

TRAVEL THE WORLD ON SOMEONE ELSE'S DIME

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO LIVING AND TEACHING
OVERSEAS

J. M. BOLDOSSER

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~~~~~  
This book is dedicated to my loving wife and to my relentlessly adventurous son.  
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PREFACE

This book came about through a desire to share with others what I have enjoyed over the past few years. I'm no different than the next person, but I'm enjoying life differently than most people. I'm traveling the world using someone else's money. Like others, I work. The difference is that most people work for vacations. I live the vacation.

I wrote the majority of this book during a vacation in Bali. Everything you could possibly image about Bali was the backdrop during my time writing this book. Overall, this book was relatively easy to write. Having experienced various overseas adventures, I have come to know the ins and outs of the process. Considering the financial situation around the world, I thought people should know that there are other options, options that can satisfy personal dreams.

Admittedly, one of my primary goals for writing this book is to show just how easy it is to travel the world. If I can provide enough information and motivation through this book to encourage people to take that leap of faith to travel the world, I have reached my goal. To that end, readers will find most everything they need to do what some only dream of; travel internationally and experience adventures beyond their wildest dreams. In some ways, this could be considered a "how-to" book. Because of the dryness of some how-to books, I have attempted to present the information in an experiential format. The information is presented through quotes, anecdotes, and honest, real-life situations that offer the variables needed to get overseas and to better understand what to expect. I hope you enjoy what I have put together as much as I have enjoyed writing it.

CHAPTER 1

FINANCIAL STRUGGLE

“The world is a book, and those who do not travel, read only a page.” ~Saint Augustine

With a rooster harmonically staking claim to the morning’s dawn, water rhythmically flowing into a crystal blue pool, and traditional Balinese music hypnotically massaging my senses, I ponder how to introduce this book. Had you talked with me two years ago, planning for a vacation wasn’t a luxury I could afford. My vacation planning was virtually non-existent. These days, I’m taking at least two to three lavish vacations a year with several notable adventures in-between. I’m also depositing money into retirement, purchasing land for future development, and spending precious, invaluable time with family. If you’re ready to travel the world and have someone else pay for your adventures, this book will help you get started.

When I return from Bali in January, I have my sights fixed on my smaller adventure in-between, Bintan Island, Indonesia. Bintan is a quaint, little-known vacation destination off the coast of Singapore. Shortly after Bintan, I return to the United States, then head north to explore my newly purchased land in Canada. Throughout my expedition, I’ll canvass several states spanning the eastern seaboard. Along the way, I’ll brave a triathlon, pitch a tent on the cool earth among the protection of pines, and harvest Maine lobster to cook over an open fire. Within six months, I will have experienced three adventures. The best part, I won’t pay for my airline ticket to America. As for the Bali and Bintan tickets, I paid substantially less when compared to in-state flights with similar distances. For me, these adventures were beyond reach living in the United States.

CURRENT SITUATION IN AMERICA

“Capitalism is in its ‘winter’ period - making it very vulnerable to crisis.” ~Dr. Michael Roberts

I think it’s safe to say we’re in the arctic tundra of a financial crisis and many people have already suffered from the bitterness of this economic storm. It’s no secret that the financial situation in many Western countries is a dismal hodgepodge of unfathomable belief. If you’re

reading this book, you're probably all too familiar with the struggles of the middle-class American. Fortunately, many Americans don't need to live this way.

The Lower, The Higher, and Everyone In-between...

Here's a quick, but realistic, synopsis of the ever-changing social structure within the U.S.

Lower Class

Less fortunate Americans, in most cases, receive financial assistance from the government. Recent years have proven challenging for the lower class. Many who receive government assistance have not received a "raise" in their benefits. Although the struggle remains, they will not become overly impacted by the current financial meltdown, as America has arguably established social safety nets for the less fortunate.

Upper Class

Time to scoop up what the middle class sell while attempting to pay their basic bills. The rich get richer, and that's okay.

Middle Class

The middle class drive the economy. Until recently, credit was increasingly available to anyone. In order to maintain a profit, the financial industry needs a catalyst. That catalyst is the middle class. The middle class have fueled the economy with credit. Unfortunately, it can no longer move forward. The dominoes are falling. The winter freeze is upon many middle-class Americans. They have few choices. Are they to dig out from beneath this blanket of crisis or hunker down and hope the season passes so they can begin to save and enjoy the fruits of their hard-earned efforts?

REVITALIZED OVERSEAS

Whether we're talking about failed or "outmoded" products and ideas or frustrated athletes, many stateside success stories often find their place overseas. Consider the 1937, world-changing, forever-lasting, precooked meat product SPAM. For a person who finds intrinsic success from exercise and healthy eating, SPAM generally doesn't find its way onto my menu. At some point in history, SPAM was on every American's grocery list. Like many products, it has lost its place in many American households. Miraculously, SPAM is selling like gangbusters overseas. When buying a prepackaged gift basket in Korea, you're sure to find a

can of SPAM in the mix. Basketball stars, music legends, and cigarettes are no different when it comes to regeneration overseas.

When I lived in the United States, I was convinced the cigarette company Phillip Morris was forever destined for bankruptcy. When regulators required cigarette companies to make consumers aware of the dangers related to smoking, I figured this was the final nail in the coffin. Of course, now that I've traveled the world, I've learned that smoking cigarettes is just as safe and popular as it was when the Marlboro Man gallantly rode into our lives. I'm being facetious with the safety aspect of smoking, but with all the cigarette billboards, company sponsorships, and overall coolness related to smoking in some overseas countries, you'd think smoking was okay. Imagine that! Unmarketable goods in America are marketable elsewhere! People are no different.

In 2008, NBA star Josh Childress went to Europe and captured an income and benefits package rivaling that which he received in the U.S. More recently, some NBA stars, find renewed celebrity status overseas. American cars are also growing in popularity around the world.

Consider Ford's overseas sales. Ford continues to lose money in the United States while increasing profit overseas. If you owned Ford Motor Company, and you were making most of your money overseas, where would you focus your sales? I'm not suggesting that everyone head overseas to test their basketball skills or enter the car sales business. I'm simply shedding some light on the fact that overseas opportunities abound, and they're ripe for the taking!

WHERE DO YOU FIT IN?

"Capitalism is the only system in the world founded on credit and character." ~Hubert Eaton

Credit in America vs. Credit Overseas

I was walking through the mall the other day. As I was walking, I was inundated with brochures. From back massagers to vacation homes, I left holding an oak tree worth of paper brochures. Several brochures were from familiar credit card companies, such as Citibank. Companies like Citibank have expended their time in America. They have moved on to other countries, countries where money is flowing like milk and honey as a result of a middle-class surge.

Having lived in Indonesia for a year without a car, my wife and I decided it was time to purchase one. Without getting into details, our car-buying process was seamless. Our sales representative, Rony, came to our house and helped us complete the loan paperwork. Within two weeks, my brand new car was delivered to my front door. No credit check. We provided a letter from my employer indicating that I had a job. Aside from that, my car representative considered my character. I wasn't just a number. I was a person. On a handshake, I had a car. Isn't that what America was founded on?

I've been overseas for several years now. If I had to compare my overseas life to a point in American history, I would equate it to the 1950's. Granted, I wasn't alive in the 50's, but, based on my father's unending childhood stories, I picture friendly neighborhoods, safe from crime, where people know your name. A sense of innocence permeates the air and the simple pleasures of the day, such as sitting in the ice-cream shop chatting with just about everyone in the joint. Norman Rockwell's *The Runaway* comes to mind. I suppose walking into Cheers, where everyone knows your name might offer a sense of what life's like overseas. It's good. In most cases, it's nothing like what's portrayed on the news. There are many benefits to the overseas life.

CHAPTER 2

BENEFITS OF LIVING OVERSEAS

“I am indeed rich, since my income is superior to my expense, and my expense is equal to my wishes.” ~Edward Gibbon

I'd like to talk briefly about my financial situation overseas. While reading this, consider whether this is something you would enjoy. Consider whether this is something you would like to have in your life. I want you to seriously consider this lifestyle. As you're reading, preface your thoughts with, "I would like." Here we go:

Free housing

Every time I've traveled overseas, my employer has provided free housing. My first overseas adventure started on Jeju Island, South Korea. I was provided a cozy, three-bedroom apartment that overlooked a tangerine orchard. I had arrived on the island late at night. I'll never forget waking up the next morning, opening my living room windows and taking in the succulently sweet smell of the tangerine blossoms. It was one of those moments when the memory is embroidered on your soul. My current accommodation, equally pleasing, is a three-bedroom house with a kitchen, living room, family room, private backyard, three bathrooms, and maid quarters. I don't pay a dime.

•Housing Amenities Paid:

- Water
- Electricity
- AC
- Heat (Not in Indonesia, as it's tropical)
- Repairs
- Local Phone
- Fully Furnished
- Trash Removal

•A Reasonable Cost of Living

•According to Numbeo.com, (which is a wonderful site to gain an initial understanding of general costs around the world) the cost of living in many Western countries is reasonably higher when compared to other, non-Western countries.

