



**CO-OPERATIVE  
EDUCATION**

*Test Drive Your Future...*

# **Co-op Transitions Processing a Job Loss**



Learning from the past  
helps ensure success  
in the future



**Waterloo Region  
District School Board**

# Acknowledgements

Sincere appreciation is extended to the following Co-op teachers at Crestwood Secondary School, Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board:

K. Kasperski, L. Rae, J. Bird and C. Bates for generously sharing their Restorative Toolkit concept at the Ontario Co-operative Education Association 2009 Spring Conference.

Special thanks to Janice Wiseman for her design and layout expertise, and the WRDSB Co-op team of Sue Emery, Leanne Graham, Gaby Hartmann, Paula LeBrun, Ruby Mironsky and Linda Schmitter for adapting the document for WRDSB use.

© November 2009 – Waterloo Region District School Board

All curriculum resource materials developed by the employees of the Waterloo Region District School Board during the course of their employment with the Board and through the Waterloo Region District Curriculum Process are the sole property of the Waterloo Region District School Board.

This curriculum resource shall not be reproduced for distribution or for sale outside of the Waterloo Region District School Board.

# Co-op Transitions

## Processing a Job Loss

### Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction .....	2
Information Checklist - Processing a Job Loss at a Co-op Placement.....	3
<b>Student Assignments</b>	
1. Reflection - Loss of a Co-op Placement.....	4
2. Building on Strengths and Achievements .....	5
3. Self-Assessment of Work Skills .....	6
4. My Transferable Skills .....	8
5. Unacceptable Behaviour at a Co-op Placement .....	11
6. Challenges at the Workplace .....	12
7. Resolving the Issues - Restorative Justice .....	13
8. Employment Insurance.....	14
9. Success at a Co-op Placement.....	16
10. Next Steps! How to Ensure Success at My Next Placement .....	17
11. Letter of Apology .....	18

# Co-op Transitions

## Processing a Job Loss

### Introduction

*This resource was developed to address the needs of Co-operative Education students who have either quit their positions or who have been fired/terminated from their placements. The purpose is to provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their job loss and what they can do to increase the probability of success in the future.*

When a student loses a job at a Co-op placement, one or more of the following could result:

- loss of credits
- removal from the Co-operative Education program
- placement with a different Co-op employer

By completing the assignments in this resource, the student will:

- understand the reasons for the job loss
- accept the consequences of the job loss
- take ownership for the job loss
- strive to rebuild the relationship with the Co-op employer
- increase the probability of success in the future

The teacher should complete the **Information Checklist** and provide a photocopy for appropriate school personnel, as well as for the student. This will allow all parties to have a clear understanding of the expectations before the student is allowed to continue in the Co-operative Education program.

This resource includes a number of assignments:

- reflective learning
- online
- research

It is suggested that students complete the school's Co-op log sheet to record the actual time spent on each assignment.

The intent of this resource is for students to complete the assignments before working with their teachers or administration on possible next steps.



# Co-op Transitions

## Processing a Job Loss



### INFORMATION CHECKLIST

To be completed by the Co-op Teacher	Co-operative Education Teacher:	School:	Date:
	Student Name:		Student Telephone:
	Co-op Placement:		
	Placement Supervisor:	Placement Telephone:	

The following individuals need to be notified of the job loss:	Date Notified
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Student	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Teacher	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Placement Supervisor	
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. Parent/Guardian (<18)	
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Vice-principal (if applicable)	
<input type="checkbox"/> 6. Guidance Counsellor (if potential loss of credits)	

*Note: Attach a copy of the student's timetable.*

**Dates, Times, and Location in School where student will complete assignments**  
(e.g., Credit Recovery room, Library, Special Education room, etc.)

STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS	Completion Dates
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Reflection - Loss of a Co-op Placement	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Building on Strengths and Achievements	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Self-Assessment of Work Skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. My Transferable Skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Unacceptable Behaviour at a Co-op Placement	
<input type="checkbox"/> 6. Challenges at the Workplace	
<input type="checkbox"/> 7. Resolving the Issues – Restorative Justice	
<input type="checkbox"/> 8. Employment Insurance	
<input type="checkbox"/> 9. Success at a Co-op Placement	
<input type="checkbox"/> 10. Next Steps - How to Ensure Success at My Next Placement	
<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Letter of Apology	

☐ **Job Loss Reflection Interview upon Completion of Assignments** Interview Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate time spent on "Processing a Job Loss" assignments: \_\_\_\_\_

Outcome: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **New Co-op Placement** Date Started: \_\_\_\_\_

# Reflection - Loss of a Co-op Placement

## Assignment 1

**Instructions** Answer the following questions. Use the back of this page if additional space is needed.

1. Describe the situation(s) that led to the loss of your Co-op placement.

---

---

---

2. What could you have done differently to have prevented the loss of your Co-op placement?

---

---

---

3. Did your placement supervisor discuss any concerns about your performance while at the Co-op placement? If so, what was said and what did you do about the concerns?

