CAFCE International Committee

Student Engagement Sub-Group

Draft Questions for Student Profiles

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First Name: Kirill Kisselev  
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Where did you work abroad (city, country): Almaty, Kazakhstan

When did you go abroad: Summer 2010

Which work term (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc..): 1st

1. What motivated you to seek out an international work term?

It was easier to get hired for that work term, since I had connections. I also wanted to “get the foot in the door” in that particular company.

1. How did you fund the travel and other costs associated with this opportunity?

Costs were not very high at all for me. The employer has provided 90% discount on the tickets through codeshare agreements with other companies. During the workterm I had lived with my parents, and didn’t have to worry about rent or food.

1. Can you tell me what steps you took to secure your co-op position? Did you feel it was hard to secure your co-op position and how would you advise other students to make the same effort?

I let my father (who works at that company) know that I’m interested in completing coop workterm. Through him, I have sent a resume and a cover letter. Once I have arrived I had a short interview/briefing on my duties. It was very easy to secure this position, since there weren’t any other candidates.

I would advise other students to establish some kind of connection with somebody within the company before applying. Find out as much as possible about the company and the position.

1. When conducting your job search did you find that many of the jobs available were in specific sectors? (ie: corporate, non-profit, government, etc.) Where, or how, would you suggest other students focus their search?

During the job search I found out that there was lack of enthusiasm from employers toward coop students. I would suggest students start applying as early as possible and apply to as many jobs as they can. Students have to be flexible regarding location of the employer and type of position.

1. Tell me about the cost of living in (city or country). How did your expenses compare to your income based on the salary you were earning? Were you able to save any money and where did you find savings or discounts which reduced your expenses?

Costs of living in Kazakhstan are significantly lower than in Canada. My expenses weren’t significant since I lived with my parents. My coop workterm was not paid.

1. How did you find accommodations and what rent can you expect to pay in (city or country)?

I’m not able to provide accurate information regarding rent prices.

1. What, if any, cultural barriers did you have to overcome and what were some of these challenges?

Fluent Russian is a must. I had no cultural barriers, since I was born there.

1. Did you find it difficult to meet new people? What steps did you take to integrate yourself into your new surroundings and make yourself more comfortable in a new setting?

It was easy to meet new people. I was actively seeking to find out as much as possible about the company and operations, employees and their responsibilities.

1. Overall, what advice would you give co-op students who are seeking international opportunities?

Find a position that student is really interested in. Find an exciting, yet suitable place for the workterm. Plan ahead.

1. Is there anything else you want us to know about your experience?