

## International Jobs and International Opportunities: An Overview

This handout is intended to supplement the workshop on International Jobs and Opportunities presented to Saint Mary's University students by Jeff Minthorn of *Verge Magazine*. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us at [info@vergemagazine.com](mailto:info@vergemagazine.com).

### This document contains the following sections:

1. International competencies
2. Gaining international competencies on campus and in your community
3. Gaining international experience
  - Volunteer
  - Intern
  - Study
  - Work
  - Maximizing the value of your time abroad
4. Researching Careers
5. Networking
6. Applying for professional positions

Further resources for international opportunities and careers are available on the *Verge Magazine* website ([www.vergemagazine.com](http://www.vergemagazine.com)). You may sign up for a free subscription at [www.vergemagazine.com/subscribe](http://www.vergemagazine.com/subscribe) using the code and URL given at the presentation.

### COMING SOON...

Please look out for the launch of our new series "Careers for Globetrotters", starting this summer. We'll be releasing weekly profiles of individuals working abroad, detailed investigations of international career paths, and interviews with hiring managers in global workplaces—all with the intent to help you land the international job that you want. This content is free with your subscription.



## 1 » International Competencies

There are three things that virtually all international employers seek in applicants:

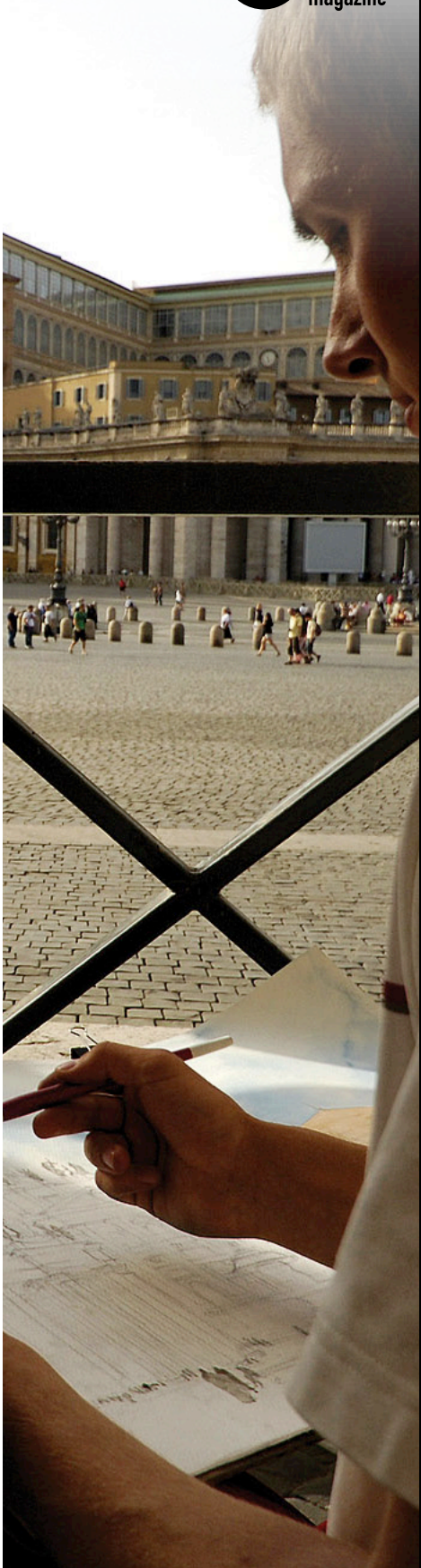
- international competencies and language skills;
- overseas experience;
- skills in your sector.

Developing your international competencies will help you to decide if international work is, indeed, for you—and it will also make you more effective in any international position you obtain.

Skills that are valuable to international employers include:

- Global knowledge: geographic, political, economic, cultural knowledge, particularly about the regions you hope to work;
- Knowledge about the international aspects of your field;
- Language skills are required for many international organizations and will set you ahead of the pack in many others;
- Flexibility, adaptability, sense of adventure and humour;
- Ability to deal well with stress and navigate ambiguity;
- Intercultural awareness and openness, tolerance and sensitivity;
- Communication skills, diplomacy and tact, listening and observing abilities;
- Leadership, independence and self-discipline.

Many of these skills can be acquired over time. However, a knowledge of the soft skills that are sought out by international employers will enable you to focus your efforts on acquiring them—both on campus and overseas—and will give you a head start in seeking international work.





