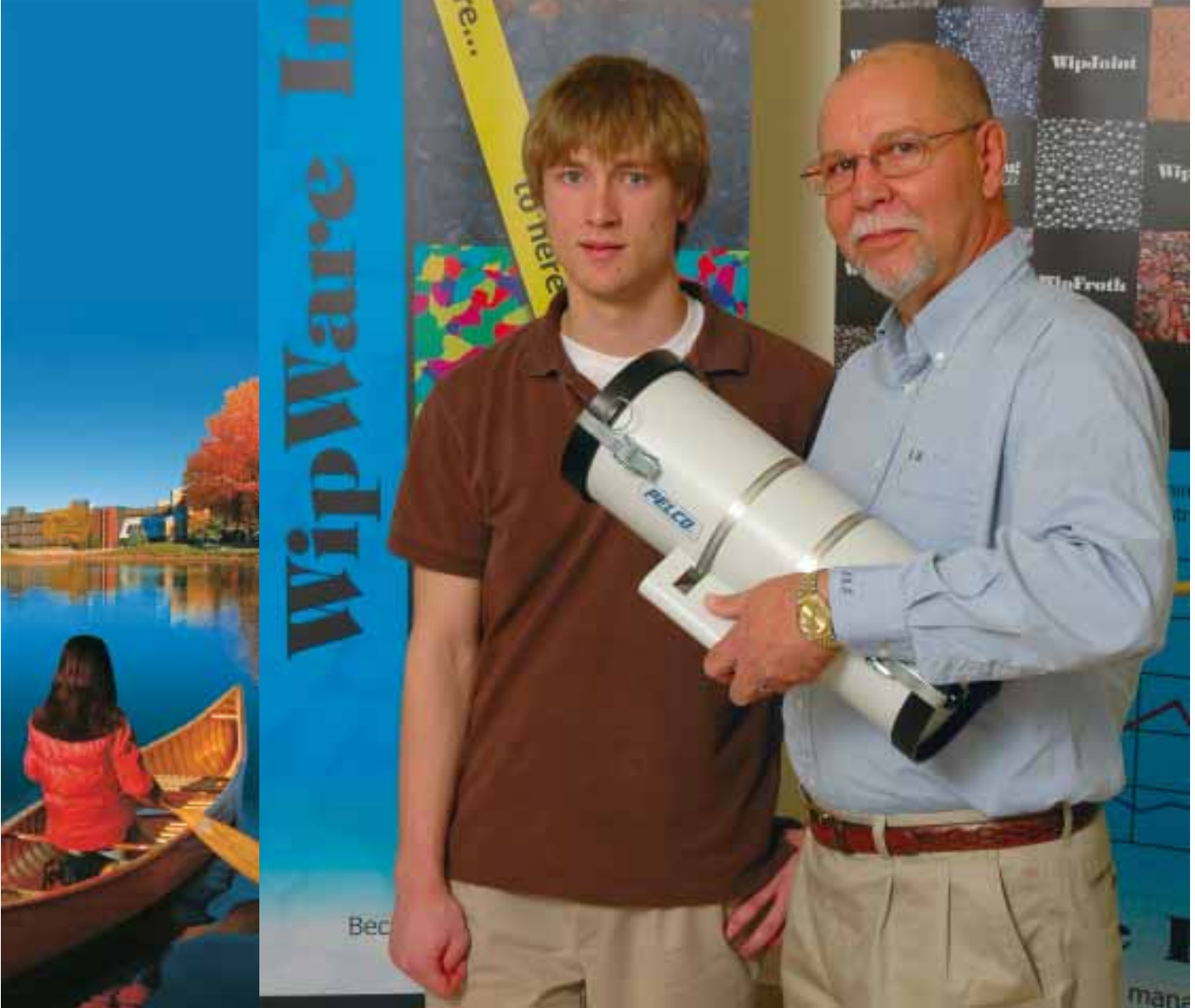




# canadore college



## **School of Business Co-operative Education (Co-op) Program Employer Guide**

AN ENVIRONMENT  
FOR LEARNING

*“Co-op is the ultimate scholarship”*

August 2008

Dear Employer,

Thank you for taking an interest in Canadore College's School of Business Co-operative Education (Co-op) opportunities.