---

---

---

4. Did you let your Co-op teacher know that there were problems at your Co-op placement? If yes, provide details about when and where this was done. If no, why not?

---

---

---

5. What have you learned from this experience that will help you become more employable in the future? Be specific.

---

---

---

---

---

**Instructions** Answer the following questions. Use the back of this page if additional space is needed.

1. Describe a positive job/volunteer experience that you have had or describe one of your successful projects/assignments.

---

---

---

---

2. What were the key factors that made the experience/project/assignment positive? Be specific.

---

---

---

---

---

3. How did **you** make the experience positive? (i.e., were you reliable, hard working, a team player, honest, trustworthy, able to use equipment you enjoy, etc.?)

---

---

---

---

---

4. Differentiate between this positive experience and that of your Co-op placement.

---

---

---

---

---

# Self-Assessment of Work Skills

## Assignment 3

**Instructions** Read each skill, check the response that best describes you and then answer the questions on the next page.

At my Co-op placement, I consider myself to be ....

SKILL	DEMONSTRATION OF SKILL	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
A hard worker	I get tasks done on time.				
	If business or my workload slows down, I look for other tasks to do until things get busy again.				
Enthusiastic	I have a positive attitude at work.				
	I am eager to learn new skills and tasks.				
	I want to learn more about the organization I work for.				
	I ask questions at my placement.				
Dependable	I show up for every shift I am scheduled for.				
	I get to work on time.				
	I do not take longer breaks than I am entitled to.				
	I finish tasks I am given.				
Helpful	I offer help if others need it.				
	I look for ways to be part of the team.				
Friendly	I make an effort to meet new people.				
	I enjoy talking with co-workers during breaks or at lunch.				
	I provide polite and respectful service to my customers.				
Able to work well with others	I work with a team to get the job done.				
	I treat my co-workers with respect.				
Professional	I dress appropriately for my job.				
	I am clean and well groomed when I arrive at work.				
	I speak positively about my employer, co-workers and customers.				
	I am honest and trustworthy.				



1. a) List the skills you checked off as "always".

---

---

---

---

- b) Do you think your employer would agree with your self-assessment? Why or why not?

---

---

---

---

2. Choose two skills you checked as "often" and explain how you could improve each skill.

---

---

---

---

3. For the skills you answered "sometimes" or "rarely", discuss how this affected your Co-op placement?

---

---

---

---

4. a) List two skills you need to improve upon?

---

---

- b) Describe specifically how you are going to improve upon the two skills in the future.

---

---

---

---

# My Transferable Skills

## Assignment 4

### Instructions Part A

For as many skills as possible, provide an example of where you have used the skill either at work, school, or in your personal life.

CATEGORY / SKILLS	EXAMPLES
<b>Organizational Skills</b>	<b>An example of where I used the skill:</b>
1. Planning	
2. Updating Information/Timesheets	
3. Scheduling/Timing	
4. Financial Management/Budgeting	
5. Co-ordinating Events	
6. Fundraising	
7. Record Keeping	
8. Setting Goals/Objectives	
9. Compiling Data or Facts	
10. Recording Numerical/Scientific Data	
<b>Helping Skills</b>	<b>An example of where I used the skill:</b>
1. Conflict Resolution/Settling Arguments	
2. Serving Individuals/Public	
3. Encouraging Others	
4. Being a Team Player	
5. Counselling/Supporting	

CATEGORY / SKILLS	EXAMPLES
<b>Communication Skills</b>	<b>An example of where I used the skill:</b>
1. Maintaining Confidentiality	
2. Report Writing	
3. Proofreading/Editing	
4. Presenting/Public Speaking	
5. Listening	
6. Writing Instructions	
7. Handling Inquiries or Complaints	
8. Training/Teaching/Guiding/Tutoring	
9. Meeting the Public	
<b>Creativity/Motivational Skills</b>	<b>An example of where I used the skill:</b>
1. Generating Enthusiasm	
2. Flexibility	
3. Resourcefulness	
4. Producing Pictures/Diagrams/Charts	
5. Marketing	
6. Graphic Design	
<b>Critical Thinking Skills</b>	<b>An example of where I used the skill:</b>
1. Identifying/Defining Problems	
2. Determining Resources/Solutions	
3. Evaluating Solutions	
4. Problem Solving	
5. Calculating Mathematical Problems	
6. Estimating Costs/Revenue/Space	
7. Researching	

**Instructions  
Part B**

From the previous two pages, determine the two categories where you have the strongest transferable skills. These will be the ones that it was easiest for you to think of examples. Name three types of Co-op placements where you think you could use your strongest transferable skills (i.e., if you have strong helping skills, then perhaps one of your suggested placements might be a nursing home).

