

# Let's Talk Business

## For Ted Rogers School Students

These reports describe industry sectors and career paths of interest to Ted Rogers School students and alumni. Each report leverages BCH employment data and the expertise of our staff. This collaborative effort engages staff, students, alumni and the University Business Librarian.

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### A Day in the Life: Human-Centered Design & Innovation Enablement Intern

We recently had a conversation with Irina Nouchikian, a Ted Rogers School of Management Co-op Student, graduating in 2024 from the Business Technology Management Co-op Program.

*She spent her Winter 2023 work term as a Human Centered Design & Innovation Enablement Intern at Manulife.*

The Global Innovation & Human Centered Design department at Manulife is dedicated to a global customer-centricity strategy, establishing a human-centred design practice, and helping Manulife transform into a true customer-obsessed organization.

Within this report, we take an in-depth look into her experience as she takes the time to navigate us through her journey to her current role.



[Irina Nouchikian](#)



**Q:** What did you do on a "day-to-day" basis in your role as a Human Centered Design & Innovation Enablement Intern at Manulife?

**A:** My role is focused on supporting the implementation and standardization of Human Centered Design (HCD) and Agile practices within the organization. Manulife uses HCD and Agile together to place the customer at the centre of their solutions and continuously iterate based on their evolving needs.

My day-to-day consists of continuous learning (e.g. seminars, workshops, learning sessions, etc.) to stay informed on how HCD and Agile are changing the way we work. In addition to this, I lead company-wide communications (e.g. newsletters, community updates, emails, etc.) to spotlight how these practices have been helping the organization strengthen its relationship with its customers and build a stronger community.

I am also responsible for the analysis of data collected from HCD and Agile training sessions, coaching events, and surveys. I use the data to prepare comprehensive dashboards to be presented to the organization's leaders to determine the impact and effectiveness of these events.

**Q:** What technology platforms did you use in your role?

**A:** My work is completed using primarily Office 365 applications. I frequently use tools within Excel, Lists, and PowerPoint to analyze and visualize company data.

**Microsoft Excel** to clean and sort large data sets, then create pivot tables/charts to visualize useful data comparisons. Using these charts, I developed dashboards and added slicers allowing the team to filter through various topics of interest easily.

**Staffbase** is used to provide companies with the platform to design and develop custom communications (e.g. branded newsletters).

**Microsoft Outlook** is integrated with Staffbase and uses Outlook mailboxes to facilitate large distributions of these communications.

**One Identity** is linked to Microsoft Exchange to allow for the secure management of Active Directories/Distribution lists within Outlook.



Platforms such as Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Excel, Staffbase, and One Identity are examples of the various platforms that are utilized on-the-job!

**Q:** How does your industry impact the world?

**A:** Organizations within the insurance industry have a strong focus on community and customer support. The services and solutions produced within these organizations are developed to support people during vulnerable moments in their lives. Whether it's providing resources or financial support, there is a sense of empathy, community, and bond between insurance companies and their customers.

**Q:** Which industry trends should aspirational students be aware of?

**A:** A trend I have recently identified within several industries and companies is taking a human-centred approach. From how the organization is run to how solutions are produced, the way we work is actively changing. We are seeing the effects of this new trend, from prioritizing inclusivity and diversity to mental health awareness.

This trend is key to developing strong communities, improving retention rates, and strengthening reputation. Different industries and companies are at various stages of this evolution; however, it continues to prove its importance and will only grow from here.

**Q:** Being a Ted Rogers Co-op student, how did you find the transition into your first work term?

**A:** The beginning of Co-op was a difficult process for me. It was all super intimidating, from finding my first work term to learning how to work on a real team in a real company. The way I countered this fear was by remembering that challenges are also opportunities. Knowing that working through this fear would help me gain skills and open more doors in the future is what pulled me out of negativity and into optimism.

Truthfully, I still struggle with anxiety when transitioning into a new role but remembering that a new role is a new opportunity for growth helps me turn a bit more of that anxiety into excitement every time.

**Q:** What advice would you provide a Ted Rogers School student who aspires to work in your industry upon graduation?

**A:** To any student, I would say, be yourself. It sounds cliché, but if you want to find the company and the work you are passionate about, being yourself plays a significant role.



Speak up for what you want to pursue, the goals you have set, and the values and changes you want to implement. Doing so will help you find your passion, inspiration, and drive.



Being yourself will also shine through the work that you do and will give the company a valuable, unique perspective. I truly believe this will help you attract the type of company, especially the team, that recognizes and values your unique approach and will do what they can to support you!



Speak up and share your ideas! One of the biggest things that people regret is not sharing their thoughts or ideas. Inspiration comes from anywhere and an idea may stem from something that you share!



Don't let the rejection of your ideas stop you, either. It doesn't matter if 99% of your ideas don't pan out, what matters is the 1% that shines through and impacts the team. This is what will make you stand out from the crowd!

**Q:** How did your Co-op experience help you with where you are today?

**A:** I believe that joining Co-op was one of the best things I could have done for my professional and personal growth. As an introvert who struggles with speaking up and communicating my ideas, Co-op has allowed me to pick the brains of people who excel in these areas and learn what I can do to improve.

I've also been able to work with professionals to advance my technical skills and achieve certifications I would otherwise not have had access to. Participating in this program has taken me out of my shell and has taught me that we are all capable, we just have to seek out experiences and work with others.

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### Staff Contributor

#### Melina Elia

Melina is a Co-op Coordinator with the Business Career Hub with over 10 years of experience in career development. She has worked for government-funded employment agencies and post-secondary institutions. Melina prides herself on being approachable, supportive, and strategic in planning the next steps for a successful outcome.



### Student Contributor

#### Jillien Arrubio

Jillien is a 4th year Retail Management student currently working at the BCH and TRSS (Retail Management Director), and is passionate about learning everything related to sustainability and retail.