The following is a Guide that will provide you information on what Co-operative Education is and how it can benefit your company or organization.

Canadore's Co-op Programs enjoy the support of countless employers from both the public and private sectors, locally and nationally. They are a fantastic opportunity for employers, students and the College to work together to develop skilled, educated and experienced workers for the future.

Students take their newly acquired skills into the work place where they exchange their knowledge and enthusiasm for an opportunity to practice what they have learned while earning a wage.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Canadore's Co-op Program.

We look forward to having you join us as a Canadore College School of Business Co-op partner.

Please review our Employer Guide and if you have any questions, contact our Co-op Advisor at (705) 474-7600 ext. 5568.

Sincerely,



David Himmelman  
Dean of Business

# what is co-operative education?

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Co-operative education is a fantastic opportunity for employers, students and Canadore College to work together to develop skilled, educated and experienced workers for the future.

Students bring their newly acquired skills into the work place where they exchange their knowledge and enthusiasm for an opportunity to practice what they have learned.

Students alternate periods of full-time study with periods of full-time, paid, productive employment in business, industry, government and the professions.

This approach to education relies upon a three-way partnership: the student, Canadore College and you, the employer. Success depends upon the co-operative efforts of each party.

## Why Co-operative Education?

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Students graduating from postsecondary programs are facing profound social, technological and economic change. Through co-operative education, employers and educators share the responsibility to prepare students for these rapidly changing conditions. The employer becomes a co-educator, helping students to become productive members of society.

Though the goal is to develop high-caliber, well-trained graduates, all parties benefit.

## Employer Benefits

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### Reduced Recruitment and Hiring Costs

- Enjoy access to a selection of highly motivated and capable students from Canadore College's School of Business to perform specific tasks or projects
- Select from a group of applicants who have already completed some postsecondary training as well as preparation for operating effectively in the workplace
- Benefit from a cost-effective means of evaluating future employees
- Enjoy eligibility for government grants - the Ontario Government offers a 10% tax credit on wages paid to a co-op sponsor

### Effective Human Resource Management

- Meet short-term needs due to vacation schedules, transfers, promotions, training commitments, peak work loads or special projects by hiring Canadore co-op students
- Increase effective utilization of permanent employees and provide an opportunity for employee development in the area of supervision
- Co-op students bring enthusiasm and a host of new ideas and approaches which can have a positive effect in the workplace
- Co-op students can free up higher paid employees to do more advanced or higher priority work
- Students returning to Canadore College sell their experience and the employer's company to other students, friends and family thereby acting as ambassadors for the company
- Upon graduation, many students take on full-time employment with their co-op employers giving those employers an advantage over companies not involved in co-op

### Investing in Our Future

- Share in the training and development of our students to help them become productive members of society and potential leaders
- Employers are considered co-educators as they provide learning opportunities beyond the bounds of the classroom
- Co-operative education provides the opportunity for you to have direct input in the educational process on how to make curriculum more relevant or improve pre-employment training

# employer responsibilities

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## Employer/Employee Relationship

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For a co-op work term to be successful, the supervisor and the student must establish an effective relationship. The student becomes an employee of the organization and is expected to be treated as any other temporary employee regarding benefits and other employment requirements as defined by the law or a collective agreement. As such, the employers assume responsibility as they would for any other employee and the student accepts the responsibilities of an employee.

**In order to increase the student's productivity and facilitate learning, it is recommended that employers:**

- Prepare the student's co-workers and other staff for the arrival of the student
- Provide the student with an orientation to the workplace, including an overview of the organization, physical layout, relevant personnel, safety practices, and the duties or tasks expected during the work term
- Provide a supervisor who will oversee the student's work and discuss expectations and give feedback on areas of strength and areas which require improvement
- Advise the student with regard to all issues of confidentiality in the workplace and ensure that any non-disclosure agreements are signed prior to the commencement of work

## Learning Environment

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- Assist students to set realistic learning objectives and provide relevant learning opportunities
- Acquaint the student with relevant resources and materials

## Evaluation of the Learning

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- Participate in the work-site visit or follow-up measures by the Canadore College co-op advisor to assess the student's progress and performance
- Complete a final evaluation of the student's performance during the work term which the employer is encouraged to discuss with the student

## Work Term Responsibilities

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### First Week

Orientation and training - make the student aware of company policies and practices as well as the specifics of the student's new job. Discuss the learning objectives set by the student.

