GUIDELINES FOR CO-OP WORK-TERM REPORTS IN BIOLOGY

The work-term report is a summary of your activities during your placement. It is used to assess whether the work you did was appropriate for you to remain in the CO-OP program. Therefore, make sure that you describe the quality and quantity of the tasks you performed accurately, keeping in mind that your work term was carried out as part of a university program in the faculty of science. Therefore, you must justify that your work had a scientific component of “university level” quality.

Each report must include parts A-E, and follow the guidelines detailed below. However, the relative importance of each section can vary tremendously depending on your particular situation. You may decide to write just a few lines for most parts and focus your effort on one particular section. For example, you could write a manuscript for submission to a scientific journal, present it as part C (what you produced during your term), and keep all the other sections extremely short. Making a clear outline of what you plan to submit before you start writing the complete version of your report is highly recommended.

**Part A - Brief introduction describing the organization for whom you worked**
Start your report by giving a short account of the organization you worked for and its mandate. What is it, how does it function, and what does it do? How does the section you work with fit within the whole organization and what is its specific role?

**Part B - Summary of your responsibilities within this organization**
During your work term, what did you do and why? How did you contribute to the overall mandate of your organization?

**Part C - Clear account of what you produced during your work term**
Describe the tangible products of your work. For example, you may have carried out experiments to test specific hypotheses and written a paper for publication. You may have collected samples, developed experimental protocols, collated information from the internet, written internal reports, developed computer programs, prepared digital presentations for meetings, designed policy recommendations, prepared management plans or any other product of your work.

**Part D - Summary of what you have learned**
Explain the jist of what you have learned during your work term that is important and new. It can include scientific theories, technical procedures to measure specific biological parameters, monitoring the environment, statistical approaches, understanding laws, public speaking, writing clearly and convincingly, patience and diplomacy to work effectively within a group, or any other aspect of your development that seems useful for your professional future.

**Part E - Description of how your work term contributed to your program of study**
How the things you have learned contribute to your program of study in biology. Explain the relationship between certain courses or laboratories that you have taken at the university and the new skills acquired during your work term. How do you think you might combine the two in a future job?

**Report size:** 3000-3500 words, not including, appendix material, graphs, figures, tables or references.

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