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*Post-Secondary Jobspeak:
How to translate your
student experiences into
job skills employers desire.*



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Agenda

1. **Introductions and Housekeeping**
2. Skills that employers seek
3. Translating Skills from a Student RAship/TAship
4. Benefits of a Student Co-op/Placement experience
5. How to translate your student experiences into skills employers need example/case study
6. Conclusion
7. Question Period



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Common Fears of the Job Search

- I don't have work experience in my field
- I don't have 3-5 years experience.
- I don't have all the skills they are asking for.
- No one will hire me because I don't speak French.

What are employers looking for?



The reality:

- 1) Job postings are not meant to reflect all the qualifications a student will need for a job, they are a framework for what skills and abilities the employer is looking for in a student.
- 2) Employers are looking for graduates that are passionate about their field.
- 3) Employers are looking for soft skills.

The importance of soft skills



“93 percent *of employers say that a demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than a candidate’s undergraduate major. More than 75 percent want higher education to place more emphasis on critical thinking, complex problem solving, written and oral communication, and applied knowledge.”*

– Key Findings | 2013 Survey of Employers
‘It Takes More Than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning & Student Success’ | A Study for the Association of American Colleges & Universities

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Critical Soft Skills for Students

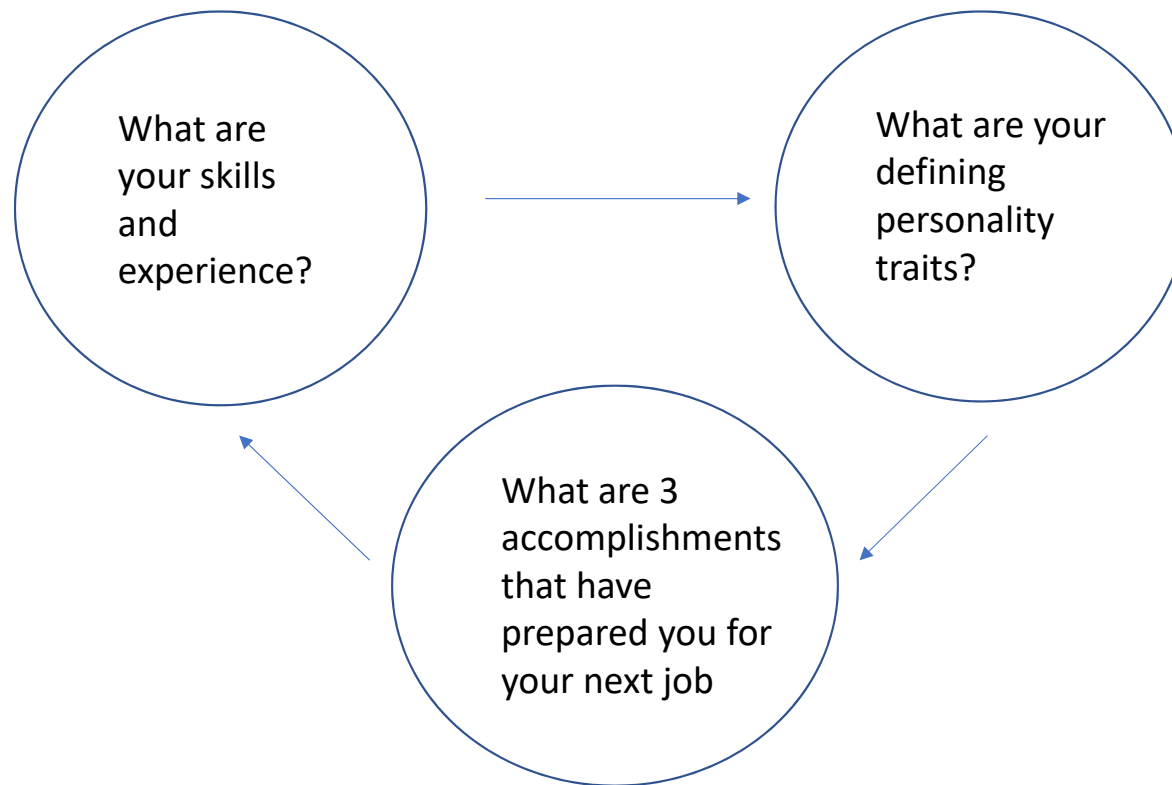


- 1) Peoples skills/Relationship building
- 2) Collaboration/Teamwork Skills
- 3) Problem Solving Skills
- 4) Communication Skills



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Who are you?





