Tips for a Successful Co-op Work Term

Have an open mind and willingness to learn:
Everything will be new at first, and it may be challenging to adjust to the new environment. As you become more comfortable in your role, continue to keep the mindset of wanting to learn. Each day is different with new challenges and opportunities. Have an open-mind and be willing to learn even if it means you need to seek out new challenges.

Ask questions and make your contribution
At the beginning of your work term, be sure to discuss expectations and set goals for a successful work term. What unique contribution can you bring to your experience? As you progress through the term, don't be scared to ask questions. Remember that co-op is meant to be a learning experience. The employer does not expect that you will always have all the answers. If your supervisor is busy, know who you can go to when they are not available.

Ask for feedback, learn and grow
Set up regular meetings with your direct supervisor where you can discuss what you are working on, ask questions and request feedback on your performance. Constructive criticism will help you grow in your role and taking the initiative to ask for feedback shows your willingness to learn.

Keep track of your accomplishments
Have a notebook and keep track of everything you have worked on and how you have contributed to your employer. This type of reflection will help with building your resume, preparing for future interviews and assist with your end of term refection. It will also help you realize everything you have learned on your experience and all of your unique accomplishments.

Build your network
Have conversations with your colleagues and build your network by keeping in touch after you have completed your co-op term. Connect with your colleagues on LinkedIn to expand your professional network. This will help when you begin your full-time job search as you approach graduation. Relationships are key to networking. Remember that these connections can be future references for you.