## 2 » Gaining International Competencies On Campus and In Your Community

### 1. GET INVOLVED WITH AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION ON CAMPUS

Check out these international student groups that exist at St Mary's:

- AIESEC; IDS; Model United Nations; Oxfam; Students Acting for Global Awareness.
- Student societies: Caribbean; Chinese students; Francophone; Japanese Canadian Cultural Exchange; Saudi students.

There are also many student groups that are well-known and well-respected nationally, which do not appear on the list of student groups on this campus. Why not start a local chapter?

- Amnesty International; Because I am a Girl / Plan Canada; Engineers Without Borders; Friends of MSF (Doctors Without Borders); Journalists for Human Rights; Students Offering Support; UNICEF.

### 2. COURSEWORK

- Integrate global courses into your studies—both within your field and to fill credits;
- Do a thesis or term paper on a topic that puts you in touch with key players in your field of interest;
- Enrol in language courses;
- Investigate research assistant opportunities with faculty;
- Look into conferences in your field with an international theme, and opportunities to attend. Often funding or discounts will be available to students, or—even better—possibilities to volunteer.

### 3. LEARN A LANGUAGE

It is easier than it sounds and can be a lot of fun.

- Exchange conversation lessons with a foreign student;
- Take online language courses; many public libraries offer online courses for free, or you can purchase online courses or audio courses.

#### Combine it with coursework:

- Go on exchange to a country whose language you want to learn;
- Take a summer course for credit in a foreign country; live in a home-stay and take intensive language training while you are there. This can be done relatively inexpensively in some parts of the world,



#### 4. INTERNATIONAL OR STUDY ABROAD OFFICE

These opportunities are available to you only while you are a student; don't miss out.

- Study abroad for a semester or a year at partner schools;
- Check out faculty-run field schools in various parts of the world; often you may join a field school from another university and arrange credit at your school;
- Take courses with a global component that both demonstrate and develop your interest in global issues;
- Always scan career office job boards and study abroad office postings, including postings on social media.

#### 5. VOLUNTEER IN A CROSS-CULTURAL SETTING

- Teach English in your local community, to recent immigrants or foreign students;
- Help organize or attend events put on by the international office on campus. This will put you in a cross-cultural setting, but also enable you to develop marketing skills, communications skills, social media, organization skills;
- Check opportunities to volunteer internationally online—see for example UN Volunteers ([onlinevolunteering.org](http://onlinevolunteering.org));
- Volunteer at a globally-minded local organization.

#### 6. NETWORK

See the Careers section!

## 3 » Gaining International Experience

### A. VOLUNTEER ABROAD

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#### 1. HOW TO CHOOSE A VOLUNTEER PROGRAM?

Most participants have cost as their primary concern. However, other factors are even more important to consider:

- What is the organization structure (for-profit or not-for-profit) and mandate?
- Is the project sustainable: will work continue after you have departed? Is your work part of an overall project?
- What is the benefit to local community? Is the project driven by community needs?
- Does the project take away local paid jobs, or involve short-term work with a vulnerable group (e.g. children, orphans)? Are volunteers screened if they work with these groups (e.g. criminal record check)?
- Can you speak with past participants directly about their experiences?
- Does the organization allow volunteers to engage in activities that they would not be qualified to do at home?
- Will you know in advance what project you will be assigned to, and your specific tasks? Can you choose your placement?
- Does the organization provide pre-departure / re-entry resources?

While the vast majority of volunteer organizations are well-intentioned, it is inevitably the bad-news stories that hit the news. Do your research to avoid finding yourself in a poorly thought-out project, or worse, a scam. The more you learn about your placement and your organization, the better prepared you will be. The primary reason for disappointment is that volunteer expectations are not in line with the reality of the placement. Do your homework to avoid surprises.

#### RESOURCES

*How to Choose a Volunteer Program—Verge Magazine.*

<http://www.vergemagazine.com/volunteer-abroad/articles/46-volunteer-abroad-how-to-choose-a-volunteer-programme>

*The Ethical Volunteering Guide—commissioned by Tourism Concern.*

<http://www.ethicalvolunteering.org/downloads/ethicalvolunteering.pdf>

*International Volunteer Briefing—Tourism Concern.*

<http://tourismconcern.org.uk/volunteer/briefing/>

*Tips and Tricks for Learning Before Helping.*

<http://learningservice.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/1tipstricks-copy1.pdf>

*How to Find an Ethical Volunteer Organization*

<http://www.vergemagazine.com/volunteer-abroad/articles/448-how-to-find-an-ethical-volunteer-organization>

*How to Live Your Dream of Volunteering Overseas—J. Collins, S. DeZerega, Z.*

*Heckscher. This is an older book, but very well thought-out and still very relevant.*





## 2. ORGANIZED VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

### FEDERALLY FUNDED VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS IN CANADA:

These placements are generally subsidised; some require previous work experience (2+ years). All of these organizations are well-established in Canada.