The Resume

The Do's

- 1) Tailor your resume to the job. Make sure to review the job posting and highlight the skills the employer is seeking.
- 2) Uniqueness. Put the "U" in resume.
- 3) Use metrics and be concise.

The Don'ts

- 1) Do not have spelling mistakes or formatting errors on your resume.
- 2) Do not have the wrong contact information on your resume or cover letter.
- 3) Do not misrepresent your employment history.

The Interview – What the employer is looking for



- 1) Why are you here?
- 2) What can you do for us?
- 3) What distinguishes you from the other 19 people who can do your job?
- 4) Do you have the required skills?
- 5) Can you provide specific examples of your skills and abilities?
- 6) What do you know about my company?



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Translating your Academic Experience

Skills you gain in
your diploma or
degree



Skills you gain in
other academic
settings

- Research Assistant Role
- Teaching Assistant Role
- Committee Work
- Student Associations
- Part-time job on campus.



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Social Work



WHAT CAN I DO WITH MY DEGREE? +

JOB SEARCH SUPPORT +

EVENTS +

GET EXPERIENCE +

DEVELOP YOUR SKILLS +

FOR EMPLOYERS

FOR FACULTY & STAFF +

FOR CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

CONTACT +

FAQ

YOUR DEGREE YOUR FUTURE

CO-OP EDUCATION

Major Skills Developed By Social Work Majors

- Knowledge of how economic, social, political and legislative contexts shape individual and societal problems
- Ability to read materials accurately and analytically
- Knowledge of methodologies of data collection, statistical analysis and evaluation; interviewing; conducting field research; observing human interactions
- Critical/Analytical thinking; abstract reasoning skills
- Problem solving skills; approaching topics and problems from various perspectives; analyzing multiple dimensions of a problem; identifying problems and developing solutions; decision making skills
- Communication skills – explaining ideas, writing and presenting information clearly; public speaking; writing grant proposals; maintaining records; good listening, clarifying, questioning and responding skills
- Ability to carry out tasks with thoroughness and precision
- Aptitude for conflict resolution; mediation; concern for and sensitivity to others
- Understanding of organizational and group dynamics



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Translating your Skills from a Student Research Assistantship/ Teaching Assistantship



Research Assistant Role	Teaching Assistant Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set up participant interviews• Correspond with participants via phone and email• Conduct research interviews• Input data into an online data base• Prepare reports• Conduct literature reviews• Research related material• Work on a long term project (1.5 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interact with Students and Professor• Grade student papers and assignments for 200 students• Input grades into online CULearn system• Lead student tutorials• Hold office hours• Answer students questions in office hours and over email



My transferrable skills



Duties and Experience	Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up participant interviews • Correspond with participants via phone and email • Conduct research interviews • Input data into an online data base • Prepare reports • Conduct literature reviews • Research related material • Work on a long term project (1.5 years) • Interact with Students and Professor • Grade student papers • Lead student tutorials • Hold office hours • Answer students questions in office hours and over email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical thinking skills Analytic Skills Strong Communications skills Research Skills Strong Attention to Detail Conflict resolution skills Strong Writing Skills Leadership Skills Public Speaking Managing multiple deadlines





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The Benefits of Co-op

3 Facts about Co-op



- **Increases Learning:**

- Co-op placements increase learning, problem solving, taking responsibility for learning, classroom performance, and increased GPA.

(Dressler & Keeling, 2004)

- **More Employable:**

- Employers perceive students who completed co-op programs to have skills beneficial to their workplace

(Metzger, 2004)

- **Long-term Money:**

- Within the first 2 years of graduation, students who participated in co-op earned \$2,000 - \$8,000 more than students who did not do co-op.

