



MAKING THE MOST OF STUDY ABROAD: A GUIDE FOR THE CAREER-MINDED STUDENT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME

A Note From GoAbroad & IES Abroad.....	3
Our Contributors.....	4

TIPS & TALES

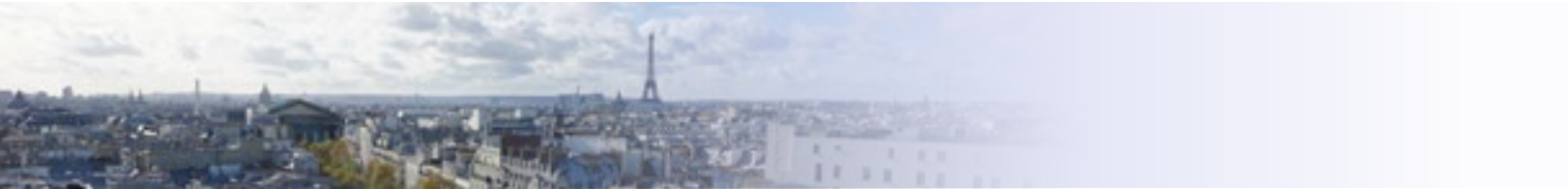
The Benefits of Study Abroad: Get Ready to Rock the Job Market.....	5
The Career-Minded Student's Study Abroad Checklist.....	7
How to Choose a Program to Maximize Career Benefits.....	9
The Benefits of Study Abroad...As Told by IES Abroad Students!.....	10
The "Market Your Study Abroad Experience" Toolkit.....	12
Cultural Understanding: What It Is & How It Can Help Your Career.....	17
Expert Career Advice from Notable IES Abroad Alumni.....	20
6 Ways to Launch an International Career.....	22

GET INVOLVED

Keep Exploring!.....	25
Questions & Comments.....	26

WHY WE CREATED THIS EBOOK FOR CAREER-MINDED STUDENTS

A NOTE FROM GOABROAD AND IES ABROAD



Ask not what you can do for your study abroad program, but what your study abroad program can do for you—we're not just talking about personal development here. The career benefits of study abroad are almost too many to keep track of, so we at GoAbroad and [IES Abroad](#) put our heads together and came up with this comprehensive resource for career-minded study abroad students.

How can you maximize the career benefits of study abroad?

This is a critical question, and one that you'll need to spend some time thinking about now. Studying abroad is not a vacation from real life. It *prepares* you for real life. Employers love to see that you have international experience, but you gotta know how to package it. That's where we come in!

As part of GoAbroad's mission to provide the best and most comprehensive resources for meaningful travelers, our friends at IES Abroad share their best tips about all things study abroad + career readiness. They're the experts with real experience and all the best info on how you can leverage your study abroad experience to score that dream job after graduation. So, now you can go out into the world, soak it all in, and make an impact!

OUR CONTRIBUTORS



Carrie Rackers Cunningham is the Director of Institutional Research at IES Abroad, where she has worked since 2007. Carrie manages, implements, and oversees a wide range of strategic research efforts, including student assessment, outcomes research, and trends in the field of study abroad. In the decade that Carrie has worked at IES Abroad, she has worked with almost all IES Abroad constituents students, parents, alumni, university partners, and faculty which allows her to bring a practical lens to the research efforts she leads.



Adam Miller is the Marketing Writer & Editor at IES Abroad, where he has worked since 2014. In his role, Adam project manages catalogs and print materials to ensure the quality of work is up to standards and is completed on time. Before starting at IES Abroad, Adam had a career in traditional book publishing, primarily in Education and Travel. Adam has an English Education degree from Michigan State University. He also studied English Literature in London for a semester, which instilled a strong desire to travel the world.



Shaina Moran has worked at IES Abroad since 2013. In her current position as Marketing Specialist, she provides comprehensive marketing support for the Customized Programs and IES Internships Departments. Prior to joining the Marketing team in 2016, Shaina served as an IES Internships College Relations Manager, traveling to college campuses to promote programs and build relationships, and as the advisor for internships in Berlin and Sydney.



Amy Ruhter McMillan is the Associate Vice President of Marketing at IES Abroad where she has worked since 1998. In her current role, Amy oversees all marketing-related aspects, including advertising, design and branding, public relations and outreach, internal and external communications, all print materials, and web presence. Since 2008, the Marketing Department has won more than 60 marketing-related awards for print materials, your world [redefined] campaign, its Study Abroad Film Festival, and IES Abroad's 60th Anniversary Book, to name a few.