Two Categories of My Strongest Transferable Skills	Examples of Possible Types of Co-op Placements
1 <sup>st</sup> Category:	1.
	2.
	3.
Why would it be important to let a prospective Co-op Employer know you have the transferable skills listed above? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Category:	1.
	2.
	3.
How should you let a prospective Co-op Employer know you have the transferable skills listed above? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

# Unacceptable Behaviour at a Co-op Placement

## Assignment 5

**Instructions** The chart below lists several behaviours that are not appropriate or acceptable at the workplace during working hours. Beside each behaviour explain why it is inappropriate at work and/or a Co-op placement (e.g., it wastes time - to an employer time is money).

Behaviour	Why is this Behaviour Inappropriate at Work and/or Co-op Placement?
Arriving Late or Not Showing Up	
Gossiping/Not Maintaining Confidentiality	
Blaming Others	
Use of Personal Cell Phone/Text Messaging	
Poor Grooming	
Personal Use of Workplace Computer	
Friends Visiting at Work	
Extended Breaks and/or Lunches	
Use of Offensive/Loud Language	
Not Listening/Following Instructions	

# Challenges at the Workplace

## Assignment 6

**Instructions**

Complete the following chart by:

1. identifying three areas that presented challenges for you at your Co-op placement
2. identifying the reasons why each was a challenge for you
3. listing the steps that you could have taken in order to overcome or solve each workplace challenge

Workplace Challenges	Reasons	Steps to Solutions
<b>Example:</b> It is a challenge for me to show up for my Co-op placement on time.	It takes me ½ hour on the bus to get there and I can never get out of bed in time to catch the bus.	Since my Mom works near my placement and starts 15 minutes earlier, I could have asked her to drop me off on the way to her job.
1. It is a challenge for me to		
2. It is a challenge for me to		
3. It is a challenge for me to		

You are on your way to overcoming challenges when you:

- take responsibility for personal issues
- ask for help
- do research
- want to make a change

# Resolving the Issues - Restorative Justice

## Assignment 7

*Restorative Justice* requires wrongdoers to recognize the harm they have caused, to accept responsibility for their actions and to be actively involved in improving the situation.

*Source: Department of Justice Canada*

**Instructions** Answer the following questions.

1. What happened that led to the loss of your Co-op placement? (Be specific - describe exactly what happened.)

---

---

---

---

---

2. What were you thinking of at the time?

---

---

---

3. What have you thought about since?

---

---

---

4. Identify the people who might have been affected by what you did? How do you think they have been affected?

---

---

---

5. What do you think you need to do to make things right? Be specific.

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Employment Insurance (EI)** provides **temporary** financial assistance to unemployed Canadians who have lost their job through no fault of their own, while they look for work or upgrade their skills.

Canadians who are sick, pregnant, or caring for a newborn or adopted child, as well as those who must care for a family member who is seriously ill with a significant risk of death, may also be assisted by Employment Insurance.

### Instructions

Complete each of the following statements or questions in the space provided.

The information needed to complete this assignment can be found at any Service Canada office or at their website: [www.servicecanada.gc.ca](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca).

- under **Programs and Services for You**, click on Employment Insurance
- under **Applying for EI**, click on the appropriate topic to find the necessary information

1. Who can apply for EI benefits?

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_
- d) \_\_\_\_\_

2. How, where and when should an individual apply?

- a) How? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Where? \_\_\_\_\_
- c) When? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What might happen if one delays filing a claim?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Specifically, what information/documents are needed to apply?

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| a) _____ | f) _____ |
| b) _____ | g) _____ |
| c) _____ | h) _____ |
| d) _____ | i) _____ |
| e) _____ |          |



5. What is the two-week unpaid waiting period?

---

---

---

6. How long does one need to wait for a first payment?

---

---

---

7. What kind of information can individuals find on-line about their EI insurance claims?

- a) 

---

---
- b) 

---

---
- c) 

---

---
- d) 

---

---

8. What is an access code and why is it important?

- a) What? 

---

---
- b) Why? 

---

---

# Success at a Co-op Placement

## Assignment 9

**Instructions** In your own words, compile a list of things that you now consider to be critical to the successful completion of a Co-operative Education placement. Include characteristics, skills, and suggestions about how to handle difficult situations at the placement.