- Canada World Youth ([canadaworldyouth.org](http://canadaworldyouth.org))
- Canadian Crossroads International ([cintl.org](http://cintl.org))
- Canadian Executive Service Organization ([ceso-saco.com](http://ceso-saco.com))
- CUSO International ([cusointernational.org](http://cusointernational.org))
- Engineers Without Borders ([ewb.ca](http://ewb.ca))
- WUSC / Uniterra ([wusc.ca](http://wusc.ca))
- Youth Challenge International ([yci.org](http://yci.org))
- (Also SUCO and Oxfam-Québec)

Most programs listed are currently awaiting funding announcements, which will affect activities starting partway through 2015.

### VERGE MAGAZINE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM SEARCH

Searchable directory for opportunities to work, study, volunteer, intern, teach abroad, with 7,000 program listings. Find a placement suited to your particular skills and interests. <http://www.vergemagazine.com/program-search>

## 3. WHY PAY TO VOLUNTEER?

This is the most common stumbling block for many would-be volunteers. It is counter-intuitive—why should you pay money to volunteer your time? But, it takes resources to manage projects and volunteers. Here are some of the costs that organizations may have to pay to be able to host you:

- Project staff in-country, partnership development
- Staff to recruit and correspond with volunteers, manage volunteers
- Volunteer training, possible pre-departure and re-entry/post-placement resources
- Administration costs, insurance, risk management (what happens if you need to be evacuated?), volunteer recruitment costs
- Accommodation, in-country travel, food
- Financial contributions towards the project

### RESOURCES

*Why pay to volunteer?*

<http://www.vergemagazine.com/volunteer-abroad/186-why-pay-to-volunteer-abroad>

Q & A: The Overseas Volunteer—Expert panel discussion

<http://www.vergemagazine.com/travel-intelligence/editors-desk/1455-q-a-the-overseas-volunteer>

*The cheapest option might not be the best value—a first person account.* <http://www.vergemagazine.com/volunteer-abroad/articles/1433-the-hidden-costs-of-volunteering-on-the-cheap>

#### 4. ORGANIZING YOUR OWN VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT

This is an alternative to going through a paid placement. It is entirely possible—look around your own community, and all the volunteer opportunities that exist. Overseas, similarly, there are many organizations that can use a hand. But there are pros and cons to going on your own:

- It takes time and effort: researching organizations, communicating with them, possibly in your second language, and organizing details. This may be particularly challenging if done from home before you are in the country you plan to travel to.
- You will need to be careful not to be a drain on a local organization. They may not be able to support you effectively if you do not speak the language. Equally, they may not have resources to finish any work that you start.
- You must deal independently with any health issues, visa issues, safety challenges, travel and accommodation arrangements.
- You may save money, have more control over your ultimate placement, learn things in the process of arranging it, and be more culturally immersed compared to volunteering with a group of foreigners.

#### RESOURCES

*Should you volunteer abroad on your own?—Idealist*

<http://blog.en.idealists.org/should-you-volunteer-abroad-on-your-own>

*International Volunteering for the Independent Type*

<http://www.vergemagazine.com/volunteer-abroad/articles/898-international-volunteering-for-the-independent-type>

#### 5. MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR EXPERIENCE

- Things can and will go wrong. We often hear from volunteers that their placement was completely different from what they expected or signed up for. Figure out how you can make the best of the situation without quitting and going home; use and hone those important international skills: adaptability, cultural sensitivity, flexibility, positivity.

#### RESOURCES

*15 ways to make your mark as a volunteer—The Guardian.*

<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2014/jul/25/global-development-volunteering-guide-volunteers-internships-students>

*How to be a Star Volunteer*

<http://www.vergemagazine.com/winter-2014/departments/how-to-be-a-star-volunteer>

*Where can international volunteering take you? A flow chart (Guardian).*

<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2013/aug/27/global-development-flow-chart>

## B. INTERN ABROAD

There are a variety of international internships available, including (i) paid placements, (ii) placements that provide a basic stipend, and (iii) placements where you pay a fee to an organization to arrange a placement for you. Note that if you have an internship on your resume, employers rarely ask if it was paid; an unpaid position is not usually perceived as less valuable in terms of experience.

