

Co-op Employer Q & A with David Bushle

Co-op in an Economic Downturn



There is no doubt we are in a recession and the job market is tight. Many companies are cutting employees and tightening their belts on expenditures. Anything that affects the job market affects the Co-op program. Our co-op coordinators are working hard to maintain relationships with employer partners. Employers have the advantage at this point in the economic cycle. They can be selective in choosing their co-op employees.

That is why it is more important than ever to plan early to participate in Co-op as part of your degree program. Take CED 220 Professional Development as a sophomore! Your resume and interviewing skills must be top notch to land a co-op job. You are competing with classmates and students from other colleges and universities; the bar is high. Get to know your co-op coordinator and follow his/her advice. Finding a co-op position might take more time and effort than it has in the recent past. Companies may be offering less pay or no pay in some instances. Take the long view that a co-op experience is one that will build your resume.

When you get that co-op job - stay with it - building your experience and knowledge of the organization. You will develop marketable skills and clarify career goals while working alongside professionals in your field. Economic cycles are a reality. By the time graduation rolls around, market realities could be different than they are today. Whatever those economic realities might be, you will be competitive as a graduate with co-op experience.

The Mount's Co-op program has a 26 year record of successfully working with students and employers to serve their needs. We will continue that tradition. Visit the Career Center soon and get to know us!

Maggie Davis

Dave works in the Marketing Department at the American Red Cross as the graphic design supervisor and is a Mount alum. We asked him to respond to the following questions about job interviewing.

Q: What characteristics or qualities are you looking for in a co-op candidate?

A: A good personality and someone who is motivated and enthusiastic about the position. In all honesty, an employer wants to like you. They will forgive a lot—nervousness, inexperience—but they won't overlook something like you *not* wanting the job or acting like you *don't* really care about the job.

Q: What kinds of things can a student do to prepare for an interview?

A: Research the company and have a thorough understanding of what the company is about. Do your homework. Check out their Web site. Be knowledgeable about what they do, who they work with, what their mission is.

Q: What can a student do during an interview to make a good impression?

A: Bring a copy (or several) of your resume. Practice what you're going to say. It doesn't matter if you're nervous or not, have something planned out to say about yourself; for example, a statement about why you majored in design or why you chose to study at the Mount. Maintain good eye contact with your interviewer. Dress professionally. (You only get one chance to make a first impression!) For males, wear a suit and tie; for females, wear a pants suit with a jacket or blazer or a skirted suit.

Q: How and when should a student follow up after an interview?

A: After every interview, a student should send a thank you e-mail within 24 hours. (This e-mail should be error free and grammatically correct!) Make sure you ask for the interviewer's business card so you will have their contact information, correct spelling of their name, etc. You never know how quickly a decision will be made, so the faster your initial follow up, the better.

Q: Do you have any other interview "pointers" for our students?

A: Avoid cute or extra long cell phone messages. Near the end of the interview, have questions ready to ask the interviewer about the organization. (This shows interest and gives you a chance to demonstrate that you have done your homework and researched the company.) When speaking about yourself and your skills, talk in terms of what you can *bring* to the job. How you can help *them*. (An interview should *not* be all about me!)



Thank you, Dave Bushle, for sharing your thoughts with our students. Thanks also to the team at the American Red Cross for providing excellent co-op opportunities for our students over the years.

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Prepare Now for Tomorrow

Ever wonder which courses you should take as a Mount undergrad to make yourself more marketable to employers? Wonder no more! Career Center staff receive feed-back from employers on skills and qualities they seek in co-op hires. As a result, there are courses we recommend students take regardless of major.

Our top ten recommendations include:

CED 220	Professional Development (required for Co-op)
BUS 101	Introduction to Business
BUS 352	Business Communications
CIS 135	Spreadsheets (sharpen those Excel skills)
COM 300	Advanced Composition
COM 320	Advanced Oral Communications
COM 355	Introduction to Public Relations
MGT 300	Management/Organizational Behavior
MGT 310	Human Resource Management
MKT 300	Principles of Marketing

Another tip! **Develop your leadership skills. Leadership is an expectation employers have of new hires.** Become active in campus organizations, sports and/or service learning. Strengthen your communication, interpersonal and organization skills by assuming a leadership role and working as part of a team to accomplish worthwhile goals. Your resume and interview skills will be more substantive, and you'll be amazed at your personal and professional growth. Prepare yourself now for tomorrow!