### How to be successful at a Co-operative Education Placement:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

# Next Steps: How to Ensure Success at My Next Placement

## Assignment 10

Note: This assignment is more involved than the previous assignments and requires Internet access.

### Instructions Part A

Thoroughly answer all of the questions. All portions completed on-line **MUST** be printed off and handed in with the rest of the assignment. Begin by going to [nextsteps.org](http://nextsteps.org)

### JOB SEARCH

1. Click on **Résumé and Cover Letters**
  - a) Complete **Résumé I.Q.** - take quiz and print out results
  - b) On a separate sheet of paper answer the following questions based on the information provided on the site:
    - What kind of information should be included in a résumé?
    - What types of things should be omitted from a résumé?
    - Describe the 3 basic résumé formats.
    - What are the 12 Quick Tips to create a winning résumé?
    - Who should you include as your references?
    - What are the 9 guidelines of a good cover letter?
2. Click on **Job Search**
  - a) Click on **Inventory** - complete and print out results
    - Identify and describe 10 ways to stay 'out of the dumps'?
    - Describe the 3 ways to 'hit the bulls eye' when job targeting for a successful job search?
    - Describe 4 Job Search strategies
  - b) Click on **Interviews**
    - What are 10 general steps to help you prepare for an interview?
    - Describe the 3 stages of the interview

### Instructions Part B

Complete **one** of the following:

- answer the following questions or
- create a pamphlet for prospective Co-op students on "Keeping your Job" or
- create a poster suitable for posting in the Co-op classroom on "Keeping your Job"

### CAREER MAINTENANCE

1. Click on **Keeping Your Job** then **Your First Day on the Job** - comment on each of the following:
  - first impressions
  - dress
  - communication
  - remember names
  - what to expect the first day
  - surviving the first day
2. Click on **Your First Week on the Job**
  - a) Identify 6 ways to build rapport.
  - b) Identify 5 ways to listen effectively.
  - c) Describe 2 characteristics of a positive attitude.
  - d) Describe what is meant by each of the following - grunt work, expect the unexpected, and own up to your mistakes.
  - e) What 6 things can you expect in the first week on the job?

### Instructions Part C

Do the following:

- update your résumé
- update your cover letter
- prepare for your next interview

**Instructions**

This assignment requires you to:

1. Write a letter of apology to your former Co-op placement supervisor.
2. Answer the questions at the bottom of this page after you have written the letter.

### 1. Letter of Apology

Use the traditional letter format shown in the sample letter on the next page to write a letter of apology to your former Co-op placement supervisor.

- Start by formally apologizing in a sincere manner
- Thank the employer for providing the opportunity to gain practical and valuable experience in the workplace
- End on a positive note – say what you did learn at the Co-op placement
- Express hope that the employer will take another Co-op student in the future

Submit a draft copy to your Co-op teacher for editing and correcting.

Submit two final copies of the letter to your Co-op teacher – one copy will be sent to the placement supervisor and one copy will be kept for your file.

### 2. Questions

a) It is important to write a letter of apology. Why?

---

---

---

b) How do you think a Co-op supervisor would feel when he/she receives the letter of apology?

---

---

---

c) How could writing the letter of apology help you in the future?

---

---

---

## A Sample Letter of Apology

175 Western Place  
Kitchener, Ontario  
N2M 4G2



- Your home address

March 15, 2010

- Use today's date

Mrs. J. Smith  
Smith and Company  
122 Weber Street  
Kitchener, Ontario  
N2M 2R2



- Placement Supervisor
- Organization Name
- Organization Address

Dear Mrs. Smith

I am writing this letter to offer my sincere apology for not fulfilling my responsibilities as a Co-op student at Smith and Company. My Co-op teacher, *<teacher name>*, at *<school name>* required me to complete a number of assignments where I focused and reflected on why I no longer have my Co-op placement with you. Having completed this process, I am sending you this letter of apology.

First of all, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to learn with you and your staff. I am grateful that, in my brief stay, everyone was very friendly and helpful while generously taking the time to teach me about the newspaper industry. I now fully understand that I lost a great chance to gain hands-on work experience.

I realize that it was my fault when I constantly arrived late for work and did not always follow instructions. I failed to live up to the expectations of a Co-op student. As a result, I let you, your staff, my teacher, and my parents down. After reflecting on the school assignments I completed, I have learned the importance of punctuality and dependability on the job.

Thank you for taking me on as a Co-op student and I hope that your experience with my poor behaviour will not prevent you from offering a placement for a Co-op student in the future.

Yours truly

*Jason Watson*



- Enter 4 returns
- Sign your name

Jason Watson  
Co-op Student