Here are some places to start looking for internships.

### WORK VISA PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG CANADIANS

- International Experience Canada ([www.cic.gc.ca/english/residents/iec/index.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/residents/iec/index.asp))
  - Work visas for young people aged 18-35 (usually)
  - Available for 32 countries and three possible categories
    - » working holiday;
    - » young professionals with a signed offer of employment;
    - » international co-op / internship—for students enrolled at university.
  - You can organize placements yourself or through a third-party organization; this program removes many of the visa faced by those wishing to work abroad.
- Government-recognized organizations that may be able to help with securing visas and internship placements. There may be a fee, depending on the organization:
  - AIESEC ([aiesec.ca](http://aiesec.ca)): paid internships in management, IT, education, social development; voluntary placements also available
  - IAESTE ([iaestecanada.org](http://iaestecanada.org)): internships in technical, career-related jobs
  - CAEP ([canada.caep.org](http://canada.caep.org)): internships in agriculture, horticulture

### FEDERALLY FUNDED, PAID INTERNSHIPS (FOR GRADUATES):

- International Youth Internship Program (Foreign Affairs)

These are available in a variety of sectors. They are for recent graduates, may be paid or unpaid, and provide a minimum of six months of work and training. The list of internships is usually available in the spring of each year. They are highly competitive, but are also required to be very well-structured. Placements usually include pre-departure training and re-entry assistance.

[www.international.gc.ca/development-developpement/partners-partenaires/iyip-psij/index.aspx?lang=eng](http://www.international.gc.ca/development-developpement/partners-partenaires/iyip-psij/index.aspx?lang=eng)

### INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (FOR STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES):

#### International organizations that offer internships

- United Nations internships (See <http://careers.un.org> and <http://undesadspd.org/Youth/UNOpportunities/Internships.aspx>, for internship information in more than 40 different departments and offices)
  - Very competitive: The UN gets more than 800 applications for each opening, and applicants can be from any member



nation. In most departments these are unpaid.

- Internships are usually for students in last year of undergrad programs, in graduate programs, and recent graduates.
- Offered in many different countries, many different fields / sectors, almost all divisions from UNICEF to International Labour Organization, UN Convention on Climate Change, UN International Computing Centre (paid), etc
- World Bank (<http://www.worldbank.org/careers>)—Masters or PhD enrolment, paid.
- International Monetary Fund ([imf.org](http://imf.org))—paid.
- Check your sector of interest (see the careers section).
- Some national governments sponsor paid internships for students. See, for example:
  - Germany's Rise (Research Internships in Science and Engineering) internship program, for Canadians, Americans and Brits. <https://www.daad.de/rise/en/>
  - The Canada-Japan Co-op Program offers paid work experience in a Japanese employer organization for a period of four to twelve months, for eligible Canadian students. <http://thecoopjapanprogram.com/>
- If your aim is to build competencies towards a global career, be open to non-international positions that can achieve this. For example, working in a northern community in Canada could expose you to many of the same challenges you would face overseas. See, for example, Frontier Foundation (<http://www.frontiersfoundation.ca/how-volunteer-operation-beaver>)

#### FURTHER RESOURCES

- LinkedIn: To search for internship listings, go to the jobs tab at the top of the page and put "internship" in the search box. Then refine your search by filling in the boxes on the left side of the page. You can search for an internship (or a job, for that matter) in any country of interest: [linkedin.com](http://linkedin.com)
- *Verge Magazine* program search tool: [vergemagazine.com/program-search](http://vergemagazine.com/program-search)
- There are many organizations that will help you to organize an internship abroad in your field. You must do your own research, but look for reputable partnerships; for example, CRCC Asia, which provides internships in China, has been selected by the British Council to provide internships for UK students ([www.crccasia.com](http://www.crccasia.com)).

## C. WORK ABROAD

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For paid, non-professional work abroad, there are two main options:

- Short-term “working holidays,” which may last up to two years; and
- Teaching English, which quite often requires a degree and a year’s commitment.

### 1. SHORT-TERM WORK ABROAD

Canada has work-visa agreements with 32 countries, which allow young people (generally 18–35) to obtain working holiday visas with relative ease. This eases one major obstacle in obtaining short-term work abroad.

