
CAREER BENEFITS OF STUDYING ABROAD

Are you wondering how you can translate your study abroad into an experience that employers will understand and appreciate? The National Association of Colleges and Employers survey employers every year about the characteristics they want to see on college graduates resumes. Many of these attributes are competencies that can be developed in part during a study abroad experience if you think broadly enough about your experience. Think about how many times you had to problem-solve (e.g., navigating the Paris Metro or what to do when you left your ATM card in the ATM machine in Cusco, Peru) or communicate across language barriers to get your point across or having to persevere despite setbacks. Reflect back on your study (or work) abroad experience using the list below to brainstorm ways you have developed important career skills that employers are looking for in candidates!

ATTRIBUTES EMPLOYERS MOST SEEK ON A CANDIDATE'S RESUME AND EXAMPLES

ATTRIBUTE	EXAMPLE
COMMUNICATION SKILLS (ORAL & WRITTEN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate across barriers • Negotiation skills • Learned to improve interpersonal communication through increased abilities in listening well, speaking clearly, and paying attention to nonverbal cues • Translating a foreign concept to a language without a word for it
PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolerance for ambiguity • Encountering new situations each day • Coming up to speed quickly • Reading between the lines to understand context
ABILITY TO WORK IN A TEAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept responsibility for actions • Ability to work in a multicultural group • Ability to fit in to new groups • Suspend judgment about people • Open-mindedness
INITIATIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reliance • Achieve goals despite obstacles • Motivation
STRONG WORK ETHIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perseverance • Motivation • Achieve goals despite obstacles • Self-discipline
DETAIL-ORIENTED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn through listening and observing • Understand nuance in language and word choice
TECHNICAL/COMPUTER SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on Individual Experience

ATTRIBUTE	EXAMPLE
ANALYTICAL & QUANTITATIVE SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of lifestyle choices and global consequences • Concern/knowledge of international issues and politics • Have a deeper understanding of the common problems and issues that confront all human beings on this planet
LEADERSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assertiveness • Independence • Understanding/appreciation of other perspectives • Ability to make clear personal choices and goals for my life rather than complying with what others expect and want from me
FLEXIBILITY/ADAPTABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolerance for stress • Ability to cope with difficulty/rejection • Adapt to new environments • Understand that there are many ways to accomplish the same task and that those approaches are only “different,” not necessarily better or worse
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitivity to cultural context • Ability to establish rapport with people different from oneself • Greater ability to empathize • Confident that I can meet and make friends abroad
ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time management skills • Greater focus on career interests • Have the ability to create personal peace and satisfaction in my life
STRATEGIC PLANNING SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking skills • Ability to see a larger picture than oneself • See the world as more interconnected than ever • Clarifying goals and values
TACTFULNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to establish rapport quickly with strangers • Respect for difference and diversity
CREATIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of curiosity • Adapting to new situations requiring novel approaches
FRIENDLY/OUTGOING PERSONALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate self-confidence • Demonstrate self-knowledge • Ability to talk with strangers in a foreign language
ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS/RISK-TAKER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to handle difficult situations • Learning as you go, in the moment • Increased capacity to experiment
FLUENCY IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work in a multilingual environment