

Co-op and New Grad Tips & Tricks

Brought to you By: Krish Patel

Hey there. Whether you're chasing your first co-op, internship or gearing up for a new-grad role, this guide is for you. I built it from the playbook that helped me land my role at AMD, from resume building and interview prep to networking with intent and staying motivated when things get tough. You'll find practical steps, examples, and scripts I wish I had on day one. If you're graduating soon, there are tips on targeting new-grad postings, converting internships into offers, and navigating timelines. I hope it makes your path clearer and a lot less stressful.

Visit co-op.krishadmin.com for Additional Resources
and my Contact Information

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Summary: Everything covered in this guide from resumes and cover letters to job searching, interviews, and building a LinkedIn profile are tips I genuinely recommend to anyone navigating the co-op journey. But if you're curious about how I put all of this into action, how I built **KrishAdmin**, created my application materials, prepared for interviews, and secured co-op opportunities don't miss  **Real Example: KrishAdmin**. It's packed with behind-the-scenes insights, lessons learned, and the full story of my personal journey.



Resumes & Cover Letters

When you're applying for a co-op position, your resume and cover letter are more than just documents—they're your personal brand. They speak on your behalf before you get the chance to, and that's why it's so important to make sure they represent the best, most polished version of *you*.

Whether you're applying for your first co-op or your final internship before graduation, here are some proven tips and tricks to make your resume and cover letter truly stand out from the stack:

Resumes

Make It Unique

The biggest mistake applicants make is treating their resume like a template filling in generic information into a format they found online or copied from a friend. HR teams and hiring managers review *hundreds* of resumes that look nearly identical. Want to stand out? Here's how:

Customize the Look and Feel

- Use tools like Canva to create a visually appealing resume with light color accents that help sections pop. A touch of color can guide the reader's eye and show effort and personality.
- Incorporate creative section dividers, and fonts that are modern but still easy to read.
- Stick to a one-page format (especially if you're early in your career) and make every inch of that page count (even the horizontal space).

Avoid Over-Used Templates

- While platforms like Overleaf (LaTeX) offer clean and professional designs, they're often quite rigid. Customization is key don't be afraid to bend the norms a little to express who you are.
- If you use LaTeX or Word, make sure your layout still feels unique. Change the colors, tweak the spacing, or restructure the sections to match your story.

Structure it Strategically

Visuals are only half the battle. What you say, and how you say it, is what lands interviews.

- Aside from looking at my Resume on my website here are some things you need to focus on:

Use Strong Action Verbs

- Start each bullet point with action verbs like *designed, developed, analyzed, led, or optimized*. These words carry weight and immediately tell employers what you've done.

Quantify When You Can

- Numbers catch eyes. Instead of "Worked on automation scripts," say "Increased automation efficiency by 35% through implementing some flow changes in the script"

Tailor It for the Job

- Don't send the same resume to every employer. Take some time to tweak your resume and cover letter for each position. Highlight relevant skills and experiences that match the job description.

Cover Letters

Convert Your Voice into Text

The cover letter is your chance to show personality and passion. It's not just a formality it's your opportunity to *talk* to the employer.

Tell a Story

- Open with a hook: a moment, a challenge you overcame, or a connection to the company's mission. Keep it conversational but professional.

Keep It Focused

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Use of AI in Cover Letters

- AI can help craft a personalized, well-written cover letter quickly, ensuring it's professional and tailored to the job while saving you time. It can also help modify the letter for each company, adjusting it slightly based on their specific job descriptions to better match their needs.

Final Thoughts

Polish your Documents

- **Proofread!** Spelling or grammar errors can immediately disrupt an otherwise strong application.
- **Ask for feedback.** Have a mentor or peer review your resume and cover letter. Fresh eyes often catch small improvements.

Conclusion

- Think of your resume and cover letter as a curated showcase of your professional identity. They should reflect your skills, creativity, and personality. Take the time to make them truly yours, because your best chance at landing the job is by presenting the best version of you.
- When it comes to the flow of your resume, it's most effective to highlight your strongest and most relevant skills at the top. This immediately captures the employer's attention and sets the tone for the rest of your application.



Job Searching

Where to Apply?

There are multiple places where co-op and internship opportunities are posted. Make sure you check **all possible sources** to maximize your chances:

- **School Portals:** Some opportunities are exclusive to Toronto Metropolitan University (such as through the Career & Co-op Centre or your department's co-op portal). These can give you a competitive edge as they're targeted specifically to your School's students.
- **Company Websites:** Many companies post openings directly on their own websites. Always check the Careers or Internships section of companies you're interested in some positions may not be posted anywhere else.
- **Job Platforms:**
 - [LinkedIn Jobs](#)
 - [Indeed](#)
 - [Glassdoor](#)
 - [Simplify](#)
 - [Handshake](#) (for students)
 - [TalentEgg](#) (student & new grad jobs)
- And keep on the lookout for many newer niche job boards as well!