The Top Ten List

For the tenth consecutive year, **communication skills** top the list of skills/qualities that employers rate as most important in new job candidates. The remaining top nine qualities in order of importance are:

- Strong work ethic
- Teamwork skills (works well with others)
- Initiative
- Analytical skills
- Computer skills
- Flexibility/Adaptability
- Interpersonal skills (relates well with others)
- Problem solving skills
- Technical skills

Source: Job Outlook 2009, National Association of Colleges and Employers

Co-op Requirements

To participate in the Mount's Cooperative Education program a student must:

Have and maintain the status of a full-time, matriculating student in a bachelor's degree program	Complete CED 220 Professional Development, a one credit hour course focusing on self-assessment and job search skills
Have established a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5	Complete course work commensurate with position requirements
Complete a co-op application form and schedule an intake appointment with a co-op coordinator	Must have 15 hrs available to work during the week day during business hours
Obtain approval from the academic department chairperson	Under special circumstances students with less than full-time status may qualify. See your coordinator for details.

College of Mount St. Joseph

2008-2009 Co-op Employers and Positions

Abode interior design co-op	College of Mount St. Joseph network administrative support, media relations co-op, gallery assistant, annual giving co-op, admission co-op, sports information co-op, ceramics lab co-op, marketing co-op, MSJ Scope coordinator, photo lab co-op, graphic design co-op, orientation leader, athletic director asst.	John Galt Bindery sales & marketing co-op	Oncology Hematology Care accounting co-op
Achieve Fitness fitness trainer		Joseph Craig Limited interior design co-op	Oystar/RA Jones graphic design co-op
APG Office Furnishings interior design co-op		Justice & Young graphic design co-op	PDT Design interior design co-op
American Modern Insurance Group underwriting co-op		Kenton & Campbell County Courts pretrial services co-op	PS Group interior design co-op
American Red Cross graphic design co-op	Computer Ease graphic design co-op	Kenwood Tile & Stone interior design co-op	Procter & Gamble Co. successway co-op, data specialist, diversity recruiting co-op, shareholder serving co-op
Anthony Munoz Foundation graphic design co-op	Definity Partners graphic design co-op	Kroger Company ISS technical recruiter	Q Laboratories Inc. chemistry lab tech, microbiology lab tech
Arbor Living interior design co-op	Dillard's management trainee co-op	LaRosa's accounting co-op	Quikrete Company sales merchandiser, sales co-op
Caldwell Design Concepts interior design co-op	Dunham Recreation Center recreation leader, inclusion specialist	Legg Mason Investment Counsel social research co-op	Redwood Rehabilitation Center day camp leader
Champlin-Haupt Inc. interior design co-op	Edenview Adult Day Services activity assistant	Leukemia & Lymphoma Society campaign co-op	Richards & Associates legal assistant
Camp Washington Recreation Center recreation leader	Eldermount Adult Day Program marketing co-op	Libby Perszyk Kathman, Inc. accounting and financial services co-op	Ritter & Randolph LLC probate paralegal
Chiquita Brands accounting co-op	Freshway Foods receiving manager assistant	Marketing Research Services Inc. call center director	Rumpke graphic design co-op
Christopher Technologies LLC IT co-op	Frontgate graphic design co-op	Marvin Lewis Community Fund graphic design co-op	SC Ministry Foundation communications co-op
Cincinnati Bell Telephone business co-op	Four Corners Community Church associate pastor	Mercy Hospital Western Hills nursing co-op, patient care assistant	Skyline Chili manager
Cincinnati Boys & Girls Club activity/team leader	Fund Evaluation Group investment co-op	Messer Construction Co. communications co-op, accounting co-op	Smith Barney Inc. communications co-op
Cincinnati Better Business Bureau charity review co-op	GE Aviation litigation paralegal	Millvale Recreation Center inclusion specialist	Sonoco/Corrflex Display & Pkg graphic design co-op
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center patient care assistant, nursing co-op, clinical research co-op, research assistant, human genetics assistant, materials management co-op, molecular genetics co-op, genetic counseling assistant, clinical cardiology co-op	GGG Technical Services document conversion specialist	Michael A. Rolf CPA accounting co-op	Susan G Komen Race for the Cure graphic design co-op
Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation public relations co-op	Game Day Communications public relations co-op, graphic design co-op	Michael B. Ganson Co, LPA accounting co-op	USI Insurance account manager
Cincinnati Financial Corporation commercial accounts co-op	Geiler Mechanical Contractors accounting co-op	Mother Margaret Hall activity assistant	Validex Employment Screening Services records associate
Cincinnati Public Library web co-op	Geograph Industries sales/service assistant	National Liftgate Parts operations management co-op, graphic design co-op, accounting co-op	Vorta Décor interior design co-op
Cincinnati Sports Medicine sports metrics instructor	George Fern Company graphic design co-op, interior design co-op	Neyer Properties finance co-op	Wallace Boggs & Rouse business co-op
Cincinnati Stream game day/ballpark	Gold Star Chili Corporate marketing co-op	Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce graphic design co-op	Western Hills Fitness Club marketing co-op
Cincinnati Zoo-CREW research assistant	Hamilton Co. Emergency Mgmt. special projects co-op	Northern Kentucky Convention & Visitors Bureau communications co-op, marketing co-op	Willow Green/ D & D Designs graphic design co-op
City of Cincinnati accounting co-op retirement system co-op	Haute Chocolate marketing co-op	Ohmart- Vega Corporation graphic design co-op	Working in Neighborhoods graphic design co-op
Clear Channel Corporation events planner	Hobson's Digital Media Inc. client development, acct. manager		
Clermont Recovery Ctr-Camp Allyn counselor aide	Ideopia graphic design co-op		