THE BENEFITS OF STUDY ABROAD: GET READY TO ROCK THE JOB MARKET

by Carrie Rackers Cunningham

While everyone may or may not be familiar with the term career readiness, most college students today are certainly aware of the concept: What do I need to find a good job? Choosing a college, finding the right major, participating in meaningful activities—these are all part of the recipe for cultivating a strong résumé.

But, putting points on paper is only part of the process. By studying abroad, you attain key job skills and can articulate the value of experiences you have had—two résumé elements that will likely be the key determinants of landing that good job.

Will studying abroad help me in my career?

Research says, yes! Most study abroad alumni point to their experience abroad as having significant impact on key job skills development and career outcomes. More than 75% of study abroad alumni say that their experience helped them develop communication skills, self-confidence, adaptability, and cultural understanding. Furthermore, half of study abroad alumni say that studying abroad helped them to get their first job after college.

Don't just take our word for it...

IES Abroad conducted two surveys on the career benefits of study abroad (2012, 2016) finding that IES Abroad alumni consistently have employment outcomes that exceed those of the national average—IES Abroad alums report higher rates of full-time employment and lower rates of unemployment.

- 91% agreed that studying or interning abroad was worth the cost.
- 90% would recommend study abroad to others.
- \$40,192: The average starting salary for an IES Abroad alum in their first job after college.

Of those who were working full time, more than a third of recent graduates (those who graduated between 2010-2015 reported annual incomes greater than \$50,000 per year).

Furthermore, students who took advantage of participating in an internship abroad were able to leverage that experience into their career pursuits and professional connections:

- 58% of internship participants say that interning abroad helped them to get their first job.
- 52% maintain contact with their internships supervisor, and 43% maintain contact with colleagues at their host company.

However, no singular activity or experience, on its own, will guarantee that you land your dream job. The value of studying abroad depends greatly on how you engage with the experience—before, during, and after going abroad. Studying abroad isn't a vacation. It can be a profound, life-changing experience that helps you grow personally and professionally, if you are willing to put in the effort to meaningfully engage in the journey.



That is why we have developed this comprehensive resource guide. In these pages, you will uncover the benefits of study abroad: find our best tips and advice for setting career goals, understanding what employers are looking for, and marketing your study abroad experience.

Are you ready to land that dream job? Then, read on!

[Learn more about the benefits of study abroad!](#)

THE CAREER-MINDED STUDENT'S STUDY ABROAD CHECKLIST



BEFORE YOU GO ABROAD

- Write down your personal & professional goals
- Choose a program considering your academic, service learning & internship interests. See page 9 to get started.
- Brainstorm ways to network while abroad
- Pack copies of your résumé & thank you cards



WHILE YOU'RE ABROAD

- Explore your likes & interests professionally, academically, & personally
- Build your network: get involved & meet people. Your current classmates might become your future business partners!
- Keep a list of people you meet including their contact info
- Take time to reflect, keep a journal or blog



WHEN YOU GET BACK FROM ABROAD

- Prepare examples of your newly acquired skills to share in interviews
- Add your study abroad experience to your résumé & LinkedIn. See page 12 for more tips.
- Get in touch with your study abroad program's alumni association
- Re-evaluate your professional goals to figure out your next career steps
- Talk to a career services representative on campus
- Keep in contact with the people you've met abroad
- Become a student ambassador for your campus study abroad office



HOW TO CHOOSE A PROGRAM TO MAXIMIZE CAREER BENEFITS

by Adam Miller

Research: Different Program Types & Their Effect on Career-Readiness

Here are a few sample program types that IES Abroad offers. Keep in mind that the programs that other schools and providers offer may differ.

Study Abroad

The name says it all—in a general study abroad program, you take classes and complete coursework as you would at your current school, but in a whole different location. Courses often have course-related trips outside of the classroom to bring context to what you are learning. Study abroad programs can help you build “soft skills,” such as cultural understanding, personal confidence, and communication, as well as “hard skills” through specific course work and language acquisition.

Study Abroad—Direct Enrollment

Similar to a traditional study abroad program, students in a direct enrollment program can develop key business skills; however, they’ll do so in an immersive academic environment at a local university. Students will have the opportunity to interact more closely with students from their host country. Just as universities in the United States are varied in campus culture, course offerings, and extracurricular activities, direct enrollment programs will offer varying experiences depending on the host university.

Study Abroad & Part-Time Internship

This is a study abroad program where, as part of your course load, you can enroll in a credit-bearing internship seminar and be placed in a part-time internship based on your interests and skills. The amount of hours you will work varies by program and placement, as do the number of credits. More than just a line to add to a résumé, part-time internships offer you the opportunity to engage in a different work culture, network with professionals, and identify future career interests.