Reasonably-Priced Food

The cost of food in many international locations is substantially lower than the United States and many other Western countries. When you consider your monthly budget, you will notice that your food budget (aside from housing) commands your money. The cost of food in most Asian countries is substantially lower when compared to most Western countries. On average, food is approximately twenty-five percent lower in Asian countries than Western countries. There are a number of reasons for higher food prices; one reason has to do with where food is purchased.

Where do you shop for your food? The majority of Americans purchase groceries at a grocery store. In many overseas locations, you're able to purchase most groceries directly from the producer. Purchasing directly from the producer offers a substantial savings not available in many American cities and an opportunity to buy locally-produced foods.

Cheap Fuel

Fuel is a tough topic to address, as there are different aspects to the topic. Most employers pay for home heating bills, assuming you live where heating is required. Most overseas locations use gas to fuel stoves. If the gas is piped into your house, it's often covered by your employer. Because my current housing doesn't require gas (tropical location), my home is not piped for gas. However, as of this writing, my current gas expense for my stove is nine dollars every two months. Why was I willing to pay so much in United States, especially when I had another choice?

Inexpensive Water

Drinking water is another tough topic to address, as water prices vary from location to location. In some countries, it is not recommended to drink directly from the tap. I'm overly cautious about drinking from taps in the States, so I'm a bit biased in this section.

My current, monthly drinking water expense in Indonesia is fifteen dollars per month. This amount does not include showers, sinks, and washing machine, as my employer covers these. How much does a twenty-ounce bottle of spring water cost at your local 7-11? Fifteen dollars a month for a family of three isn't too bad, especially considering it's delivered to your

house. When I was in Korea, water was equivalent to stateside prices. Again, water prices vary from location to location.

Inexpensive Transportation

I rarely (if ever) found myself on public transportation in the United States. Personally, I viewed public transportation for those who were either students or commuters. I was neither. In other countries, however, public transportation or hired drivers, including taxis, is common. It's customary to take a taxi across town or hire a driver for the weekend. Your taxi starting rate for many countries is approximately one dollar. Of course, for many other countries, your starting rate is equivalent or even more when compared to some larger U.S. cities. Bus transportation is often cheap overseas. For the adventurous types, you might brave a ride on a motorcycle taxi, or an ojek as they're commonly called here in Indonesia. If you wish to travel by train, you'll likely find an amazing deal!

Domestic Helpers

In some countries, it is common to have a driver, a maid, and a gardener. We don't drive often, as my employer is located next to my home, but when we do travel beyond our city, we borrow a friend's driver. It is nice to have a maid, though. Our maid lives with us. In many households, maids become close members of the family, albeit this is not the case in our home. We have a good relationship with our maid, but we enjoy our personal space and she respects it. On average, domestic helpers are incredibly affordable.

Respect

As an expatriate, there's a level of respect one earns in another country that's not customary in the U.S. or other Western countries. Many cultures in Asia require a respect for elders and Westerners that is not common in non-Asian cultures. I've never been one to seek respect, but it exists, and if this is for you, you will gain this in Asia, South America, and other locations around the globe. Additionally, overseas teachers garner a respect for their profession that is often lost in the bureaucracies of unions and state budget cuts in many Western countries.

These are just a taste of the benefits that many people currently enjoy during their overseas adventures. Average people, just like you and me, have access to these benefits and so much more. In the next chapter, we begin to dive into the how of starting your overseas adventure.

CHAPTER 3

TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES OVERSEAS

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” ~Lao-Tzu

During my military tour, I was stationed in Texas then South Korea, with short trips to Fort Knox and Death Valley. In Korea, I was stationed about fifteen minutes from the DMZ in the small town of Munsan. Our base served as a speed bump for advancing North Korean troops had they decided to invade. Aside from a few seedy bars and countless rice fields, Munsan was a typical farming town with only a small section with buildings. On the weekends, I would travel to Seoul via train.

For an adventurous, young G.I., Seoul offered unending, shenanigan opportunities for adventure. During my time in Seoul, I met a myriad of non-military Westerners. Who were these people who seemed to enjoy life beyond the restrictions of military rules and regulations? In most cases, these new-found friends were working for international companies or teaching. During my weekend jaunts throughout Seoul, I never met an unhappy expat. There was a sense of unexplainable exploration and joy in their nature. Whenever I had conversations with these people, I was charged with a spark of adventure, the same spark that had prompted me to request a station overseas in the first place. Little did I know, my family and I would return to Korea ten years later. Once you've been bitten by the travel bug, there is no turning back!

I often speak from an Asia perspective when referencing my overseas adventures. It's only fair that I do so, as my overseas experience primarily involves Asia. As I'll note later, there are many other overseas options.

My wife and I started our overseas adventure when we determined that our “American dream” was turning into a nightmare. Long story short, our income simply did not accommodate our basic living expenses. In essence, we were upside down. Did we bite off more than we could chew in terms of our lifestyle? No, given that many Americans were (still are!) experiencing a similar situation, one must conclude a different cause. I'm not an economics professor, but I'm guessing that the cost of living outpaced income. Couple that with sending jobs overseas, thereby reducing income (supply and demand 101), and you have a recipe for disaster, an arctic tundra in which many Americans have found themselves. Psychologically,

this sort of situation can have a devastating impact on a person's well-being. Like many Americans, I simply wanted a life for my family that didn't force us into public housing or unable to meet basic needs. In these situations, we reach a point where we can either blame others for our misfortunes, or we can take the situation into our own hands and make a change.

My changing point occurred on a cold Sunday morning pulling into our church's parking lot. Barely arriving, I struggled with the realization that I was driving a rapidly deteriorating, violation on wheels that had about a month until it met its final resting ground. I had to make a change, and I did!

Our First Stop... Sub-Tropical Jeju Island, South Korea.

Jeju Island is South Korea's Hawaii. Lush, green palm trees, white sandy beaches, and a magically-inviting dormant volcano served up the prescription we desperately needed. Traditional Jeju seafood dishes are second to none in taste, creativity, and visual appeal. The island is famous for irresistibly inviting tangerines and orange chocolate. Having the opportunity to live on the island was a surreal adventure, an adventure for which I did not pay. Teaching on the island was just as exciting.

The first thing to know about teaching overseas is that almost every Asian country wants you! Whether you have teaching experience or not, you have English experience, and that's what they're hungry for. Many people believe that they are unable to live an overseas life because they don't have teaching experience. That's simply not true. Teaching English overseas is an amazing opportunity to explore places about which most Americans only dream. What most people don't realize is that almost everyone is a natural teacher. Granted, there are good teachers and there are average teachers.

A Day in the Life of an "Average" Teacher

Stories about classroom teaching experiences permeate the overseas coffee houses and pubs. I worked with a "single" teacher at a hagwon (private English academy) in Korea. We'll call him Chris. Chris was the most fascinating person I had ever met. His carefree love of life was the envy of anyone with whom he came into contact. He was personable, friendly, and easy to talk with. He was also an average teacher.

Chris had a bachelor's degree in psychology. As a relatively newer teacher, I would arrive at school about an hour before my first class and remain about an hour after my last class. Chris would come in minutes before it was time to teach and leave even faster after his last class.

I never clearly understood how he managed, but did have an opportunity to observe his classroom on various occasions.

Chris' students were normally reading or playing games. He was usually facilitating the games or "working" on his computer. Chris was a social butterfly. He had many friends outside of work; he was nowhere to be found on the weekends. As a newer teacher, I learned a lot from Chris. Chris maintained the position that many Asian families want to be surrounded by English material, English conversation, and English-based activities. Many people don't realize that English teachers not only teach grammar, spelling, and sentence structure, but they also teach a thought process that can only be realized via the English language. As a teacher, I realize the benefits to English immersion, but there's definitely more to teaching than simply reading books and playing games. That's what most "good" teachers realize.

This book does not focus on how to teach. Many newer, non-teacher, teachers will simply reference their own, in-school experiences when stepping into a classroom. Couple that with direction from your employer, and everything will work out. I won't boast, but most parents wanted their children in my classroom because I enjoyed teaching English, math, science, or any other subject, so long as it was conducted in English. I enjoyed the preparation time I had spent on weekly and daily lessons. At first, it was challenging, but the rewards were plentiful, both in and out of school. More important, once I had done it for a while, I was able to leave early and arrive shortly before class started. I was becoming an efficient teacher. I was beginning to enjoy the fruits of my labor, the fruits of living overseas.

Licensed Teachers and Non-licensed Teachers

You do not need a teaching license to teach in many places overseas! You don't even need a teaching degree. As I had said, if you are a native, English-speaking person, you can travel overseas on someone else's dime! When I traveled to Korea to teach, I did not have a teaching license. I had a Bachelor's of Science in Liberal Arts. If you have a Bachelor's degree, you can begin your overseas adventure on someone else's dime! While I wrote this book, ninety-five percent of the job listings on one of the largest overseas employment boards were Bachelor-only positions. In some cases, as you'll read in the article, *Get a Job Teaching English Overseas Without a University Degree*, you don't need a Bachelor's degree. Like every profession, there are different degrees of teaching.

Certified English Teachers

Some schools pay more if you are certified. Some English certification courses take only a few months. You can find a list of English certifications toward the end of this book. If you have the time, you can earn a state-certified teaching certificate. There are a few online institutions that will provide these endorsements. In many cases, this can be done within two years. It's nice to get overseas with your Bachelors and start a teaching certification program while you're there. Finally, if you wish to earn your teaching certificate, most states have "alternative licensure" programs. These programs are state specific, and it's best to research your state's requirements.

