

PBRL 1199 and PBRL 2299 Work Term Report Guidelines Lessons Learned: A Reflective Report

Now that you have completed at least one public relations work experience term, it's time to reflect on your personal growth as both a student and a practitioner of public relations using concrete examples to explain and support your way of thinking. This report will encourage you to look at your work experience term as a whole and what that experience has meant to you. What have you learned about public relations? What have you learned about yourself? How has the experience influenced your career goals? How has the experience informed your academic studies?

Work term report is due to co-op@msvu.ca by 4:00PM on Friday, August 12, 2022.

Reflect on Learning Outcomes

This will be a personal paper based on your individual learning throughout your academic program thus far. As a starting point, you might think about your experience within the context of the learning goals you set for yourself for this work experience term. Listed below are the general outcomes for the work experience program that might help to prompt your reflective process.

Academic Outcomes	Professional Outcomes	Personal Outcomes
Students will develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the ability to integrate classroom theory with workplace practice greater clarity about their academic goals academic motivation 	Students will develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clarity about their career goals understanding of workplace culture workplace competencies new or advanced skills 	Students will develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> greater maturity their strengths and weaknesses their interpersonal skills their lifelong learning skills

Instructions

- Keep a folder handy as you may require samples of background information or materials you produced as appendices for the report.
- Begin writing early and make it an ongoing part of your daily work, especially in the four weeks leading up to the due date for the report.
- The Department of Communications Studies expects an English language competence in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and semantics. The responsibility to achieve that minimal standard lies with the student.

Evaluation & Deadlines

- Work term reports are given grades of 'Pass', 'Fail', or 'Re-submit' (returned for revisions).
- A 're-submit' indicates a report does not meet the stated objectives but could receive a passing grade if revised. Any report returned for revisions must be re-submitted within 7 days of receiving it back. You will have only one chance to re-write a work term report. Failure to revise the report to a satisfactory level will result in a failing grade for the work experience term.
- The work term is submitted to the Co-op Office but addressed to the Work Experience Faculty Advisor of your academic department for evaluation.
- **Work term report is due to co-op@msvu.ca by 4:00PM on Friday, August 12, 2022.**

Format

The work term report should be approximately 10 pages in length. This does not include the title page, table of contents, executive summary, or appendices. The report should be double spaced on 8 ½" by 11" paper with margins of 1" to 1 ½" and size 12 font.

Your report should be organized into sensible sections. To help you structure this report, we suggest that you explore the following sections:

Title Page

Sample title page below.

(This page is not a part of the minimum 10-page requirement.)

Table of Contents

This is a list of sections in your report and appropriate page numbers.

(This page is not a part of the minimum 10-page requirement.)

Executive Summary

The executive summary is a one-to-two-page summary of the work term report. It is intended to serve as a synopsis for the busy executive who does not have time to read the entire report.

(This page is not a part of the minimum 10-page requirement.)

Background Information and Introduction

This section is intended for the benefit of the reader so they have some background information on the organization(s) where you spent your work experience term(s), thus allowing the reader to better understand the context of your report.

Developing as a Student

How did your work experience term(s) influence your concept of yourself as a public relations student? For example, one student reflected that her study habits changed considerably after her work terms. She noted that when she first came to university, she approached her work in much the same way as her friends in other programs. She stated *"Working in public relations prepares you that in this profession you will be working long and hard hours. As a work experience student, I became more focused on my schoolwork... spending a lot more time on projects and assignments."*

Another student noted that her work experience term opened her eyes *“to the real living, breathing definitions of corporate culture, organizational behaviour and politics... all of which play an important role (in public relations)”*.

Developing as a Professional

How did your work experience term influence your development as a public relations professional? What did you observe and learn about workplace language, etiquette, issues, work ethic, management styles and organizational policies and procedures? One student noted that the work experience program taught them a great deal about the nature of work. *“Certainly, these lessons will have proven incredibly valuable as I leave the public relations program to enter the world of work. I am more confident about what the world wants of me as well as what I can offer it.”*

Personal Development

How did your work experience term influence your personal development? Many students identify that their self-confidence increased, judgement matured, interpersonal communication skills improved and that they learned to set high standards for themselves. One student noted that when she began the program, she assumed that she would create personal ties with everyone in the workplace. Through her work experience term, she learned to deal effectively with difficult personalities. *“These people have taught me that you don’t have to be friends with everyone... as long as you continue to work in a professional manner”*. In many cases, students reflect that they learned the most about themselves in situations that were less than ideal. Another reflected that working away from home during the work experience term was surprisingly enjoyable. *“It gave me the opportunity to re-invent myself.”*

Public Relations in Practice

How did your work experience term influence your views about public relations? Is your concept of public relations practice the same as it was when you entered the program? Did your experiences contribute to a new understanding of the role of public relations as well as the opportunities for and expectations of public relations professionals? One student, whose employer weathered a serious media relations crisis, reflected that this experience gave her critical first-hand knowledge. *“This work term was an excellent introduction to my fourth-year courses which focused a great deal on issues management. Here, I began to truly see public relations as a management function.... I learned about media relations through the eyes of an organization rather than through (classroom) case studies.”*

What the Future Holds

How did your work experience term influence your career goals? Does it influence your understanding of what you need in terms of a professional and personal life? Do you feel well prepared for your career? *“As I flowed through the PR program,”* said a senior student, *“I asked myself many times, ‘Is this what I want to do with the rest of my life?’ The work experience program was a big help in my realizing that the answer is yes.”* Another student said the experience gained through several interviews to secure her work term has prepared her well for the professional job market. A graduating student reflected, *“I feel I am more realistic about work, the type of position I will likely receive and the role it will play in my life.”*

Contemplating the future is both exciting and a little frightening. *“I, like many of my peers, want to be part of something that counts, something that makes me proud, but above all, something that*

will change the world. Now I have come full circle. Again, I am at a moment where things could go either way and anything is possible.”

Sample Title Page

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EMPLOYER: ABC Company
Halifax, Nova Scotia

August 12, 2022

MOUNT SAINT VINCENT UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES
PUBLIC RELATIONS WORK EXPERIENCE REFLECTIVE REPORT
SUMMER 2022

TITLE OF WORK TERM REPORT

Work Experience Faculty Advisor: Dr. John Smith

Work Term Supervisor: Ms. Martha Goodboss

Department: Corporate Communications and Marketing

Work Experience Position: Communications Advisor