

# **From Study Abroad to Career Abroad: Going Global**

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# My Thesis

- All top workers (2%, elites, owners, and officers) are going to have to be global
- The age of just exporting North American business practices is coming to a close
- For Canadian and American students, the challenge is ***The Bridge Experience***

# Three Recent Waves of Globalization

**First Wave: Production, 1980s to present**

*Products:* 1980-1988, developing countries share of global exports grew from 25% of total to 80%      Cause: falling tariffs

*Services:* 1999-present offshoring of services  
Cause: instantaneous free transmission of intellectual property (Internet)

# Three Recent Waves of Globalization

- **Second Wave: Markets, 2000 to Present**
- Massive new middle classes in China, India, Brazil, South Korea, etc.
- Cause: income from the production wave

# Three Recent Waves of Globalization

- **Third Wave: Talent**, Now into Future
- Cause: The most powerful and pervasive power structures in the world are no longer state governments, but MNC (multinational corporations)
- They want to deploy their most skilled people wherever they want, around the globe
- *They want this, and they'll get it*

# Implications for Workers

- ***Borderless Careers:*** The most highly talented people in the world will be able to go to the most highly paid assignments in the world
- This will be a golden age for the most talented, people with unique, rare, highly valuable skills
- And perhaps a disaster for people who can be replaced by a button (technology or an English-speaking worker in a developing country)

# Major Major Point

- A borderless career may not be abroad
- Employers increasingly want workers who can prove their internationalist skills even if they work most of the time in Tampa or Peoria
- Ability to be successful working with customers/clients/suppliers/partners from other countries is the critical skillset

# The Old Ex-Pat Model

- One to three years abroad
- Executive, spouse, kids, dogs, etc.
- Club memberships
- Kids in “American school”
- 3 or 4 first-class trips home for the entire family per annum

# Reasons for Death of Ex-Pat Model

- Very, very expensive
- High failure rate (early returnees, unsuccessful at mission, divorce)

# New Model

- “Ex-Pats” has negative connotations going all the way back to Colonialism; new term: **ISE (International Service Employee)**
- Young people without families may be stationed abroad
- Young people *from abroad* gain a couple years’ experience in U.S. and return home
- Most common: a lot of TRIPS back and forth; two weeks or a month in China or Peru or wherever, then back to home base in the U.S.

# Sample Modern Model

- Ian F. designs lamps and tables in Chicago in a two-person design firm
- Goes to China four times a year to meet with his production partner, one to three weeks at a time
- Example of a cultural issue: singing Karaoke whether you want to or not...

# Borderless Careers

There is an emerging consensus on the global skillset:

1. A sensitivity to other cultures' norms
- 2. An ability to negotiate norms**
3. Multiple languages

*...BONUS:*

4. A true appreciation for other cultures

# First Step: Mixed Global Teams

What we know about mixed teams...

- Teams that spend time discussing working styles, communication styles, crosscultural issues, emotions, and individual preferences end up more productive than teams that “just start” with a presumption that everyone is on the same page

# Part of the Global Skillset

The ability to **negotiate norms** for interaction:

- Languages
- Flow of ideas
- Treatment of ranks and roles (age/gender/power)
- What **time** means, what “**yes**” means, what a **deadline** means, what a **deal** means
- Negotiations and agreements
- Gifts, meals, holidays

Vital for Understanding  
*(but it's hard to ask)*

- **What is success?**
- **Who has power?**
- **Whom do you trust?**
- **What is the role of the rule of law?**

Sample application:

- If we need to revise the contract, how do we best approach your group?

# From Simple to Complex

- The simple versions of this belie how complex these issues actually are

## SIMPLE STUFF

- Brazilian concepts of time are different from German (certainly important but not subtle)

## MORE COMPLEX

- Concept of Power Distance Index, which has to do with authority and locus of control

# Power Distance Index

- Concept generated by the Dutch business anthropologist Hofstede: *Culture and Organizations: Software of the Mind: Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival* (2005)
- Evaluated IBM executives all over the world to control corporate culture from local culture
- Emotional distance of bosses // subordinates
- Only *one* of the ideas in crosscultural studies

# Power Distance Index

## Low PDI

- Egalitarian
- Social mobility
- Boss is a colleague and a resource
- Ideas flow in many directions
- Power decentralized, “empowerment”
- Denmark, Ireland, Sweden, Australia, Costa Rica