Networking = Hidden Opportunities

Sometimes the best roles aren't even posted online they're found through networking. Here's how you can make connections work for you:

- Reach out to recruiters directly through LinkedIn or company emails. Express your enthusiasm for the company and role, and share your resume with a short, professional message.
- Set your LinkedIn status to "*Open to Work*". This makes it easier for recruiters to find you and lets your network know you're actively searching.
- Join LinkedIn groups, attend virtual career fairs, and follow companies you're interested in to stay up to date on new opportunities.

Interviews

Let's be honest, interviews can be intimidating. Even after all the prep and hard work, things don't always go as planned. But with the right mindset and a few key strategies, you can walk in feeling a lot more confident. Here are some things I did to make my interview process smoother and more successful:

Be Confident with Soft Skills Questions

Some of the most common questions are also the hardest to answer if you're not prepared. Make sure you have clear, thoughtful answers to questions like:

- “Tell me about yourself.”
- “What are your strengths and weaknesses?”

Pro tip: When discussing a weakness, always follow up with what you're doing to improve it. Employers don't expect you to be perfect, they want to see self-awareness and a growth mindset.

Handle Technical Questions with Strategy

When it comes to technical questions, preparation is key, but not just the kind you memorize.

- Research the company. Understand their tech stack, their products, or what type of work they do.
- Look up interview experiences and sample questions for that company or similar roles.
- Always assume a technical deep dive can happen even if the calendar invite looks “short.” Be ready to go from behavioral to technical instantly.
- Email responsiveness matters once interviews start. Reply quickly with clear availability as processes can move in hours, not days or weeks.
- If you get a question that throws you off, be honest. Say something like:
“I’m not 100% sure about the final answer, but here’s how I would approach it...”
Then walk them through your thought process. This shows how you think, which can be just as important as getting the answer right.

Bonus tip: If you need clarification, **ask them a question back**. It’s a conversation, not an exam!

Practice Makes Confidence

Once you’ve prepared your answers, practice with friends or family. The goal isn’t to memorize lines it’s to feel comfortable responding to different types of people and questions. You want to reach a point where, no matter who’s on the other side, you’re grounded, calm, and focused on the conversation.

Confidence Is Everything

Confidence doesn’t mean having every answer it means showing that you can **think on your feet, communicate clearly, and handle pressure with poise**. It’s about how you carry yourself, how you respond when things don’t go exactly as planned, and how you bounce back if you stumble.

Interviewers aren’t just looking for someone who knows everything they’re looking for someone who is adaptable, positive, and ready to learn. When you walk in prepared, stay calm under pressure, and believe in your abilities, that confidence will shine through.

Building Your Brand on LinkedIn

In today's job market, your LinkedIn profile is more than a digital resume it's your personal brand and professional intro. Recruiters and collaborators often check it before or after your application, so it should reflect not just what you've done, but who you are and where you're headed. For example, I created and maintain krishadmin.com as part of building my own brand.

Why LinkedIn Matters

LinkedIn isn't just a job board. It's a place to:

- Tell your story in your own words,
- Showcase your projects and achievements, and
- Position yourself as someone who's intentional about their career.

Tips for Creating a Strong LinkedIn Brand

Set your status to “Open to Work”

Let recruiters know you're available. LinkedIn gives you the option to signal this privately to recruiters or publicly to your network.

Use a professional headshot and banner

First impressions matter. A clear, confident photo and a banner image that represents your field (or personal brand) help establish credibility.

Craft a standout headline

Go beyond just your title. Write something like:

“Virtualization Validation Engineer @ AMD | Computer Engineering Student @ Toronto Metropolitan University”

Write a compelling About section

Your “About” section is your elevator pitch. Use it to:

- Share what you're passionate about
- Highlight what you're working on (e.g., side projects, research, or internships)
- Mention what kind of roles or industries you're interested in

Keep your Experience, Education, and Skills updated

Be consistent with your resume, but use LinkedIn to go a bit deeper add bullet points, media (like links or PDFs), and skills that showcase your full range of abilities.

Engage with content regularly

React to industry posts, comment on others' updates, or share articles and insights relevant to your field. Post about your own projects or thoughts too it shows you're active and passionate.

Connect intentionally

Don't just collect connections build relationships. Reach out to classmates, professors, professionals you meet at events, and recruiters. Always send a short message when connecting to make it more personal.



Real Example: KrishAdmin

One-on-One

So, this is the part where it's just you and me one-on-one.

Let me tell you how this all started.

I created **KrishAdmin** back in second year. I wanted something that reflected who I was something that captured my passion for technology, my interest in systems and servers, and my drive to help others. The name came naturally, and over time, it became more than just a username, it became a brand. A space where I could not only showcase my knowledge but also make an impact.

