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A survivors guide to working overseas





The market for skilled professionals is truly a global one. Candidates with good skills can literally work their way around the world.

However, for every successful move we hear about, there are also plenty of others that end in disappointment and (occasionally) disaster. Most of these could have been avoided with additional research and careful planning.

This e-briefing has been produced in an attempt to ensure that candidates who are contemplating a move overseas give careful consideration to the issues – ensuring they realise a happy and successful venture and enjoy the experience to its full.

Answering these three questions will give you a blueprint for your move

Before you update your resume, pick up the phone, or do anything else, we recommend you ask yourself the following three questions:

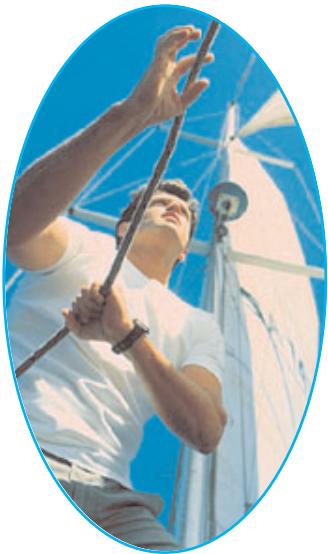
- **why do I want to work overseas**
- **where do I want to go**
- **what do I want to do when I get there**

Why?

There are many reasons why people move overseas – and before you decide to make such a move, it is worth considering exactly what your motivations are. The most common reasons to move tend to be:

Career – possibly the best reason for a move of this type. You will also find there is a very positive knock on effect when (if) you decide to return home again. Companies view candidates that have worked overseas as a sign of self-confidence and get-up-and-go. From your point of view, an international move will enhance your marketability – and hence your rate or salary when you return.

Money – whilst you can earn a good living overseas, we recommend you define exactly what you want to get out of a move financially - taking into account differing local tax rates and cost of living. Having done that, you then have to check that what you are asking for is reasonable.



Remember – companies won't pay much more for international candidates just because they happen to come from overseas – they will look at your worth on their local market – unless ex-pat deals are on offer.

Lifestyle. Another good reason – with some fantastic places available to visit whilst applying your skills. However, we recommend you define exactly what type of lifestyle you are looking for and select a minimum of 2-3 locations that offer such a move. It could be that your Number 1 choice is just not available.

A change. Finally - it is all too easy to get caught up in the daily grind, and as they say, 'a change is as good as a rest' – so, if your only reason for moving is that you fancy doing something a little different, then a move overseas can be a rejuvenating and exciting experience.

Where?

Whilst we would all like to work in our dream location, your final destination may actually end

up being a compromise between your Number 1 choice and somewhere that supports your skill set.

When you do decide on a destination, check it out – do your research and ensure that it can both offer you the range of opportunities you might need and that it matches the expectations and motivations you have already written down.

What?

You need to decide under which status you wish to be making a move – either as a contractor or a permanent employee. Generally, it is easier to move overseas long term as a permanent person, given that the visa and tax issues are taken care of up front – which might fit you if you are looking to make the move for career reasons.

One obvious consideration is how long you intend to be away from home. To make it worthwhile, most candidates go overseas for a minimum of 1 year. However, don't bank on coming home exactly as planned – many candidates end up staying way beyond the initial period of the assignment.



Also - consider the level of position you want to accept. Many people like to believe they'll get a promotion if they move overseas, but the truth is often rather different. When you move overseas, you have to prove yourself again in a new market. So, it is usual to move across at the same level, with some people even having to take a step back (to then take a step forward). Try to remember why it is that companies recruit internationally in the first place – it is because they cannot find the right people locally. If they could recruit locally, generally they would.

Finally, consider what skills you want to use if you move overseas, and whether any of the opportunities you are looking at offer you the chance to pick up new skills or enhance your existing skill set.

Having written your own blueprint for this move, the next step is to source enough good quality leads to ensure you secure the right position.

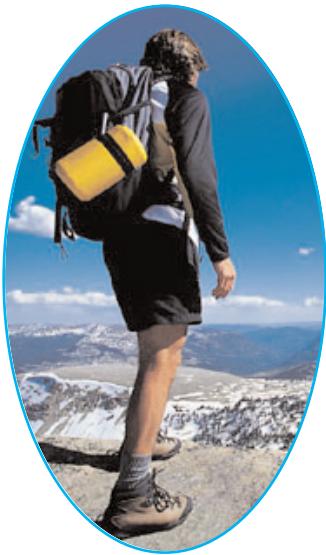
How do I get that dream role?

