A. Co-op Work Assignment

During my summer term, I was a Research, Development & Quality (RD&Q) Intern. I was in a product development role, which is something that I had requested because my last term was a process development role. I had two main projects during my term. My projects were focused on working with formulations for two different cracker brands. In order to do this, I needed to understand cracker technology, process, and analyses as well as gain knowledge of ingredients in crackers. Following that, I developed formulations, conducted bench top experiments, and conducted pilot plant trials. With the product samples from the pilot plant, I then led product tastings with RD&Q, business teams and sensory.

There was an orientation on the first day for all the interns and my manager gave me some readings to familiarize myself with the project at the beginning. Outside of my manager, I had a technical advisor and a buddy to show me around. For questions, I typically approached my manager, technical advisor, and various internal experts.

B. Assessment of Learning and Development

Although I didn’t directly apply most of the material I had learned in classes, I did feel like I was able to apply general concepts and problem solving skills that I had gained. This was valuable industry experience for me, since it was the first time I had been exposed to a work environment. I learned how important it was to network and meet different people because their experiences can be key to my project. Another thing I learned that was extremely valuable was personal accountability. I didn’t have many firm deadlines, but it was important to make sure I was on track for my work. I don’t think I would have done anything differently.

C. Life Outside of Co-op

For my co-op term, Mondelez provided subsidized housing at an extended stay hotel. Most of the co-ops/interns stayed at the same location. I would definitely recommend taking the housing option unless you have family in the area, as it is a very good deal. I would also strongly recommend that you bring a car if possible. Not only is there a commute to work, it was also necessary to drive to the grocery store, run errands, etc. Over the summer though, there were a lot of interns, so carpooling is a possibility if you don’t have a car. The Union housing location is right across the train station that gets to New York City in about half an hour, so I spent most of my weekends in the city. Otherwise, there were things to do around the apartment. We had informal intern activities such as going to a karaoke bar, mini golfing, or going to the movies.
D. Evaluation

The best feature about this job was definitely the company atmosphere. Everyone at Mondelez was very friendly and helpful. Whenever I had questions regarding my project, I knew that there were multiple people to reach out to. Also, we were encouraged to set up 1 on 1 meetings with lots of different people so we were able to get a more holistic view of what work at Mondelez can be. Work hours are also very flexible as long as you get your work and projects done.

The worst feature of this job was more of a personal assessment. I simply realized that the food industry isn't what I want to pursue in a career after college. However, I'm still very grateful for this experience and I learned a lot during my time at the company.

E. Additional Info

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me (mmw86@cornell.edu). I'd love to speak about my experiences at Mondelez International.
Adam Wolford
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Mondelez International
Summer 2013

Co-op Work Assignment

This summer I worked in the ingredient technology R&D division of Mondelez. The function of this group in the company was to provide upfront research for new and developing technologies. I worked in the gum and candy division so for me it was working to develop a new coating to be applied to the gum surface. The interesting part of my project was that I took on the whole technology development platform. Which means I was working on multiple aspects of the technology at the same time (stability, sensory development, processability etc.). This was a big change from the fall because I was forced to spread myself thinner and stay much more organized and on top of multiple different functions. It was a great learning experience for me at this point in my career.

I spent most of my time in the lab running experiments and collecting results to see how are alterations to the coating were affecting different aspects we were looking at. I was initially trained in my first week there and then I hit the ground running working diligently to complete the amalgam of experiments I was going to be running throughout the summer. It was an aggressive learning curve but one I was able to easily stay on top of.

I spent most of my time working with my manager to analyze the data from our experiments and moving forward to further deep dive into the technology. She was also my point person for my professional development as well. I also had a technical advisor that I would approach with any other questions I had. It was nice to have two different people to run my ideas through as well developing my own expertise and ideas as well.

Assessment of Learning and Development

I would say that my job this summer was very much a product development job so not much of what I learned in my classes directly applied to my job in a literal sense. However, many of the experimental formalities and also my thought and problem solving skills were applied from my classes.

This learning experience was great for my professional development. I learned a lot about the importance of networking or “moving and shaking.” I also learned that even in a technical role this is important so when you have a question you can consult technical experts. This position helped me learn a lot about myself as a professional as well. I realized I don’t like research-intensive roles and I prefer to coordinate and working the pilot plant.

If I were going through this experience again I would try to come in with a more open mind. After my co-op I thought this experience would be similar and it would be easy for me. However, this was not the case.
Life Out-side of Co-op

Mondelez sets you up with corporate housing in Union, NJ, which is only 30 minutes outside the city. You pay $150 a week for housing that costs upward of $2500 a month. It's a pretty awesome deal! For transportation I drove my car. However, my roommate and the other employee from the University of Puerto Rico car-pooled with me and we split the gas money, which was nice. There are many opportunities for social experiences over the summer when all the interns are present. We had a three-day all intern emersion event, which allowed us to take a boat tour and have a networking event across the Hudson from NYC with a beautiful view of the city. Mondelez offered some opportunities to play on sports teams with full time employees and also to volunteer one day during the summer!

Evaluation

Pros: professional development, unique application of engineering principles, mobility in the company, intern experience, great experience with a huge name company, interaction with business and marketing needs, technical development, expanding network, large Cornell alumni network, relaxed culture, no set hours or clocking in or clocking out

Cons: housing 40 minutes from work, a lot of work in a short amount of time
A. Co-op Work Assignment

I worked on the North American process development team for chewing gum. While Mondelez is a global company, my group focused on North America. I was given a project for which I was the leader. On my third day at the company, I was trained, step-by-step, on how to make a batch of gum from scratch in the laboratory. Throughout the next two weeks, I learned from various individuals how to run different analytical instruments.