Study Abroad & Service Learning Placement

Service learning and volunteering abroad gives you the opportunity to actively engage in your host community and to develop leadership, communication, and citizenship skills and insights that can have a lasting impact in your personal and professional life. Service learning is available on many IES Abroad study abroad programs. Typically, you enroll in a for-credit seminar in conjunction with your part-time placement, where you’ll work alongside local people toward a common goal.

Full-Time IES Internship

On these programs, you will work full-time. Your only course might be a required credit-bearing internship seminar. Some full-time internship programs also offer a language course. A full-time internship allows you a substantial experience in an international professional setting, the connections to grow your network, and opportunity to identify possible “next-steps” in your career.

Self-Reflection: What Do You Want to Get Out of Your Time Abroad?

After understanding the different program types available, you can select the best-fit program through self-reflection on what you want to get out of your time abroad. To answer this, some other questions may need to be answered first:

- Is there a specific city or country that you want to go to?
- Do you have an academic or personal interest that you want to delve deeper into?
- Do you need to fulfill major requirements while abroad? Do you expect to develop your professional skills?
- Do you want to immerse yourself in another culture or improve your competency in another language?
- Do you want to give back to the local community while you’re abroad?

Next Steps

Identifying the right program is a major first step in preparing to go abroad. Next, it’s time to talk with study abroad advisors, submit an application, and, of course, get really excited for a possibly life-changing—and career-changing—adventure.

Every study abroad program is unique—and not just in its location. There are programs geared toward specific majors, interests, internship goals, service learning placements, and more. Whichever you choose, the experience is likely to change your life for the better—and have noteworthy career benefits. However, the key is selecting the right program that meets your specific goals and interests. This may seem overwhelming, with thousands of programs available in locations across the globe, but the perfect fit is out there if you are willing to do some research and self-reflection.

THE BENEFITS OF STUDY ABROAD... AS TOLD BY IES ABROAD STUDENTS!

"I'm thankful for studying abroad because of how the experience affected my academic interests and career goals. I am interested in pursuing Museum Studies, and to spend two months visiting the most amazing museums in Europe with local professors made me confident that I have chosen the right path for myself."

– **Maya L.** | [IES Abroad Multi-Location Summer—Museums & Beyond: Art & Culture in Paris, Madrid & Rome Program](#), Summer 2017



"My experience working as a Marketing Intern with a telecommunications startup in Milan, Italy, gave me many soft skills that will contribute to my ability to work in a wide range of companies upon graduating college. I worked with a small team of 8 from Italy, Brazil, and Ukraine, helping manage a small marketing budget and creating leads for the Business Management team. I have no doubt that my experience will help me in my future employment, both in a Marketing role and as an employee who knows how to work on a multicultural, cross-border team."

– **Nicholas D.** | [IES Abroad Milan—Business Studies](#), Fall 2016

"I am thankful for the clarity studying abroad created for my future goals. After both working and living abroad, I know that I should pursue a long-term living situation abroad in the future. It has now become my goal to move back to London, as the experiences, people, and culture of this city are something I seek for my future."

– **Reid M.** | [IES Abroad London—Study London Program](#), Spring 2017



THE “MARKET YOUR STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE” TOOLKIT

by Shaina Moran

With the many benefits of study abroad and internships abroad, it's a no brainer that you should share your experience with potential employers, whether you're seeking internships for summer close to home or for overseas jobs.

But how? Read on for information and tips on how to include your study abroad experience on your résumé and cover letter, in interviews, on LinkedIn, and while networking.

RÉSUMÉ & COVER LETTER

Education

One of the most important things to remember when showcasing your international experience on your résumé is to be sure to actually include it! This seems obvious, but too often, this information is either forgotten or study abroad returnees are unsure of how to make mention of it. We're guessing this was one of the most memorable, if not the best, times of your life, so don't you forget it!



To include your experience abroad on your professional materials is actually quite simple:

- List your educational experience abroad in the “Education” section of your résumé underneath your home school, or college or university from where you’re earning your full degree
- Be sure to list where you studied abroad and with whom (whether it’s a provider [IES Abroad], university abroad [Carlos III University], or both).
- List any relevant coursework you took while studying abroad (that is to say, relevant to the particular job or internship for which you’re applying)

Here’s an example:

Education
State University Smithtown, IN
 B.A, Social Studies Expected Jun 2018

Relevant Coursework: Economics, Consumer Behavior
 Honors: Dean’s List for six consecutive semesters

Trinity College Dublin Dublin, Ireland
 Concentration in Social Sciences Jan – May 2017

Relevant Coursework: Sociology, Irish History
 Honors: Study Abroad Scholarship Recipient for Academic Merit

Experience

In addition to coursework, did you do an internship in New York City, volunteer in Granada, participate in service learning in South Africa, or work on a professional project in Tokyo? List it chronologically relative to other work experience you’ve had (if any).

