



World's Largest Conference for
Women in Engineering and Technology

CONQUERING YOUR CO-OP:

HOW TO MAXIMIZE SUCCESS
AND NAVIGATE TRANSITIONS

» MISTY TOMLIN &
OLIVIA WRIGHT



TOGETHER
WE RISE

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

AFTER ATTENDING, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO:



- » **IDENTIFY KEY STRATEGIES** for maximizing the value of co-op experiences in engineering and technology fields.
- » **APPLY PRACTICAL TIPS** for overcoming common challenges and fears associated with transitioning from a co-op to full-time.
- » **DEMONSTRATE EFFECTIVE NETWORKING TECHNIQUES** to foster professional growth during and after a co-op assignment.

MEET MISTY



INDUSTRIAL ENGINEER FOR FORD MOTOR COMPANY

- » **B.S. INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING W/ A MINOR IN SUSTAINABILITY**
- » Alumna of **KETTERING UNIVERSITY** in Flint, MI
- » Completed **FIVE (5) YEARS** of co-op rotations.
 - » Detroit Thermal Systems
 - » Detroit Manufacturing Systems
- » Previous **VICE PRESIDENT** of her collegiate SWE section.
- » Loves visiting theme parks, is an avid bowler, and always on the lookout for her next adventure.



MEET OLIVIA

OPERATIONS MANAGER FOR EWIE



- » **B.S. INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING & B.S. MANAGEMENT**
- » Alumna of **KETTERING UNIVERSITY** in Flint, MI
- » Completed **FIVE (5) YEARS** of co-op rotations.
 - » EWIE Group of Companies
 - » DTE Energy
 - » United Parcel Service (UPS)
- » Previous **PRESIDENT** of her collegiate SWE section.
- » Enjoys exploring new fitness routines, painting, and watching scary movies, which help her stay creative.





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MAXIMIZING CO-OP / INTERN EXPERIENCES

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- **SET CLEAR GOALS:** Before starting your co-op, define what you want to achieve.
 - This might include learning specific skills, gaining exposure to certain technologies, or industry practices.
- **TRACK YOUR PROGRESS:** Use a journal or app to monitor your milestones and adjust your plan as needed.



SEEK FEEDBACK

- Regularly ask for assessment from your supervisors/peers.
 - Prepare Any Questions
 - Actively Listen
 - Implement Feedback
 - Check-In Regularly

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK

“Could you provide specific examples of where I can improve?”

“What are some areas you think I should focus on for my next project?”

“How can I better support the team and contribute to our goals?”

“Are there any skills or tools I should develop to enhance my performance?”



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OVERCOMING TRANSITION & FACING CHALLENGES

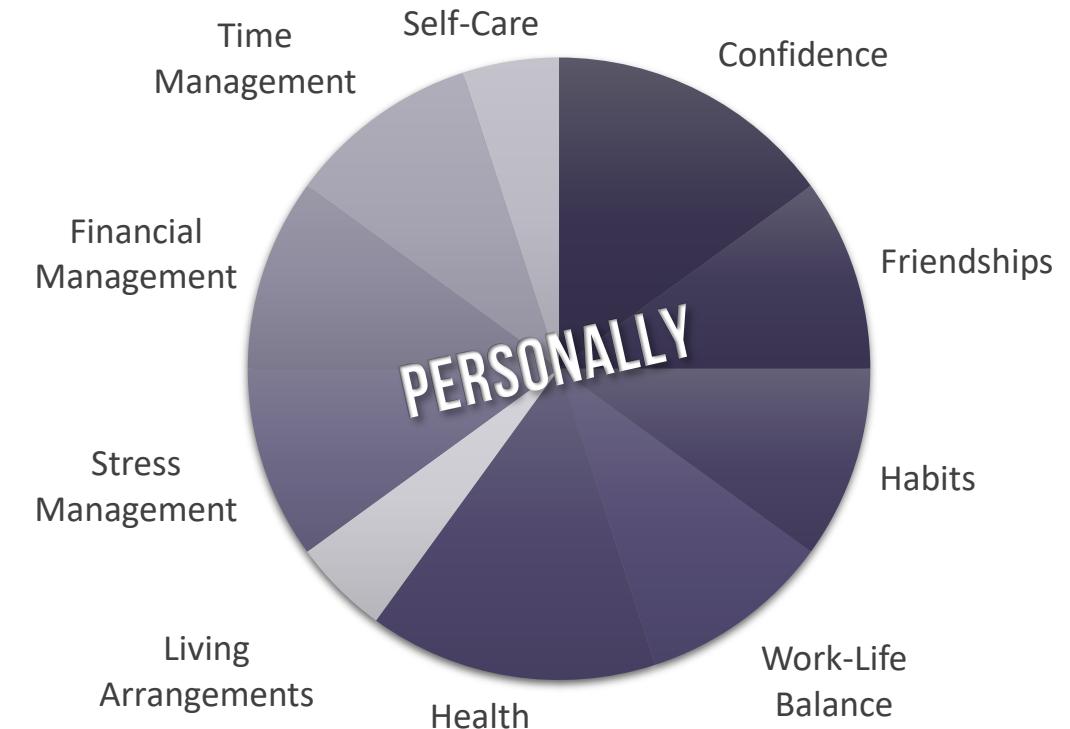
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PREPARE FOR CHANGE



&



BUILD CONFIDENCE



REFLECT ON ACHIEVEMENTS

- Celebrate Your Successes
- Document Your Achievements



PRACTICE SUCCESSFUL TIPS

- Practice Self-Affirmation
- Set Short & Long-Term Goals



SEEK MENTORSHIP

- Find a Mentor or Role Model
- Engage in Regular Discussions

FACING COMMON CHALLENGES



IMPOSTER SYNDROME

- *Solution:* Reflect on past achievements and realize that you're capable of a full-time role.



