

*In today's global world, being able to communicate across different frames of reference and work effectively in other cultures is increasingly important for successful careers and citizenship. An educational experience abroad integrated with a liberal arts education offers students a unique opportunity to develop these abilities and a sense of themselves in a global context.*

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## Marketing your Education Abroad Experience

Studying, interning, or researching abroad offers students a powerful personal and intellectual experience to advance their understanding of global issues, their sense of self in the world, and their ability to communicate across cultural and national difference. An educational experience abroad can also make you stand out in a competitive job market. Surveys have shown that many employers highly value the following skills in their employees:

### Global Competency

- An understanding of global issues and their implications for the future
- Knowledge of the role of the U.S. in the world
- Understanding of cultural diversity in the U.S. and other countries
- An awareness that other cultures and societies have valid views based on the realities of their own circumstances

### Resourcefulness

- Problem-solving skills
- Ability to work independently— without continuous feedback
- Sense of initiative

### Adaptability

- Ability to adapt to new environment
- Confidence in taking on new tasks

### Ability to work as a member of a diverse team

- Greater capacity to accept difference
- Developed interpersonal and cross-cultural communication
- Curiosity about and respect for new ideas

As you think about your experience abroad, you will realize that the skills you developed map very powerfully onto the list above, for example:

- An ability to function in an unfamiliar environment (a new cultural and linguistic context)
- An ability to function in a more unstructured learning environment
- An ability to recover quickly from mistakes and disruptions

### Presenting your Transferable Skills

Be prepared to demonstrate to future employers the connection between what you did abroad and how it relates to what you offer as a candidate. Be sure to include context that provides a sense of the scope and rigor of your experience.

### Your Resume

Include your study abroad experience in the "Education" section of your resume. For example:

*Mount Holyoke Program at Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier, France (Spring 2011)*

Enrolled in regular undergraduate classes, taught in French, at Université Paul Valéry

*School for International Training (SIT) Program in India (Fall 2010)*

Completed seminar, intensive language study, and independent study project focusing on the visual and performing arts of India in the context of religion, politics, and identity

McCulloch Center for Global Initiatives

Where you include internships, research, employment, or volunteer experience abroad on your resume will depend on the kind of position you are seeking. If you are applying for a position that does not have an international focus, include your employment, paid internships, or unpaid activities under the “Experience” section of your resume. For example:

### **Experience**

Marketing Intern, Infosys Technologies Ltd., Bangalore, India (Summer 2010)

- Designed, developed, and launched the website for the Diversity Office on the Infosys Extranet
- Initiated a series of visual campaigns for corporate diversity

English as a Foreign Language Teacher, La Esquela Puerto Carrillo, Puerto Carrillo, Costa Rica (2010)

- Designed lesson plans pertaining to English language development in primary school
- Created ecological project to enhance environmental awareness in the community

Independent Research, Durban, South Africa (*Spring 2011*)

- Conducted interviews with students at six secondary schools on HIV/AIDS awareness
- Analyzed results in senior thesis on gender and education in South Africa

If you are applying for a position abroad or for a position in the U.S. with an international focus and you have had multiple experiences abroad, consider consolidating these under the heading “International Experience.” For example:

### **International Experience**

*Instituto Monteverde, Monteverde, Costa Rica (Spring 2010)*

Study abroad program focusing on global-local challenges to sustainability

*Independent Research (Summer 2010)*

Prescott College Field Station, Sonora, Mexico (Supervisor: Dr. Denise Pope)

- Designed and conducted experiments examining female mate choice in the fiddler crab *Uca musica*
- Completed high honors thesis: “Female mate choice in the fiddler crab *Uca musica*: the role of sand structures in mate attraction” and presented findings at Summer Science Symposium and Senior Symposium at Mount Holyoke College

### The Interview

Is your international experience relevant to your candidacy? If so, be prepared to offer meaningful examples of the way in which the skills you developed abroad translate into skills that will make you effective in the workplace.

- Reflect on the “why” questions
  - Why did you choose to study abroad? Why and how did you choose your program location?
- Give examples that illustrate competency in qualities employers seek. Identify experiences that demonstrate that you can:
  - Creatively solve problems by applying familiar concepts in unfamiliar situations
  - Contribute to a diverse team
  - Take personal risks and act independently
  - Be flexible and adaptable to rapidly changing situations
- Refer to your education abroad experience when answering behavior-based interview questions Examples:
  - “Tell me about a challenging experience you faced while in college and how you handled the situation.”
  - “Tell me about a time when you took a risk. What did you gain or lose from the risk?”