Experience

Marketing Partners Dublin, Ireland
 Design and Marketing Intern Feb – Apr 2017

- Copyedited design documents before final review on a weekly basis
- Created ~50 flyers using Adobe Creative Cloud Software
- Presented to entire company on ‘How to Market to Generation Z’ at culmination of internship

Township Books Smithtown, IN
 Clerk and Marketing Assistant Jun 2016–Present

- Performed all marketing duties for the bookshop, managing social media, events, and promotions
- Assisted customers with locating and purchasing books
- Prepared, received, and stocked product for and from shipments

Skills

So many skills! What didn’t you learn during your time interning or studying abroad? Luckily there are a couple of places on your résumé where you can showcase the things you picked up:

In the “Experience” section of your résumé:

Any of your skills, technical and otherwise, can be embedded within the bullets of your individual work experiences. For example, if you want to demonstrate leadership, teamwork, and cross-cultural communication, something like this would work:

- *Led and worked in a team with seven colleagues from several different countries to plan annual conference*

In the “Skills” section of your résumé—let’s jump right into the example:

Skills

Computer: Microsoft and Apple Operating Systems, Adobe Creative Cloud, Social Media platforms, Hootsuite, MailChimp, GoToMeeting

Language: Advanced Spanish (studied for 5 years), Novice in Gaelic (one semester in Ireland)

Other: Project management, event planning, copyediting

Cover Letter

Intangible or “soft skills” can be tricky to convey in the “Skills” section of your résumé, and you might find it easier to demonstrate them in your cover letter (yes, you should write a cover letter). Such skills might include:

- effective cross-cultural communication
- flexibility
- dealing with ambiguity
- adapting to a new professional setting
- multi-tasking
- positivity
- organization
- public speaking
- and the list goes on thanks to your experience abroad!

INTERVIEWS

According to the IES Abroad Recent Alumni Survey, most IES Abroad alumni felt that studying abroad helped them develop valuable job skills, such as language proficiency, cultural understanding, tolerance for ambiguity, adaptability, and self-confidence. They also felt that their international experience helped them develop confidence specifically to deal with new skills required for the job at hand.

Translating your study abroad experience into an interview context is a skill in itself. While many things about the particular location where you studied or interned abroad are likely interesting, think about how much of that detail needs to be referenced when telling a story in an interview. Decide what’s really relevant rather than what just might be a “cool story.”

Ask Yourself These 3 Questions



Did you develop skills on your study abroad or internship program?

Maybe you learned a new computer program, utilized non-verbal communication when there was a language barrier, or improved your foreign language skills.



How might these study abroad skills be used in daily life back home?

Mandarin might not come in handy on a daily basis for when you’re back in the States, but how did learning a new language teach you patience, or could those language skills be applied to an international job?



How can you convey these skills in an interview?

Learning a new language and immersing yourself in a new cultural environment improves your social skills (i.e. you’ll have an easier time getting to know colleagues and adapting to a new workplace), increases your tolerance for ambiguity (which also leads to creative problem solving), and makes you a better listener. Now think about how these skills are utilized in this particular job. There you have it!

Answer an Interview Question in 4 Steps

Surely you have some really interesting stories from your travels, but how and where do they make sense and fit into your professional life? One of the best guidelines for talking about (any) experience is the STAR Method, which is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, Result. Let's breakdown a potential experience you may have had abroad:



Situation: While studying abroad in Madrid, you were assigned to a group project in one of your classes at the local university. The students all spoke Spanish, but you weren't yet confident enough in your language skills. You wanted to improve your Spanish while communicating with them about or over the course of the project.



Task: Contribute equally to the group project by writing and presenting on your portion of the given topic.



Actions: You established a pact with your roommates to only speak Spanish with one another in an effort to improve your skills and increase your confidence. You visited with a tutor. And, you consulted the staff at the IES Abroad Madrid Center on other ways to practice your Spanish. They suggest participating in language intercambios (exchanges), Spanish cooking and dance lessons, and weekend activities with Spanish students.



Result: After taking these actions, you were able to better communicate with classmates and speak clearly and effectively en Español on presentation day.

This anecdote, reframed using the STAR method, conveys that you: can work in a team, pull your own weight, avoid roadblocks that inhibit you from getting your work done, are willing to ask for help, can problem solve, and can speak publicly (in a foreign language, to boot).