Whichever avenue you choose, it's important to realize that you do not need a teaching license or an English teaching certificate to teach in many places overseas. As you will see when perusing the sites I have listed at the end of this book, you only need to possess a Bachelor's degree to enjoy the benefits of an overseas adventure.

CHAPTER 4

BENEFITS OF TEACHING OVERSEAS

“Like all great travelers, I have seen more than I remember, and remember more than I have seen.” ~Benjamin Disraeli

There is a plethora of considerations when traveling overseas. You’ll be happy to learn that most overseas considerations aren’t as complex as one may think. More often than not, the benefits outweigh the trials.

Pay

Pay varies, and in some cases, is very negotiable. Salary depends on many factors, and it’s best to research the difference within the sites I have provided. On average, an overseas teacher earns about twenty-four thousand to fifty thousand annually. It’s difficult to talk about what’s a decent salary, as a person’s quality of life differs from person to person. Take the time to review different positions to get an idea of what best suits your situation, goals, and needs. We’ll talk more about this later.

Housing

Overseas housing is often viewed in the worst possible light. One of the first questions from home is, “What’s your house like?” I couldn’t help myself when my family asked about my housing in Korea. For the longest time, my family honestly believed that my accommodations consisted of a dirt floor, a scrap metal roof, and a distant outhouse. Housing conditions are always negotiable. When reviewing your employment contract (see the sample contract at the end of the book), you will learn more about your housing. Almost all overseas employers provide housing, free of charge. If they don’t, consider looking elsewhere.

Medical

The U.S. is a business-driven society. That said, most medical plans revolve around corporations getting paid. This is not the case in many other countries. Most employers include medical plans without a fee or with a nominal fee. In some instances, the host country provides medical care.

Two weeks after arriving in Korea, my son developed pneumonia. His white-blood-cell count dived well below a healthy level. My wife and I were devastated. Our overseas journey

was crushed by his sickness. He spent one week in the hospital, went through a deluge of blood tests, and received an onslaught of medication. At one point, he was transferred to another, more suitable hospital where he spent another week. The cost of similar treatment in America would have been incomprehensible. When all was said and done, we paid approximately one hundred dollars for the entire situation. Whatever your position on socialized medicine, there's a piece of mind knowing that a loved one receives reasonably-priced health care without the worry of finances. You'll want to conduct your due diligence to find out what your overseas health insurance covers. In some countries, "health insurance" might not provide much assurance.

Food

I touched on this earlier. It's difficult to discuss food, as dining preferences differ from person to person. You can purchase food from a grocery market, the local market, or street vendors. Obviously, you will get a better deal from street vendors and the local market. Dining out differs from one location to another. During the authoring of this book, my family (a family of three) can expect to pay about ten dollars for eating out. Again, this differs for every location, but overall, the cost of food is less expensive in many overseas countries.

Airfare

I love talking about airfare for overseas carriers. Because of the low cost airfare, I have gone on over three vacations within six months. There are a multitude of air carriers in Asia that offer sweet deals to a number of locations. At the time of this writing, the airline Airasia offered fifteen dollar flights from Malaysia to Seoul Korea. Every six months or so, Airasia offers free tickets to various locations around Asia. If you're one of the lucky ones to catch a free ticket, all you have to pay are the airport taxes. Their slogan, "Now Everyone Can Fly," is true. My wife and I had "purchased" free tickets to Malaysia by simply paying the airport taxes. The seats were free!

THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE UGLY (EMPLOYERS)

Good Employers

While in Korea, I worked for a wonderful couple. My son became very close friends with their son. Our family had dinner at their home on a number of occasions. As employers, they always brought the employees out to dinner, purchased holiday gifts, and ensured our needs were met. Our first overseas experience was a golden steppingstone for things to come. Not all employers are peaches 'n cream.

Not-So-Good Employers

I mention unpleasant employment situations as a precaution. It's not the norm to experience unpleasant employment situations. However, they do exist, and it is recommended that once you have identified potential employers, you do a Google search and check their history. I'll cover more about the employment process later, but you can search a company's name to ensure they are a reputable company.

By this point, you're wondering whether this adventure opportunity is for you. As you've seen, the benefits are immense and they're real. The next section offers an opportunity for self-assessment, an opportunity to see if an overseas adventure is for you!

CHAPTER 5

IS IT FOR YOU?

“Happiness includes chiefly the idea of satisfaction after full honest effort. No one can possibly be satisfied and no one can be happy who feels that in some paramount affairs he failed to take up the challenge of life.” ~Arnold Bennett

Goals (wants)

Chances are, if you’re reading this book, you have a desire to break free from your current situation, travel overseas, and explore endless possibilities. At this point in the book, it is time to stop reading and make a list of why you wish to travel overseas. As everyone’s life goals are different, I can’t paint this picture for you; I can only give you the facts. Take a minute to write out a list of ten reasons you wish to travel overseas. It’s important to place any reservations, blockades, or other impediments, whether psychological or physical, aside while assessing your desire to travel overseas. STOP! Write this list before moving forward. It’s important to understand why you wish to make this life-changing move before moving on to the next section.

Devil’s Advocate

I couldn’t, in good faith, write this book without presenting the obvious. When I operated my mortgage company, I ensured that every customer knew exactly what they were getting into. My company’s mission statement included, “striving to meet our customer’s goals.” I could have refinanced hundreds of homes. Many of my customers came to me because something wasn’t quite right with their financial situation. Had I simply offered a quick fix and stuffed a little extra cash into their pocket, I would have been untrue to myself and untrue to my clients. Often was the case that my clients did not understand their goal. Through honest conversation, we were able to discover what they truly needed. From there, I discussed their options, providing all details in an easy to understand manner. Traveling overseas is easy to do, but it’s also life-changing. Did you read that correctly? It’s life changing. You will forever become a new person after traveling overseas. You’ll see and hear things differently. The worldview lenses through which you have spent the majority of your life basing decisions,

judgments, and experiencing emotions will crack and crumble into something mind opening. Here's a list of often-overlooked factors you'll need to check against your personal goal list.

Different Culture

Are you prepared to enter a different culture? The positive differences seriously outweigh the negatives when considering different cultural perspectives, but things are different, and YOU need to adapt to the culture; the culture will not adapt to you! Time and time again, I had experienced expats who wanted to do things the "right way." Interestingly enough, if you allow a culture group to function within their own environment, you come to realize the truth behind the statement, "There's more than one way to skin a cat." In some cases, the "wrong" way is better! You definitely want to study up on the culture for whichever country you choose.

Many of the cultural difference you'll experience traveling overseas will prove either "weird" or worth a smile. It's all about perspective. If you're able to accept cultural differences, your overseas adventure is going to be fun! Overall, people are friendlier and more willing to engage in conversation overseas. I hesitate to say this, as there are plenty of U.S. cities that offer friendly people. My overseas adventures have always included curious, smiling people greeting me in almost every situation.

Traveling

I had once read that eighty percent of Americans don't own a passport. Having traveled the world, this was shocking to me. Most people from other countries have passports. I don't know where you stand when it comes to traveling, but there are things to consider. We'll talk more about this later, but here's a short list of factors you'll need to consider before traveling to another country:

- Passport
- Travel insurance
- Luggage
- Medications
- Important contact numbers
- Registering with local embassies
- Travel money
- Pre-medical visits/shots

Finances

Obviously, unless you're sitting on a nice trust fund, you need to consider your income. When you start exploring your opportunities, you need to factor your income and debt. You also need to consider your goals.

Health concerns

I'm a relatively healthy person. I've never factored my health into my travel decisions. However, you might need to consider your health and your destination. Are the health benefits adequate to suit your needs? Are you close enough to a hospital should something go wrong? Each country is different. For example, Korea covered all expenses for my son. Indonesia, on the other hand, is different. Again, it depends on the country and your employer.

Family

Your family will influence your decision to go overseas or to stay overseas once you're there. I recommend talking with family, friends, church members, or other support people after you have completed your research on traveling overseas. Depending on your family, you need all the facts before presenting your case. In many cases, you'll have to argue for familial support.

THE FAMILY FACTOR

"Be who you are and say what you feel because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind." ~Dr. Seuss

I'm not a huge fan of the Harry Potter series. I am, however, a fan of the author's determination. J. K. Rowling's first book was rejected by countless publishers. Because of her determination and fortitude, she now ranks as one of the highest paid female authors. Steve Jobs said it best, "Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice."

Nay Sayers

Before traveling overseas to teach, I was a soldier stationed in Munsan, South Korea. One night, some friends and I decided to go out on the town. When I returned to phone my parents, I was shocked to learn that CNN had just reported North Korea was about to invade South Korea. Yikes! This was shocking news to me, as I was stationed not far from the DMZ.

The Western media has a way of demonizing some other countries. Don't get me wrong. This book's purpose isn't to criticize the media. For the longest time, I believed most of what I had heard or read in the news. My new worldview lenses have changed all of this since traveling overseas. For family members who have not traveled overseas, their perspectives are based on what they know, and most of what they know comes from the television. Unfortunately, television often portrays traveling to distant places as dangerous, too expensive, or otherwise unrealistic.

