Co-op Site Visits

A Cornell staff or faculty member will visit each Co-op employer on a rotating basis to help ensure that the assignment is beneficial to students and employers.

As part of the visit, the Cornell representative would like to meet with Co-op supervisors and coordinators. These visits are typically arranged through the Co-op students. If you prefer that we arrange these visits through a full-time staff member, please let us know. Thank you.

Suggestions from Engineering Co-op and Career Services

We recognize that you want to provide your Co-ops with the best experience possible. These suggestions are based on strategies that have been successful for several of our current Co-op employers.
Make sure your students have the resources they need to start working on the first day. They have been anticipating this day for a long time and are anxious to hit the ground running.

An operating computer or workstation, telephone, electronic calendar, email, timecard, and physical or electronic access to the rooms and files they will use allows student hires to be immediately effective.

It is helpful to: set up desktops with shortcuts to frequently used files, websites, and the organization’s intranet, as well as provide names and information of the contacts they will work with. An organizational chart and list of frequently used acronyms or nicknames are great resources. Current Co-ops and interns can help gather this information for new hires.

Provide opportunities for students to learn about your organization and feel the pride of ownership for their contributions.

Tours or workflow charts show your student how their work contributes to the big picture.

Create opportunities for them to meet with other student hires, Cornell alumni, departments, and managers.

Involve student hires in professional development opportunities. Invite them to attend workshops, seminars, and sit in on meetings with internal and external clients.

A desk sign, business cards, and/or ‘company’ shirt they wear on casual Fridays further contributes to making your student hires feel valued, respected, and like a real employee.

Communicate is crucial. Start early. Prior to the first day of work, send your student periodic emails; wish them luck on finals, send them info about their project, orientation, and your organization’s dress code.

Prepare an orientation during their first week. Clearly outline expectations and anticipated working outcomes. Weekly progress meetings with supervisors ensure their productivity and progress is in line with your goals.

Keep in mind that some students may hesitate to approach supervisors or initiate conversations with co-workers because of cultural differences or nervousness.

Pair your student with a mentor who is not their supervisor. The mentor enables the student to ask questions they may be intimidated to ask their supervisor.

Offer Housing Assistance

Housing and transportation play an important role. Giving the same attention to these issues as you would with full-time hires shows students you understand and value them as real employees.

Make arrangements with local apartments for short term leases. Suggest safe, affordable neighborhoods that are close to work, social activities and the bus or train line.

Help your students determine in advance if a car is needed or if there is sufficient public transportation.

Provide your Co-ops and interns with a list of all your student hires so they can network with each other in advance and find potential roommates to share housing with.