Co-op of the Year — Grayson Rhoades



Grayson graduated in May 2009 with a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies. As a student, he co-oped three semesters as an inclusion specialist/recreation leader at the Dunham and Millvale Community Centers for the Cincinnati Recreation Commission. Grayson was nominated for this award because of his remarkable ability to interact with children of all ages, racial and ethnic backgrounds and abilities. He was exceptionally adept at engaging children with developmental or learning disabilities. Grayson worked well with African youth from Burundi, Senegal, and Rwanda, helping them become accepted and assimilated with the other youth at the community centers. Grayson's co-op experience has led him to begin graduate work in special education at Xavier University.

“On any given day, I have the opportunity to have one-on-one relationships as well as group interactions with children. I also interact regularly with the program directors and the administrative staff. I am with adults and children from all ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. It is a great mix. It is a great opportunity for me to experience their lives and learn from them. This co-op experience has enabled me to more clearly understand my goal in life, to teach children with disabilities.”

2008-2009 Co-op of the Year Nominees



Michelle Brickner
Major: Interior Design
Co-op Sessions: 5
Co-op Employers: Burgess & Niple, Vorta Décor



Taylor Longworth
Major: Nursing
Co-op Sessions: 7
Co-op Employers: Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center



Michele Grise
Major: Biology
Co-op Sessions: 4
Co-op Employers: Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center Research Foundation, Cincinnati Zoo Center for Endangered Wildlife (CREW)



Kimberly Moore
Major: Communication Studies
Co-op Sessions: 3
Co-op Employers: Eldermount Adult Day Program



Robert Huesman
Major: Business Administration
Co-op Sessions: 7
Co-op Employers: Legg Mason Investment Counsel



Daniel Swift
Major: Social Work
Co-op Sessions: 4
Co-op Employers: Mother Margaret Hall (Sisters of Charity)

Co-op Faculty Coordinator of the Year 2008-2009

Dr. Charles Kroncke

This year's recipient of the Co-op Faculty Coordinator of the Year award was Dr. Charles Kroncke from the Department of Business Administration. Charles has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Co-op program and is dedicated to the students' success. Charles earned his doctorate in economics from Auburn University and has taught at numerous institutions. He also spent four years abroad, living in Estonia. In 2003, Charles joined the Mount community as an assistant professor of economics. In the classroom, he is known for his high energy level and his personable style. In recognition of his dedication to the Co-op program and to our students, we are pleased to honor Dr. Kroncke.



2008-2009 Employer of the Year Ohmart/VEGA Corporation

This year's Employer of the Year award was proudly presented to the Ohmart/VEGA Corporation. Matthew Thomas, environmental, health and safety manager/co-op supervisor, accepted the award. Ohmart/VEGA has been an active co-op partner with the Mount for the past three years, employing five graphic design students who play a vital role in the marketing department. While at Ohmart, students have the opportunity to interact with managers and executives, impact the company with meaningful projects, and work both as a group and independently. Ohmart has a strong and growing co-op program and students are mentored and encouraged to take on new roles and responsibilities.