Selfish Reasoning

It's not easy leaving family to create your own path, to choose your own adventure. Our families do not want us to leave. At some point, you'll need to ask yourself whether you'll be able to live apart from family and close friends. Once you've signed a contract and you're in that airplane, there's no going back. Getting to the contract stage is the hardest part!

Many times I've heard a family member say, "I'd love to travel to another country" or "I'd love to travel across America." I simply cannot understand why people tell me I'm living a dream, which I am, but they choose not to live their own dreams. Why on earth would someone live a life and choose not to satisfy a dream?

You can spend your life wishing to do things, or you can live your life to its fullest potential. Our choices today have an everlasting impact on tomorrow. Will you choose to continue down a path that promotes the same tomorrow, or will you choose an adventure that comes with exploration, seeing new and exciting places, and meeting new and interesting people? The choice is yours.

CHAPTER 6

I'M READY TO GO! NOW WHAT?

“Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in where nature may heal and cheer and give strength to the body and soul.” ~John Muir

Steps to Getting Overseas

Determining needs and wants will determine where you'll go and what you'll do. Basic needs must be met in order to survive. Obviously, you need food. Your needs might be different from my needs. I need a certain amount of money to feed my family. A want, on the other hand, is something you wish for. I want the new HP Slate 500 running Windows 8. I can attempt to rationalize my want so that it looks like a need, but, in the end, it's a want, and I don't need it.

Needs

You'll want to take some personal reflection time on this next section. You've already created a short list of why you want to travel overseas. Let's add to this list specific needs and wants. For each section below, write what you need. It is very important that you complete this step, as you will consistently reference this list later in the process. Here are some example prompts and considerations under each required section as guides to help your planning.

•Financial

- Pay for your child's education
- Fund travel adventures
- Support quality of life
- Save for retirement
- Pay off debt

•Quality of life (environment)

- Dietary needs/restrictions (allergies, preference, etc.)
- Cleanliness (hygiene, showers, toilet, etc.)
- Mountainous region
- Close to a beach
- Internet/cable
- Walking trails

- Diversity

- Clothing

My good friend Steven struggled with shoes in Asia. He had to special order his size 15 from the U.S. A “large” size in Asia is sometimes a “small” size in the U.S.

- Safety

- AC

- Family/Personal needs

- Schooling

- Home-school

- Public school (cultural impact)

- Private school

- Housing

- Community

- Vacations/Time off

- Language Barrier

- Health Care

- Medications

- Personal liability

- Personal health concerns

- Dental

- Eye care

- Family doctors

- Medical facility location

- OB-GYN

- Transportation

- Personal car/motor bike

- Public transportation

- Bicycle

- Your feet

Let’s take some time to make a list of things you want. For example, I would enjoy several retirement properties. I’ve always found the “snowbird” lifestyle incredibly appealing.

Moving to the Northeast in the summer and flying to Florida in the winter sounds great to me. Is it a need? Not really, but it's definitely a want that I would find needful! Make a list of short-term wants and long-term wants. A short-term want is six to twelve months out. Long-term wants are farther out, such as two to five or six to ten years out. STOP! Take the time to create these lists. Doing so provides clarity and vision to your overseas adventure. Now that you know what you need and what you want, let's make a match and kick start your overseas journey!

LET'S MAKE A MATCH

This next section is a step-by-step explanation on how to find an overseas position and get there, from start to adventure.

1. Create your resume

KISS (Keep It Simple Student)

However you decide to structure your resume, just remember this, keep it simple and try to stay within one or two pages. I've provided an example resume in the back of the book. Never lie on your resume.

Picture

Most overseas employers require a picture. Faceless qualifications are often enough to secure an interview in the U.S. Overseas employers want to know what you look like. Right or wrong, it's part of the process. I often cut and paste my picture in the upper right hand corner of my resume.

2. Search positions

I have provided employment research links to get you started on searching for your position. Many of these links are established sites. If they're no longer available, search the sites on a major search engine (e.g., Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc.).

Find five companies that meet your needs and wants. After locating these companies, submit resumes to them and let the process run its course. While waiting for a response, start making a list of other companies to contact. You will get hired either by an employment agency or directly by the company or school. There are agencies that charge people to find positions. Many agencies are paid by the employers, not the employee. I have never used an employment agency. Whether you're hired by an agency, a company, or a school, you should never have to pay another person to find a job for you.

The employer must meet your needs or it's not a good fit. Not all of your wants must be met. If the employer does not meet your wants, but meets your needs, it might not be a bad thing. Remember, once you're overseas and you begin to make contacts, your options expand exponentially. Don't wait for the perfect fit. You might miss an opportunity to start your adventure! On the other hand, don't jump on the first offer, unless, of course, it's the perfect fit.

3. Adjust (don't lie) your resume to accommodate the position

Highlight your abilities as they meet the needs of the employer. For example, if the employer wants you to have experience with Microsoft applications, mention how you used Outlook, Word, and Excel while working at the general store. This is the time to sell yourself. Don't sell yourself short! What you see as common knowledge might just be the experience an employer is looking for.

4. Submit requested application requirements

CHAPTER 7

THE BATTLE PLAN

“A good battle plan that you act on today can be better than a perfect one tomorrow.”

~General George S. Patton

Staying Organized

When I first started searching for overseas positions, I sent out twenty applications. At the time, I didn't realize all twenty would respond. In the U.S., you're lucky to receive one or two "we'll keep your resume on file" responses. Receiving twenty responses was great! Unfortunately, I could not remember which adjusted resume I had sent to each employer. Was it the one where I had emphasized my computer skills, athletic skills, or business background? I failed to organize notes. In the end, I had no idea which employer to choose, as I couldn't remember what information connected to which company. Learn from my mistakes; remain professional!

- Keep track of employer communication. Take notes in Google docs (docs.google.com) or a separate Word document.

- If you write notes, maintain a paper folder and ensure to use one sheet of paper for each company.

- In your notes, record which resume you had sent. Placing a number at the end of the resume name will assist in doing this (i.e., James1, James2, James3, etc.)

Types of Responses

- We need you now! Run!

- If you receive a response that says they need you tomorrow, you'll probably find, through your due diligence, that there's something wrong with the employer.

- It's customary for many overseas, English schools to hire within two to four weeks of when they need someone. Be wary of schools that need you next week (assuming they have a bad reputation), but understand that some overseas employers are poor planners. Your employer research will help you make a decision in this area.

- Language

- KISS (Keep It Simple Student): When communicating with a potential company, don't demonstrate your advanced English skills. Remember, the employers are hiring you to teach English. If they were native English speakers, they'd do it themselves. KISS and don't use "big" words.

- Improper grammar: Plan to work with improper grammar or broken English. It comes with the territory.

- Smile with your words: I can't speak for non-Asian countries, but when communicating electronically, your words must remain clear and friendly. In Asia, a person will tell you her mom died while smiling through the entire conversation. Smile with your words and remain friendly. Anything else is rude and might ruin an opportunity at a great position. Placing a smiley face in an email communication is okay!

- Be friendly...enough said.

- Everything is negotiable

- Pay (If you find that a position almost meets your needs, don't hesitate to send a resume. In most cases, you will likely get what you want.)

- Benefits (I have already mentioned some of the basic offerings of overseas employers in Chapter 4. If an employer fails to offer these "basic" benefits, ask for them. Chances are, you will get them.)

- Hours (It's sometimes difficult to negotiate hours, as many schools sell their services to parents. Their schedules are often controlled by the parents. Negotiating a half hour to an hour difference might be worth a try, but don't hold your breath.)

- Nothing is permanent (When you arrive on location, don't be surprised if something within your contract has changed. If you have something in writing from the employer, whether in e-mail or in your contract, don't hesitate to smile and remind them of their commitment. It's common for things to change upon arrival (i.e., hours, benefits, classes taught, housing, etc.). It comes with the territory; pick your battles.)

YOU FOUND A POSITION

Contracts will vary from country to country and company to company. I have provided a sample contract at the end of this book. If you have to hire an attorney to review your contract, you probably need to consider another position. Contracts are generally easy to understand. If

sections of the contract seem confusing, ask the employer for written clarification. Make sure you keep all written communications.

Contract Terms

- Income
- Airfare (to/from)
- Benefits
 - Insurance paid by employer and amount paid by you
 - Insurance for you and your family
 - Tax responsibility for host country
 - Government retirement scheme
- Housing
 - Shared/single
 - Distance from the school
 - Details (apartment, house, rooms, bathrooms)
 - Furnishings
- Hours
- Working days
- Vacation days (when, back-to-back, government holidays included as vacation days or are vacation days separate from those, etc.)
- Sick days, personal, maternity, paternity (not common overseas), bereavement
- End-of-year bonus
- Classes (minutes, number of students, goals, etc.)
- Length of contract (one year, two years, months, etc.)
- Transportation to school
- Termination/quitting/renewal
- Visa support
- Meals
- Classroom details (i.e., co-teacher, etc.)

Research the school

- Move fast, but don't rush the situation. They need you!
- Forums

- Once you have identified a few schools or employers, it's best to conduct your due diligence, background research on the school. A simple Internet search using Boolean search techniques will likely pull a multitude of information on the school. It is imperative that you do not skip this step, as it will prevent many headaches.