You may apply for a visa directly through International Experience Canada ([www.cic.gc.ca/english/residents/iec/index.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/residents/iec/index.asp)), or go through a government-recognized partner that can help with paperwork and settling into your new country. The best-known partner is the Student Work Abroad Program, or SWAP ([www.swap.ca](http://www.swap.ca)).

Obtaining short-term or casual work abroad is often best done in-country. Risk-taking is integral to this process, and travellers must plan to have some funds to cover expenses prior to finding work. Work that is easiest to come by is often seasonal work, in retail, service or agricultural sectors. However, the working holiday visa does not limit you to any particular sector and working travellers are free to look for other employment.

#### RESOURCES

*5 Ways to Land a Job Overseas*, by Susan Griffith (author of *Work Your Way Around the World*). <http://www.vergemagazine.com/work-abroad/articles/180-5-ways-to-land-a-job-overseas>

*Working Abroad: A Beginners Guide*. <http://www.vergemagazine.com/work-abroad/articles/179-working-abroad-a-beginners-guide>

*Casual Work Overseas Resources*. <http://www.vergemagazine.com/work-abroad/articles/105-casual-work-overseas-resources>

*International Jobs for All Seasons*. <http://www.vergemagazine.com/work-abroad/articles/1394-international-jobs-for-all-seasons>

### 2. TEACHING ENGLISH

Work teaching English is in abundance, and ranges from volunteer positions with short-term commitments to well-paid positions that require a degree, a TEFL certification and a minimum year-long commitment.

There are many organizations all over the world looking to recruit English teachers. In general these job postings are not difficult to find; the real challenge is determining what is a reputable organization to work for. A few resources to get you going:

#### **JET Program**

These are one-year, well-paid placements in Japan, organized and paid for by the Government of Japan. Placements are for either teaching English, or community on international exchange activities. <http://www.jetprogramme.org>

### Dave's ESL Café

A classic website that looks its age. Full of job ads (some fairly dubious), but the site includes some very well used forums where teachers share their insights about various employers and the market in different countries. [www.eslcafe.com](http://www.eslcafe.com)

### ESL101

A newer, Canadian site that has a good job search function. [www.esl101.com](http://www.esl101.com)

### RESOURCES

*TEFL-ution: The Changing Landscape of Teaching English Abroad.* <http://www.vergemagazine.com/work-abroad/articles/1154-the-changing-landscape-of-teaching-english-abroad>

*Teaching Abroad: How to Choose a Credible Recruiter.* <http://www.vergemagazine.com/work-abroad/articles/732-teach-abroad-choose-a-credible-recruiter>

*Look Before you Leap: Six Things to Consider Before Committing to an English-Teaching Job.* <http://www.vergemagazine.com/work-abroad/articles/1054-look-before-you-leap-six-things-to-consider-before-committing-to-an-english-teaching-job>

*Questions to Ask Before Signing a TEFL Contract.* <http://www.vergemagazine.com/work-abroad/articles/1026-six-questions-to-ask-before-signing-a-tefl-contract>

## D. STUDY ABROAD

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### DURING YOUR DEGREE

The best place to start for study abroad options is your own campus.

- Going on exchange through your university;
- Take a language course abroad and arrange credit through your school;
- Look for faculty-run programs and field schools abroad—both through your own university and others, which will make it easier to obtain credit.

There are a variety of other options for studying abroad, but these experiences are cost effective and only open to you while you are a student. Don't forget to check your international office for study abroad funding! <http://www.smu.ca/international/funding-and-awards.html>

### GRADUATE SCHOOL

Undertaking a graduate degree abroad will certainly enhance your international resume and appeal to an international employer. Scholarships are more readily available for graduate studies compared to undergraduate degrees; many universities and governments offer scholarships for international students.

### FUNDING FOR STUDY ABROAD

- **Free or very inexpensive foreign tuition:** Germany, Norway and Finland offer nearly free university tuition, even for foreign students, and also offer many courses in English. Sweden has free PhD programs. Slovenia and Brazil charge relatively low fees and offer some courses in English.