### During Placement

1. Treat the student as any other employee with similar privileges and responsibilities.
2. Provide students with a wide variety of experiences.
3. Review student's performance.
4. Provide a verbal evaluation during a supervisor/student, co-op advisor meeting.

### End of Term

Complete Employer Evaluation of Student form.

# student benefits

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## Co-op students gain:

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- Relevant employment skills and realistic expectations of the work force before graduation
- A well-rounded education, enriched by practical application of classroom learning
- A broader understanding of career options, often in a variety of employment settings
- Financial remuneration which helps to defray educational costs
- Documented practical experience, a résumé, and job search skills
- Maturity, self-esteem, and skills developed through working with others and being a productive member of the work force
- A network of professional contacts that can be used for full-time employment job leads
- Understanding of the academic program through practical application

## Student Responsibilities

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### Co-op students are expected to:

- Conform to all the conditions and rules that apply to employees in the organization
- Complete their placement - withdrawal from the placement without prior consultation and consent of the co-op advisor will result in dismissal from the co-op program at Canadore College
- Exercise ethical workplace conduct
- Set goals for learning
- Work on enhancing their academic, professional and personal skills
- Maintain employer confidentiality
- Accept feedback and suggestions for improvement in a positive manner
- Participate in work-site visits
- Resolve any problems or issues that may arise in a prompt, professional manner
- Advise the employer and co-op advisor of any concerns or problems with their work assignment or environment as soon as an issue arises
- Share with their professors and students their experience of co-op when they return to Canadore College
- Keep in contact with their co-op advisor
- Complete the end of term work place report

# benefits to canadore college

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## **Institutional benefits include:**

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- Qualified graduates who are prepared to assume a productive role in society
- Increased enrolment as co-op programs attract top quality, superior, well-motivated students
- Enhanced visibility and reputation through interactions with the community
- Feedback from employers on the quality and relevance of program curriculum
- Information on current research and development in employer sectors, with opportunities for collaborative projects

## **Canadore College's Responsibilities**

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### **The institution is responsible for:**

- Ensuring the integrity of its co-operative education programs
- Developing and maintaining relevant curricula which reflects the needs of employers
- Providing relevant academic training for students in their chosen career field
- Providing adequate communication between student, employer and co-op advisor
- Developing co-op programs which meet the needs of employers

## **Role of Canadore's Co-op Advisor**

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- Facilitate development of co-op opportunities relevant to the program area
- Ensure fair and equitable treatment of students and employers through the placement process
- Assist employers through all aspects of the co-op process
- Prepare co-op students with appropriate skills and attitudes for their work terms
- Work with employers and students in monitoring and evaluating the students' work terms
- Encourage students to experience a range of organizations during their co-op program
- Monitor the placements, through on-site visits, ensuring that both the employer's and the student's needs are being met
- Convey to employers the types of funding assistance that may be available
- Conduct a post-employment process with students

# the co-op process/hiring procedure

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## Job Descriptions

The employer works with Canadore College's co-op advisor to develop job descriptions that outline duties and responsibilities, required education and experience.

## Student Applications

Job descriptions are posted and résumés of interested students are sent to the employer for screening and interview selection.

## Interviews

The employer works with the co-op advisor to arrange interviews for those students they wish to consider. Usually interviews take place on the job site, however, telephone interviews can be arranged for non-local employers.

## Placement Process

Upon completion of interviews, the employer makes an offer to the student.

## Placement Confirmation

The student and employer will confirm the placement with the co-op advisor.

## Acceptance of Offer

Once the student is confirmed, employers are requested to provide a written letter of offer, including salary, start and end date, and any other relevant terms of employment. Students should respond with a written acceptance.



## Job Development

Some co-op students undertake to develop their own work term opportunities and may approach your organization. If you, as the employer, are already dealing with a co-op institution, please deal directly with Canadore's co-op advisor. Students are advised not to approach co-op employers who are already posting with an institution.

If employers have not been actively employing co-op students through an institution, they may negotiate directly with the student regarding work placement; however, contact should be made with the co-op advisor to discuss the position.