- Not all bad are bad

- Not all negative reviews or school comments are bad. Many people head overseas with rose-colored glasses. Unlike the recommendations in this book, they choose to head over without comparing the employer offerings with their individual needs; they fail to perform their due diligence. In the end, they feel cheated. The result, they demonize the school with unwarranted reviews, comments, or character attacks. If you follow my instructions, you will successfully navigate past biased comments.

CHAPTER 8

MOVING FORWARD, A FEW MONTHS TO DEPART

“Success always comes when preparation meets opportunity.” ~Henry Hartman

A Few Months to Move

- Employers will instruct you on visa requirements

- Country Consulate: Your employer will require that you get a visa from the closest consulate. For U.S. citizens, the U.S. Department of State offers country locations on their website. Obtaining a visa can take anywhere from a day to a week. Don't wait until the last minute to take care of this. Before my family and I first traveled to South Korea, we had planned a day trip to travel from Burlington, Vermont to Boston, Massachusetts, South Korea's closest consulate location. By that time, we had everything we owned in storage, our bags were packed, and all farewell parties were behind us. With tickets in hand, we were booked to leave the next day! We were shocked to learn that we couldn't receive our visas for several days. Don't find yourself in this incredibly stressful situation.

- Paperwork: Your new employer will provide the necessary paperwork needed to meet the visa requirements. Upon receiving this paperwork, it's best to contact the local consulate to ensure they don't need additional documentation. In many cases, you might need to travel a significant distance to complete the visa requirements. Make sure you're prepared. You don't want to have to make two trips.

- International Travel Health Insurance

- What: International Travel Health Insurance is a temporary health insurance used when you travel.

- Why: You never know when something will go wrong. It's better to be safe than to be sorry. Most employers do not provide international travel insurance. I purchased insurance for my first trip overseas. Once I felt comfortable with the overseas travel process, I chose not to purchase the insurance. If I weren't traveling with a child, I would not have purchased the insurance during my first trip. Of course, this is discretionary, and I suggest considering your personal situation.

- Where: I cannot recommend any company over another. However, through a basic search, I found a credible company.

- Storing your stuff

- There are a multitude of self-storage companies. Your goals will determine your storage needs. When I went overseas the first time, I owned my home. Storage for me was simple: I stored my personal belongings in my basement. You can rent a storage unit or borrow some space at a family member or close friend's home.

- Storage insurance: If you rent a space, you might consider purchasing additional storage insurance, usually sold by the storage company. Famous tennis athlete Pete Sampras lost invaluable trophies and other items related to his astounding tennis career due to a storage facility theft. Unfortunately, these items were not insured. If storage theft can happen to Pete Sampras, it can happen to you!

- Dressing for the occasion

- Cultural Considerations: When conducting your research, you'll learn how best to dress upon arrival. When I researched living in Indonesia, I learned that darker colors were appropriate and to cover my skin. Upon arrival, however, I had found that my research was unfounded. I could basically wear clothing I would normally wear in the U.S. I suggest following your research until you understand what's normal for the host country.

- Weather: Dress for the occasion. When I traveled to Jeju Island, South Korea, I brought just about everything in my wardrobe. Coming from Vermont, this worked, as the island did, occasionally, receive snow. Traveling to Indonesia was a different story. I brought along a few long-sleeved, dress shirts and sports jackets. I rarely wear long sleeves, and I have never worn a sports jacket. Travel light and bring clothes that you know you'll wear. If you plan to visit home, keep a few sets of appropriate clothes for your travels.

- Professional wear: When speaking with your potential employer, you'll want to know what is normal attire. This is usually mentioned in the contract. Some Asian companies require a formal uniform. Whatever the case, you'll want to ensure that you have the necessary clothing to meet your employer's requirements.

- Overseas sizes. For the most part, "Asians" are smaller than Westerners. Consider my friend's size fifteen shoe. If you wear a larger size, it may be difficult to find shoes or other

personal clothing. You might not encounter this in Europe or South America, but it's definitely something to consider when traveling in Asia.

- What to pack

- Most countries have most everything you'll need to survive. Through due diligence, you'll know what you can and cannot purchase. Make sure to bring "hard to come by" items.

- Location of items: Having been overseas for a number of years, I've learned that you cannot truly understand what you can get on location until you get there. Do your best to conduct due diligence for needed items, but realize that you will not know what is attainable until you're on location.

- Niche items: Spices, cooking supplies, and English books are sometimes difficult to get.

INTERVIEWS

I decided to include personal interviews as a way of offering different perspectives about traveling and teaching overseas. Interviews provide a down-to-earth understanding that helps a person make the decision whether to travel overseas and/or what to expect. As you will read, the responses provided by each interviewee are heartfelt and honest.

Becky (The Globetrotter)

Jakarta, Indonesia

My wife and I had the opportunity to sit down with a friend over coffee. Becky is the epitome of the modern-day globetrotter. Here's a recent post on Becky's Facebook wall, "I had an INCREDIBLE day with Carolyn and Michaela black water rafting in the Waitomo Caves: abseiling, a flying fox ride in the pitch darkness, climbing up waterfalls, jumping off rock shelves into the icy cold river in a cave with glo-worm cover ceilings:)...not to mention tubing down the river while eating chocolate and a hot drink! SOOO cool!!" Becky speaks several languages and has traveled to over thirty countries! Becky's interview was nothing short of insightful and motivating. Had I read Becky's interview before heading overseas 18 years ago, I would have definitely changed some of the things I did before heading overseas and some of the things I did while there.

James: What or who prompted you to go overseas?

Becky: I had always wanted to explore and experience new places. It was part of my personality. When I was in high school, a foreign exchange organization came to my school. I listened to their presentation and was hooked. That led to my first overseas trip. I was seventeen.

James: How about Indonesia?

Becky: I was hired to teach at an international school in Java, Indonesia through a teaching job fair that had schools from around the world. I went to the fair hoping to find a job in Latin America, but ended up intrigued by the possibility of living in an area of the world I had never explored. I have been teaching in Indonesia for eight years now.

James: What are some things you enjoy most about traveling overseas?

Becky: The challenge of putting yourself in different environments, the cross-cultural element, different languages, different foods.

James: What other languages do you speak?

Becky: Ha..ha... I speak varying levels of German, Spanish, Dutch, Indonesian and, of course, English. Fluency is always something difficult to gauge though, especially if you aren't immersed in the language on a daily basis.

James: Wow! That's amazing. What other things do you enjoy about traveling overseas?

Becky: The exoticness... the uniqueness. I like that I'm not like everyone else. It's not that I want to be special, but there's a uniqueness about being overseas. In Canada, you're just another person; no one pays attention to you.

Living overseas, then traveling into other Asian countries is interesting. Bartering is interesting... traveling while living overseas, it's cool. It's exciting to purchase something and have the person try to charge an outrageous price, then to let them know that I'm actually a local. There's something cool about that.

James: Can you talk a little about some of the things you do not enjoy about traveling or living overseas?

Becky: The cultural differences are sometimes so far from how you're wired or what you are used to or what is acceptable to your comfort zone. These are often little things that are resolved over time. Certain things you just connect with certain countries. Some countries I could live in for a long time and some not. Even though I haven't fully connected with Indonesia as a country, I have stayed here so long because of the tremendous community at my school.

Sometimes you feel really far from home. Without a good community, you can really feel alone. When I first started out teaching, I taught in Mexico for two years. I loved the country, but there were a lot of problems at my school and there wasn't a strong community. I wasn't homesick, I wasn't melancholy, and I just felt alone. Time zone differences or poor Internet or phone connections can also make it really difficult to communicate with friends and family.

James: Can you talk briefly about what you like or dislike about teaching overseas?

Becky: Compared to teaching in North America, there is limited access to resources or familiar items...library, Internet, computers in classroom. We have had overseas orders held up at customs in Indonesia, which has been very frustrating. When visiting a western country, you can find books to bring back or simple things like maps, but it all takes up luggage space and weight. The lack of resources forces you to be creative. Many teachers struggle with adapting to new curriculum or different reporting systems, such as the IBO (PYP, MYP, and DP). As a single teacher, school can easily become your life. Your friends are the people you work with, travel with, which can be very insular. It sometimes feels claustrophobic. If for some reason you don't connect well with them, it can be very lonely.

James: What are some of the things you like about teaching overseas?

Becky: I like the challenge of being forced to be creative, to make my own resources. I find students here are more respectful than in North America. They want to learn; they're focused, driven, and polite. In most cases, parents are supportive, helpful, and encouraging. In addition, I think a foreign teacher in the classroom sparks interest in the kids. Finally, working on an international staff with colleagues from other countries brings a fresh perspective, which is also very cool.

James: Can you talk about some of the challenges you face overseas?

Becky: Yes. The community is always transient and it is hard to say goodbye to people who are moving on. You establish friendships so quickly, yet depending on where they move, you may not see them again. I had previously put up walls when people were leaving, as it was hard to say goodbye. Now I try to savor the time I have with each friend before we part ways.

I am also challenged to stay in reality. The average persons' socio-economic status is relatively high at my school. It's easy to be comfortable with life, especially having a helper (maid), traveling on every vacation, and having a currency that feels like it is monopoly money! It's easy to live an "artificial life."

James: Was it a difficult decision to travel overseas? Can you talk about that decision-making process?

