

University of Technology, Jamaica

Co-operative Education at UTech, Ja.

"Partnering with Industry to produce work-ready graduates"



The Digicel SportsMax Internship. Providing A Learning Platform For The Next Generation Of Business Leaders.



"Our Interns have presented a recruitment opportunity for us as we have benefitted from finding suitable employees over the years."

16 Interns promoted to Full-time Employees since 2012

The University of Technology, Jamaica continues to recognize the immense support given to the Co-operative Education (Co-op Ed) programme by its numerous industry partners. Co-op Ed is one of the University's flagship programmes which aims at providing opportunities for undergraduate students to gain relevant professional exposure at the workplace prior to completion of their course of study.

Digicel SportsMax is one of our esteemed industry partners. It is the Caribbean's only 24 hour sports cable channel showing the world's top sporting events to 25 Caribbean countries. The company has been on-board with the Co-op Ed partnership since 2012 and from the outset the success of the partnership was evident.

Ms. Tanya Lee is the Caribbean Marketing Manager. She stated that the company's decision to partner with UTech, Ja. through the Co-op Ed programme was based on its belief in the principle of mentorship and the idea of exposing undergraduates to the work

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The Digicel Sports Max Internship. Providing A Learning Platform... continued

environment and job functions that they may eventually be required to perform. Further, the company was fully cognizant of its important corporate responsibility in providing work experience opportunities for the “next generation of business leaders” attending esteemed tertiary institutions such as UTech, Ja. According to Ms. Lee, students were recruited mainly from the areas of Communications, Marketing, Engineering, Information Technology and Television Production. However, for this summer, Digicel SportsMax expanded its intake to include UTech, Ja. interns pursuing the degree in Sport Sciences.

Expectations Surpassed

Ms. Lee was quick to affirm that UTech, Ja. interns had in many cases surpassed the company’s expectations. She readily made reference to two of this summer’s interns with whom she work closely. The two, one Information Technology and one Engineering student, were instrumental in providing general user support to the IT team, and assisting with the email migration and server installation processes. She concluded that both students were excellent additions to the company’s IT department as they adapted quickly and were team players who followed instructions well.

Generally speaking, Ms. Lee was confident that for Digicel SportsMax, the decision to invest in interns was rewarding as these students contributed significantly to the company’s dynamism and were usually brimming with creative ideas. She states, “Our interns have presented a recruitment opportunity for us as we have benefitted from finding suitable employees over the years.” The opportunity of being able to observe the students over their period of attachment has allowed the company to find the kind of talents that it needs to help grow the business without relying solely on a short interview which does not necessarily give a clear feel of a potential employee’s

competencies or personality fit.

Full-time Employment

The company boasts of having quite a few hires in different departments. In fact, since 2012, sixteen (16) interns have filled permanent positions in the production, engineering and master control departments. Five (5) students have been identified from this year’s cohort to fill different capacities in the company over the next few months.

Supervision

At Digicel SportsMax, the employees or supervisors set the general tone that will decide whether the students have a great Co-op Ed experience. Supervision and mentorship are taken seriously by all employees as each is cognizant that his/her input is a vital building block in the students’ career development as they seek to gain hands-on experience in test-driving their selected career path.

Concluding Remarks

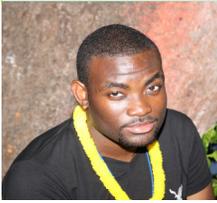
Ms. Lee commended UTech, Ja. for having done a great job with the training of students for the world of work. She further added that Digicel SportsMax stood ready to recommend the programme to any employer. Ms. Lee implored employers to take their mentorship of tomorrow’s business leaders seriously by becoming a part of this fruitful initiative. She alluded to the strong work ethics displayed by the students, whom she said would undoubtedly add value to any organization to which they are attached.

Finally, Ms. Lee encouraged students to make the most of a great opportunity made available through the Co-op Ed programme and further, to work assiduously to make a good impression as it was a great way to land a job in a tough economy.



Engineering and Computing students assigned to Digicel Sports Max for the Summer 2015 Placement period.

The Digicel Sports Max Internship – A Student's Perspective



KWESI WHITELOCK
Electrical Engineering student

Kwesi Whitelock was assigned to Digicel Sportsmax during the period June to August 2015 to complete a total of 400 industrial hours.

The Co-op Ed Unit was pleased when Mr. Whitelock gladly consented to share his experience at the company. An interview was conducted. Below are Mr Whitelock's responses to the questions that were asked.

SS: What were your expectations of the programme and were these met?

KW: I expected to be placed in a work environment where my knowledge attained from UTech, Ja. could be applied and enhanced. This was met. Additionally, I expected to learn new things that could be applied in other areas in general. This was also met.

SS: What have you learnt from the experience at Digicel Sportsmax?

