

Cooperative Education/Internship Program

Learning Objectives Information Sheet

Creating learning objectives is a very important part of defining your career related experience. They motivate you to maximize the benefits of your work term. Establishing your learning objectives before you begin work will help you identify what you hope to gain from your experience, help you develop life skills, and focus your career goals. In addition, evaluating your learning objectives upon completion of work will help you assess your overall learning experience, professional skills, and personal growth.

However, sometimes it is difficult for you to predict your employer's expectations prior to beginning your work term. Before going to work, you should set some general learning objectives based on your current knowledge of the company/agency you are working for and what you know of your job responsibilities. As knowledge of your job increases, your learning objectives will become more specific.

There are numerous categories of learning objectives. Some of the most common categories are explained below.

Problem-Solving: Specific problems or challenges you anticipate and how you plan to handle them

Ex. Develop effective troubleshooting techniques to allow for a more smooth database conversion.

Skill Acquisition: Skills you hope to acquire on the job site such as learning to use appropriate procedures, equipment, or methods

Ex. Learn how to effectively use SPSS while compiling and analyzing research.

Skills Application: Putting skills to work that you have acquired in the classroom such as testing theories or principles. Or skills such as leadership, that are developed through activities that you hope to apply to real life situations

Ex. Apply theories covered in class to realistic situations to enhance my understanding.

Personal: Skills you hope to apply or cultivate on your job such as self-confidence, interpersonal skills like working effectively with others, acting professionally, networking, teamwork, communication skills, relationships with supervisors, and professional meeting behavior

Ex. Serve as a reliable and effective team member on this project.

Professional: Refine professional skills learned in class through practical application or acquire specific skills available through your job experience like adaptability and flexibility

Ex. Develop better time management techniques at work in order to maximize effectiveness.

Increased Knowledge: Gaining new information through your career related experience; for example, learning more about the company/agency, resources available to assist you in the future, trends, and pros and cons, etc.

Ex. Gain a greater understanding of e-commerce and its future trends.

Communication: Learning the most effective ways to communicate with co-workers and supervisors, or improving your written, electronic, or oral communication skills

Ex. Improve electronic communication effectiveness with supervisors and co-workers.

Other: Students' learning objectives will differ tremendously depending upon what kind of career related experience they choose. Consider your field of choice and the critical knowledge/skills you would like to obtain from this co-op/internship. Please use the Skill Clusters List to develop your own unique learning objectives.