**PEARLS of WISDOM**

**Be Prepared**

**Supervisor:** The motto of the scouts comes in handy in most situations. In this case set up a TRAINING PLAN for your coop student.  Aim to have assigned tasks for their first week or two. They will need this time to get familiar with the place, culture, and tasks. Use this time to train them on their general tasks such as reference, as well as meet with as many members of the library team as possible.  They will get off to a good start and this will help to avoid any boredom or lack of direction those first couple of weeks.  It will also help you to delegate time as a supervisor.

**Co-op Students:** Use this training time to familiarize yourself with the people and procedures at your new workplace. ‘Job shadowing’ or observing someone is a great way to learn the ropes, especially if you ask lots of questions! Try to get a sense of the projects or tasks that you might be interested in doing.

**Colleagues:** I’m not always involved in this stage. However, when I meet the co-op students I mention that I do a variety of teaching situations and how previous students have participated in my teaching program.

**Open Door Policy**

**Supervisor:** Talk often with your student; let them know that they can touch base with you as needed. While all meetings do not have to be arranged I have found it easier if you can SCHEDULE MEETINGS every other week.  This prevents you from forgetting to touch base with your student and lets you gage their experiences throughout their placement.  It is easy to assume all is going well, and if you only casually ask that is probably the answer you will get. Having one on one time will help the student feel more comfortable to bring up things that otherwise may go unnoticed.

**Co-op Students:** Share both your successes and your concerns with your supervisor. Tell your supervisor about the projects that are going well, and don’t be afraid to tell your supervisor if something is not going as you thought it would. Your supervisor may be able to help!

**Colleagues:** If a student is working with me on a teaching assignment or collection development project I try and touch base each time they complete a step, i.e. after they have their lesson plan; giving them relevant examples; reviewing the final product. In general we usually co-teach classes so they also need to know what I will be doing.

**Mentorship**

**Supervisor:** You want to be able to coach the student in order to further the student’s knowledge, skills, and career. Think back to what may have wanted to know about the profession before you started working. Think also of the unique experiences that your institution may have to offer as a working environment. It is important to continuously HIGHLIGHT our PROFESSION.

**Co-op Students:** A co-op placement is a great opportunity to find a mentor. A mentor may offer you advice and guidance during your co-op. A mentor may also be willing to share their knowledge about the profession and can be a valuable contact after you have finished your co-op.

**Colleagues:** I make suggestions based on my experience and give advice but generally I let the co-op students go with their gut feelings. Once they have taught one or two sessions, I encourage them to try something different. I am also able to provide references for the co-op students since I've seen them in action.

**Being Practical**

**Supervisor:** In order to develop practical skills the students have to be given an opportunity to practice. It is equally important that they get a chance to partake in those DAY to DAY ACTIVITIES that are a part of our profession as well as grander projects. This will allow them to get a better sense of what the job truly entails, and not an image warped by only seeing part of the picture.

**Co-op Students:** Try to do as many of the day-to-day activities of a librarian as you can – work at the reference desk, do a collection development project, join a committee, etc. Go for a well-rounded experience, and don’t be shy about putting what you’ve done on your resume afterwards!

**Colleagues:** I try to take them through the whole process involved in designing a teaching strategy for students. Whenever possible I include them in any meetings I have with professors so they can see the negotiation process. I give suggestions and advice in regards to how much information can be taught in the given time period. I let them choose what they would like to do so they have a comfortable level of involvement. I try my best not to interject any comments during their teaching sessions. After the session is over I take them for a coffee and we debrief - what went well, what didn't go so well.

**Innovation**

**Supervisor:** Foster the creative thoughts of your student by letting them tackle a SPECIAL PROJECT.  If possible let the student have input as to the nature of the product, build on what the library needs are and what are the students’ skills and potential. Let them spearhead the task and thus take ownership of the outcome. This will allow them to

**Co-op Students:** Choose a special project that is both interesting and challenging. The goal is to learn something and also to come away with a finished product that you are proud of. Be sure to keep copies of your work for your portfolio to show to prospective employers.

**Colleagues:** I have been teaching many of the same classes for years and I know the faculty quite well. They know I like to try different teaching methods and they welcome this creativity. I find most of the co-op students I work with have very interesting ideas and new strategies. I encourage them to incorporate their ideas into our session and if possible we do an assessment of the students to get their feedback.

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