(Walters & Zarifa, 2008)

3 Facts about Co-op at Algonquin College



- **Earn real dollars:**
 - AC co-op students earned over **\$6.5 million** in 2016-17
- **Lots of opportunities:**
 - **4,287** paid co-op positions related to program of study...or roughly **3:1** jobs to student ratio.
- **Retention & graduation:**
 - **97%** of students who successfully complete a co-op work-term are **retained or graduated** at Algonquin College



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Case study /Exercise



Selma recently graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce degree. She completed 2 co-ops at a manufacturing company as part of her degree.

Selma also has a year and a half experience working as a barista at a coffee shop, and two years of volunteer experience with local food bank. She wants to find a job in inventory management.

She reaches out to her co-workers and past supervisor at the manufacturing company about potential job openings. Selma sets up an informational interview/meeting to see what skills she should highlight in her resume. During the informational interview she finds out the top 5 skills that the employers are looking for.

Selma updates her resume with her co-op experience and her job as a barista and makes sure to highlight the skills she learned in her co-op and her past work experience that's related to the job of interest.





Walk through a beginner exercise



- 1) Outline current employment and volunteer duties and experience
- 2) Translate your experience into employment skills
- 3) Think of concrete examples that demonstrate these skills



Step 1

Outline your current employment and volunteer experience

Think about

Think about the everyday duties and tasks you completed



Think about

Think about any special projects you completed or unusual situations you might have dealt with

Think about

Think about who you interacted with in your job



Selma's Related Employment & Volunteer Experience

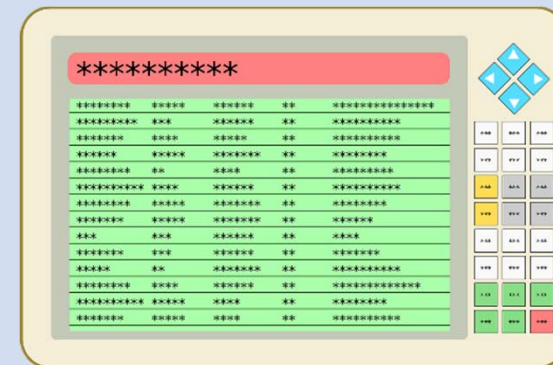
Barista:

- Take orders from customers
- Prepare coffee and food orders in a timely manner
- Take inventory and report to manager
- Provide good customer service
- Work as part of a team



Co-op:

- Use SAP computer database software
- Analyze inventory needs
- Arrange transportation for outgoing shipments
- Prepare shipping documentation for outgoing shipments
- Work as part of a team
- Lift boxes
- Work with multiple vendors



Volunteer at Food Bank:

- Sort food
- Lift boxes
- Take food donations from drop in donors
- Work with diverse populations



Step 2
Translate your
experience
into
employment
skills

Think
about your
soft skills

Think
about your
hard skills



Selma's Related Employment & Volunteer Experience

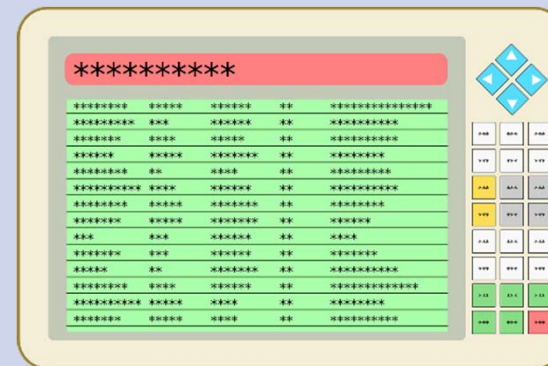
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Volunteer at Food Bank:

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- Take food donations from drop in donors