KW: I have learnt quite a few things from Digicel Sportsmax such as the operations of the engineering department in terms of the equipment used and the various functionalities. My troubleshooting skills, as they relate to internet based issues and knowledge of networking, have improved. This supports my

computing minor. My critical thinking skills have also improved. Furthermore, my co-workers are more than willing to listen to any ideas I may have and my thoughts on problems and solutions.

SS: In what areas were you able to apply classroom knowledge while on Co-op Ed?

KW: I was able to apply some of my classroom knowledge from my minor in Computing, for example, my knowledge in Networking was applicable in areas such as programming switches and making network cables. As it relates to my major in Electrical Engineering, basic foundation knowledge was applied. Hence, relevant concepts were clear to me as the engineers explained how their equipment worked.

SS: Would you recommend this programme to anyone? Why, or why not?

KW: I would recommend this programme to persons because it is an effective way for a students to gain experience in their field of study before they graduate. As a result, they would already be ahead of persons who do not have experience in their field of study, because in today's working world experience has become a necessity in getting an entry level position at a company, especially in a technical field.

(Interviewer: Shaneica Spence)

Co-op Ed Students Making A Mark: Summer 2015



JAMAICA PROMOTIONS CORPORATION (JAMPRO)
Hospitality and Tourism Management



NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING AGENCY (NEPA)
Environmental Science



CLUB KINGSTON
Hospitality and Tourism Management



PORTMORE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
Urban and Regional Planning



JAMAICA DEFENCE FORCE (JDF)
Food Service Production and Management



INDECOM JAMAICA
Forensic Chemistry



HEATHER LAINE LIMITED
Apparel Design and Production Management



RESET CARIBBEAN FOUNDATION
Computing & Information Technology

"Don't watch the clock; do what it does. Keep going." -Sam Levenson

The Co-op Ed Experience: “Everything to Gain and Nothing to Lose ”



Bridgette Morrison
Final Year Student,
School of Business
Administration, Accounting
Major

The second cohort of students were engaged by KPMG during the period January to May 2015. Ms. Bridgette Morrison was a part of the group and so excited to share her experiences at KPMG.

Below are the responses obtained from an interview conducted with her.

SS: How has the experience at KPMG benefitted you?

BM: I have gained invaluable work experience and it has helped me to become a more rounded individual. The experience has adequately prepared me for the working world. Additionally, it has also helped me to determine whether or not this field will remain my ideal choice.

SS: Outline briefly the main tasks to which you were assigned.

BM: As an intern I was given the tasks of working on the cash and bank sections of the file, adding financial statements, attending stock counts and conducting cross-references.

SS: How were you prepared by your school (SOBA) for the Co-op Ed programme?

BM: There was an orientation session in which the expectations and responsibilities of students were discussed. Additionally, I was given information regarding where I would be working and who would be my supervisor from the Co-op Ed Unit. I received a formal introductory letter as well as other documents that I was to take to my supervisor.

SS: What were your expectations of the programme and were these met?

BM: I went into the firm expecting to learn and

gain experience. However, I did not realize that the experience would have been so in-depth, rewarding and ‘real’, for this reason, my expectations were not just met but they have been exceeded. Everything I have learnt in the classroom now makes a lot more sense.

SS: Did you encounter any challenges in the programme? If yes, what were they?

BM: I did not encounter any challenges because I incorporated strategic planning with effective time management in the process. I was aware of the Co-op Ed (internship) opportunity in the semester prior the commencement of the programme, thus I selected the majority of my modules in that semester to minimize those that I would have to do during the programme. I was able to manage full-time work and school simultaneously.

SS: How did you react when you were made a permanent job offer?

BM: Wow, happy I would say is an understatement, I was delighted, ecstatic, overjoyed! It was like a dream come through for me. To actually become a part of an elite firm is a privilege and a honour.

SS: Is this permanent position aligned with your career goal?

BM: It is precisely aligned with my career goal. I have been given everything I have ever hoped for.

SS: Would you recommend the Co-op Ed (Internship) Programme to anyone?

BM: I would recommend this programme to everyone, it is a great opportunity. You will not be disappointed and you have everything to gain and absolutely nothing to lose.

(Interviewer: Shaneica Spence)



Bridgette Morrison (right) along with other participants at the Closing out ceremony for the second cohort of Co-op Ed students engaged by KPMG. The ceremony was held in May 2015

**UTECH JA.'S ORIENTATION
ACTIVITIES 2015**

The University's Orientation activities for new and transferring students were held during the period August 16-21, 2015.

The Units' participation in the orientation activities was geared towards sensitizing incoming students regarding existence of the programme, requirements for participation and the services offered by the Unit. The ultimate goal is to have students better prepared for the Co-op Ed experience by the time they would have become eligible for participation in the programme.

