Kaylee Hoffner STEP Proposal

by

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Prepared for
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Project Summary: Summer 2014 I will be working as a Facilities and Material Handling Project Engineer Intern for FedEx SmartPost in New Berlin, Wisconsin. This project will expand upon my Industrial Engineering Degree I am working toward at Ohio State, while teaching me real world applications and aiding my professional development.

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Introduction

Objective
This proposal will provide an outline of the STEP Experience I plan to participate in. It will outline a description of the project, a personal statement, a planned budget and the plan for reporting back to the university.

Project Description

Internship
The STEP Experience I plan to participate in is an internship. The primary objective of this experience is professional development in my field of study, Industrial and Systems Engineering. On January 31, 2014 I signed an offer letter from FedEx SmartPost for the role of Facilities and Material Handling (FMHE) Project Intern. This position is with the FedEx SmartPost New Berlin, Wisconsin location. This position was open to students who are studying Industrial Systems Engineering or Mechanical Engineering at an accredited university, and have completed 2 years of their education upon the start date. I went through an online application process, screening interview, and final interview before being offered the position.

The internship will entail engineering related assignments that vary from full term projects to daily tasks. The FedEx careers website [1] lays out some of the essential functions that the job will entail. One of these includes creating Computer Aided Drafting (CAD) designs of operations processes and equipment, as well as updating built designs. The intern will assist the Design Engineers in creating and editing bid documents and requesting quotes. The intern will work directly under a Project Engineer in the FMHE department to complete daily tasks that would be performed by a typical Project Engineer in an industrial setting.

FedEx SmartPost [2] is a service that provides cost efficient shipping of low weight packages from online retailers to customers of United States Territories. FedEx SmartPost has a variety of advantages including reduced transit time and maximized savings. Because this is a specialized shipping service, the aspects of Industrial Engineering that will be used throughout the course of the internship are Operations Management and Logistics. The internship will provide an application of classroom knowledge in a real world setting, providing challenges and project experience I have not yet been faced with, and experiences that are not repeatable in a classroom setting.

The courses needed for preparation for this experience have been completed. Per the requirements the intern must have completed their second year at a university upon the start date of the internship. As an Industrial and Systems Engineering Major at Ohio State, the courses that have been completed upon the second year of study include two fundamentals of engineering courses, engineering calculus and statistics, physics, technical writing for engineers and computer programming. These courses led to fundamental knowledge in engineering basics, written and oral communication, experience with Microsoft Excel, and a proficient understanding of SolidWorks and CAD Systems. These skills make up the required skills stated in the role description, and are sufficient preparation for the experience.

Timeline
The start date of the internship is June 2, 2014. The length of the internship is 11 weeks, and it will terminate on August 15, 2014. The last day of Ohio State’s Spring Semester is April 29th. Classes
resume for Autumn Semester on August 27, 2014. This internship falls during summer break, and leaves the opportunity for a May Semester class. A brief outline of dates is as follows:

- **January 30, 2014**
  - Complete interview process with final phone interview
  - Receive and accept verbal offer

- **January 31, 2014**
  - Accept and sign written offer
  - Complete documentations to confirm employment

- **June 1, 2014**
  - Relocate to New Berlin, Wisconsin
  - Beginning of summer sublease on an apartment in Wisconsin

- **June 2, 2014**
  - Begin internship at FedEx SmartPost

- **July 2, 2014**
  - Learning Agreement uploaded to the STEP website

- **August 15, 2014**
  - Internship completion date

- **August 25, 2014**
  - Return to The Ohio State University for start of Autumn 2014 Semester

Because the internship starts at the beginning of June, I will sublease an apartment on the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee campus during the school’s summer term. This is the closest college campus, and will include a half an hour commute to and from work each day. The end of the internship coincides with the end of the sublease for the start of both UW Milwaukee and Ohio State’s school year. FedEx does not provide relocation support, so the only necessary resource I have to provide will be housing during the term of the internship.

For these reasons, this STEP project will be feasible with respect to time and resources.

