

CO-OP



Cooperative education or a co-op allows students to preview their career path to ensure they are heading in the right direction and avoiding costly mistakes. Co-ops integrate classroom curriculum with real-work experience. This method of work-based learning gives students the opportunity to spend traditional academic semesters working full time in the related industry. Co-ops also create a match for future employers who are interested in developing their talent pipeline. At the conclusion of a co-op students are provided with at least a year of professional experience in an industry before graduation. The experience obtained leads to first-hand knowledge of professional practices and it also makes the student stand out amongst other applicants.

High quality co-ops are paid, full time, major related, supervised and evaluated.

There are several benefits of co-ops for employers:

- Creates a partnership between business and education.
- Increases cost-effectiveness of recruitment and training.

Developing a Co-op

- Set goals and policies for the co-op position
- Write a plan for the experience
 - Include work assignment and projects that offer professional and personal development for the student.
- Recruit a qualified student
 - Connect with local colleges to assess if they are looking for employers to host students for co-op opportunities.
 - Allow time to search for candidates and arrange interviews.
- Manage the student

Provide an orientation that includes reviewing company policies and ensuring the student understands safe practices and proper use of equipment. During the orientation, be sure to set clear expectations for the student.

- Conduct exit interviews and follow-up

For more information about developing a high-quality co-op experience, view the [Creating a Quality Co-op Experience Guide](#) provided by Henry Ford College- Career Services.