Andrew Scott – Bachelors of Science (Mechanical Engineering ) ‘12

University of Akron Hockey:

While spending four and a half years on the Akron hockey team, I met a lot of great friends and learned a lot about leadership and dedication. The hockey team allowed me an outlet to remove myself from the grind of schoolwork and focus on a different goal for ten to fifteen hours a week. While playing hockey, I was studying to become a mechanical engineer. This brought a set of challenges because of the time commitment required for school as well as hockey. Although this was a challenge, this allowed me to develop great time management skills that continue to pay off to this day. In addition hockey gave me an outlet to have a fun time even when times were tough with my studies. Playing hockey gave me a chance to continue to work on my leadership skills that are still being used in my present job.

While nothing was more important than my schoolwork in college, playing hockey was always an interesting topic to talk about while on co-op interviews. Hockey showed potential employers that I was able to balance multiple tasks and be successful at both. Because of this, my current employer selected me when I was only a sophomore to begin a co-op in a coal-fired power plant. As a co-op, you work different semesters over the course of two and a half years. This meant that two of the semesters I would be working and playing hockey at the same time. This brought a new set of challenges as my job was over an hour away from campus, but I was able to take advantage of this as I scheduled a night class to take prior to practice so that the drive back and forth to Akron was able to accomplish continuing to play hockey, while also getting ahead in school. Additionally the hockey team was very understanding of my job requirements as sometimes I would need to leave practice early to get back to work for emergent work. That flexibility allowed me to excel at my job while continuing to play hockey.

As I was concluding my college hockey career and my college education, I began looking for a full time job. As the coal-fired power plant I was working at was not hiring, I began interviewing with other companies. This brought its own set of challenges as hockey season was in full swing as well. I remember over the course of one week, I was in Cincinnati for a job interview Monday and Tuesday, back in school on Wednesday and Thursday morning (also had hockey practice that morning), then in Canton Thursday and Friday until five in the afternoon. If that wasn’t enough I had to be back in Cincinnati for a game Friday night. While that was a challenge, it all ended up being worth it because it taught me about perseverance when times got tough and how to work through it. While I didn’t take either of those jobs and ended up working for my co-op employer in a Nuclear Power Plant, all of these experiences have shaped who I am today.

After college I began working on an $895 million dollar project for my company. Before I knew it, I was second in command of the engineering at the age of twenty-three. The experiences that I had while playing hockey helped me prepare for that moment. The first is the leadership skills that I developed as an assistant captain for two years. The second is how to deal with people who come from different backgrounds and experiences. When you are in high school, most of your teammates have similar backgrounds, whereas in college it is much different and taught me how to deal with this. Now as a supervisor in charge of running a nuclear power plant I continue to employ these skills and continue to grow. Additionally my whole college experience taught me about dealing with adversity and how to quickly turn something around that is not going the way you want it to. Still to this day I use skills that I learned while juggling the requirements of engineering school and playing hockey in my everyday work life. I believe that a lot of my success in the last five years still resides in the fact that I took on this challenge and was allowed to fail at points, but in the end succeed.