## High PDI

- Hierarchical
- Respect for class differences
- Boss is paternalistic and directing
- Ideas come from above
- Centralized, rules-based
- Guatemala, Philippines, Russia, Arab Countries

# PDI Curiosities

## Low PDI

- Costa Rica
- Swiss German-speaking areas of Switzerland

## High PDI

- Guatemala
- French-speaking areas of Switzerland

# Get Beyond Travel Guides

- It's fun and easy to do the travel guide version
- A real globalist *studies* crosscultural issues and national differences
- You can go as intellectual on this as you want: Tuckman, Permuter, Yoshikawa, Hall, Ofstede, Thomas, Hallpike | a primer: Woesler, *A New Model of Crosscultural Communication*, European University Press, 2006

# Travel Guide vs. Cultural Guide

*Chinese Business*

*Etiquette: A Guide to  
Protocol, Manners, and  
Culture in the People's  
Republic of China*

by Scott D. Seligman  
(1999)

*The Geography of*

*Thought: How Asians  
and Westerners Think  
Differently...and Why*

by Richard Nisbett  
(2003)

# Sample Internationalist Issues

The travel guide info is not trivial!

- The Taiwanese business card incident
- Meeting a Japanese executive in Europe
- Eye contact in America vs. Thailand/  
Cambodia/etc.
- Boss is the boss in U.S., no matter age or  
gender, but in rest of world age and gender  
matters

# More Internationalist Issues

- In Europe, you do *not* ask an executive about his or her family, but you can talk all about money
- In America you never talk about money in polite company, but you are *supposed* to ask about everybody's family

# Sample Crosscultural Miscues

- In Latin America, you do *not* do business at dinner
- In America, you don't even schedule dinner unless it's about business

# Sample Crosscultural Miscues

- In the U.S. it is illegal to ask candidates about religion, marital status, age, and so on
- In India job candidates are expected to reveal their age, marital status, children, religion, and the status and connections of their family
- In Mexico, people over 34 are considered too old to hire in many occupations

# Sample Crosscultural Miscues

- In India, you don't disagree with a superior, and if you manage someone, they will not disagree with you (high PDI)
- In America, some top managers and CEOs have an open door policy, and any worker can walk into the office and ask to speak with him/her (Low PDI)

# Sample Crosscultural Miscues

- In Asia, it is an insult to point with your feet (actually, never point at all); Americans do not understand this
- Among most people worldwide, it is an insult to say, “Your English is very good”

# More Crosscultural Issues

- In Australia, you can tell a dirty joke in a mixed-gender business setting (which would get you fired in the U.S.)
- In Czech republic women executives may dress in what would be considered very racy clothing (cleavage, lace, miniskirts, overtly sexy attire)

# Problem?

- Generalizations are dangerous
- Global differences need to be *negotiated*
- Your “foreign” contact probably speaks perfect English, spent several years in Indiana at some point, and reads etiquette and protocol books for fun...

...or not

# Whose Norms?

- Complex calculus of ...

Who is hosting and who is visiting

Who is buying and who is selling

Who is more internationally experienced

Language in use

Power

# Cosmopolite

- Someone with a global skillset can anticipate cultural differences, and knows how to describe their own culture
- Someone without a global skillset *cannot* do this

# Why Languages Really Matter

- Respect (biggest reason)
- Social engagements are where trust is created; you may speak English all day long, but when you go out at night it's going to be Tagalog or Cantonese or Swiss German or whatever
- Business proficiency is great, sure, but even some is better than none

# Market Languages

Used to be...

- French, Malay, Swahili, ...

Now...

- English
- Chinese (many dialects)
- Spanish
- Japanese
- Arabic (many dialects)
- Russian
- Portuguese ... and of course the local language...

# Parse Your Skill Level in Languages

Specify ability...

- Some or basic - required for everybody *and not that hard*
- Business proficiency
- Fluent
- Bilingual
- Bilingual/bicultural

*Always be able to say, "Sorry, my \_\_\_ is only basic. Can you repeat that please?" e.g., "Lo siento pero tengo solamente un poquito espanol. ¿Mande, por favor?"*

# Internationalize Your English

Avoid colloquialisms; no one will know what these mean:

- “get out of Dodge”
- “bite the bullet”
- “I kept my nose to the grindstone”
- “You Dawg, you!”
- “did a double take”
- “get a leg up”

# Why Go Global?

1. It's interesting
2. It's a great way to live
3. You have no choice

Largest English-speaking nation in the world?  
Not the U.S., and not even India, but China

