Setting Effective Learning Objectives

What are Learning Objectives?

Learning objectives are goals that you set for your learning during your work term. Your learning objectives may be inclusive of any one or combination of the following goals:

- **Personal**
- **Workplace**
- **Academic**
- **Career**

How to Write Learning Objectives

To write your learning objectives, you need to determine what learning you want to explore and/or the knowledge or skills you want to enhance or acquire.

Before you write your learning objectives, think about the following questions as they may help you to develop some general goals:

- What are your expectations of your Co-op work term?
- What do you think may be some challenges?
- What knowledge and skills would you like to enhance or acquire?

Once you have thought of some general goals, you can refine them into specific and measurable learning objectives by thinking about:

- What is the task to be accomplished?
- How will I carry out the task?
- When will it be completed?
- How and by whom will it be evaluated?
- How will I know when I have achieved this objective?

For each work term, you must enter 3 learning objectives in your Symplicity profile. See the “How to Submit Your Learning Objectives Into Symplicity” section on the next page.

We recommend that you write SMART learning objectives which are:

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Achievable**
- **Realistic**
- **Time targeted**
Reflect on Your Learning Objectives

As you progress through your work term, take some time to reflect on the plausibility and attainability of your learning objectives based on your actual work experience. Use some of the following questions to guide your reflection:

- What has happened that surprised you the most?
- What patterns can you recognize in your experiences? What does that say about your knowledge and skills?
- What does the experience suggest to you about your strengths? Or about your opportunities for development?
- What was the most fulfilling part so far? And the least? What do these experiences suggest to you?
- How does the experience compare with your learning objectives? What would you change, and why?

Be sure to modify your learning objectives accordingly and your coordinator will be discussing these with you one-on-one during your site visit.

### Examples of learning objectives:

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<th>Learning Objective:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Learn the processes involved in nanofabrication and the applications of nanotechnology.</td>
<td>Learn how to use Microsoft Excel to organize and analyze data.</td>
<td>Improve my verbal communication skills.</td>
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<td><strong>Tasks/Strategies:</strong> Work in the lab with experts and gain experience with the systems used in fabricating nanotechnology. <strong>Evaluation:</strong> I will have enhanced this knowledge by the end of the work term if I know how all of the tools work and what their role is in the fabrication procedure.</td>
<td><strong>Tasks/Strategies:</strong> Watch online tutorials and take notes, create a spreadsheet with formulas and ask my supervisors for help when needed. <strong>Evaluation:</strong> I will have achieved success when I am comfortable applying formulas, and when my supervisor has reviewed my data and is satisfied with the work.</td>
<td><strong>Tasks/Strategies:</strong> Speak up during team meetings, ask my supervisor questions and volunteer to participate in any potential presentations. <strong>Evaluation:</strong> I will measure my success by my comfort level with proactively asking questions and contributing during team meetings.</td>
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### How to Submit Your Learning Objectives Into Symplicity

1. Log into your Symplicity account
2. Click on the “Profile” tab
3. Click “View All” in the Experiential Learning Section
4. Click on the “Edit” button under your current work term
5. Fill in your basic work term information
6. Scroll down the page and fill in your learning objectives (click on + Add Learning Objective)
7. Click “Submit” at the bottom of the window

Once you have submitted your learning objectives in Symplicity, print a copy and discuss them with your supervisor. Please complete these tasks by the end of your first month on the job.