Becky: Not at all. I have always been curious about the world around me and have always been very independent and driven. My mom always said she knew as a kid that I was determined and that I was principled, so if my sights were set, I would go. This gave her peace about me moving to Belgium when I was seventeen for my exchange year. My family continues to be amazingly supportive.

James: So you're moving back in six months. How are you going to go back having spent so much time overseas?

Becky: For me, it has always been harder to move back to Canada than to move overseas. I normally give it a year and then I find a new country to move to! After eight years away, I finally feel like it is time to head home for a bit. I think that as long as I can connect with people who have lived overseas, I will be okay. Although it's definitely more of a challenge to go back and hang out with people who have never left home.

James: What was your greatest adventure overseas?

Becky: I feel like the last eleven years of my life have been the greatest adventure. I've lived in three different countries aside from Canada and have traveled extensively during that time. I have the opportunity to speak in various languages, which keeps me on my toes and there isn't a single school holiday that I'm not traveling somewhere. I also get to go home and catch up with people.

Jessica: My friend and I were chatting about years overseas. Where would I get this much vacation time?

Becky: It is nice that our school has its vacations spread throughout the year, rather than a super long summer vacation. It definitely allows you to take a week to see a country close by, while still flying home for a few weeks with the family at Christmas.

James: Would you briefly name some of the locations you have visited overseas?

Becky: Let's see. I have been to Japan, France, Netherlands, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Denmark, England, Scotland, Ireland, Sweden, Hungary, Australia, New Zealand, Guatemala, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, India, Turkey, Israel, Philippines, Czech Republic, USA and lived in Belgium, Colombia, Mexico, Germany and Indonesia.

James: Wow! You should be writing this book! Which do you prefer, Asia or Europe?

Becky: Europe.

James: Why?

Becky: Culturally, I connect with Europeans a lot more. Language wise I can communicate, since so many languages are similar to ones I speak, so I can get by. Prague was the first European city I visited where I couldn't understand any of their signs or language; it was frustrating. As a (European) history major in university, I enjoy seeing things I studied.

Everything seems to make sense in Europe and the architecture is so beautiful. On such a teeny, tiny continent, there's so much cultural diversity.

James: What suggestions would you have for people thinking about traveling overseas to teach?

Becky: Go into it with an open mind. It will not be like home! Expect it to be different and go into it open-minded and excited to explore and learn. Understand that you are choosing to leave your comfort zone and step into something new. The biggest downfall for many people is it's not like home! Be prepared to get involved and to engage with language and culture.

Before signing a contract, come up with a list of questions: about how the school runs, assessments, living set-up, and cost of living. I asked family and friends to make a list of questions they had about where I was going and about what my job responsibilities would be then used their questions to make a question template for myself. Ask for a contact from the school you're going to so that you can ask about simple, little comfort items.

Jessica: I had an opportunity to speak with someone who was coming overseas. It's interesting to talk to someone. One of them was drilling me with so many questions.

Becky: That's so important... like can I buy tampons in your country or women's shoes above size nine?

Jessica: It's a big difference when you come knowing what you're getting into. Am I going to be able to access this or that? Kim was the person I talked with. It was nice having that, having someone tell you something small you wouldn't normally think of.

Becky: When I went to Mexico. I packed all things I couldn't get in Belgium. When I got there, I could get them all.

James: Anything else?

Becky: Do it! Even if your overseas experience is short, you will go back home and will have been changed. You will see your own country with different eyes and you will have a better perspective on yourself and the world around you!

Jessica: Military has a bad rap, but once you're on other side there is a different perspective about what is going on. Just knowing people, seeing people, and the way they view it. Most Koreans we met were happy with the U.S. presence.

Becky: You just see things from a different perspective in so many ways once you are removed from your home culture. You still have your cultural lenses, but suddenly you add the lenses of another culture and you can see things in a different perspective. Then you go home and appreciate the things you have taken for granted. You can't live overseas and not have a life changing experience.

James: Tell me about Japan.

Becky: I had a friend living in Tokyo who I taught with in Mexico. I had never been interested in visiting Japan, but a free place to stay was too good to pass up! The people were wonderful, in their formality and in their friendliness. I loved the urban nature, the theme parks, and the baseball game. The food was great: I was pleasantly surprised. Even language was not as difficult as other Asian languages to distinguish sounds and recognize place names as they were said on the train announcements.

James: Did you visit Hiroshima?

Becky: Yes. Hiroshima was a sobering experience. It's amazing the choices a country can make in response to such a horrific event. The Japanese people do not seem bitter about the bomb, but rather have become one of the leading nations pushing for nuclear disarmament. They are such a peaceful people now.

Jessica: Culturally, is it more westernized?

Becky: Japan has its own very distinctive culture, but since so many of our western products come from Japan there was a lot of familiarity about Japan. Their transportation system is brilliant and things seem very orderly and organized.

James: I really appreciate the time you've taken to do this.

Mark (The Laidback Traveler)

Cobourg, Canada

I had the opportunity to Skype with my good friend Mark a couple days ago. I worked with him for two years at an international school in Indonesia and we participated in several triathlons in Indonesia. Mark offers a unique perspective, as he has returned from his overseas adventure. Mark is now in Cobourg, Canada, a small town on the shore of Lake Ontario. Mark offers a relaxed perspective on living and teaching overseas. I really enjoyed Mark's interview, as it encompasses a free spirit, life perspective. Mark's overseas adventure reflects a situation in which many people find themselves, traveling overseas was not their first choice, but in the end, it was a positive, life-changing experience.

James: What or who prompted you to go overseas?

Mark: My friend Becky.

James: Oh, you knew Becky before going to Indonesia?

Mark: She was actually an acquaintance at that point. I was looking into different options overseas. At the time, there weren't a lot of jobs in Canada. I was doing some supply teaching. At first, I looked at Ireland, then I got in touch with Becky, and the ball started rolling.

James: Was it a difficult decision to travel overseas?

Mark: Going to Indonesia was more challenging... Indonesia was so far away... I had been to Ireland. It was just difficult getting into thinking about a developing country. Once the job was offered, I was like, okay, I'm going to do this.

James: Were there any struggles with transitions?

Mark: The transition was challenging, but the community made it better... an expat support system is important.

James: What was the most challenging aspect of transitioning?

Mark: Congestion of Jakarta... so many people, so much traffic... this huge, expansive city. It was difficult to connect with nature.

James: That has been one of my biggest struggles, especially coming from Vermont. Most everything we did, we did it outside. That's not always the case overseas.

James: Can you talk a bit about that decision-making process?

Mark: I kind of thought about it... new adventures... new challenges. There wasn't too much thought, though. Once the job was open, I just decided to go.

James: Were you aware of overseas options while in university?

Mark: I was. I actually did my teaching practicum in Ireland. While in university, I was just thinking more of staying in Canada. I didn't think too much about the workforce... just planned to stay here.

James: What are some things you enjoyed most about traveling overseas?

Mark: The cultures. Indonesia has so many different cultures to see. Teaching the students was amazing; they're so excited to learn. They're really warm, really receptive... maybe because the culture among parents... maybe because driver-nanny type culture. Opportunity to travel.

James: Where have you traveled inside Indonesia?

Mark: Bali, Banda Aceh, Sulawesi, Danau Toba.

James: Beyond Indonesia?

Mark: Cambodia, India, Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand.

James: You had lived in Australia for a year. Can you talk a bit about that?

Mark: It was a bit challenging, as there wasn't a support group; people didn't know what I was going through. I found a place to live through a friend. At first, I was going out giving my resume to schools for supply teaching. I had to be intentional about building relationships. It was like I parachuted in trying to make my way through, trying to meet people. I did that for about 6 months.

I was in the Outback for 6 months. That was good. I had a support network, a base of teachers; they were new as well. We were all foreigners, guests in this Aboriginal community.

James: How was the teaching?

Mark: Teaching was challenging.

James: Why?

Mark: It was a vibrant culture. The students did a lot of hunting. They were very artistic and creative. They loved coming to school; they enjoyed the attention paid to them. In some ways, I felt I've been taught all these western approaches to teaching, and then to use them there... it was difficult.

On one occasion, we went into the bush to cook hamburgers on a fire. The kids just took over, the whole procedure. They were working well together; everything just worked. Why didn't I know this before? In the classroom, kids pushed each other; they were a bit more rowdy.

James: So, you were, like, teaching them for a western future?

Mark: Well, I do think it's important to learn English, math, and other areas.

James: Did you enjoy your time out there?

Mark: Yes.

James: What about some of the negative aspects of traveling overseas? Were there any?

Mark: Well, there's this disconnect with people once you're away. I thought coming back to Canada would be easy, but now that I've returned, it's like rebuilding friendships. It's good to be around people who have been overseas. Yeah... the disconnects.

James: Yeah... I was speaking with Becky, and she had said that when she returns home, she'll need to connect with people who have been overseas. There's definitely a different perspective.

James: How did your family react to your decision to go overseas?

Mark: I think with my parents, it was one hundred percent support. My grandma said I was crazy, but she was happy I didn't go to the Middle East.

James: Tell me about some of your greatest adventures living overseas.

Mark: When I first arrived in Indonesia, a group of us from school went to Banda Aceh, six months after the tsunami. We were in a rebuilt community center. While inside, there was a large earthquake. Suddenly, the building was swaying back and forth. We all ran across the road. I think it was a 5.8.

