobs, there are a couple things you need to do to become eligible to use the MyCoop database:

- All students must have passed or be enrolled in ENGR 020.
- A signed Terms and Conditions form must be on file for all students.
- A signed Work Term Registration form must be handed in to the Co-op office.

Each term before you begin applying for jobs, you must complete the top section of the Work Term Registration form (or, for grad students, the Add/Drop form) and submit this to the Co-op office. Once you are placed in a job, this form is filled in with the employers name by our office and we will register you in the work term. Each work term will be recorded on your transcript.

Emails are sent to students at the beginning of each term reminding them to bring in forms so they can begin applying for jobs. Normally, we have 200 engineering students looking for work each term, as well

as 50 to 100 math and computer science students.

◆◆ THE CO-OP PROGRAM FEE

Students are assessed a work term fee for each registered Co-op job. This fee is payable to the Accounting office at UVic or may be paid online through USource.

The Co-op office has no control over this fee. It is set by the Board of Governors and is similar to fees levied for tuition. This money goes into the general revenue for the university and is used to support all programs on campus.

Your Co-op work term fee is due to Accounting at the end of the first month of the work-term. See [http://www.finance.uvic.ca/tuition/fees.shtmlforcurrentCo-op fees](http://www.finance.uvic.ca/tuition/fees.shtmlforcurrentCo-op%20fees).

◆◆ YOUR STATUS WHILE ON A WORK TERM

Students on a registered work term are considered to have full time student status. This means that during your work term you are covered by UVSS medical and dental insurance, unless you choose to opt out. Your status if you have loans remains the same as if you were on academic term. You may opt into the bus pass and athletics and rec membership if your work term is located in Victoria. Validation of your student card or information regarding the aforementioned passes may be obtained at the SUB info. booth.

◆◆ WORK TERM FORMS & DOCUMENTS

The following list of documents must be completed in order to pass each work term. All required forms can be printed from the Co-op website, at <http://mycoop.coop.uvic.ca/engrcoop/?page=forms>.

Work Site Record Form

This provides our office with your contact information and enables us to arrange a work site visit during your work term.

Student Performance Review

This form consists of three sections, to be filled out at the beginning, middle and end of work term. All three sections must be handed in to our office upon your return to campus following the work term. Keep one copy of your performance review for your portfolio.

Work Term Topic Submission Form

This form is submitted at the end of the third month of your work term. It tells us the planned topic of your work term report and is used to note whether the report is confidential. This may require that a non-disclosure form be sent to your employer.

Work Term Report

This is a 10 to 15-page technical report which all students are required to write for each of their work terms. Work term reports are due to the Co-op office on the first Friday of classes in the term following your work term.

Your report should address an engineering problem encountered while on work term. Provide suitable background, identify the problem and discuss possible solutions. If applicable, discuss how a solution was implemented and the ensuing result, followed by your conclusions and recommendations.

You will need your supervisor's signature on the title page of your report. Reports are graded by Faculty, Associates, or Co-op Coordinators and are given a pass or fail mark. Should you receive a fail, you will have the opportunity to re-write your report. Comprehensive guidelines for work term reports are available at <http://mycoop.coop.uvic.ca/engrcoop/?page=forms>. Be sure to read through this site thoroughly before writing your report.

Logbooks

All Engineering students must keep a logbook for each work term. Logbooks should be available for review with your Co-op Coordinator during the work site visit, or they may be submitted to the Co-op office upon completion of the work term.

Logbook guidelines, examples and templates can be found on our website, at http://www.coop.uvic.ca/engrcoop/?page=logbook_guidelines.

◆◆ **IMPORTANT REMINDER**

Please remember: the Co-op program cannot guarantee you a Co-op job. We will, however, work in partnership with you to support and provide you with resources you'll find helpful in your Co-op job search.