*People in China are learning English in massive classes in sports stadiums*

# Lots of \$\$ Abroad

- The Hong Kong estate wine auction became the richest in the world in 2009, *only one year after it was inaugurated*, surpassing London and New York
- Macau casinos win is now almost three times as large as Las Vegas, as of August of this year
- Chinese car manufacturers made 10,000,000 cars for the first time while American cars were in double digit declines and various forms of bankruptcy

# Lots of Growth Abroad

The four most populous countries, 2<sup>nd</sup> QTR 09:\*

- China:  $\approx 9\%$  > 4 times bigger than U.S.
- India:  $\approx 6\%$  > 3 times bigger than U.S.
- U.S.:  $\approx -4\%$  (now believed to be  $+3+\%$ )
- Indonesia:  $\approx 4\%$

Also: Canada:  $\approx -3\%$

NOTE: *North Korea* is growing faster than the U.S.

\*according to Trading Economics Global Economics Research (think tank)

# Trends

## Foreign Nationals Are Going Home

- I went to India last year, and their MBAs have no interest in coming to the U.S.
- “Why should I go to the U.S. and have 3% growth when I can stay here and have 3 or 4 times that level of opportunity?”
- U.S. trained Ph.D.s and engineers are going home in record numbers

# Weird Demographic Facts

- Japan, U.S., Europe flat or falling populations; global pop growth is all in developing countries
- Japan & U.S. are going to have massive shortage of middle managers
- U.S. post-boomer generation is 15% smaller
- $15\% + 3\% = 18\%$  job openings
- Japan even higher percentage of elders who will be leaving the job market

# Hidden Implications

- We are facing the greatest time to be an employee in the history of the world
- The greatest gains will go to the most highly skilled:
  - Advanced Degrees
  - Managerial/Executive Talent
  - Mobile, with Global Smarts

# Global Smarts

- *Much* more than language and cultural skills
- Savvy about working with people from different parts of the world
- Take the best of each and the worst of none

# How to Start Becoming an **Internationalist or Cosmopolite**

While in school...

- Take a market language in school and/or
- Buy and use a home-study guide (e.g., Rosetta Stone) to gain familiarity with 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>
- Join international clubs and go to events
- Befriend international students
- Live in the language dorms
- Study abroad

# Making the Most of Study Abroad

- Go for one year instead of one semester or short intensive
- Study in the local language
- Go in the off season (more locals; less English)
- Get into rural areas (English disappears)
- Live with local family (instead of foreigner dorms)
- Avoid the Americans and Canadians you came with

# Leveraging Study Abroad

- **Treat study abroad like a career internship, not a class or a party !**
- Get out and info interview at businesses, NGOs, volunteer sites (set this up yourself)
- Plan on staying after the program is over, *90 days could change your life*
- Get a local girlfriend or boyfriend (the French call this the horizontal university)

# Before You Go

- Investigate study abroad options at *other* universities (most are reciprocal now); look for:
  1. More instruction in the local language
  2. More commerce; less tourism (Frankfurt over Berlin, Guangzhou over Beijing)
  3. More access to local enterprise
  4. Follow-on intern or co-op or volunteer opp.

# Before You Go

- Research the country, the culture
- Mary Ann Thompson, founder of [goinglobal.com](http://goinglobal.com), had 43 information interviews arranged *before* she left for study abroad in Stockholm
- Ask everybody you know, “Do you know anyone in \_\_\_\_\_.”

TIP: 30-year-old connections are still active!

# Do Your Research

- Country Guides, Culture Guides, Portals (especially portals)
- [www.goinglobal.com](http://www.goinglobal.com) has *everything*: local business HQ, local hiring norms and practices, local CV and resume styles, NGOs and volunteer opportunities, visa rules, city guides (hotels, hostels, where to eat, where to party)
- Mary Ann Thompson books on CVs and jobs

# Do Your Research

- [www.workingoverseas.com](http://www.workingoverseas.com), a portal founded by Jean-Marc Hachey -- *Great* info on everything from study abroad to career abroad
- Also see his *Big Guide to Living and Working Overseas*
- For our Canadian viewers and Americans interested in Canada, is strong on this, too

# Do Your Research

To find U.S. HQ of foreign MNC, and offshore HQ of U.S. MNC:

- **Directory of Foreign Firms Operating in the United States**
- **Directory of American Firms Operating in Foreign Countries (3 vol. set)**
- [www.onesource.com](http://www.onesource.com), a site with info on corporations all over the world