**Proposal Development**

There were multiple outlets of support, services, and people used in the development of this proposal. First was Dr. Ghadiali, my STEP Faculty Advisor. Throughout meetings with Dr. Ghadiali and my STEP cohort, I learned about the requirements and opportunities available through the STEP program. I decided that Internship was the experience I wanted to participate in, because I felt it would best aid in my professional development and aspirations as an Industrial Engineer. Another essential person in the development of my proposal was my Engineering 2367 instructor, Dr. Lynn Hall. Dr. Hall was my technical writing instructor and one unit I completed in her class last semester was writing proposals for Engineers. This helped me with the formatting and preparation of this document. A service that aided in my proposal development was the Engineering Career Fair held in the fall. At this career fair I learned of the FedEx SmartPost Internship opportunities, and held on to a flyer that detailed when the internship applications went live. Once my online application was reviewed and accepted I worked with the Human Resources Department and FMHE Hiring Managers to move through the interviewing process until I was offered the position. The workshops and meetings put on through STEP helped aid the process by giving valuable resume and professional interviewing advice.

**Personal Statement**
I am a second year student at the Ohio State University, studying Industrial and Systems Engineering. Participating in the Second Year Transformational Experience this year has enhanced my experiences at Ohio State in a multitude of ways. First, I had the opportunity to interact with faculty members in a relaxed setting. I had the opportunity to meet professors I wouldn’t run into in the course of my studies, and in turn received words of wisdom that are irreplaceable. I was able to participate in programs and meetings that helped with my professional development by giving me resume and interview tips, and practice in a setting that felt more comfortable. I felt prepared by the time my interview came around, and received an offer for an internship I wouldn’t have applied to had it not been for the encouragement of this program.

The internship as a Project Engineer with FedEx SmartPost is in line with my aspirations because it allows me to put my classroom obtained knowledge to use in the real world. It will challenge me by facing me with projects and operations I haven't dealt with. I will be working as the only intern in my department, thus I will have the opportunity to be the least experienced person in the room. This will be a challenging position to hold, but will provide the opportunity to learn and grow professionally and individually. Upon graduation, I hope to work as a project engineer at a well-respected company like FedEx, and this internship will help me by giving me the project experience and networking connections that will set me on the right path to move in this direction.

The project will be socially expanding because I will be in an unfamiliar place. I will be able to network with professionals throughout the company, as well as new people throughout the city. I will be able to explore new places, learn a new city, and observe the culture in a city other than Columbus or my small hometown in Illinois. It will give me experiences that will be useful when I graduate and have to go out on my own, out of the comfort of a dorm filled with 1100 of my peers and friends. I also hope to use some of the professional networking I will be able to do to my advantage, by using it for future internship or job references and opportunities.

This project will be intellectually challenging in many ways. First, what I have learned so far in my classes at Ohio State has given me brief insights to various processes of Industrial Engineering, but not to the scope I will be faced with at this internship. I will have to learn operations systems at a large scale, as well as how to represent them in CAD drawings. I will need to learn the culture and standards upheld by FedEx. I will need to learn at a much faster pace than I am accustomed to, as I will not only learn the company and the systems, but also complete projects and tasks all in the course of 11 weeks. I am expecting the internship to be challenging like I have not experienced yet, but also rewarding in the valuable projects I will get to experience first hand. As I have only completed my second year at Ohio State, I wish to be able to learn quickly and work hard to make up for my lack of knowledge being younger than a typical intern.

This internship will be challenging, but I am confident it is the best STEP experience I could participate in because it will give me an edge in the professional world upon graduation.

**Budget**

FedEx SmartPost does not aid in the relocation process for the internship program. Because of this, the budget for the internship will consist of a few different things. Relocation costs will include flights to and from Columbus and Milwaukee, gas for the commute to and from work, the cost of subleasing an apartment or dorm for the summer, and costs of living while there such as food and household supplies. The detailed estimated budget is as follows:
- **Flight:** Southwest [3] cites the cost of a plane to Milwaukee from Columbus as costing $221. Because I will need this flight both to and from Columbus, the total cost for air travel will be **$442**.

- **Gas:** Because there will be a 30 minute commute to and from work each day from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee campus, the cost of gas will be included in my budget. Because I will be flying to Wisconsin, my dad will drive my car to New Berlin for me (from my family home in Illinois) for use throughout the internship term. I drive a 2004 Volkswagen Beetle that has a 14.5-gallon gas tank and gets 24 miles per gallon. Fox 6 Now [4] states the prices of gas in June of 2013 as $3.94 per gallon. Using this gas price as a base, and the estimation of 1 gas tank refill per week, the weekly cost of gas will compile to $57.13. Over the course of an 11-week long internship, the total cost for gas will be **$628.43**.