Selma's Related Employment & Volunteer Experience	Draw out skills to highlight on your resume	
Barista: Take orders from customers Make coffee and food orders Take inventory and report to manager Provide good customer service Work as part of a team	Problem solving Conflict resolution Communication skills Working in a fast-paced environment Attention to detail Team work; working with your team's strengths Leadership	
Co-op: Use SAP computer database software Analyze inventory needs Arrange transportation for outgoing shipments Prepare shipping documentation for outgoing shipments Work as part of a team Lift boxes Deal with vendors	Problem solving Collaboration Communication skills Attention to detail Analytic skills Critical thinking Team work Meet project deadlines Profession specific writing skills. Proficient SAP database software	
Volunteer at Food Bank: Sort food Lift boxes Take food donations from drop in donors	Communication skills Critical thinking skills	



Step 3: Think of concrete examples that demonstrate these skills




- Behavioural and Situational Interviews
 - First determine what kind questions you are being asked




Most common questions:

- Tell us about a time you dealt with conflict
- Tell us about a time when you dealt with a difficult co-worker
- Tell us about a mistake that you made at work and you how you dealt with it



Employment/volunteer job	Example to highlight/demonstrate your skills
<p>Barista:</p> <p>Take orders from customers Make coffee and food orders Take inventory and report to manager Provide good customer service Work as part of a team Key holder (open/close)</p> 	<p>Scenario: You are working the morning shift at the café and your usual morning co-worker called in sick and you are working with someone who is still training. Mornings are a busy time and customers are getting impatient and one of them is upset that they had to wait in line for 15 minutes.</p> <p><u>Your behaviour towards the customer:</u> Apologize to the customer for the long wait Explain to them why the wait is longer than usual because you are short staffed. Tell the customer when they can expect their order. Thank them for waiting and explain that they will get a free coffee for their next visit.</p> <p><u>Your behaviour towards your colleague:</u> Turn to your co-worker and frame in a positive way ; Joe we are falling a bit behind; I noticed that you are stronger on the cash and taking orders; why don't we switch for a bit and I'll make the orders to catch us up? We can then switch back and continue with your training once it settles a bit? Don't worry this will be you in a couple of months. What do you think?</p>

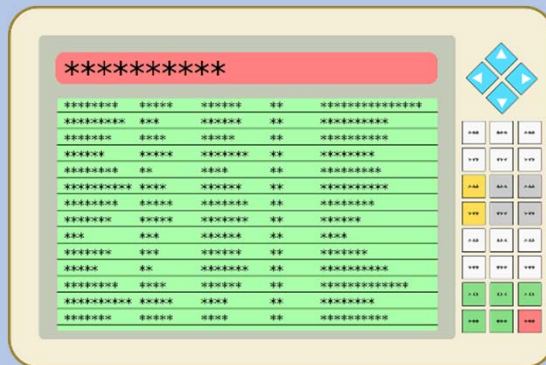


Employment/volunteer job	Skills You acquired	Example to highlight/demonstrate your skills
<p>Barista:</p> <p>Take orders from customers</p> <p>Make coffee and food orders</p> <p>Take inventory and report to manager</p> <p>Provide good customer service</p> <p>Work as part of a team</p> <p>Key holder (open/close)</p> 	<p>Skills you acquired and demonstrate in your scenario</p> <p>Problem solving</p> <p>Conflict resolution</p> <p>Communication skills</p> <p>Working in a fast-paced environment</p> <p>Attention to detail</p> <p>Team work; working with your team's strengths</p> <p>Leadership</p> 	 <p>Scenario:</p> <p>You are working the morning shift at the café and your usual morning co-worker called in sick and you are working with someone who is still training. Mornings are a busy time and customers are getting impatient and one of them is upset that they had to wait in line for 15 minutes.</p> <p><u>Your behaviour towards the customer:</u></p> <p>Apologize to the customer for the long wait</p> <p>Explain to them why the wait is longer than usual because you are short staffed.</p> <p>Tell the customer when they can expect their order.</p> <p>Thank them for waiting and explain that they will get a free coffee for their next visit.</p> <p><u>Your behaviour towards your colleague:</u></p> <p>Turn to your co-worker and frame in a positive way "Joe we are falling a bit behind, I noticed that you are stronger on the cash and taking orders; why don't we switch for a bit and I'll make the orders to catch us up? We can then switch back and continue with your training once it settles a bit? Don't worry this will be you in a couple of months. What do you think?"</p>



Co-op :

Use SAP computer database software
Analyze inventory needs
Arrange transportation for outgoing shipments
Prepare shipping documentation for outgoing shipments
Work as part of a team
Lift boxes
Deal with vendors
Enter data into computer system



Example to highlight/demonstrate your skills:

You are short 1 delivery truck to get
Your deliveries completed on time.

