

Career Profile

Brian Vanpee **Manager, Test Engineer Extraordinaire** **Google**

By: Trisha Sharma, Outreach and Support Peer

Brian Vanpee began his career in computer science long before arriving at Laurier. He spent his childhood tinkering with electronics and trying to understand how they worked. Most of his family were Laurier alumni and so joining the Golden Hawk family was an easy choice. Brian graduated with a Bachelor in Computer Science in 2003. The program allowed Brian to realize his strengths in software programming and further propelled his career into the tech world. He had an analytical mind and built video games and contributed to open source projects. Brian worked with an insurance firm in university, which later turned into an IT role with the same company. He worked with a London startup in 2005 and after meticulously applying, finally landed a role with BlackBerry. In his role as a Senior Multimedia Software Developer, Brian worked closely with BlackBerry's music app. He transitioned into a management role where he found the skills required to lead came naturally to him.



Through his network of IT professionals and friends, Brian managed to land a job as a Test Engineer at Google. Brian describes the culture at Google as disruptive but collaborative, with every inch of design made with employee productivity in mind. In his role as a Test Engineer, Brian proactively troubleshoots problems, eliminates bugs and codes solutions. He works with the product development teams to strategize and add new features to Google Home products as well as working with user experience specialists.

Brian firmly believes that everyone has the chance to take their career as far as they want; contingent only on the amount of hard work and effort they're willing to put in. The IT industry itself is shifting and growing exponentially, with increased emphasis on theories concerning artificial intelligence, machine learning, blockchain and computer vision. Keeping up with industry trends and being aware of their implications is essential to thrive in the tech sector.

To be successful in this field, Brian recommends learning a coding language, like Python or Java, and creating a portfolio to show future employers. Each language has a specific/intended use, despite the main differences lying only in the syntax. In addition, being able to collaborate effectively with diverse teams is a crucial soft skill.

Finally, if you are looking to follow a path similar to Brian's, networking is essential. Attending things like conferences, startup and tech events, or related meetups will allow you to not only gain insider information, but develop purposeful relationships with employers.