Through **KrishAdmin**, I dove deeper into the **tech and server world**, gaining hands-on experience in areas like system administration, scripting, virtualization, and containerization. But beyond building skills, I also focused on **giving back to my community**. That's when I launched notes.krishadmin.com a platform where I share notes that I've either created or compiled from reliable student resources. It's a simple idea: give students a reliable place to study and succeed.

Alongside the notes, I also started recording **study hall sessions** from the school union where they reviewed course content. I would then post these recordings on my [YouTube channel](#), making them accessible to anyone who wanted to revise, catch up, or learn at their own pace. These small efforts quickly snowballed. Students started messaging me, thanking me for the resources. This is when I realized that I wasn't just building a brand I was building a **reputation**.

By third year, it was time to apply for co-op positions. And that's when all the pieces came together. I began applying everything I've shared in this document writing a strong, personalized resume and cover letter, researching companies, reaching out to recruiters, and preparing for interviews.

One of the **biggest takeaways** I want to share is this: **your resume matters a lot**.

When companies review applicants, they often have very limited time. If something stands out, or doesn't, that usually determines whether a candidate moves forward. A clear format, strong keywords, and a clean structure can truly make or break that critical first impression.

That's why I'm so passionate about this document. These strategies **aren't just theory** they're what helped me stand out.

Of course, I didn't do it all alone. I want to give a big **shoutout to my mom**, who supported me through every step of the interview process. She practiced with me, challenged me with tough questions, and helped me polish my answers until I could speak with clarity and confidence. Her belief in me pushed me forward more than she probably knows.

My Interview Experiences

Now, onto the interviews.

I had the opportunity to interview with **Bell, The Six Semiconductor (TSS), and AMD**. Each one was different with its own challenges, and each taught me something new!

The Six Semiconductor (TSS)

At TSS, I had a one-on-one interview with one of their technical leads. It was very technical covering electrical engineering topics like resistance, op-amps, and more. I felt I had done well, and I was hopeful for an offer. But ultimately, they were looking for someone with a more specific background in electrical engineering. As a computer engineering student, **I wasn't quite the right fit** for what they needed, and I respect that.

Bell

I had my first interaction with Bell during a speed interview session in January at OEC. Later in October, I went through their formal interview process. It began with an HR screening over the phone, where they asked basic questions to get to know me and confirm my details. That was followed by a **group interview** with 5 other candidates and 3 interviewers. We answered questions, solved puzzles, and were eventually placed into breakout rooms for more technical discussions.

Two weeks later, I received an offer letter. Here's something important: **even after getting an offer, you can negotiate logistics**. I had my AMD interview lined up that same week, so I requested a five-day extension to decide. They agreed, and that gave me time to pursue the AMD opportunity.

AMD

My AMD experience was truly **unforgettable** and marked a pivotal moment in my professional journey. I went through two interviews as part of the selection process. The first one was a bit rough. While I had prepared thoroughly, the atmosphere felt more **formal than expected**, and I struggled to fully get into my comfort zone. As a result, I didn't feel as confident answering some of the questions, and I knew I hadn't showcased my full potential.

But everything changed in the second interview. This time, the focus shifted toward **virtualization**, and that was my moment to shine. The questions aligned perfectly with my **strengths**, and I was able to confidently demonstrate my knowledge in areas like Python scripting, system architecture, server management, Docker, and hypervisors. I walked through each technical problem logically and **clearly communicated my thought process**. Out of the **five interviewers** present, each one seemed genuinely impressed with my responses, and I received a job offer within just **30 minutes** after the interview.

Coincidentally, that same day I was also invited to the **AMD Markham campus** for an in-person open house event. While I was there, one of the attendees mentioned that I was the **first student** to officially secure a co-op position at that location. That moment made everything feel even more special. I was beyond ecstatic and filled with a sense of pride and **excitement** for what was ahead.

Post Co-op

Now that I'm wrapping up my co-op term at AMD, I can confidently say that my team has been incredibly supportive. Without them, I honestly think I would've struggled. They provided mentorship, answered my questions, and helped me grow not just technically, but professionally.

Outside of my day-to-day responsibilities, I also had the chance to serve on the **AMD Intern Steering Committee** as one of the **Gaming Liaisons**. I helped organize gaming events each quarter and contributed to discussions about what interns wanted and needed from the program. It gave me leadership experience and made my term even more rewarding.

As I approach the end of this co-op term, I've been in conversation with **FEAS Co-op** about sharing my experience with future students. I've already participated in several student panels and answered tons of questions about the co-op process.