In the lab, I prepared the entire batch from start to finish: weighing ingredients, mixing to the formula’s specifications, rolling and scoring the gum into individual pieces, and analyzing its texture upon completion.

In the pilot plant, I supervised the team as well as took time, temperature, and other analytical measurements as the batch was created. On the roll and score line, I worked alongside the pilot’s line lead to ensure I collected an adequate number of gum sheets with the correct line settings in order to later perform additional analytical testing.

During my co-op, I took two trips to Rockford, IL, where the company has one of its manufacturing plants. I worked alongside the project leader to collect the data I would need in order to compare my lab and pilot plant data to Rockford’s manufacturing plant data.

Throughout my co-op, I met with my manager weekly, and additionally as needed. Because my project changed significantly throughout my time at Mondelez, my manager assisted me in designing new experiments as the ideas arose. I also had a technical advisor to whom I asked questions regarding any of my analytical testing.

B. Assessment of Learning and Development

One possible path that can be taken with a chemical engineering degree is work in the food industry. Before working at Mondelez, I thought I may enjoy a job in the food industry, and my co-op verified that. Through my co-op I learned that it is extremely important to work hard, meet as many people as possible, and show those people that you are not afraid to work hard. After working at Mondelez, I now have a large network of individuals that I can ask for letters of recommendation and advice when looking for a job after graduation. I learned how to lead a project and take full responsibility for the positives and negatives that come with being a leader.
C. Life Out-side of Co-op

Though I lived with family in NJ, Mondelez provides furnished, subsidized housing about 30 minutes from either office. It is not necessary to look for housing outside of what Mondelez will provide. When I come back next summer, I will live with the other interns. Because there were only 6 co-ops this fall, it was not a burden for me to travel to the apartment where the co-ops live to hang out on the weekends, but when there are ~30 interns next summer, I definitely want to be able to take part in the daily intern festivities.

It is 100% necessary to have a car during the internship. It would be nearly impossible to travel to and from work each day without a car. The commute is not bad though traffic can be a pain at times.

As a large company, Mondelez has numerous opportunities for social activities outside of work time. The NEO team provides organized activities once in a while for new employees as well as their “buddies” such as an afternoon at the arcade or a group dinner. There are also plenty of sports teams to get involved in after work as well as holiday parties and festivities such as pumpkin decorating during work hours.

D. Evaluation

The best features of this job were the independence and the people. I was given my own project and trusted with every portion of it. Each and every person I met was willing to help me in any way they could, even if it meant putting their own work on hold for a few minutes.

The only downside to my co-op was that my project description was very broad. When I first arrived, I was a bit overwhelmed because it seemed like I could be working on the project for years before I came to any conclusions, yet I only had 16 weeks. As my work progressed, the project scope narrowed, and I was able to draw a significant number of conclusions as well as point my group in the direction necessary to continue my work after my co-op ended.

E. Additional Info.

I highly recommend applying for a co-op at Mondelez International!!
Travis Wasson
Tcw58
Chemical Engineering
Company: Mondelez International
Manager: Wei Yang
Fall 2013

For my work assignment, my primary function was to assist in the production of the belVita soft product through analysis of the baking operation. My job was to look at the process of sending the product through the oven and finding the optimal way to meet product specifications using my knowledge of heat and mass transfer along with mass and energy balances. I was also tasked with assisting the Chips Ahoy! team in their work, again primarily focusing on the baking section and taking measurements in the plant. My training was provided through shadowing employees in their work in the plant, observing trials that were performed to gain a better understanding of the workings of the instruments, how to take measurements, and how to think critically about the process. I also gained much knowledge through interactions with my co-workers. Many one-on-one meetings were set up to talk specifically with people who were working on the same project I was, people who hold similar jobs to gain knowledge of what the engineering role entails, and also with those involved with the Cornell recruiting to talk with them about how the co-op experience was going. Whenever I had questions, everyone was ready to help if they could. I regularly met with both my manager and my senior technical advisor, both of whom were very instrumental to helping me get on my feet quickly and learning how best to perform my duties.

My work activity was highly relevant to my desire to pursue a career in chemical engineering. I got to work closely with some of the knowledge that I have gained so far at Cornell, and have seen many real applications of what I have learned, rather than only having a theoretical knowledge of it. I learned that I enjoy working in the food industry, and have greatly enjoyed my time working here at Mondelez International. Given that this was my first job of any type, I feel that I have gained a lot of professional experience and knowledge of how to interact in a company setting. I have learned how best to handle certain situations, deal with different kinds of stress, and how to interact with my co-workers and leverage my connections to utilize their knowledge.

Outside of my work environment, the company provided subsidized housing for me. They provided an excellent apartment at a very good rate, and took a lot of the stress dealing with finding a place to live away from me. For transportation, having a car was vital to get to work every day. The public transportation (train system) exists for travel to major cities, such as
New York City, which is a great, nearby location for social activities. The apartment itself also had many opportunities to get to know the other tenants, and overall the setup worked quite well.

The best feature of the job for me was getting to know how I could best apply my knowledge from the classes I’ve taken and see how the applications worked in the real world. In particular, the classes of Heat & Mass transfer and Mass and Energy balances really came into play for me, and the knowledge I gained in those classes helped me understand what I was doing on a deeper level. On the other side, the worst feature of the job for me was the location. I originally come from a small town, and going to a large urban area in New Jersey was a big transition for me. The traffic was much worse, there were many noises all throughout the day from living near the city that I was unaccustomed to, and transitioning to life in this different area was the hardest part. The job itself was great, however I am not sure I could see myself living in the environment I do now for the rest of my life.