Computer Science Co-op Work Report

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To: Christine Donahue

From: Marc Daaboul

### Introduction

Co-op’s give many students the opportunity to improve their skills and have real-life experience in the workplace. I was fortunate enough to take part in a co-op at the Canada Revenue Agency. The period of employment was from May 27th, 2021 to August 20th, 2021 and My supervisor’s name was David Lamothe.

### Employer Description

The agency's mission is to (as stated in the CRA website) “[Administer] tax laws for the Government of Canada and for most provinces and territories.”. They collect and return taxes from/to the Citizens of Canada depending on what province they are from.

### Position Description

I worked as local IT or otherwise known as Tech Support. Their role is to help other employees working at the CRA, with most issues related to computers. They do services including some that require admin accounts, like installations or helping those who have forgotten their passwords. They also help employees with any issue they had that they do not the solution of, that does not require special permissions. Local IT also takes care of deploying, replacing and receiving laptops and other devices needed for employees to work from the workplace or from the comfort of their homes. I have personally done most of the things described above.

The procedure for a client to get help regarding computers is described below:

1. The client find an issue or is missing something, like an application in their device
2. The client calls the front desk and sees if they can have their issue resolved on the spot. If not, the front desk open up a ticket for us to deal with
3. We schedule with the client to help fix the problem.
4. We contact the client and remote to their desktop or go to them in person and help them out with whatever issue they have/had.

### Technical Environment

During my co-op, the laptop they gave me was a Toshiba Tecra. They also gave me a monitor, mouse, keyboard and a docking station, but I didn't use any of them since I didn’t really find a use for them. Everyone, if not, most people at the building where I was working used Windows 10, including myself and had access to Microsoft Office apps. I personally also had access to some government-built applications and apps from a third party like Entrust.

### Skills Used and Acquired

A skill that I learned from going to computer science at Heritage College is my time management skills. There were some moments where I would have to deal with multiple clients in 1 day or deal with clients that have a very tight schedule. I was able to easily manage my time to make sure everyone had enough time to get their issue resolved. Like giving clients where I would have to install an application around 30-60 minutes on my schedule or give a client that has an incident ticket 60+ minutes to make sure none would be overlapping.

A new skill I got from working with the CRA during the summer is my ability to adapt much quicker. Some clients like talking more or like having more energy in the conversation than others. And since I wanted to make it as easy as possible for the client to answer questions and/or follow instructions, I would have to match their energy as fast as possible. It isn’t something I acquired immediately, but came to me over time, by dealing with more and more clients.

Another skill I have sharpened is my communication skills. A lot of the clients did not know much about computers and didn’t know all the terms. So I had to dumb down a lot of explanations and/or avoid using some words which may cause confusion to the client. It helped me to use the correct words at the right time.

### Evalutaion of co-op experience

I believe I was mostly well-prepared for the co-op experience, but I do not believe the college played a big enough part in this. Considering that most students in the first year-end up working as computer technicians, I feel having the chance to practice a little before jumping straight into it might have helped develop more skills beforehand.

What I liked the most about the co-op work term is the team, they were very fun to work with. But always made sure I knew what I was doing first.

The only complaint I could have about the co-op work term is that we didn’t start working in person soon enough. I spent the majority of the term working from home, including the training, which may have slowed down the progress a little. I only spent the Fridays and Thursdays of the last 2 weeks working in person and I found those 4 days to be the best out of the work term.

### Conclusion

The overall experience working with the CRA was very enjoyable and learned a lot of new things from it. From the process of working with clients to working with the team, this co-op term was a big success.