LINKEDIN

Your Profile

Make sure that your study abroad experience is listed on your LinkedIn profile, just as it would be on your résumé. You can list it under the "Education" section, and if you participated in a professional experience like an internship while abroad, be sure to list this under "Experience." Volunteer and service learning also have a place on your profile—just add them under the "Volunteer Experience" section.

Of course, just like any other education or experience on your profile, you can add as much detail as you'd like—if you took a certain course(s) that's extremely relevant to the type of job you're seeking, or the projects you completed at your internship abroad demonstrate strong or transferable skills, include these in the "Description" section, too. There's even a spot for foreign language skills on your profile, so if you advanced your Dutch skills while you were studying abroad in Amsterdam (or even grew up speaking it), definitely list it!

LinkedIn section examples:

Experience:

Press Office Intern

UK Public Relations Partners
September 2016 – November 2016
London, United Kingdom

Education:

IES Abroad London

Fall Semester Liberal Arts Program
September 2016 – December 2016

Volunteer Experience:

Central Day School

September 2016–October 2016
London, United Kingdom

LinkedIn Groups

In addition to adding your time abroad to your individual LinkedIn profile, chances are, your study abroad provider has a LinkedIn group for students and alumni—join that group! You'll be kept up to date on alumni gatherings (a great opportunity to network) and job openings at the study abroad organization itself and its partners, as well as learn tips for using your study abroad experience to your advantage in the job or internship search. You'll also gain access to and make a ton of connections with other alumni whose professional interests may align closely with your own—can't beat that!

LinkedIn Features

Other useful features on LinkedIn include Career Insights. On the IES Abroad LinkedIn page, you can click into the Career Insights section and learn about where IES Abroad alumni live and work and in which industries. You can even filter this down further, by searching for a professional title, company, or keyword in order to then connect with alumni who fit those queries. LinkedIn also has a section for university students, specifically, so if you're still in school or are a recent graduate, definitely give it a look.

Customize Your Messages

Remember, when reaching out to people on LinkedIn, be sure to customize your message. Inviting someone to connect, especially someone whom you've never met, without an explanation of why you're interested in getting to know them or reminder of where you met does not pave the path for a professional relationship. Help establish a rapport by typing a few sentences of what you'd like to learn from them, how you've met previously (if so), or what you're looking for. Racking up connections on LinkedIn isn't a winning game—if you don't know your connections well enough to feel comfortable reaching out to them, what's the point?

IES ABROAD

STUDY ABROAD & INTERNSHIP STUDENT SUCCESS



"I came to South Africa with a vague understanding of my career-driven goals, and left with new ambitions and aspirations for my future. While participating in service learning, I was able to shadow a handful of amazing occupational therapists. They inspired me to begin my own journey in such a challenging, yet rewarding, profession."

—Sally K. | [IES Abroad Cape Town Summer—Health Studies Program, Summer 2017](#)



"I'm thankful for the internship because of how it affected my career readiness. This past summer solidified my love for student affairs and international education while I interned for the University of New South Wales Exchange and Study Abroad office."

— Alexandria S. | [IES Internships—Sydney Internship Program, Summer 2017](#)

Read more reviews of IES Abroad programs [HERE!](#)

NETWORKING

Network with Contacts from Abroad

In addition to using LinkedIn, there are a number of other venues for networking and some of this can start before you even return home from your study abroad program.



Keeping in touch with your internship employer, colleagues, professors, and study abroad staff is encouraged, even if you don't plan to work abroad in the future.



Before you head back home, thank those that you connected with both in-person and with a nice card, note, or email.



Form or continue the genuine bond you've created by checking in periodically with them. Nothing is worse than only reaching out when you need something, like a reference or an 'in' at a company.

6 Tips for Networking Face-to-Face

While networking events can create lasting and valuable connections, they are often nerve-wracking for many people. A few tips for being prepared:

- 1. Know Your Audience:** Review information ahead of time about speakers or guests so you have talking points when interacting at the event.
- 2. Hot Topics:** Brush up on neutral current events so you'll have small talk topics at the ready.
- 3. Name Names:** Repeat each person's name after you are introduced, say "Michael, it's great to meet you!" Saying their name aloud will help you remember and make them feel positively towards you.

4. Set a Goal: If you're nervous, set a target number of people to meet (five is attainable). Keep in mind, even if you are determined to hit that goal, when having a productive conversation with someone, don't dash away just to add to your tally of new contacts. Conversely, be sure to strike a balance between meeting several people and cornering one person for the entire event.

