Getting Ahead by Going Global: Career Benefits of Study Abroad

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Career Benefits of Study Abroad (1/2)

- Find your career!
- Enhance your resume
- Find a job faster
  - 89% of study abroad students – 6 mos.
  - 95% of study abroad students – within 1 year
  - Non S.A. students – 49% within 1 year
Career Benefits of Study Abroad (2/2)

- Make more $ in your first job
  - On average $7,000 more in starting salaries

- Build confidence

- Learn to be a global leader
Finding Your Career & Discovering Your Passion

- Reflect on your time abroad to help you uncover your strengths and your passions!

- Continue to utilize and build on those skills.
  - Example 1: You started a blog during your semester abroad to keep your family up to date on your adventures. It turns out you love travel writing! Keep developing your skills by writing for the campus newspaper or independently blogging.
  - Example 2: You’ve realized how much you enjoy working with people from other cultures, so you start volunteering with groups that help refugees adjust to life here in Maine.
Staying Connected to Your Experience: In the U.S. (1/2)

- Write your experiences down before you forget them.
- Volunteer using your skill set.
- Campus & community groups (language clubs, cultural events)
- Take advantage of contacts you made while abroad.
- SEC USS-L listserv
- NAFSA.org/conferences
Staying Connected to Your Experience: In the U.S. (2/2)

- Jobs with an international focus:
  - NGOs
  - Field rep for a study abroad organization
  - Study abroad or international student advisor
  - Travel writer/blogger
  - International business
  - Travel/tourism
Staying Connected to Your Experiences: Outside the U.S.

What’s next? How can you gain even more international experience?
- Teach English abroad
- Internships
- Volunteering
- Graduate degree
- Peace Corps
- U.S. Department of State/Foreign Service
- Fulbright program
Marketing Your Study Abroad Experience to Employers

- "Unpack" your experience abroad: process your experience and learn how to articulate it.

- Focus on accomplishments and transferrable skills, not just where you went or what you did.

- Determine how best to highlight it on your resume.

- Be sure to include relevant facts in your cover letter.
Marketing Your Study Abroad Experience to Employers

- Develop a stock of career stories for interviews:
  - Are there experiences abroad that would be relevant to the job you are applying for?
  - Use your stories to reinforce your professional skill set.
  - Be careful not to overuse your S.A. experience.
  - Save the “wild and shocking” experiences for your friends.
“A global point of view is a critical skill set that is not easily come by in the US, and it is a skill set that facilitates creativity, diversity of thinking, and better skills for working with a variety of individuals with varied backgrounds, interests and capabilities.”
- Advertising Executive

Have people assured you that your experience abroad “looks great on a résumé?” They’re right! The bad news is that potential employers or members of graduate or professional school admissions committees may lack these experiences themselves. It’s up to you to effectively communicate the skills and proficiencies that will benefit their organization and convince them of the value of your experience.

“I think I have my current job because of my experiences abroad. Those experiences gave me greater self-confidence and a greater understanding of myself, which led to my willingness to uproot myself and try new work in a new location.”
- Higher Education Administrator

**SKILLS**

What skills or proficiencies have you acquired or enhanced while you were abroad? Some of the skills that professionals with international experience cite as being particularly useful in their careers include:

- Enhanced cultural awareness and sensitivity to customs and cultural differences
- Foreign language proficiency
- Adaptability
- Ability to identify and achieve goals
- General improvement in communications skills
- Increased confidence, initiative, and independence
- Greater flexibility and sense of humor
- Awareness of global economic and political issues and realities
- Ability to maintain an open mind and be tolerant of others
- Clarification of goals and improved self-awareness
- General travel skills
- Resource management
- Organization
- Problem solving and crisis management
- Patience
- Listening and observation
- Specific professional skills or knowledge base
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EDUCATION
Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC
Bachelor of Arts in History, minor in Spanish, May 2014
Cumulative GPA: 3.2
Carswell Scholarship, awarded for leadership

Related Course Work
Public Speaking Marketing Microeconomics Macroeconomics

FOREIGN STUDY
University of Salamanca, Salamanca, Spain, Fall 2012
- Participated in total language immersion program; lived with host family, speaking only Spanish.
- Completed Spanish history, art, and literature courses taught in Spanish by native scholars.
- During marketing course project, led a team of five students in creating an advertising campaign for a Spanish audience, mediating creative differences between members and managing objectives and work assignments to meet deadlines successfully.

EXPERIENCE
Intern, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Raleigh, NC, Summer 2013
- Prepared operating budget and financial statements for director of finance.
- Participated in 3-month financial research project regarding financial reporting.
- Evaluated current departmental budget submission system and suggested improvements.
- Wrote 50-page final report and presented results to top management.

Student created a different header to make study abroad stand out
If applying for a job in the international education field, consider describing your overseas experiences in depth. Otherwise, this style is overkill.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Education</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Michigan State University</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts, Spanish and Interdisciplinary Humanities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Minors in Geography and Linguistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Honors College, GPA 3.96/4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Functional fluency in Spanish</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>International Experience</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spain &amp; Portugal</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Nine-week direct enroll study abroad program</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Studied Spain’s history, literature, culture, and media</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Refined written and oral Spanish communication skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Traveled independently and navigated complex foreign systems</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Argentina &amp; Uruguay</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• One-month faculty-led study abroad program</td>
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<td>• Earned academic credit in political science via formal cultural excursions and classroom studies, including guest lectures</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Experienced full cultural and linguistic immersion by living with a host family</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ireland</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent travel</td>
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<td><strong>UK, France, Germany, Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Education First World War II Revisited Tour</td>
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INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Semester Abroad in London**  
Spring 2009  
Adapted to an unfamiliar environment and embraced cultural differences  
Used communication and organization skills to navigate through new cities  
Managed finances in varying currencies

**International Student House Resident Assistant**  
Spring 2009  
Built interpersonal relationships with students from all over the world  
Planned and supervised community events that appealed to students of all cultures

**Independent Research Project**  
Fall 2009  
Used primary and secondary research methods to study London from the student’s perspective  
Combined research into a comprehensive report and presented findings to the department in a symposium

Highlight significant aspects of your time abroad, particularly those that are relevant to the job(s) you are applying to.
Questions?

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