Invaluable for finding hiring offices of MNC

# International Co-op & Intern

- [www.icemenlo.com](http://www.icemenlo.com) (international cooperative education)
- International co-op programs sponsored by your university *or another university!*

Example:

<http://www.emich.edu/worldcollege/icee.html>

Eastern Michigan University's World College Co-Op Program

# NGO, Volunteer & Teaching Opp's

- [www.bunac.org](http://www.bunac.org), a leader in service work abroad programming
- The “Opportunities Abroad” section of Michael Landes’s *Back Door Guide to Short-Term Job Adventures*
- Peace Corps (for U.S. citizens)
- Save the Children
- *Alternatives to the Peace Corps*, by Backhurst

# NGO, Volunteer & Teaching Opp's

- *World Volunteers: The World Guide to Humanitarian and Developing Opportunities*, by Ausenda and McCloskey
- *Teaching English Abroad*, by Griffith
- Dave's ESL Café, [www.eslcafe.com](http://www.eslcafe.com)
- [www.jetprogramme.org](http://www.jetprogramme.org), Japan Exchange and Teaching Program

# More Global Volunteer Possibilities

- Habitat for Humanity International

## BIGGEST POINT:

- Don't wait for someone to hand you an idea
- Visit your career center and ask for help
- Google it and go for it

# Late Start?

- Jean-Marc Hachey tip: \$3000 can make you multilingual and change your life
- Antigua, Guatemala – World Heritage Site, \$125 to \$200 week will get you lodging with a local family and half-day language school, in 90 days you'll be conversant in Spanish

# How to Go From Study Abroad to Career Abroad

- You need a “bridge experience”
- Volunteer, co-op, work abroad *after* college
- Extend your study abroad by a summer or a semester, or...
- Go after graduation to teach, study more language, volunteer, work

# Sample Bridge Experience

- Alex G. of Denton, Texas, went abroad with no internship, no job plans, nothing
- Started in Ireland, discovered that Europeans have a trendy interest in American male au pairs, and stayed for months as an au pair to two different families
- He then continued on to Nepal, volunteered with Happy Home Orphanage in Katmandu
- Became the orphanage's IT person, built them a page on Facebook, created a fundraising program
- Called it a "life changing event"
- NOT ALL BRIDGE EXPERIENCES NEED TO BE PLANNED OUT ALL IN ADVANCE

# Sample Bridge Experience

- Whitney W. taught English in Japan on the JET Programme, then stayed to teach English at night to executives and corporate groups
- Was invited to be the global sales rep for a Japanese company! Age: 24
- Did that for seven years, now does commercials as an American flawlessly fluent in Japanese...

# Sample Bridge Experience

- Clarissa H. wanted to go global after getting a bachelor's in mathematics at U.C.-Davis, but didn't have the money to go far
- She discovered that all over the world there are Irish and British pubs, and bars for British and American ex-pats, so she worked her way around the entire globe, gone two years, came back with *more money than she left with*
- Included living for months with a tribe of nomadic Bedouins

# Sample Bridge Experience

- Christine L. got her MBA with emphasis in international business
- Went to Taiwan to improve her Mandarin, taught English at night to executives
- Got hired by a Taiwan-based financial services firm
- Catapulted deep into six figures specializing in Asian investment opportunities

# Alternative to Overseas Bridge Exp.

- Join an American or Canadian company
- ↓ Gain some skills and subject matter expertise
- ↓ Continue to advance your market language skills (*vacation at language schools*)
- ↓ Volunteer for any assignments involving travel or interaction with business units abroad
- ↓ Take on offshore assignments
- Voilà, you're an internationalist !

# Smaller Companies Going Global

- Smaller companies want help going global
- Even a very young careerist with language skills and an offshore co-op or internship could be named European Market Rep or similar

# Typical Corporate Offshore Jobs

- Sales, marketing, advertising, promotions
- Product management, production management
- Logistics, supply chain management
- Engineering (especially oil, civil, infrastructure, heavy industrial stuff)
- M&A and vendor sourcing and vetting (travel)
- IT (usually short-term)

NOTE: Most young people will *not* have car and driver, fancy memberships, etc.

# A Few Notes on Coming Back

- Abroad assignments do not always advance domestic career
- Stay connected to friends, alumni groups, family or coming back may be rougher than leaving
- Pay your taxes! In both countries! (note: for Americans, the IRS Foreign Income Tax Exclusion is currently \$91,400)