- **Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada** has many international funding programs. This is a good source for information regarding which universities have recently received funding for international programs and field schools, which you may be able to apply for or get funding for. <http://www.aucc.ca/programs-services/international-programs/>
- **Department of Foreign Affairs** provides scholarships and funding information for students wishing to study internationally. <http://www.scholarships-bourses.gc.ca/scholarships-bourses/can/opportunities-opportunitites.aspx?lang=eng>
- **Export Development Canada** provides International Business Scholarships. <http://www.edc.ca/EN/About-Us/Student-Programs/Youth-Education-Program/Pages/default.aspx>

## **E. MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TIME ABROAD**

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- Make a list of the international competencies that you wish to gain, and ensure that you find ways to gain and improve these skills when you are abroad—even if it means signing up for extra activities or responsibilities.
- Reduce your ties with home while abroad. Recent studies have shown that the more students can “unplug,” the greater the benefits. Limit your Skype and social media time; make friends with local students, not people from your own country. You will have a more meaningful and in-depth cultural immersion experience.
- Stay an extra couple of weeks (or longer) and add another experience to your resume. Find a volunteer placement, study the local language, try a homestay program. You will have two relevant international experiences to present to an employer instead of one.
- Work on your communications and social media skills. Communicating about your time abroad will also help you to really think about and process the experience. Blog about your experience, preferably for your school, volunteer program or employer; write an article for a campus publication upon your return. Apply to blog for *Verge Magazine* to get experience, get published, and work with an editor to improve your writing skills (<http://www.vergemagazine.com/program-search/work-abroad/verge-magazine-blog-from-the-field>)

Offer to act as a mentor or contact for future candidates or your program once you return: this will help you to learn and practice communicating about your international experience and the skills you gained. Volunteer with your international office to assist future students going overseas.

Network and stay in touch with your connections overseas after you return home.



## 3 » Researching Careers

### YOU'VE BEEN BUILDING YOUR INTERNATIONAL SKILL SET, BUILDING YOUR NETWORKS...

#### 1. What now?

Define your passion, and figure out how you can make it fit: start by defining what drives you. Then, figure out how you can use it in a global occupation.

Do not dismiss a sector out-of-hand if it truly interests you but you feel unqualified; you may be surprised at what is available.

#### Example: Humanitarian and International Development Sectors

In September, 2014, we held a “Careers for Globetrotters” panel discussion at the Go Global Expo, where four hiring managers discussed openings in the overseas job markets in their sectors. A hiring manager for a large humanitarian organization identified areas of growth and demand. In addition to technical positions (medical, engineering), real and growing needs in this sector include:

- Project management professionals;
- Community service workers;
- HR management, which is now being incorporated more into the design of interventions;
- Communications specialists for liaison and to ensure work on the ground and issues are being communicated effectively;
- Logistics coordinators, to source supplies and find ways to move them where needed.

Likewise, an advisor in the international development field argued that a degree in international development far from the only way into this sector. Some positions that are in demand, and may be less competitive entry-points, include:

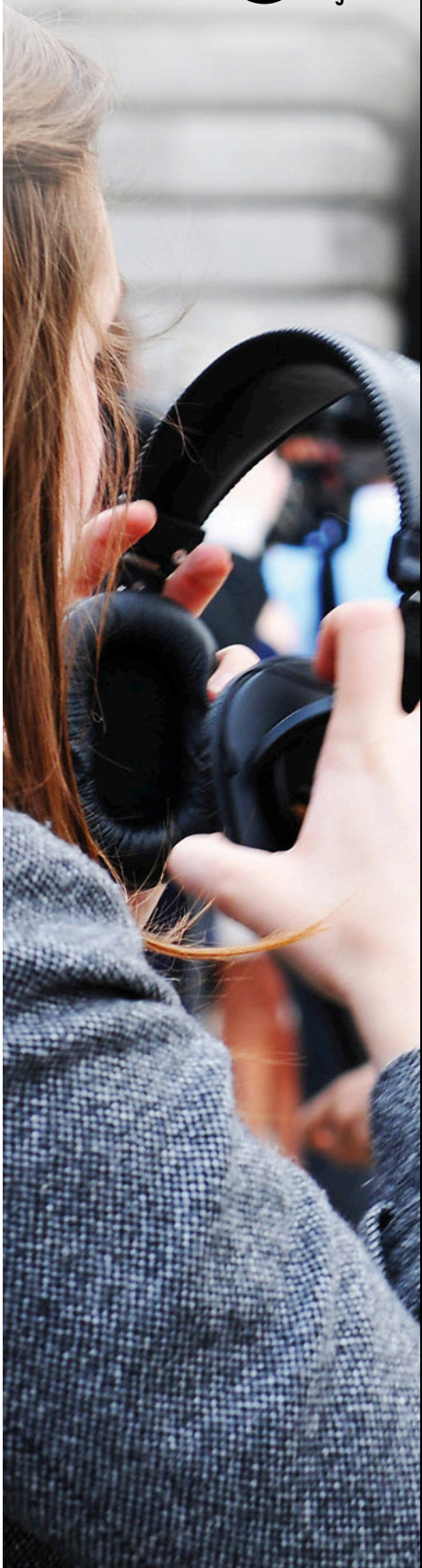
- Fundraising, project management, business, marketing, communications, IT;
- Technical skills such as education, health or engineering;
- Strong administrative office-based skills are vital for many entry-level jobs;