5. Ask First: Ask questions, especially before you talk about yourself. A good way to guide your introduction about yourself, however, is a 30-second elevator pitch, where you briefly mention:

- Your name
- What you have been doing (school/work), including your time abroad
- What you are interested in doing
- What kind of assistance/information you are seeking

6. Keep the Conversation Going: Exchange business cards or contact information and follow up with anyone with whom you connected. If you connect on LinkedIn, remember to customize your message.

STRUT YOUR STUDY ABROAD STUFF

Your study abroad experience is invaluable, unmatched, and uniquely yours, which is why so many people will want to hear about it. So now that you know how to identify and articulate the skills you gained or developed while abroad, fill out that résumé (or CV), draft that cover letter (you can do it, promise!), and go be a social butterfly at that next networking event! Get out there, and show 'em what you got!

CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING: WHAT IT IS & HOW IT CAN HELP YOUR CAREER

by Carrie Rackers Cunningham

Maybe you are enticed by the stories of life-changing adventures from friends who have gone abroad. Maybe you want to develop your language skills. Maybe you are excited about the idea of experiencing the cultural diversity of a new place. Whatever your inspiration may be, know that study abroad can truly change your life.

And although you may be transformed while you're studying abroad, there are also many benefits of study abroad when you return home. Have you thought about what a cultural experience abroad might do for your career? Taking the time to think about how study abroad could play a part in your professional development will undoubtedly impact the way you engage in the experience and improve the likelihood that you'll be able to effectively parlay your experience into the job market later. This starts by contemplating what cultural understanding and intercultural competency mean and how these skills play a part in today's job market.

* Deardorff, D. K. (2006), The Identification and Assessment of Intercultural Competence as a Student Outcome of Internationalization at Institutions of Higher Education in the United States, *Journal of Studies in International Education* 10:241-266
** NACE: Employers Rate Competencies, Student's Career Readiness



What Cultural Understanding Means

Culture is a difficult noun to define. Webster's Dictionary provides at least six possible definitions; the Oxford-English Dictionary adds at least three more. It is not surprising, then, that the terms like cultural understanding (or cultural sensitivity or cultural awareness) can be equally difficult concepts to grasp.

For starters, cultural understanding is a skill, not a personality trait. It is the process by which a person actively engages in trying to understand another's cultural background, beliefs, and values. Studying abroad is a very effective way to build cultural understanding—more than 90% of IES Abroad's study abroad alumni feel they develop this skill during their experience abroad. Cultural understanding is the first step toward intercultural competence—perhaps the most fundamental goal of study abroad programs.

Defining Intercultural Competence

In academic circles, intercultural competency is defined as “the ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills, and attitudes that lead to visible behavior and communication that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions.”*

For many, the very act of being immersed in another country, observing cultural diversity and language or dialog that is different from your own, is a launch pad for cultural understanding and cultural awareness. Taking the additional step toward achieving intercultural competency requires work beyond observation. It requires learning how to take those observations, analyze, interpret, and eventually anticipate how to proceed with your own communication or behavior. Quality study abroad programs will integrate intercultural competency training into coursework, orientation, field trips, or other program elements to help students develop these abilities.

Why These Are Important in the Workplace

It starts with communication. Take a look at any list of what employers look for, and you will find communication somewhere in the top five.** Regardless of field. Knowing how to understand one’s audience and develop verbal and non-verbal communication that is effective and appropriate to that audience is a skill that transcends academic disciplines or career fields.

What makes intercultural competence a skill distinct from communication is that intercultural competency requires growth in other skills.

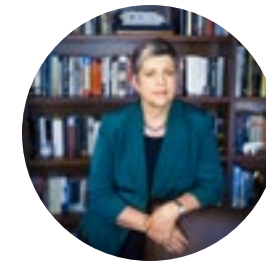
- To understand a culture different from your own, you must think critically.
- You must work hard to deduce the nuances of explicit and implicit rules and norms.
- You must learn to collaborate with people different from yourself.



Do the words critical thinking, hard work, and collaboration sound familiar? Remember that list of top job skills sought after by employers? You guessed it. This is what employers look for in job candidates, and studying abroad can be an incredibly effective way to develop these skills.

With more than 2 million people graduating from college each year, employers have to find ways to ways to differentiate job candidates. Having the credential of an undergraduate degree might get you a foot in the door, but developing and being able to articulate key “soft” skills is essential to moving from job candidate to hired employee. If you are going to take the leap to study abroad, do yourself a favor—think about your experience within the context of developing these skills. Don’t slack off when presented with orientation and course activities that push you to enhance your cultural understanding and cultural awareness in order to build intercultural competency. Engage. Think hard, and work hard to develop your toolbox of skills. In the long run, your career will thank you.