To take that support even further, I created co-op.krishadmin.com a website designed to help fellow **engineering students at TMU** navigate the co-op process with more clarity and comfort. Whether it's tips, templates, resources, or just honest advice, the goal is to make the whole experience feel a little less overwhelming and a lot more doable.

As a way to give back, I also created this document because I know how confusing and stressful the journey can feel at times. And if I can help even one student feel more prepared, more confident, or more motivated, then it's all been worth it.

Final Words

If you've made it this far thank you. I genuinely hope this guide gave you clarity, confidence, and a sense of direction in your co-op journey.

I know firsthand how overwhelming the process can feel. From building your resume and stressing over interviews to comparing yourself with others or wondering if your grades are "good enough" it's easy to get caught in the pressure. But here's something I want you to remember:

Don't put too much pressure on yourself.

You don't have to land the "perfect" co-op. You don't need to have a 4.0 GPA. And you definitely don't need to have it all figured out. What matters most is **progress**, not perfection.

Your grades don't define you.

The projects you work on, the connections you build, and the passion you bring to the table that's what makes you stand out. Employers look for curious, motivated, and solution-oriented people not just people who ace exams.

Whether you're in your first year trying to figure out where to start, or in your third year grinding through interviews and applications, I want you to know: **you're doing great**. Keep going. Stay consistent. And trust that your efforts will pay off.

I created **KrishAdmin**, this document, and the helpful websites because I believe in sharing knowledge and making things a little easier for the next person coming up. If this guide helped even a little I consider that a win.

This is my journey. And now, it's your turn to write yours. You've got this.

– Krish Patel

❓ Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How many co-op jobs should I apply to?

There's no magic number when it comes to applications personally, I applied to 38 jobs leading to my co-op acceptance.

When should I start applying for co-op?

Start applying as soon as your resume is ready and job postings go live timing can make all the difference.

What if I don't have much experience to put on my resume?

If I were in your shoes, I'd focus on making my personal projects stand out by showcasing creativity, impact, and real-world relevance

What kind of projects should I focus on for my resume?

This isn't a one-size-fits-all answer it really depends on your passions and interests. When you work on something you're genuinely excited about, you'll naturally take the project further and make it your own.

What do I say when a recruiter messages me on LinkedIn?

Start by being polite, appreciative, and professional. Here's a simple example:

"Hi [Recruiter's Name], thank you for reaching out! I appreciate you considering me for this opportunity. I'd love to learn more about the role and how I might be a good fit. Please feel free to share additional details!"

Keep it conversational, express interest, and ask questions if something is unclear.

What if I get rejected from a job I really wanted?

It happens and it's tough. But rejection is part of the process, not a reflection of your potential. Use it as a learning experience: ask for feedback, if possible, reflect on what went well, and identify what you can improve for next time. Remember, every "no" brings you closer to a "yes."

Do personal projects or GitHub portfolios actually help?

Absolutely. They're one of the best ways to showcase your initiative, technical skills, and passion especially when you're early in your career. Even small, well-documented projects show that you're hands-on and serious about learning. Bonus points if they're aligned with the field you're applying to!

Should I follow up after an interview or submitting my resume?

Yes, but keep it respectful and timely. After an interview, send a thank-you message within 24 hours. If you haven't heard back after a week or two from an application, a short follow-up message expressing continued interest is perfectly fine. Just be professional and brief.

How do I negotiate offer timelines or job details?

Be honest and respectful. If you need more time to decide, let the employer know you're enthusiastic but are currently waiting on other responses. Example:

"I'm really excited about this offer, but I was wondering if it would be possible to extend the deadline by a few days as I'm currently wrapping up final steps with another opportunity."

You can also ask questions about pay, hours, or expectations before signing just approach it with curiosity, not demands.



How do I balance co-op with school and my personal life?

Time management is key. If you're taking courses during co-op, plan your weeks in advance and keep your calendar organized. Prioritize rest and make time for things that recharge you. Communicate openly with your manager or professors if things get overwhelming most people will support you if you're honest and proactive.



What advice would you give to your past self before applying?

Don't overthink every detail just start. You don't need the perfect GPA or the most polished resume on day one. What matters most is consistency, willingness to learn, and showing who you are through your work. Also, don't be afraid to reach out and ask for help you're not in this alone.



Is a 2-page resume OK for new grads?

Yes, if you truly need the space. Page two should earn its keep with internships, capstone results, standout projects, and quantified impact. Quick checks: can a busy recruiter skim your top skills in 6 to 8 seconds, are your bullets results focused, and does every line map to the job you want?

More Questions?

Got questions or just wanna chat about co-ops, resumes, interviews or anything at all? Don't hesitate to reach out! You can shoot me an email at krish@krishadmin.com, connect through my [contact page](#), or even hit me up on [LinkedIn](#). I'm always down to help however I can, whether you're just getting started or deep in your internship hunt. Let's connect!