I am currently working as a Co-op Performance Analyst within the Center of Excellence, part of the Global Customer Success team at Kinaxis. Located in Kanata, Ottawa, my role is pivotal in conducting in-depth analyses of system performance related to Kinaxis' main product, RapidResponse. This software is designed to address complex challenges in supply chain management, including material allocation, master resource planning (MRP), and enterprise resource planning (ERP).

During my tenure which spans two terms from September 2023 to April 2024, I focus on analyzing backstage system data critical for assessing customer performance. My responsibilities have evolved since this is my second co-op term. I now independently lead a project aimed at identifying relationships between metrics used to describe the customer behaviors and clustering and classifying customers based on their data patterns.

This experience is instrumental in my professional development, providing me with invaluable insights into complex data handling in the high-stakes field of global supply chain solutions.

Datadog:

I selected digital capacity as my first UOCompetency to present how I leveraged advanced technological tools effectively within my role as a Performance Analyst at Kinaxis. Recognizing the potential for improved data visualization, I integrated Datadog, which is one data visualization platform for logs data, extensively into our workflow. This involved enhancing visualizations of backend log metrics, such as Performance Counter and Heartbeat data. I implemented moving averages, robust trending lines, and cumulative bar plots to enhance the clarity and utility of trend analysis. This allowed us to spotlight key data insights more effectively, supporting strategic decision-making processes.

The improvement in data visualization was highlighted during my mid-term review, where leaders commended the innovative integration of analytical tools. They noted the significant reduction in time required to interpret complex data sets, which has bolstered our team's efficiency and responsiveness to rapid changes in data.

Classification:

I prioritized problem solving and creativity to deal with the challenge of effectively classifying customers within the complex landscape of supply chain management. Leading a critical project, I shifted away from traditional complex clustering methods. Instead, I developed a straightforward, binary-choice tree structure decision method for customer classification. This approach was designed to be user-friendly and adaptable, catering to varying operational needs by allowing for the application of arbitrary rules as required by different scenarios.

This creative solution was particularly well-received, as it directly addressed the operational challenges we faced. My supervisors praised the method for its simplicity and direct applicability, which significantly improved our ability to segment customers according to specific, real-time business requirements, thus enhancing our strategic engagements.

Small talk:

I chose to develop self-awareness to better understand and integrate into the social dynamics of my workplace. Initially I was hesitant to engage in social interactions, particularly during lunch, but I soon recognized the integral role these interactions play in building professional networks and understanding organizational culture, which is very valuable for one new graduate, especially considering the fact that I am going to starting my professional career in a very close future, after my graduation at the end of this year. By actively participating in lunchtime conversations and trying to initiate small talk, I improved my communication skills and built stronger relationships with colleagues, help me to get the idea that the importance of balancing technical skills with interpersonal engagement in a professional setting.

Academic per:

During my CO-OP placement at Kinaxis, one of my key projects involved developing a sophisticated clustering strategy to segment over 300 customer datasets. This initiative utilized 27 statistical features including mean, standard variance, entropy, skewness and so on, and employed six clustering methods, including KMeans, Agglomerative Clustering and some revised KMeans algorithms. The segmentation was validated using three metrics from Scikit-learn: silhouette score,calinski harabasz score and davies bouldin score, demonstrating the effectiveness of these techniques in creating meaningful customer groups. This project not only improved our team's strategic decision-making capabilities by providing clearer customer insights but also enhanced my technical proficiency and problem-solving skills.

The technical abilities honed during this placement, such as data manipulation, statistical analysis, and the practical application of clustering algorithms, are directly relevant to my academic pursuits in my program. These skills will serve me well in future courses, particularly those involving complex data sets and advanced analytical tasks, as well as the complex coding project implementation ability. The project management experience gained from leading this segmentation initiative will also benefit me in future group projects and in managing multiple deadlines, enhancing my capabilities in coordination and time management.

My advice here for the possible new course is, I suggest opening more practical data analysis projects for student that mimic real-world business challenges. Including software tools like Python and PowerBI in these projects would provide hands-on experience with the tools that are pivotal in the industry.

What u learned from the interview:

The most important thing I learned from the CO-OP interviews was the significance of adeptly describing past experiences and projects in detail, ensuring alignment with the interviewer's interests. Based on the feedback from the team leader and the HR, how well I connect my technical accomplishments to the specific needs of the employer was one important reason of my success. The key was not just to demonstrate technical expertise but to articulate how these skills solve pertinent business challenges. For instance, in my interview I mentioned one complex project about optimizing material allocation using convex optimization algorithms and implementing BP neural network algorithms to predict supply risk levels from my resume. Explaining how the automated material allocation system I developed reduced manual work significantly, aligning perfectly with the prospective employer's goal to enhance efficiency.

For future interviews, I plan to adopt a more tailored preparation strategy. I will thoroughly research the company's current challenges and strategic goals, ensuring my project examples directly relate to and address these points. This preparation will guide me in selecting which experiences to highlight and how to discuss them. Additionally, I will focus on improving how I communicate the relevance of my projects. Practicing clear and concise explanations of the business impact of my technical work will be crucial. I aim to present not only the technical aspects but also how these contribute to larger business outcomes, facts always speaks louder than words.