Special thanks to **GraceKennedy** one of our industry partners, for its kind donation of two baskets that were used as giveaways to students who answered correctly questions relating to the Co-op Ed programme.



Above: Students visiting the Co-op Ed Booth on Day 2 of Orientation at the Papine Campus.

Right: Alexia Dixon (L), Nursing student, receiving gift basket courtesy of Grace Kennedy Co. Ltd. Making the presentation is Ms. Adian Miller, Co-op Ed Coordinator for the Western Campus.



Left: Christina Afflick (Centre), from the School of Business Administration, receiving a gift basket courtesy of Grace Kennedy Co. Ltd. Making the presentation is Ms. Stacy-Ann Walker, UTech, Ja.



**CAREER
CORNER**



Interview Do's and Don'ts

Do's

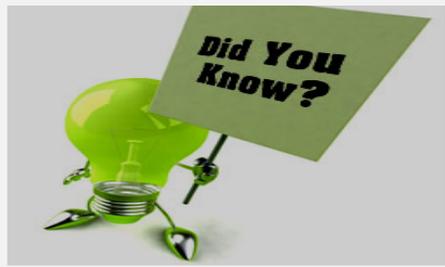
1. Err on the side of over-dressing for your on-site interview rather than under-dressing.
2. Be kind and graceful to every staff member you meet during your interview process, not just the hiring managers.
3. Reschedule an interview time by sending the recruiter at least three other options. To not do so, communicates a lack of interest.
4. Offer a firm handshake, make eye contact, and have a friendly expression when you are greeted by your interviewer.
5. Ask several questions during the interview, even if you believe you know the answers. It displays mutual interest. Who knows the insight you could glean from asking another employee about the information you only read or heard about?
5. Send a thank you card in addition to an email to the recruiting representative, human resource representative or chief interviewer after your in-person interview.

Don'ts

1. Don't falsify application materials or answers to interview questions.
2. Don't call a recruiting representative that has not returned your phone call more than two times.
3. Don't call a recruiter or show up without an appointment to express interest in a position or ask if positions are available unless clearly indicated that you should. Although that was viewed as tenacious in the pre-digital era, it is now viewed as bothersome in light of the conventional online application process.
4. Don't give the impression you are only interested in salary; don't ask about salary and benefits issues until the subject is brought up by your interviewer.
5. A job search can be hard work and involve frustrations; don't exhibit frustrations or a negative attitude in an interview.

Source: http://blogs.edweek.org/topschooljobs/careers/2015/06/10_interview_dos_and_donts.html

Meet the School Co-ordinators



- ◆ **Student placement remains ongoing throughout the academic year and during the Christmas and summer periods.**
- ◆ **All students are eligible to participate in the Co-op Ed Scheme once they have completed at least one year of their specialization.**
- ◆ **The Co-op Ed experience provides opportunities for professional networking among students. Further it allows employers to identify "best fits" for their organisations.**
- ◆ **Students may be placed locally, regionally or Internationally.**

Acknowledgement



Special thanks to Miss Shaneica Spence for compiling this issue of **Co-op Ed at UTech, Ja.**

Miss Spence is currently a final year student pursuing B.B.A. in Accounting and Finance.

She was assigned to the Co-op Education Unit for the period June to August 2015



Ms. Bridgett HooSang
School of Business Administration
(SOBA)

Meet SOBA Co-op Ed (Work Experience) coordinator, Ms. Bridgett HooSang. Below are the responses obtained from an interview conducted with her.

SS: How long have you been the school coordinator?

BH: I was appointed Coordinator in August 2014.

SS: What do you perceive as the most important role of the school Co-op Ed coordinator?

BH: Perhaps the most important role would be that of Student/Organization liaison, to ensure that the experience is one that is mutually beneficial.

SS: What do you find most rewarding about the job?

BH: When the students are sent on assignment. Nothing beats first-hand experience and when the student can have that, the University (the programme) is fulfilling its mandate.

SS: How have your students benefited from the Co-op Ed programme?

BH: The learning is invaluable. Students have the opportunity to see businesses operate and can compare it to what they learn in class. Experiential learning gives the students a wider world view when they return to the classroom; there is even improved work ethic in class. Happily as well, many are able to earn, in many instances, a small stipend, which in today's environment goes a long way in assisting them to meet their expenses.

SS: What change do you think is necessary to enhance the quality of the Co-op Ed programme in your school and by extension the Co-op Ed programme as a whole?

BH: Greater support and direction from the management body of the University.

SS: What advice do you have for our current and prospective Co-op Ed students?

BH: Make use of this opportunity; make a good impression, not just for the University and your School, but for yourself as well. It is what you make of it and you can make great things from this one area. The experience prepares you in many ways that the classroom cannot. Your Co-ordinators, both from the University and the School, want to see you excel, and are providing an open door. Walk through. Learn and network.

(Interviewer: Shaneica Spence)