James: How did you deal with the different food overseas? Did you enjoy it?

Mark: I really do enjoy Indonesia food. I didn't like spicy food at first, but it eventually grew on me. I have a high tolerance for spicy food now. I really enjoy many fish dishes.

James: Do you have any advice for others thinking about traveling overseas?

Mark: Try to live as fully in the present as possible, and don't think "This is how we do things in my home country."

James: Do you speak any other languages?

Mark: I speak Indonesian and English. I also speak basic French, Japanese, and German.

James: Talk to me about teaching overseas.

Mark: I really enjoyed teaching the students; they're great. I found that the kids needed more direction, like choosing a color to use. It was difficult... just pick one! They were asking everything. Kids from the west are very independent. They yearn to express themselves. In Indonesia, they tend to be... they like to have direction... they like things structured.

James: Any challenges?

Mark: I'd say working with teachers from international communities. There're lots of thoughts about teaching, different mindset, different teachers. It's important to stay open to input. Realize that a different way is not a right or wrong way, just a different way. Be willing to work with people with different teaching styles. Even culture ... different cultures.

James: Supplies?

Mark: I'd say it was difficult. You had to be creative... creative with what we had. You get use to what we had.

James: Yeah. There's definitely a level of creativity required. Do you have any advice for non-teachers?

Mark: Definitely talk to people who are at the school. Find out if they like it. See if there's an expat community, other experienced teachers. Find out as much as possible.

James: Now, you've been back in Canada for six months? How's it going? Are you content?

Mark: Yeah. I'm content. At times I feel like I'm crazy, not fitting in. It's like I just had this crazy experience... sometimes out of the loop. Need to connect with others who have been overseas.

James: Any advice for someone traveling overseas?

Mark: Just be aware, what you've been used to is not the right or the best way. Keep an open mind... cultural differences are not right or wrong, just different.

James: It was great talking with you, Mark. Thank you so much!

Steven (The Solo Traveler)

Louisville, Kentucky

I worked with Steven in Indonesia. Steven has a background in radio and education. As you'll see from our interview, his overseas experience was both challenging and rewarding. In the end, however, he wouldn't have traded it for the world!

James: What or who prompted you to go overseas?

Steven: I believe that it was put on spirit to go overseas around 1999 or 2000, but I ignored the gentle nudging and used various classic excuses to ignore it. In 2004, I took a baby step and went on a mission trip to Poland (not my initial choice... but I believe it was God's). Then, after changing my job at the time to have more flexibility, I had the opportunity to work in Ethiopia. Unfortunately, that option didn't come to fruition, but in 2008, Indonesia received me with open arms.

James: What did you enjoy most about traveling overseas?

Steven: Traveling overseas has given me an opportunity to see the abundance of life - it expands my paradigm. Various cultures, viewpoints, and ways of life are exciting, exciting to see despite the differences. The common bonds are so much greater in weight and value.

James: Interesting and very true. What about some of the negative aspects of traveling overseas? Were there any?

Steven: Some of the things that I did not enjoy about traveling overseas would be my seemingly inability to acquire languages, feeling out of place (due to not being able to communicate with people that I might have felt more of a bond with), and not having my American friend-base with me.

James: I agree. Leaving friends and family is not always an easy step. Tell me the rewards of living and teaching overseas.

Steven: As a teacher, I am challenged to see educational strategies in a different light. I am stretched causing me to expand my philosophy of education. Teaching in a private sector versus public has also required me to view my role as teacher differently. Being able to form relationships with people from other parts of the world is a true blessing.

James: It sounds like you experienced many positive moments living overseas. How did your family react to your decision to go overseas?

Steven: Mom was very supportive of my travels. I was very concerned about how my dad would react, not overtly, because one never knows what he is thinking. After telling me that everyone who goes there gets decapitated, he, in a very subtle way, showed his support.

James: Your father's perspective of life overseas is definitely not uncommon. I recall coming home from a night on the town with friends in Seoul. I called my mom and dad to find out that the news was reporting an attack by the North Koreans. Of course, this wasn't the case. Tell me about some of your greatest adventures living overseas.

Steven: Japan... all of it. From Tokyo, visiting Cirque du Soleil and a baseball game, to the family that we met on a train. Though we both had limited language, they spent the day with us, and took us around Nara, Mt. Fuji, its world-famous roller coaster park, Fuji-Q, and to the emotional and heartbreaking roller coaster of Hiroshima.

James: Can you tell me more about the emotional experience connected to Hiroshima?

Steven: It was hard to describe, but my actual spirit changed, and I got a heavy heart, a lamenting spirit, an instant reflection on what destruction we did there. Once I stepped off the bus onto the ground, and before the next breath of air, I was in a different place on so many levels. It inspired me to write a poem to help me deal with the emotions.

James: Thanks for sharing that. Regarding your experience with the Japanese family, it's amazing how, for the most part, people are so friendly with expats. If we can shift gears a bit, did you struggle with the change in your diet while living overseas?

Steven: I struggled with eating rice. That is something that I do not eat and had to eat due to the fact that it is a staple item. For the most part, it's even embedded into the language that, traditionally, if you did not have rice with the meal, you had to use verbiage that communicated that you have not eaten yet.

James: I understand the rice thing. It took me a while to get my head around the fact that if you hadn't had rice, you didn't actually eat a meal. Eventually, I found myself gravitating away from potatoes and toward rice while living in Asia. I have become quite accustomed to it. Can you talk about some of the other challenges you had faced?

Steven: It was difficult in the sense that I have never lived outside of my home state. Living with the fear of failure rendered me immobile. After I allowed the thought of "regardless of what happens, God will still love me and I always have a home" to take root, then it made the ability to move easier. Leaving and going overseas meant the changing and loss of current relationships. Possibly losing someone who could have been my wife because I was overseas, but that's another story for another day.

James: Would you briefly name some of the locations you visited overseas? Which was your favorite?

Steven: While living in Indonesia... Lake Toba. It was beautiful and peaceful. Manado and North Sulawesi (Bunaken) were also amazing places in Indo. Being able to go to Africa, the Motherland, for the first time was powerful. I spent two weeks there connecting with the people, mostly kids. Although I saw a limited part of Ethiopia, it was quite clear how "developing" it is.

James: Honestly, when I think of Ethiopia, I think of a desert with starving kids everywhere.

Steven: I guess people would consider it Third World... for some reason I don't like that term... utter poverty... when comparing Indo's capital to Ethiopia's ... which I would consider the best economically of both countries... Indonesia would be light years ahead...

James: Thanks, Steven. I appreciate your time!

Jessica (The Traveling Wife/Mom)

Jakarta, Indonesia

Jessica, my wife, offers an amazing perspective as someone who has both taught overseas and been a full-time mom and wife. This interview is especially beneficial for anyone who is planning to be a non-working spouse or anyone who plans to travel with children. Please keep in mind that I have decided to interview Jessica not as a husband but as the author of this book.

That said, Jessica often refers to her husband, not me.

James: What or who prompted you to go overseas? Was it a difficult decision? Can you talk about that decision-making process?

Jessica: There were several discussions which eventually prompted my husband and I to consider teaching overseas. The initial discussion was prompted by my husband who had lived in South Korea while serving in the Army. While living there, he met several Americans who were there working as English teachers.

We discussed the possibility for several years before making the decision to seek out schools and consider an actual move. I was hesitant to consider it at all, but after a lot of time, I became excited at the possibility. Looking back on it now, I can say that I am glad I was willing to step outside my comfort zone and to immerse in another culture.

After spending a year in South Korea, we returned to America. We were not home long before we realized that we actually missed living overseas and wanted to explore the possibility of travelling again. I was the one who initiated us moving back overseas. I could tell my husband was not happy in our current location and I thought things would be better if we went back overseas.

I really wanted to go to Europe, but we put applications out all over the world and Indonesia ended up being the best option for us as a family. We are now half way through our third year living in Indonesia. It has been an amazing experience for our son at the international school. He absolutely loves it there.

James: What are some things you enjoy most about traveling overseas?

Jessica: What I enjoyed most has been meeting so many people from all around the world. I have friends from so many different parts of the world. It is different than just travelling because I have gained true friendships in these locations. There are expats from numerous countries in addition to the national people you meet in the country you live in.

It is a unique situation when you meet people while you are away from your family and friends. I have found that friendships often develop quickly and it is likely that you will end up with very close friendships, more like family. I am still in touch with friends I made while teaching in Korea and am certain I will maintain many of the friendships I have made with people here in Indonesia.

Indonesia has provided a much larger community of expats due to our location. In South Korea, it was a bit more challenging to make friends because we taught in a remote area. Location is a huge factor to consider depending on what your social needs are. If friendships and community are important, make sure to choose a location with lots of expats and English-speaking people.

James: Can you talk about some of the things you do not enjoy about traveling overseas?

Jessica: Hands down, the most difficult thing for me to get used to in both locations has been the dirtiness. Growing up in Vermont, where it is very clean and environmentally friendly, it has been difficult to comprehend the lack of concern for the environment.

