

WKEXP 904 WORK TERM REPORT

Engineering Career Paths

PURPOSE

This assignment gets you thinking about possible career plans by combining self-reflection with insights gleaned from engineers or engineering-adjacent professionals. You will assess your personal growth through co-op and work experiences, reflect on your evolving values and goals, and consider how real-world experiences influence career choices. A central component of this assignment is interviewing three professionals at different stages of their careers. These conversations will give you multiple perspectives on career development, highlighting the potential perils, pitfalls, and possibilities that shape professional career journeys. By integrating your own reflections with what you learn from others, you will articulate career possibilities that are both personally meaningful and informed by others' lived experiences.

FORMAT

Your report must include a formal introduction, a body of analysis as described below, and a conclusion.

Length: Minimum 1250 words. Number all pages, not including the cover page. Cover and reference pages, and appendices do not count toward the minimum.

Font: 12pt; Calibri, Arial, or Times New Roman

Margins: 1"

Cover Page indicating:

- Student name
- ID number
- Work term
- Discipline
- The name of the coordinator who conducted your onsite evaluation.

Reference Page: Include the names, positions, and companies of your interviewees, along with any additional sources consulted. All references should be formatted according to the IEEE citation style. For guidance, refer to the University of Alberta's Citation and Reference Management page or consult the official IEEE Reference Guide (Section Q): [IEEE Reference Guide](#)

You may include details of your interviews in attached appendices if you wish, but they should not form the main body of the document.

Resources for Writing

Regardless of your engineering discipline or possible career path, strong writing skills and clear communication are highly valued by employers. To support your development, we also recommend taking advantage of [Writing Services](#) offered by the Academic Success Centre. If you're serious about improving your written communication, consider consulting these resources, too:

[1] R. P. Clark, *Writing Tools: 55 Essential Strategies for Every Writer*, 10th Anniversary ed. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 2016.

[2] W. Strunk Jr. and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style*, 4th ed. New York, NY: Longman, 2000.

[3] D. A. McMurrey and J. L. Zobel, Technical Communication: A Reader-Centered Approach, 8th ed. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2016.

REPORT

The WKEXP 904 report is designed to help you braid your academic and co-op experiences, personal reflections, and insights from others into a thoughtful career plan. It combines self-assessment, exploration of career goals, practical job search strategies, and learning from professionals who are further along in their careers. By working through each part, you will not only clarify your own values and aspirations but also develop an informed possible plan for your future in engineering.

1. Reflective Career Planning

Using your work terms and personal growth as a starting point, develop a thoughtful career plan that reflects your evolving goals, interests, and values. Your reflection should include:

- What do you want from your career beyond just a job title or salary? Consider the type of impact you want to make, the kind of lifestyle you envision, and the values that will guide your choices.
- What industry or industries interest you most, and why?
- What are your short-term and long-term goals, and what draws you to them? What additional training, education, mentorship, or smaller steps (such as specific roles, skills, or credentials) will help you reach those goals?
- What internal or external obstacles do you foresee? How can you prepare to face them?
- Reflect on your key strengths and how they've developed through your work experience. How can you apply these strengths in your future career?
- Identify areas of weakness—how have they shown up in your work term(s), and how might you address them?
- What past experiences have helped you overcome challenges, and how can you apply those lessons moving forward?

2. Job Search Strategy

Assume you are entering the job market without an offer from a past co-op employer. Reflect on your preparedness and personal job search strategy:

- How do you feel about entering the job market? What are your biggest concerns?
- What tools, platforms, or resources will you rely on, and why?
- What role will networking play in your search? How do you plan to approach it?
- What setbacks have others faced in job searching that you may encounter as well? What steps can you take to prepare to face these setbacks?
- What proactive habits or routines will help keep you motivated and grounded?

3. Interviews with Engineers – Learning from Others

Interview three professionals, at least one engineer that is an E.I.T or P.Eng, or other professionals at varying stages of their careers, preferably in an area of industry that you are interested in working in. Interviewees that are E.I.T's should have a minimum of three years of experience

- Ask about their journey, expectations, surprises, and turning points in their career.
- Learn what influenced their key decisions and values along the way.
- Explore the personal sacrifices and successes they've experienced.

Reflect on the interviews:

- What insights challenged your assumptions?
- What did you hear that reinforced or contradicted your current plan?
- Which pieces of advice resonated most with your personality and goals?
- Did anything leave you feeling uncertain or conflicted about your own direction?
- What, if anything, do you now see differently about career success or fulfillment?

4. Reflection & Integration

In your conclusion, tie everything together:

- What have you learned about yourself throughout your work term and this reflective process?
- How has your perception of your career path changed?
- What specific changes are you making to your original plan as a result?
- What will you commit to doing differently, and why?
- What role does self-awareness play in career planning?

DEADLINES

Your report is due one month prior to the end of the work term. Please name your completed work term report as follows: ID#_RPT_Surname_Initial of First Name (example: 1234567_RPT_Mills_F).

The Canvas submission portal closes at 11:59pm on the dates noted below. Failure to complete the report may result in a grade of "NC" - no credit - for your WKEXP 904 course.

<u>Work Term</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Winter	31 March
Summer	31 July
Fall	30 November

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

The End of Term Evaluation must be completed by both you and your supervisor before the end of each four-month work term. Toward the end of the term, a link to the evaluation will be sent directly to your supervisor's email address. To ensure they receive it, please make sure their correct email is entered in your work term record in campusBRIDGE. If you will be leaving your position more than two weeks before the end of the work term, notify your co-op onsite contact so the evaluation link can be sent earlier.