# workplace issues

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## Salaries

The employer, within the salary structure of that organization, generally sets salaries.

## Benefits

Benefits are the responsibility of the employer and must be provided under the terms of a collective agreement or the Employment Standards Act; 4% vacation pay, or time off in lieu, should be provided during the work term.

## Evaluation

All students and their employers are contacted, and in most cases, visited at least once during each work term. At the end of each work term the supervisor is asked to complete an employer evaluation of the student.

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality issues should be discussed and agreed to prior to the job offer and acceptance. Student employees must comply with their employer's policies regarding confidentiality and recognize that the information they work with, including the results of any research undertaken, belong to the employer.

## Problems in the Workplace

Should any unusual circumstances arise during the work term, for example, behavior problems or medical emergencies, employers should contact the co-op advisor to facilitate a resolution. Should employers consider dismissing a co-op student, they are urged to consult with the co-op advisor as early as possible to discuss their concerns.



## Lay-offs and Strikes

If employers foresee a lay-off or strike that will directly affect the co-op student, they should notify the co-op advisor as soon as possible.

Participation in Canadore College's School of Business Co-op program is a win-win-win situation for student, employer and Canadore College. A co-op position is more than just a job. It is an opportunity for the student to put theory into practice; the employer to train a potential future employee; and Canadore College to serve both students and the community.

# what to expect from a canadore college co-op student

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Canadore College's Business Co-op students are highly motivated to have a successful co-op placement. Their placement in co-op is more than just a way to make money.

For most, the co-op mark on their transcript is the most important mark of all. Upon graduation, it tells a prospective employer that the student has been successful in applying the knowledge learned in the classroom to an actual job.

Students are so committed to the co-op process that they take extra courses and pay a premium to be enrolled in the co-op course. Some claim that co-op is the reason they come to Canadore College. They highly value the experience in their field under the direction of the college co-op and employer advisors.

## **Canadore College co-op students have had at least one successful year of college, they:**

1. Learned how to manage their time and to complete assignments, study, and attend class
2. Work independently with minimal supervision
3. Value their education since most have made large personal financial commitments to higher education
4. In many instances, are living away from home, managing the responsibilities of such a move

The students have a genuine interest in the work they are doing. They want to learn all they can about the company and the career possibilities as well as the field in general.

Through classroom participation and group assignments, students have developed strategies for working as part of a team. They have developed research and writing skills as they fulfill their academic assignments.



When they return to Canadore College, they are eager to share their on-the-job experiences with faculty and students thereby promoting the company.

Students bring with them support from Canadore College and its staff to assist in planning the co-op term and advising on any concerns that may arise.

Finally, an enthusiastic co-op student, willing to work while learning, can bring fresh life into the workforce.

# placement suggestions for canadore college co-op students

Canadore College Business Co-op students are able to take on positions where they are required to use basic business skills, learn new skills quickly, work independently or as part of a team and communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing.

**While most co-op students accept a position already defined within the company's structure, here is a list of suggestions:**

1. Summer replacement - filling in for employees as they go on vacation
2. Research projects - drawing on the research skills they learned in college, they can conduct Internet searches, library research, phone surveys, tabulate questionnaires etc.
3. Apprenticeship style job - student works with an individual or department carrying out some of the basic duties so full-time employees can be freed up to concentrate on more advanced work
4. Public relations - a major brewing company hired a co-op student to drive around to pubs and create a "fun atmosphere" while promoting the product; students represent the company at community events
5. Younger customers/clients may appreciate being served by a young student
6. Secret shopper - evaluating service and products from company locations as well as competitors
7. A business co-op student is well prepared to run a small retail location in a mall, park etc.
8. Train a student for an entry level or lower management position
9. Use a co-op student to extend normal hours of operation for the business
10. Company is looking at a new opportunity they could have a student develop
11. Many students have excellent computer skills in web page design, Power Point, Word and Excel



**The co-op advisor welcomes the opportunity to discuss co-op with you:**

**David Thompson, B.A.**

Co-op Advisor

School of Business, Canadore College

North Bay, Ontario

david.thompson@canadorec.on.ca

(705) 474-7600 ext. 5568