

Essential Skills for International Careers

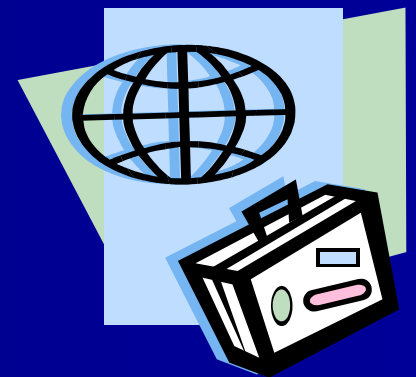
Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

Career and Employment Services

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International Careers

- An *international career*
 - A series of jobs that requires employees to work across national borders, between at least two cultures within a single country, or outside of the United States.



Employment Trends

- For Americans:

- Entry level employees work in locations within the United States.
- Mid-level employees travel to other countries.
- Staff with the most experience and with the most desirable skills get overseas assignments.

Corporate Culture

- Corporations tend view all professional careers as having international potential.
- Company may initiate the international career path early in an employee's tenure, when appropriate
- Frequently, this does *not* happen
 - Due to a lack of "**cross-cultural competence.**"

Business Environment

■ Cross-Cultural Competence

- An understanding of the international business environment, plus the skills and knowledge needed to adapt to new situations.
- International business persons must be multiculturally aware, sensitive and tolerant, and skillful in their jobs.

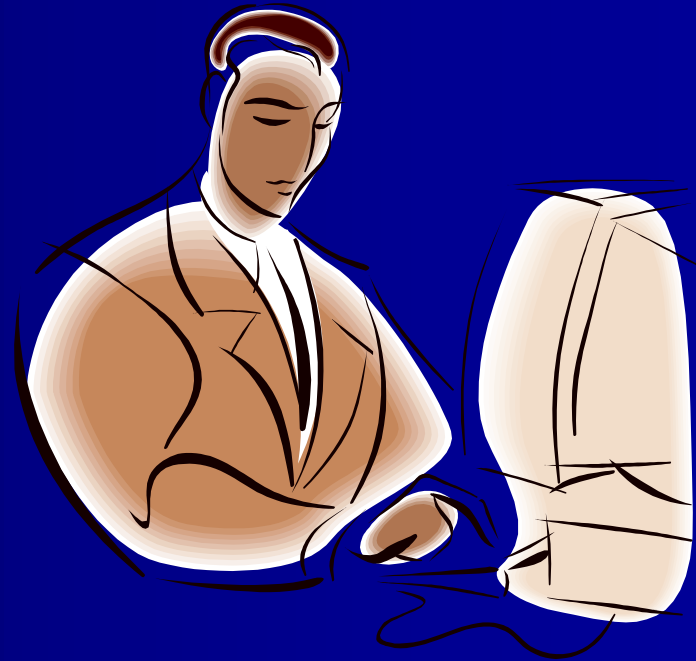


International Focus

- Company views the world as its market.
- In person or electronic contact with people from other countries.
- May involve living abroad or living in the U.S. and traveling abroad.
- Demands a targeted skill or area.
- Extremely demanding, especially when based outside of the U.S.

Examples: Local Companies

- Cargill Worldwide
- Buckman Laboratories
- FedEx
- International Paper
- Medtronic



Required Skills

- Ability to learn
- Adventurous spirit
- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Functional Skills
- Initiative
- Language Skills
- Sense of humor
- Sensitivity, adaptability, and flexibility
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Tenacity
- Willing to take risks

Paths to International Jobs

- ESL Teacher
- Peace Corps
- Au Pair
- Small Business in Emerging Country
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Immigration Law
- International Law



Reality Check

- The chances of obtaining an entry level job that is international are slim in today's market.
- The international job market is said to be 10 times more difficult than the domestic job market!
- You must be resourceful and willing to prepare for international positions.

How to Prepare

- Acquire pertinent knowledge.
- Cultivate a multicultural attitude.
- Take cross-cultural courses as electives.
- Gain knowledge of the international economy.
- Develop fluency in another language.

How to Prepare

- Gain experience.

Complete one or more internships with international companies, either locally or overseas.

- International Internship Websites
- General Scholarship Resources
- Contact Sarabeth Beekman, Internship Coordinator, for assistance and additional information

How to Prepare

■ Gain Experience

- Participate in Study Abroad Programs.

<http://academics.memphis.edu/cips/abroad/default.shtml>
studyabroad@memphis.edu

- Prove your capability for international assignments by securing a domestic position with an international company.

Resumes and Interviews

- Resumes abroad may...
 - Simply detail academic and formal work experience in chronological order.
 - Be two or more pages long
 - Include personal information not included on American resumes such as age, marital status, race, and religion.

***Note:** Know the appropriate format for the country in which you are applying.*

Resumes and Interviews

- Interviews abroad may...
 - Put more emphasis on personal relationships than time
 - Involve the interviewer doing most of the talking.
 - Require an awareness of cultural norms such as whether direct eye contact with an authority figure is considered disrespectful.

Resumes and Interviews

- Interviews abroad may...
 - Involve a focus on age, race, sex, and/or marital status. Males may be expected to dominate interactions with females, and younger people may be expected to show deference to their elders.
 - Feature indirect questions about your competency and experience.

Resumes and Interviews

- Interviews abroad may...
 - Focus on modesty. You may be considered boastful, self-serving, or too individualistic if you cite your accomplishments and skills.
 - Feature jobs that are assigned by the company or family. Questioning your role may be viewed as disloyalty. Expectation that you accept whatever work is available.

Resumes and Interviews

- Interviews abroad...
 - The employer may expect a long term commitment; therefore you may not be expected to be immediately competent in your job.
 - Questions about strengths and weaknesses, leadership style, problem-solving abilities may be considered an invasion of privacy.

Resumes and Interviews

■ Interviews abroad...

- Researching an organization in advance could be perceived as showing too much initiative and independence.
- You may be considered rude or forward if you ask an employer where the company is in the interview process.

Resource Library

- *Careers in Travel, Tourism, and Hospitality*
- *Work Abroad*
- *Guide to America's Federal Jobs*
- *The Directory of Websites for International Jobs*
- *Best Resumes and CVs for International Jobs*
- *The Global Resume and CV Guide*
- *International Job Finder*
- *Jobs and Careers Abroad*