EARLY BURNOUT

- *Solution:* Set firm boundaries around work hours and ensure you take breaks to rest/recharge.



BALANCING WORKLOAD

- *Solution:* Break tasks down into manageable steps, prioritize, and use task management tools.



FEELING GUILTY FOR TAKING TIME OFF

- *Solution:* Recognize that taking time off for yourself ultimately improves your well-being.



ADJUSTING TO FULL-TIME

- *Solution:* Establish routines that help maintain work-life balance and ensure time for self-care.



FEELING ISOLATED AS A NEWCOMER

- *Solution:* Be proactive about reaching out to peers for regular check-ins/conversations.



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BUILDING A STRONG PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

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MAKE CONNECTIONS

**CONNECT WITH
COLLEAGUES**

Take the initiative to introduce yourself to team members and colleagues.

Engage in conversations, attend meetings, and contribute to team projects.

**ATTEND COMPANY
EVENTS**

Participate in company-hosted events such as seminars, social gatherings, and workshops.

Use opportunities to meet new people and expand your professional network.

**JOIN PROFESSIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS**

Become a member of relevant industry associations or professional groups.

Attend their events and get involved in activities to broaden your network.

BE GENUINE

Approach networking with a genuine interest in others.

Ask questions, listen actively, and offer help where possible.

FOLLOW UP

After meeting someone, send a follow-up email or message and stay in touch.

Mention something specific from your conversation to help the person remember you.

LEVERAGING LINKEDIN

KEEP YOUR
PROFILE UPDATED

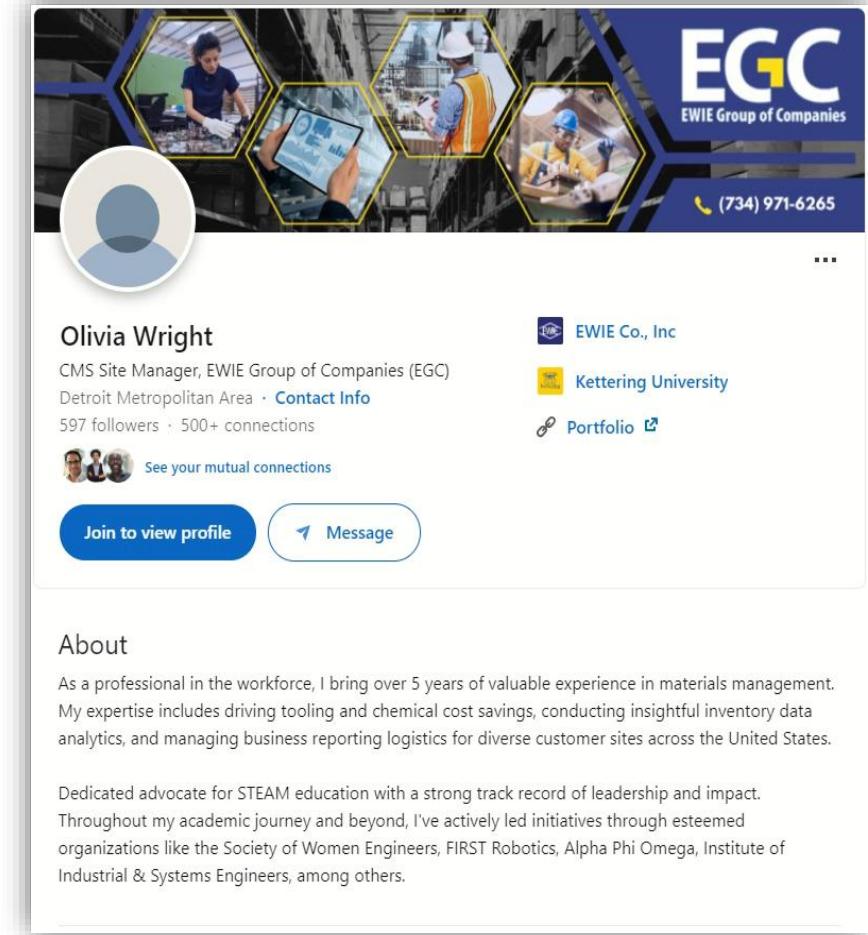
Highlight Recent Achievements
Showcase Your Skills

ENGAGE WITH
YOUR NETWORK

Connect with Professionals
Share Relevant Content

MAKE THE MOST
OF YOUR APP

Join Affinity or Other Groups
Personalize Requests



THE SWE MENTOR NETWORK

- The **SWE Mentor Network** is an exclusive members-only community for the facilitation of mentoring conversations.
 - As a SWE member, you can offer mentoring services, receive mentoring — or even act as both a mentor and mentee.
- Check out the [FAQ page](#) to learn more! (QR Code ->)
- Also consider getting involved with SWENext, SWE Committees, CLI Program, etc.



SUMMARY & KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Set SMART goals to ensure your co-op experience is focused and measurable.
- Seek regular feedback to continuously improve.
- Track your progress not only for yourself, but for reviews and end-of-term reports.

**MAXIMIZE CO-OP &
INTERNSHIP SUCCESS**

- Apply practical strategies to tackle common obstacles and remember they're "common" for a reason.
- Build routines and habits to maintain work-life balance and reduce stress.

**NAVIGATE
TRANSITIONS &
CHALLENGES**

- Utilize networking opportunities by attending local events and joining professional organizations.
- Leverage LinkedIn to stay connected with people you meet and strive to keep your profile up-to-date.

**BUILD A STRONG
PROFESSIONAL
NETWORK**

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



Please take the survey to leave feedback on our
WE24 session.

Scan the QR code with your phone camera.

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