



# Canada: Networking Academy Students Gain Work Experience

## Model of Practice: Future Shop Hiring Program, British Columbia

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### The Future Starts Before School Ends!

While work experience programs are hardly new to Future Shop, the arrangement the company has with Cisco® Networking Academy® is proving to be particularly beneficial for all concerned.

Last year, **Braydon Berthelet** and **Taylor Furdal**, two high school students from Sardis Secondary in Chilliwack, BC, completed a successful holiday season at Future Shop’s Centre Point Plaza store. This year, Taylor Furdal returns for season two. “I love it!” says Taylor. “The environment is friendly, and it’s competitive enough to keep things fresh and exciting.”

Braydon and Taylor both obtained their jobs through the Future Shop program that gives Networking Academy students priority interviews for part-time positions when recommended by their instructors. John Murtha, computer science instructor at Sardis Secondary, explains: “The big thing for me is how well this program lets my students apply what they’ve gained in the classroom to the working world.”

Braydon was recommended because in addition to his amazing programming skills (he got 5 out of 5 on his Computer Science A and B exams, which are top marks at the university level), he is really good at helping others.

“This is one of the reasons Braydon is currently lecturing my other students right here in the school,” says Murtha. “And Taylor was recommended because he’s hardworking, gets good, solid marks, and is naturally outgoing. He works very well with others and likes starting things up, which I knew Future Shop would like.”

Born in Chilliwack, 19-year-old Braydon enjoys the retail environment, and has this to say: “In school, I’d been used to working in small groups or alone, whereas at Future Shop, it was a lot of people... a really different experience.”



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[www.cisco.com/go/netacad/can](http://www.cisco.com/go/netacad/can)

“I was a general associate in the Mobile Audio section, but when people asked about other things, I could help. I’d taken IT Essentials, the PC repair course, and all the programming courses at Sardis, plus networking. When I mentioned my networking courses in the interview, they hired me right there.” -Braydon Berthelet

Braydon will continue earning university credits next semester at Sardis with advanced placement courses, including Cisco CCNA® certification prep. He then hopes to go to Waterloo University for its five-year software development program.

17-year-old Taylor Furdal, born in Vernon, BC, was originally hired as a general associate in the IPG (computers, printers, and accessories) and ENT (music, games and

movies) sections at Future Shop. “I checked and found they were hiring seasonal workers, so I put in an app online. Then Mr. Murtha explained there was a partnership between Cisco and Future Shop, which I’d obviously kick-started by filing my app. I was hired and contracted for November and December, 2008.”

“Now I’m back here again. It’s great. I’m just in ENT this year, but it has a lot to do with computers. I get customer service experience, listening to problems and solving them, plus general knowledge of the products I’m selling. There’s always something new.”

With ICTS 1, introductory PC repair, introductory networking, and introduction to Java under his belt, Taylor will graduate from Sardis at the end of this year, and is planning an ICT career, possibly in maintenance. “I’m most interested in hardware.”

## The Stores Want More

Greg Apps, general manager of the Centre Point Plaza Future Shop in Chilliwack, recalls how he first became aware of the Cisco and Future Shop program. His district HR manager called and asked if two Cisco students could come by to see him.

“Braydon did a great job for us last year. His customer service skills were excellent, he was always eager to learn, and we were very happy with him. Taylor was also fantastic. Dozens of customers made a point of mentioning how good he was, everybody in the store liked him, and he continually hit his sales targets... which is another reason I brought him back this year.”

Currently overseeing new hires at seven BC Future Shop stores, Ram Manaktahla, the district HR manager, gave a quick overview of how the Future Shop program works: “Future Shop does a lot of hiring at holiday time, starting in October. The agreement we have with Cisco Networking Academy is that teachers will put forward only their best students for positions on the tech side or in sales. I have my recruiters call them and conduct preliminary interviews over the phone. We then bring those students into the stores in the district to meet one of our managers, which is exactly what we did with Braydon and Taylor.”

“Because all of the students come recommended by their teachers, this is a program in which I’ve had confidence right from the start,” continues Ram. “Working with these students has been a great experience, and we really like this program.”

To learn more, visit: [www.sardissecondary.ca](http://www.sardissecondary.ca)