

# Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Co-ops

## Information for Students

### Is a co-op experience required?

Yes, a cooperative work experience is required for your major. It helps you to prepare for the competitive working world after you graduate.

- You must register for your co-op in SIS AND report it in RIT Job Zone.
- There is no tuition fee for your co-op and you receive no credit, but it is required for your degree and will appear on your transcript.
- Some paperwork is required. See your academic chairperson, co-op coordinator or employment advisor for specific forms required for your major.

### What about pay?

A co-op should be a paid experience at competitive wages for a temporary job.

- Pay can vary, depending on the type of employer, job duties, your qualifications, and location of the co-op.
- If you can only find a co-op without pay (volunteer position), it is very important for you to ask your chairperson for approval.
- If you receive SSI and/or SSDI, and get a paying co-op, be sure to discuss with your Social Security representative how to handle your SSI/SSDI payments for the time you are on co-op.

### When you get a co-op, share your good news with your employment advisor, chairperson and/or co-op coordinator.

It is important that you provide the following information for Job Zone so that your supervisor will receive an on-line evaluation to complete on your performance:

- Name of company, complete mail and e-mail addresses
- Name, job title, and telephone number of person who hired you
- Name, job title, and telephone number of your supervisor
- Your job title and duties

### At the beginning of the co-op, we suggest you:

- Discuss with your employer the best ways to communicate with you. For more information about communication and working with deaf people, tell the employer about the NCE Web site, at <http://www.rit.edu/ntid/coops/jobs>.
- Meet your supervisor and the other workers, and ask for a chart of the organization if available, to help you understand the company's big picture.
- Find out what your co-workers prefer to be called.
- Ask about the dress code.

### Learn about the culture and policies in your workplace. Some examples:

- Everyone is expected to come to work every day and be on time.
- Teamwork and cooperation in the workplace are important.
- Participation in social events will help you be part of the team.

### Tips for success

- Understand your responsibilities and work priorities.
- Be motivated to do the tasks well and on time.
- Ask what else you can do when you finish assignments.
- Be flexible and willing to do tasks that are not normally part of your job.
- Ask appropriate questions.
- Learn new skills and grow.
- Maintain a good attitude.
- Make the co-op a positive experience for both you and the employer, since you represent yourself, NTID and other deaf people.