IES ABROAD® EXPERT CAREER ADVICE FROM NOTABLE IES ABROAD ALUMNI



Show You’re Adaptable

“Many employers are international, and if you’ve had a semester or some time abroad that’s a good thing. It will show that you can operate and do what you need to do in a different environment. There is virtually no academic field that we have at the University of California—and we have every academic field—that doesn’t relate or couldn’t benefit from some time abroad.”

Janet Napolitano

President of the University of California, and former U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security

[IES Abroad London](#), Spring 1978



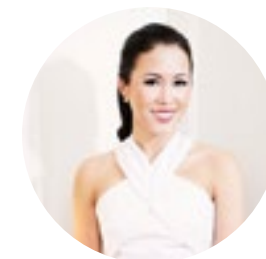
Identify the Skills You Develop Abroad

“The ability to communicate effectively is by far the most valuable skill I brought home from my time abroad. In Barcelona, the language barrier created challenges. In running a business, you’re constantly up against communication breakdowns with suppliers, distributors, accounts, customers, stakeholders... the list goes on and on. But the ability to clearly, concisely, and effectively communicate with these partners on a daily basis is key to running a successful business, and I cannot imagine doing what I do without it.”

Adam Romanow

Founder & President, Castle Island Brewing Co.

[IES Abroad Barcelona](#), Fall 2005



Take Courses Relevant to Your Future Career

“At IES Abroad, I took Introduction to Luxury Brand Management that is, to this day, one of my absolutely favorite courses I have ever taken. Building a lasting brand takes a ton of well-thought-out strategy, and I gained a new perspective on branding from this course. To be a successful businessman or woman, I think understanding different cultures and having an open mind is key. Having the chance to live abroad encourages someone to step outside of their comfort zone, and see things from a different perspective.”

Brittany Lo

Founder & CEO, Beautini

[IES Abroad Paris](#), Fall 2012



Learn Another Language While Experiencing Other Cultures

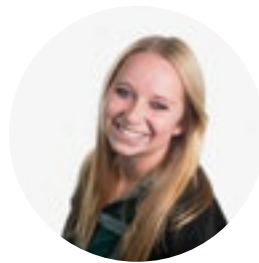
"To be successful in our increasingly interconnected global business world, my advice to students is to take advantage of any opportunity to experience other cultures, be it via study abroad programs, international travel, or hosting foreign exchange students here at home. Learning foreign languages is integral to that process. The more students can broaden their college experience by interacting with people from other parts of the globe, the more prepared they will be for the global business world."

Electing classes that address international topics and getting involved in international clubs on campus is another way to increase exposure to the world beyond the United States. In my experience, however, the best way to truly gain a global perspective is to live abroad. It is difficult to gain a truly global mindset unless you leave your familiar and comfortable surroundings and immerse yourself in a foreign country."

Kurt Stache

Senior Vice President of Marketing and Loyalty, American Airlines

[IES Abroad Freiburg](#), 1987-88



Prepare How to Professionally Speak About Your Study Abroad Experience

"When returning home from a whirlwind semester, summer, or stint abroad, the simple question 'How was your study abroad trip?' often proves itself to be complex when answering to your parents, friends, or teachers. After all, summarizing an experience that likely left you speechless a time or two isn't easy. So on you go, rattling off memories of good food and laughter, captivating sites, and interesting new people."

And while your best friend is eager to hear all of your exciting stories, considering how you may present your experience to a future employer in an interview is important. Here are some tips for marketing your study abroad experience professionally:

- **On your résumé, showcase your soft skills.** While you may not have realized it at the time, living and studying or working in a foreign country requires stepping out of your comfort zone, problem solving, managing money, and practicing constant cross-cultural communication. Don't be afraid to show that off on paper.
- **In an interview, be prepared to elaborate on experiences that shaped you.** While not every moment abroad is life-altering, you likely learned a lot about yourself that time you got lost on the Metra and ended up in an unfamiliar place, or discovered your passion for cinema after signing up for a class on a whim.

Taking the plunge to study abroad is a big deal, and future employers will appreciate a candid and thoughtful response on how you grew from the experience."

Sophie Babcock

Associate, Golin

[IES Abroad London](#), 2014



6 WAYS TO LAUNCH AN INTERNATIONAL CAREER

by Amy Ruhter McMillan

So you loved your study abroad experience.

And, you can't stop talking about it, even when you can tell people have stopped listening.

