TRANSLATING ‘I STUDIED ABROAD’

From Classes to Career - interview focus

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TODAY’S GOAL

Learn how language and other soft skills that you gain abroad can help you professionally
(Interview focus)
FUNDAMENTALS

Global = global
- U.S. population is impacted (education, legislation, boardrooms, media, environment…) by how the world works
- Geographic/economic borders can protect but walls or other ‘safety’ measures will not change this

Today’s undergraduate = tomorrow’s leader
- U.S. competitiveness and influence will depend on a globally-aware U.S. population
- Today’s UWEC Freshman class joins the workforce starting in 2020

Leadership attributes
- Ability to work in or lead a team of diverse thinking styles, beliefs, cultures
- Adaptable and flexible in unfamiliar situations / Initiative / Entrepreneur / Risk-Taker
- Aware of economic systems and politics
- Effective communication across cultural and linguistic boundaries
‘I STUDIED ABROAD, BUT…’

• How are you articulating this experience as you prepare for the workforce?

• Study abroad or foreign language fluency do not always top the list of desired experience or skills
  • Caveat: Foreign language skills - US Job Market (Mar 2017)

• How do I…?
  • elevate this beyond a bullet point on my resume?
  • make this more interview-relevant than ‘it was life-changing’?
‘HOW DO I TRANSLATE STUDY ABROAD IN A JOB INTERVIEW?’

• First, consider all aspects of your experience abroad: housing, academics, travel, student clubs, volunteering, internship
  • Who did you meet? What did you learn? How did you impact?

• Think of specific elements which could provide a direct benefit to an organization, institution or company

• Consider career implications
  • starting from now when you decide on an international program
  • …to challenges overcome while abroad, your applied learnings
  • …to job interviews where you’re asked to describe your skills or attributes

• Tip: review Job Descriptions that interest you after graduation, highlight desired skills or attributes
EXAMPLE: TRANSLATING MY EXPERIENCE
- FRENCH MAJOR / SPANISH MINOR
- FRANCE AND SPAIN SEMESTERS ABROAD
- GAP YEAR OF WORK BETWEEN JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEAR

Forecast or address business situations from a different cultural frame of reference

Take personal risks; act independently

Flexible and adaptable to rapidly changing work environments

Contribute to an ethnically diverse team

Self-confident, yet able to listen and learn from people whose value systems are different

Adapted from: Effective Marketing of International Experiences to Employers by Cheryl Matherly
‘I CAN NOT STUDY ABROAD…’

• Really? Truly...??

• Timing, finances => no undergraduate time abroad?

• What to do
  1. Make an appointment with UWEC’s Center for International Education
  2. Intern with US-based international company
  3. Select specific non-US news sources; review daily
  4. Find your focus - a region, a country - what’s trending?
  5. Join a student organization with international focus
  6. Interview UWEC students who studied abroad
  7. Interview UWEC students from EU/Americas/Asia/Africa - keep in contact!
YOU’RE PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW...

My global thinking skills

• Do I follow the news from multiple countries on a regular basis?
• When news happens in one country, do I often think of its implications on other countries?
• Can I describe political parties from at least one country on each major continent?

My language / communication skills

• In what languages am I fluent (spoken/written/read)?
• Do I have a network of professional contacts in other countries?
• Am I able to recognize different meanings in gesturing from more than one culture?

My knowledge of culture (traditional & popular)

• With what cultures and nationalities have I had close dealings?
• Am I familiar with ethnic or religious traditions beyond my own? With cultural, religious or national festivals and their significance?
• Can I identify traditional and/or contemporary art from abroad?
• Am I familiar with social trends abroad (music, fashion, movies)?
YOU’RE PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW...

My knowledge of business employment practices
• Can I articulate similarities and differences of predominant management styles in more than one country?
• Am I familiar with labor laws and/or hiring practices in other countries?

My ability to adapt
• How long does it generally take me to settle into a new environment?
• How long do I feel it will take to make an impact in a new job?
• When did I last take a risk? What did I gain / lose?

Why did I participate in an international experience? How did I choose my program and location?

When have I used my presentation skills to influence someone’s opinion?

What skills did I learn abroad? How could these skills be applied to this company?
TRY THIS…

Think of 1-2 key questions to ask your interviewer / employer that demonstrate:

- Your global mindset
- Your language / communication skills
- Your cultural awareness
- Your knowledge of business employment outside US
- Your adaptability
- Other skills or attributes* relevant to a job that interests you

* See tip slide 5
THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!

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Learn how skills gained abroad can help you professionally
(Interview focus)
NEXT STEPS

If you have already gone abroad

Attend:
‘Resume Writing Workshop’
Monday March 13
3:30-4:30pm
Where: Centennial 1920

If you are interested in going abroad

Make an appointment:
Center for International Education
715-836-4411
Where: 3, Schofield