Mr. Thomas has also played an important role by visiting the Mount's campus and serving as a member of an employer panel for students enrolled in the co-op readiness course, CED 220 Professional Development. Ohmart also hosted a tour of its facility for the new Mount president, Dr. Tony Aretz. Congratulations to our 26th Co-op Employer of the Year!



Social Networking

Social networking can be a great way to discover available jobs. Most jobs today are found through networking rather than newspaper ads or online sites such as Monster.com and Careerbuilder.com. However, social networking (Facebook, MySpace and LinkedIn) can be a double-edged sword.

With ever greater frequency, employers and prospective employers are visiting social networking sites and checking on prospective employees and interns. It is easy to gain access to these sites. Inappropriate pictures and/or comments can be the difference between being hired and being rejected by an employer.

This doesn't mean you should stop using social networking in your co-op search or any other job search. By all means, continue to use this technology as many companies are creating accounts on these sites allowing prospective employees to connect to them. However, be careful what you post on your account.

A good rule of thumb is...if you don't want your mom or dad to see it, don't post it. For instance, the word "party" should never be used as a verb on these sites. The same applies to blogging. If you are into blogging, that's fine. It can show an employer your writing and communication skills. However, the same rule of thumb applies...if you don't want your parents to see it, don't write it. Even if you think an employer or prospective employer won't notice it, it is there forever and can easily come back to haunt you. Blogging anonymously doesn't necessarily protect you either. Resourceful employers will find you.

Remember, many employers Google prospective employees' names. If they Google you, make sure they see only positive things about you.

Alumni Reflections

We spoke with alum, Melanie Riedel, and asked her to reflect on her co-op experiences while at the Mount. Melanie graduated from the Mount in 2008 and completed a double major in psychology and criminology/sociology.

What were your goals going into the co-op process?

My main goal was to explore different career paths. When I went to college, I was unsure about what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I knew the Co-op program would be the perfect opportunity to work in different fields and discover which aspects I enjoyed the most. I wanted to try working with both children and elderly, in a legal environment, and in a research setting.

Where did you co-op during your time at the Mount?

I co-oped with four different employers while in the program: Cincinnati Recreation Commission, as a recreation and program leader, Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati, as a volunteer lawyers project intern, Edenvue Adult Day Program, as an activities assistant, and Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center as a cardiology research assistant co-op.

Where are you currently working and what are your job responsibilities?

Currently, I'm employed at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center as a research assistant. My main duties involve contributing to two research studies, investigating quality of life and neurodevelopmental outcomes in the pediatric cardiac population. I recruit patients and parents to participate in the research studies, administer questionnaires to the participants, and input data into multiple databases to track study results.

What did you find most valuable about your co-op experience?

The most valuable part of my co-op experience was being able to "test-out" different career options. Being able to figure out what I wanted to do with the rest of my life, while getting paid and getting class credit, was a wonderful opportunity! Most importantly, I learned how to conduct myself and interact with co-workers and supervisors in a professional setting. By working in these co-op positions, the transition to my full-time position after graduation came easily.

What are your future plans?

My co-op experiences have allowed me to discover that I enjoy working with the elderly population. I want a career that will allow me to help others. I will be starting the master's in social work program at the University of Cincinnati in the fall, specializing in gerontology. I plan to continue working fulltime at Cincinnati Children's Hospital while attending graduate school.

Thank you Melanie for your valuable insights and comments!



Co-op Benefits

- Integrate theory and practice
- Solidify decision of academic major
- Earn dollars to defray educational costs
- Gain valuable work experience
- Learn about the workplace
- Enhance career goals
- Establish contacts in the field by networking

Fast Facts About Co-op at the Mount

- There were 270 placements in the 2008-2009 academic year.
- Hourly wages ranged between \$7.00 and \$16.00 an hour.
- The average co-op wage was \$10.79 an hour.
- Mount co-ops earned \$1,098,759.00 this year!

Co-op Events

Career Center Open House	September 16, 2009
Coffee on Co-op	October 7, 2009
Networking Workshop	November 4, 2009
Etiquette Dinner	February 10, 2010
Co-op Recognition Dinner	April 7, 2010

Co-op Commentary

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