- **Food:** At school, I am on the 450-block plan for campus dining. The Ohio State University Dining Services [5] charge $2,275 a semester for this plan. Over the course of a 14-week semester, the weekly cost is $162.50. Because I plan to cook and pack my own lunches, I am expecting the weekly cost to be cut in half at $81.25 a week. For the summer, my total estimated food costs would be **$893.75**.

- **Housing:** Finally, the last resource I will need to pay for during my internship will be housing. I plan to sublease an apartment on the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee campus in interest of cost reduction and safety. Through research online I found a reasonable apartment cost to be $488 a month plus utilities. The location is on campus opposed to downtown for money saving purposes. Craigslist [6] has a sample apartment sublease I used as reference. It is a 1-bedroom rental in a 2-bedroom apartment, and the estimated cost of rent and utilities per month is $525. For a 3-month sublease, the total cost would be **$1575**.

These estimates bring the total budget projection for the project to **$3539.18**. The sources of funding for this budget would include up to the $2000 I would be eligible for from the STEP program, as well as myself. Throughout the school year I work as an Undergraduate Teaching Assistant in the College of Engineering at The Ohio State University. I save this money, as well as any money I make in the summer, for costs such as those included in this budget as well as my tuition while I am a student at Ohio State. I chose this STEP experience not only because it allows for the most professional and personal development, but also because it is the most affordable for myself.

**Reporting Back**

For reporting back to the university in the most efficient manner, I plan to slightly adjust the STEP requirements outlined in the Internship Experience.

I will keep to the first requirement, which is completing a learning agreement with my employer. This documentation will include the following information:

- Learning Objectives
- General Job Duties
- Possible Projects
- Work schedule
  - Hours per week, total number of weeks, etc.
This document will be a collaboration between my internship employer and myself. It will be completed and uploaded to the STEP website no later than July 2, 2014.

In addition to the learning agreement, the STEP requirement is to a 2-4 page reflection upon the completion of my internship. Instead of this written reflection, I plan to keep a blog where I will keep a collection of posts throughout my internship experience. For my summer internship last year, I contributed to blogs for the company NextNet Partners based out of Tempe, Arizona. The blog I launched “NextNet Narrations” taught me how to write blog posts, use Search Engine Optimization to draw attention to posts, and how to keep to a posting schedule. I believe this is a better route of communication because it can be used to demonstrate project experience to future employers, further enhancing this experience as a career building opportunity for me. It is also more personable which I believe will better reach out to future STEP participants. Additionally, it will be easier to keep up with on a weekly basis, ensuring that none of my learning experiences get left out in the final reflection. When I submit the learning agreement I will include the domain name for my blog. Posts will be published on a weekly basis and some idea for content will include:

- What I did to find my internship
- The interview process I went through
- The types of projects I have been working on
- An end of summer reflection and assessment of the learning objectives submitted
- Day to day work experiences
- Additional personal experiences while completing the internship

I believe this blog post is the best form of communication because it will both demonstrate my project experience and attainment of learning objectives, while giving myself a tool to use for future employers. It will also be more a more personal account and include internship advice that I believe will be able to help future STEP participants.

**Conclusion**

I plan to participate in the Internship Experience because I feel it will aid in the development of myself both personally and professionally. The granting of funding by the STEP program will assist greatly in my aspiration to complete this internship, by making it a more affordable and realistic goal. I feel the STEP program has already begun aiding in my development, and feel I am ready to easily step into the shoes of a Facilities and Materials Handling Project Engineering Intern. I look forward to the learning and fun that lay ahead.
References


APPENDIX 1: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY


This is the website for careers through FedEx. The full project description as well as the minimum education, experience, and skills requirements are stated. It is used in this proposal to reference various functions that will be completed during the term of the internship.


This article summarizes the uses and benefits of FedEx SmartPost. It is used in this proposal to establish credibility by providing information of the company providing the internship opportunity.


This estimates the cost of a flight ticket to and from Milwaukee and Columbus. It is used in the proposal for the purpose of establishing a budget for the project.


This is the website run by Fox 6 Now news station. This article states the prices of gas in June of 2013 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and was used in this proposal for budget compilation.


This is the Ohio State Office of Student Life Dining Plan descriptions. It is used in this proposal to estimate the cost of food for the budget portion.


This website is an example apartment sublease description in Milwaukee. It gives monthly cost, as well as utilizes estimate and was used in the preparation of a budget for this proposal.