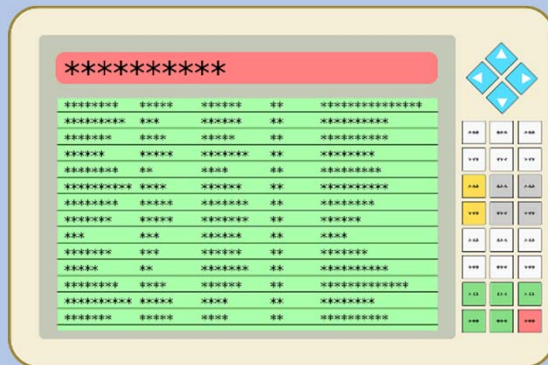
What do you do?

Talk to my colleague who worked in
this position for 10 years and ask them
for the typical policy & procedure in
this situation.

Bring forth possible options and
pros/cons to each option and discuss
these with your manager.

Co-op :

Use SAP computer database software
Analyze inventory needs
Arrange transportation for outgoing shipments
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Skills you acquired and demonstrate in your scenario

Problem solving skills

Collaboration

Communication skills

Attention to detail

Analytic skills

Critical thinking

Team work

Meet project deadlines

Profession specific writing skills.

Data Entry and Computer Skills

Example to highlight/demonstrate your skills

You are short 1 delivery truck to get your deliveries completed on time.

What steps do you take next?

Talk to my colleague who worked in this position for 10 years and ask them for the typical policy & procedure in this situation.

Bring forth possible options and pros/cons to each option and discuss these with your manager.





Volunteer at Food Bank:

Sort food

Lift boxes

Take food donations from drop in donors



Example to highlight/demonstrate your skills

While taking walk-in food donations you note that you have to walk really far to the donation drop off zone where put the food donations. You also note that you have to bring them back to the sorting area to sort. Which is actually closer to the drop off area. You note that a space has opened up close to the sorting area that would make sense for a safe accessible walk-in donation drop off. You bring this up to your supervisor and inquire about a possible change in space noting both accessibility and safety of the proposed area.



Volunteer at Food Bank:

Sort food

Lift boxes

Take food donations from drop in donors



Skills you acquired and demonstrate in your scenario

Communication skills.

Critical thinking skills.

Example to highlight/demonstrate your skills

While taking walk-in food donations you note that you have to walk really far to the donation drop off zone where put the food donations. You also note that you have to bring them back to the sorting area to sort. Which is actually closer to the drop off area. You note that a space has opened up close to the sorting area that would make sense for a safe accessible walk-in donation drop off. You bring this up to your supervisor and inquire about a possible change in space noting both accessibility and safety of the proposed area.





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Participant Questions



Contact Info

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Additional Resources

For Students

Algonquin College Co-op Services: <http://www.algonquincollege.com/coop/contact/>

Algonquin College HireAC: <https://hireac.algonquincollege.com/home.htm>

Algonquin College Career Services: <http://www.algonquincollege.com/employment/>

Carleton University Career Services: <https://carleton.ca/career/>

Wayup. (2018). <https://www.wayup.com/guide/community/5-key-academic-skills-that-actually-translate-to-the-professional-world/>

50 traits to highlight on your resume. <https://www.monster.ca/career-advice/article/50-personality-traits-for-the-workplace-Canadat>

Additional Resources

For Educators

CCRS Center. (2018). Integrating Employability Skills: A Framework for All Educators.

<https://ccrscenter.org/implementation-tools/integrating-employability-skills>

For Graduate Students

From PhD to Life

<https://fromphdtolife.com/>

Beyond the Professoriate- access to webinars and resources.

<https://community.beyondprof.com/>

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