Here's the thing: You don't have to pretend studying abroad never happened. You can use the experience to launch your career. There are jobs out there for intelligent, adaptable, adventurous, open-minded, travel-hungry, conscientious, change-seeking, and adaptable people just like you.

Here are some of the opportunities where you can parlay your global curiosity into a career beyond college:

- Cultural Training & Global Relocation
- Fulbright Scholar Program (Research or Teaching)
- Volunteering Abroad
- Teaching Abroad
- International Education
- Government Work (Diplomats, Consular Staff, Foreign Service)

Cultural Training & Global Relocation

Do you imagine yourself training and preparing others for their adventures abroad? Then this could be the perfect job for you.

Cultural training companies offer a broad range of relocation services, but most importantly language and culture training to prepare individuals or families who are relocating to a new place abroad.

Check out job offerings at companies, such as:

- [Cartus](#)
- [Communicaid Global Communications](#)
- [Cultural Candor](#)
- [International Orientation Resources](#)

Fulbright Scholar Program (Research or Teaching)

If going back abroad again right after graduation is your dream, securing a [Fulbright grant](#) allows you to pursue an individually-designed study or research project. You can also participate in the [English Teaching Assistant Program](#).

For similar scholar programs for recent graduates, check out:

- [Boren Awards](#) (worldwide)
- [DAAD – Study & Research](#) (Germany)
- [Luce Scholars](#) (Asia)
- [Princeton in Asia Fellowships](#)
- [AIF Clinton Fellowship](#) (India)
- [Leland International Hunger Fellows Program](#) (Asia, Africa, & Latin America)

Volunteering Abroad

If giving back is your focus, then you've likely already heard of the [Peace Corps](#). There's a reason why their motto is "Make the Most of Your World" –they are looking for changemakers with a passion for service.

For any other opportunity around the world, your most comprehensive resource is to start with [GoAbroad's Volunteer Abroad Directory](#).

Teaching Abroad

International Schools

Teaching at an American or international school abroad isn't as difficult as it might seem. This way, you use your teaching degree as intended –to teach science, math, language arts, at the age level you are certified for.

Check out the [GoAbroad Teach Abroad Directory](#) or [International School Services](#) to get started.

Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Teaching English abroad is also another popular way to go back abroad again.

Check out options like:

- [Berlitz](#)
- [JET Program](#) (teaching in Japan)
- [International TEFL Academy](#)
- [Teaching fellowships](#) (from ProFellow)

International Education

Yes, there are actually careers in the study abroad field! You can either work with a study abroad provider or in the study abroad or international student office at a university.

Study Abroad Providers

A study abroad provider offers study abroad programs to students from any college or university –the provider plans and carries out all levels of the study abroad experience, before departure and then once on-site.

Jobs are available primarily in the United States, but international posts sometimes open up. For example, [IES Abroad](#) has their headquarters in Chicago, but has Centers in 34 cities around the world.

Get started with [GoAbroad's provider list](#).

Study Abroad Offices at Universities

Most U.S. universities or colleges have a study abroad office on campus. These opportunities would be listed alongside other openings on campus. Search using "study abroad," "abroad office," or "international students" to find some unique jobs supporting incoming and outgoing study abroad students.

If you're interested working in the study abroad field, you can also follow job openings (both on campus or with a provider) in study abroad through [NAFSA's SECUSS-L listserv](#).

Government Work

Joining the [Foreign Service](#) is another way to find an internationally-focused job, with the potential for overseas placement.

Foreign Service Officers work in one of five different career tracks: Consular, Economic, Management, Political, and Public Diplomacy, and you have to pass the [Foreign Service Officer Test \(FSOT\)](#) to be able to apply for these jobs.

Other related opportunities include:

- [USAID](#)
- [Travel.State.gov](#)
- [International Trade Administration](#)

In a globalized economy, there are ever increasing opportunities to develop an exciting international career. Listed above are only some of these opportunities.

More and more companies are also including study abroad as a requirement in their job descriptions. Try searching "study abroad" when you're on job search sites and you might be surprised what comes up.

Whether you want to spend a few years living and working abroad after you graduate, or you work overseas until you retire, the skills and experience you gain while studying abroad can help you launch a successful international career.





KEEP EXPLORING



Find the right study
abroad or internship
program for you and
your career at
www.IESabroad.org



INTERESTED IN SPONSORING AN EBOOK?

We'd certainly love to work with you! [Contact us!](#)



WANT TO KEEP READING?

Check out the [GoAbroad Ebook Library](#) to prep for your next adventure!

WANT TO SHARE THIS GUIDE WITH YOUR STUDENTS?

Feel free to add it to your own website or resources: <http://bit.ly/StudyAbroadCareerBenefits>