#### RESOURCES

See some related interviews with HR managers:

Alan Noble, Emergency Recruiter at World Vision International.  
<https://humanitarianjobs.wordpress.com/about/interview-alan-noble-emergency-recruiter-at-world-vision-international/>

Esker Copeland, Internship Coordinator at CARE USA. <https://humanitarianjobs.wordpress.com/about/interview-esker-copeland-internship-coordinator-at-care-usa/>



## 2. Where to start the search?

### RESEARCH INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS IN YOUR SECTORS OF INTEREST

Many Canadian professionals who work internationally do so through Canadian organizations. Focus on a specific sector and find out which are the international organizations in that field. There will usually be an international hierarchy as follows:

- World umbrella organization or international organizations
- Regional and national associations
- Organizational members—companies, NGOs, government departments
- Individual members—experts, professionals, students.

This will allow you to research:

- Organizations' mandates, type of work, specializations, regions of operation;
- Job boards, including vacancies, internships, contracts, consulting, scholarships and research grants;
- Contracts recently awarded or up for tender;
- Professional development organizations and international conferences.

Narrow down your search by deciding what kind of organization you want to work for (government, private sector, university, non-profit, international NGO), and what kind of corporate environment.

**Note: Do not dismiss small firms.** They and their vacancies may be harder to find, and networking will be important here. You are likely to have an opportunity to take on significant responsibilities earlier, gaining valuable experience sooner, with a small organization.

**Learn the terminology of your target sector.** This is important for writing a targeted resume, and succeeding in interviews: it helps to show an understanding of the sector.

#### RESOURCES:

*10 Essential Tips for Landing a Job Overseas.* [www.quintcareers.com/landing\\_international\\_job.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/landing_international_job.html)

*How Young Professionals Find International Jobs.* <http://www.mesacc.edu/sites/default/files/pages/section/students/career/IntlJobs.pdf>

## 4 » Networking

Most job openings are never advertised. Networks may be able to provide job leads, advice about a particular company or industry, and introductions to others in the industry. This is particularly important in the international field, as it is generally so competitive.

### BEFORE YOU START—BUILD YOUR PROFILE

Put together a strong resume and a profile on LinkedIn, making sure it includes your international competencies. This will help you connect with contacts, and enable them to learn more about you. Your careers office can help you with this, and further resources include:

- Using LinkedIn Professionally (Boston College). <http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/careers/pdf/2014%20LinkedIn%20Guide.pdf>
- 10 Tips for Students & New Grads on LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/10-tips-students-new-grads-linkedin-omar-garriott>

### GET IN TOUCH

Actively grow your network and seek out people in the sectors and countries that interest you.

- Alumni networks at your university
  - Mentorship program that can put you in touch with alumni in your field or country of interest, for career-related advice and assistance;
  - LinkedIn and Facebook alumni groups where you can contact graduates in your field / country of interest;
  - Search for alumni of your school and university on LinkedIn using the Alumni Tool (start at <http://students.linkedin.com>) and narrow them down by country, field, company, skills, etc.
- Conferences in your field of interest
  - Get involved with organizing conferences on campus;
  - Assist with choosing and booking speakers you would like to meet;
  - Meet and work with university faculty in the fields you are interested in;
  - Attend conferences outside the university—many professional conferences offer student rates or accept student volunteers.
- Careers Office
- Study Abroad Office
- Professional membership organizations
  - Conferences and other networking opportunities;
  - Many also have career and job boards.
  - Your high school principal, teachers, careers counsellors, etc.
  - Friends, family friends, co-workers, colleagues, student group members.