The Internet is the best source for international positions, with literally hundreds of web sites across the planet offering vacancies for overseas candidates. If you look at web sites local to the opportunities, you may find that these are only looking for local candidates – so do not be surprised.

Another way of finding a position is to keep an eye on the trade press – both at home and abroad. Some of these adverts will be from agencies and others from end companies – no matter - if it looks attractive, call them up.

You can also do your own independent research, and apply direct to companies. This method is hit and miss and very often you'll find that you get a standard reply suggesting that the company doesn't sponsor candidates from overseas – but it could be worth trying.

The easiest way of getting overseas work is to contact a specialist agency. Contact Eutopia and talk to our specialist team.



Using agencies to your advantage

Whilst agencies are often a great source of opportunities for you, there are one or two pitfalls with using them – and as long as you know what these are, you can ensure that you use them to your best advantage.

Use the specification you have written to be specific. Keep an open mind and a flexible attitude to what is being offered, but use your blueprint as a guide to allow the agency or consultancy to match as closely as possible the ideal opportunity for you.

Ask them about their experience in moving people abroad. As the number of international job vacancies has risen recently, so the number of agencies professing to be experts in the area of global recruitment has also risen. Ensure you feel confident that they know what they are talking about.

The agency should work hard to gain your trust – after all, you are putting your career in their hands. At Eutopia we earn your trust by giving you good

professional advice and by helping to make your relocation as smooth as possible. If you don't feel comfortable with what your agency is saying, then walk away – there will always be other opportunities.

Finally – make sure that your agency provides adequate support – before, during and after the move. Again, this will give you the confidence that you are indeed making a good decision.

Other considerations

Assuming you are closing in on a few roles, there are a few important considerations to be aware of:

- **Visa/Work Permit. Do you need a visa, and if so, what type? Who will make the application – you, the end company or the agency? What does it allow you to do and, more importantly, what are its restrictions?**
- **Tax. Where do you pay tax – in your home country or overseas? Could you be put in a situation where you might be double taxed? Conversely, could you get a tax break, given that you are living away from home?**



- **Pay.** How are you going to be paid – and where? Will you get paid for your overtime or receive any bonuses?
- **Cost of Living.** Putting all of the above in context, what is the cost of living like? Given the main expense you may encounter is the cost of accommodation, how cheap or expensive and available is suitable housing?
- **Your Partner/Spouse.** If you have a partner, how do they fit into these plans? If you are not married, can your boyfriend or girlfriend even get a visa to accompany you and what is their status on this permit? Can they work or study or they are consigned to a life of leisure?
- **Schooling.** What about your family – what is the cost of schooling and who will arrange it? How much assistance is provided in getting them (and you) relocated to the new location?
- **Language** – can you get by with English, or do you need to learn a new foreign language?
- **Religion** - do you have any special religious requirements?

Basically, it all comes down to support – ensure wherever you decide to go in the world that you are not on your own.

EUTOPIA HINTS & TIPS

Finally – a few words of wisdom, compiled from feedback from numerous individuals that have already made the move.

“Put the move into perspective”

A lot of people who make an international move do so with the wrong mindset, believing “the grass is always greener”. When you work overseas, you still have to get out of bed in the morning, and turn up to work on time. You still might face a commute – possibly even longer than the one you have now. So, you need to accept that you’re not going there as a tourist, but as a worker. Once you have accepted that, then you can get on and enjoy it a little more.



“Enjoy the differences”

We hear all the time of candidates that arrive in their new locations and begin to complain that “it’s not like home” – that’s right - that’s why it is called abroad. One of the many reasons for going overseas should be to experience something new. So the key is to enjoy the difference – look for the good things (for some of us that could be cold beer!) – and don’t dwell on the bad (every place has them). Stick with it and soon you will be wondering why you hadn’t made the move years ago.

“You get out what you put in”

Our advice is to make the effort. Speak to everyone you get the chance to – people in some countries are more open and communicative than in others – but it is a whole lot easier if you also make an effort. So, speak to everyone – they’ll be fascinated because you are a foreigner – and we promise, you’ll get more out of the whole experience.

“Integrate to succeed”

Basically, grab every opportunity to experience the real place you are living in. Don’t be a pseudo-tourist and hang out at the British pubs (if you’re British) or at the American burger bars (if you’re American). Get involved with the locals, get yourself invited for dinner – get stuck in - and again, you’ll find you become a far more successful international worker.

“Use reputable agencies that give solid professional advice”

Finally, this could be one the most important moves of your life, so don’t leave it to chance by using amateurs.

If you need any further advice or have any questions whatsoever – please contact us today.

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