

End of Term Reflections:

As my term has come to an end, I have done a lot of reflecting on new lessons I have learned during my co-op term at ABC Company. It's been an honour to have been able to work at one of Canada's largest banks for the past four months. I have learned about the work process, organizational structure, and different groups within a large organization; it was only a dream to me five years ago. As a 20-year-old just testing out different career paths to see what fits, I appreciate each and every learning experience I have gone through at each of the jobs I have worked at so far. At ABC Company, the four most important lessons I have learned include: details matter, how to collaborate more proactively, the importance of soft skills in the workplace, and being radically candid.

1. Details matter. When I first started my term here, I was not a very detail-oriented person. I would say that I am about average when it comes to noticing the errors in the fine print, and I usually am not able to pick up all the errors on the first try. However, I realized just how important proofreading communications documents was to maintaining high quality. At a large organization like ABC Company, where our brand name is parallel to maintaining accuracy and quality, documents must be error-free to be representative of our corporate values. Although I am still not as detail-oriented as my manager is (I wish!), my attention to detail has improved since starting co-op.
2. Collaborating more proactively. In the previous three jobs that I have worked at, I had very few meetings with my managers, mainly because they were usually busy with other matters, and the tasks I was assigned did not require much collaboration. However, since the majority of my tasks at ABC Company involved helping to create PowerPoint decks, and proofreading communications documents, I found that I needed to communicate more with my manager in terms of what her goal for the end product was to look like.
3. Soft skills make a big difference. As a student born in the late 90's, I am part of a generation that gets constantly told, "It's not just about the tangible skills that matter at the workplace; behaving professionally, dressing appropriately, and having the right attitude matters as well."
4. The best way to resolve any issues is to have a direct and open conversation – and be radically candid to clarify things.

As a young adult who is just starting to assimilate into the workforce, I know I have a long way to go and more lessons to learn in the journey ahead of me. I appreciate each and every piece of advice that I have received on how to succeed in Canada's evolving workforce including the following:

- Being able to bring your full self to work is important. If you find that you cannot bring your full self to work, you are probably not at the right role.
- Networking is an important skill to have in the workplace as you never know what opportunities you can discover by just meeting the right people.
- One great soft skill to have is keeping calm in all work situations. Panicking will only add gas to the fire.

Thank you, ABC Company, for having me as a co-op student for the past four months. I wish everyone a great happy holiday and a happy new year!