## USE YOUR NETWORK

### Informational interviews

The purpose of informational interviewing is not to get job offers, but to learn about a field, help you decide if it might be a good fit for you, and find out how people get into the sorts of positions that interest you. You may also find out about jobs before they get posted. This is also a good opportunity to get your resume in front of people who may be hiring, without asking for a job and without the competition of other resumes.

One out of every 12 informational interviews results in a job offer. These are much better odds than simply applying for jobs: only one out of every 200+ resumes results in a job. Informational interviewing is a great networking technique.

#### TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- Come prepared: research the company, the types of work and positions, and the person you will be speaking with thoroughly;
- Prepare a list of questions, and have someone check them to ensure you are not missing anything. Don't ask questions in an informational interview that a few minutes research on the web could have answered for you.
- It is also customary and expected that you ask your contact if there is anyone else that they would recommend you speak with to get another perspective on the field;
- Be respectful of the person's time and do not overstay your allotted time;
- Don't forget to follow up with a sincere thank you;
- Stay in touch: develop a strategy for this, and at a minimum make the connection on LinkedIn.

#### RESOURCES:

*Background information about informational interviews.* [http://www.quintcareers.com/information\\_background.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/information_background.html)

*How To Land and Ace an Informational Interview.* <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2013/12/11/how-to-land-and-ace-an-informational-interview>

*Conducting informational interviews.* <http://www.idealists.org/info/GradEducation/Resources/Preparing/Interviews>

*Leveraging your study abroad experience: the informational interview.* <http://www.ifsa-butler.org/for-alumni/leveraging-your-experience.html>

*Quintessential Careers Networking Guide.* [http://www.quintcareers.com/networking\\_guide.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/networking_guide.html)

*Sample questions for informational interviews.* [http://www.quintcareers.com/information\\_interview.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/information_interview.html)



## 5 » Applying for professional positions

### RESUMES

Your resume is a sales document, not a chronological list of your experience. You **MUST** take time to tailor your resume and cover letter for each employer, to show exactly how you are a good fit for the job.

Do the analytical work for the recruiter: demonstrate how your experience has enhanced your international competencies. The importance of each element of your resume should be directly relevant to supporting your employment objective. Show the employer exactly how you match the criteria in the job ad.

In general, resume writing for international positions is similar to domestic positions, with two exceptions:

- A focus on international competencies throughout, and
- If you are applying directly to employers overseas, you may require a CV, which differs significantly from the North American resume, in length, format and content.
  - The BBC provides a list of major differences between regions: <http://www.bbc.com/capital/story/20131022-resume-or-cv-a-global-guide>.
  - A list of countries and expected formats may be found here: [http://www.goinglobal.com/en/topics-overview/?topic\\_id=12](http://www.goinglobal.com/en/topics-overview/?topic_id=12)
  - Considerations for writing a CV or resume for a different country: <http://fordschool.umich.edu/downloads/GlobalResume.pdf>

### BEWARE THE MACHINES

Be aware that online screening has changed the world of applications significantly. In many larger companies, automated word checkers screen to make sure you meet the minimum requirements and compile the initial shortlist. If you are applying online, it is important that you get help with your resume. Consult your careers service and others who are up-to-date with these developments.

### INTERVIEWS

Most advice for non-international job interviews applies equally to the international job market. (The three main themes, according to one recruiter, are: "Why do you want the job?"; "Can you do the job?"; and, "Can I work with you?") However, in preparation to interview for a global position, it is worth reviewing all of your past experience to consider how it can help to highlight your international competencies.

Think of concrete examples related to your experiences that show your ability to, for example:

- Solve problems in unfamiliar situations;
- Be confident yet flexible in a changing environment;
- Work with and learn from people whose value systems are different than yours; and
- Analyse business problems from a different cultural frame of reference.

You may also face situational questions, to help an interviewer understand how you might handle challenges overseas. Often, the aim is to assess your judgement and analytical ability; there is generally no “right” answer. Show the interviewer that you can consider the situation carefully by thinking out loud, for example by outlining:

- factors you might consider when assessing the situation;
- how you might prioritise competing concerns;
- your prior knowledge, or information that you might seek before taking action;
- drawing comparisons with a similar type of situation you faced successfully.

### A FINAL WORD

International jobs are popular for some very good reasons. While the competitiveness of landing a job in some international fields may, at times, be daunting to graduates looking to get a foot in the door, there are plenty of opportunities to gain international experience and skills that will help you to stand out. Eventually, you will find yourself overseas again. Enjoy the process.