In our immediate planned community, here in Indonesia, the cleanliness is not so much of an issue. If you leave our area, it can get very bad. One of the things I miss the most is being able to truly enjoy nature, which is difficult unless you travel hours away. Again, this is due to location. In South Korea, we lived on a remote island which had an abundant amount of outdoor activities from the beach to hiking. There, we had lots of nature opportunities, but not so many social ones.

Really, it is all about location and what is most important to you. I can only speak about the two locations I have lived in, and both happen to be dirtier than I would like.

James: Can you talk about what you like or dislike about teaching overseas?

Jessica: I would say that the largest struggle I have had concerning teaching overseas is the lack of ability to discuss work concerns with superiors. The assumed submission to authority can be irritating especially when a concern is based on complete common sense. Sometimes it is virtually impossible to explain the issue and have changes implemented. This can be extremely frustrating. Being from the States, it is normal to approach your boss and inquire if things can be done differently, but here it is less likely that a change will occur.

Additionally, there are several instances where one might work for someone whose qualifications are lower, yet they are still the authority. This is even more so the case for women depending on the culture. While teaching in Korea, a male co-worker sought my husband's opinion concerning my student rather than asking me which was very frustrating since I was the student's teacher. As a woman, this takes getting used to. I found the most effective way to deal with it was just to move on and accept that aspect of the culture.

James: Talk to me about the rewards of living and teaching overseas.

Jessica: There are many rewards to living and working overseas. The experience of living in a new culture definitely grows you and causes you to examine your beliefs. Learning to adjust to cultural norms can be challenging, but rewarding when you choose to grow from doing so. I know I have certainly come to appreciate many of the modern conveniences that we often take for granted after living in a culture where things like an oven, dryer, and normal toilet are not always available.

Language barriers can be a challenge, but it is amazing how well you can do with just learning the basics. It doesn't take much to get by if you know the simple terms like where is the bathroom, how much, yes, no, thank you, and hello.

I would definitely say the greatest benefit is meeting all the amazing people. In both overseas locations, the people have been great and I have made many friends. It is great to work alongside and become friends with people from all over the world who we would otherwise never meet. Teaching and living overseas allows you to not only immerse in the culture of the country you choose to live, but it also allows you to work alongside people from numerous countries. I have made friends with people from Australia, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Singapore, England, Germany, South Africa, Canada, the Philippines, and China.

Another reward of living overseas is the ability to travel to surrounding countries. This is particularly true if you choose a country far from home. Living outside Jakarta, Indonesia allows for a four-hour flight to Australia and even shorter flights to Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Bali, and Vietnam. Traveling and exploring is an added benefit to living and working overseas.

James: How did your family react to your decision to go overseas?

Jessica: My parents were not happy. They have been supportive, but would definitely prefer we stayed close to home.

Initially, I think they thought we were crazy to take our young son to a foreign country and to go live in a place without knowing anyone. Mostly, I think they were just really going to miss us and were very sad that we were going to be so far away. Fortunately, with things like email, Facebook, Skype, and Facetime, it makes it quite easy to stay in touch.

I think my family would still love to have us live closer to them, but they are supportive of what we are doing and look forward to our visits.

James: What was your greatest adventure overseas?

Jessica: I would probably say I have two. Our first trip to Bali was awesome. We traveled over the Christmas holiday and stayed in a villa right on the ocean. It was amazing. We jet skied,

snorkeled, took a boat out to an island, travelled down a mangrove river, visited lots of awesome markets and shops, tons of places to shop, awesome food. We even found the best Mexican restaurant, which was off a small side street and was full of plants with great music. Awesome atmosphere and amazing food.

Last year we flew to Perth, Australia on the west coast and it was breathtaking. A gorgeous city by the ocean with tons of lakes and parks. I absolutely loved it. We stayed in the city for a week and then rented a caravan and drove down the coast. If I could find a job in Perth, I would move there in a heartbeat!

James: Would you name some of the locations you visited overseas (countries, famous places, etc.)? Which location was your favorite? Why?

Jessica: Perth, Australia: I absolutely loved everything about it. It was similar to the States in many ways, but also unique. Super clean and full of outdoor activities. Loved the people. Very friendly and welcoming. There are parks everywhere and so many things to do.

Bali, Indonesia: We have visited Bali three times over the past two and a half years. Great beaches, good food, friendly people, awesome shopping.

Singapore: I always love a trip to Singapore. It is only an hour and a half flight from here, so it is easy access to lots of shopping and tons of western food. Love it!

Seoul, South Korea: We visited Seoul for a few days in the winter. It was very cold, but fun to experience the city after living on the island for so long.

James: Can you share a memorable moment about your time overseas?

Jessica: There have been many memorable moments living overseas. The first that comes to mind for Indonesia was the amazing host family that we met upon arriving here. We arrived in the late evening and they met us at the school to drive us and all our luggage to our new home.

After helping us with our bags and showing us around, my wonderful friend Kim brought us tea and homemade cookies. Such an amazing welcome after over thirty hours of travel.

Another memorable moment was when my son started his second year of school here. On the first day, he came home saying it was the best day he ever had and he loved his class. As a mother, it is such an amazing feeling to know that your child loves his school.

James: Can you share anything else about teaching or living overseas?

Jessica: If you like adventure and are open minded then you will most likely love the experience. From all the various people I have met, those who embrace the new place and try to enjoy it are the ones who have the best time living and working overseas.

As a mother, it was extremely important for me to know that my son would be in a safe environment. I have to say that in the locations we have lived, I have always felt safe. In some ways, it almost feels safer living overseas than living in the States.

The best advice I could give would be to thoroughly research the area and the school you are planning to teach at. Make sure you are fully aware of what your most important needs are and look for a place that meets them. There are so many opportunities to teach overseas and there are many different locations. Keep an open mind and look forward to the adventure that you are sure to have. And don't forget your camera. I must have thousands of photos from all the amazing places we have visited.

EXPERT ARTICLES

In order to gain a different perspective on various locations, personal situations, and other overseas teaching and living related items, I have included four articles. There are countless Internet articles covering all facets of teaching and living overseas. The four articles I have provided are incredibly useful. The first-hand, researched opinions will serve as catalysts in helping you determine where to take the plunge into your overseas adventure and what to consider!

The first article, *Safety Tips for Solo Women Travelers*, provides some of the best information for solo women travelers. This well-written article is concise and could potentially prevent some of the less frequent, but possible, negative occurrences for solo travelers. Some of the information is also useful for solo male travelers.

Safety Tips for Solo Women Travelers

Beth Whitman

Perhaps you have always longed to travel down the Yangtze River, visit the museums of Paris or backpack through Australia's outback, but you haven't managed to convince your significant other, family members or friends that this is the trip for them.

These same people may have convinced you that traveling on your own is unsafe, therefore you've put off your life's dream waiting for the right travel partner. The truth is that a woman journeying on her own does need to take a few extra precautions, but adhering to the following advice can result in rewarding and trouble-free travel.

Baggage

Before you set out, consider what luggage you will carry, what day bag you will use and how you will keep your important personal belongs (passport, money, camera, etc.) safe.

Pack all of your belongings in a combination roll aboard/backpack. A twenty-two-inch (or smaller) bag can be used as a carry-on and has plenty of room for even the longest of getaways. This type of bag can be quickly strapped on your back if you are walking up stairs or along a cobble-stone street, or if you need to quickly get out of a sticky situation. It then easily converts into rolling luggage as you make your way through an airport or hotel lobby.

Traveling light is not only easier, but it's safer, than carrying multiple heavy bags. For daily use, carry a day bag, such as one from PacSafe, which includes slash proof panels and slash

proof strap. This will prevent it from being sliced open and the contents stolen or the strap being cut while it hangs over your head and across your shoulder. Considered your one “personal item” in-flight, these are small enough to fit under the seat in front of you on a plane but large enough to hold a guidebook, journal, water bottle and camera.

Your passport and cash are the most important items you take with you during your travels. Keep these in a neck pouch or money belt, both of which should be worn under your clothes. A thief will have little chance at snatching either one of these from you. Alternately, try wearing a leg pouch (which uses Velcro to attach around your calf), though these can be bulky if you’re carrying a lot of currency.

Sexual Harassment

It may be difficult to completely escape one form or another of sexual harassment but the degree varies depending on the country or city you’re visiting. Italian men are more notorious for it than Japanese men, for example, but even then they may “only” taunt you verbally. You can minimize any type of harassment in several ways.

Don’t make eye contact with men. While those of us in the Western world have been taught that it is polite to look someone in the eye when having a conversation, in many cultures, this may be seen as provocative. Similarly, making small talk with your waiter, hotel manager or taxi driver can be seen as you having a special interest in him. While you don’t want to avoid all conversations with men, understanding the culture you’re visiting and acting appropriately, will serve you well.

Dress conservatively. Western women are often portrayed in movies and on television as loose and reckless. Don’t let yourself be mistaken for an easy gal by dressing provocatively. Follow the lead of the local women and cover up the appropriate amount of skin based on what they are wearing.

Avoid dangerous situations altogether. It’s all too easy to find yourself walking down an empty street at night after taking a wrong turn or accidentally mentioning to someone that you’re traveling on your own within earshot of eavesdroppers. The best way to avoid harassment is to not get yourself into a potentially dangerous situation in the first place. Share taxis when possible, ask a hotel staff person to walk you to your car at night and trust your gut instinct if a situation doesn’t seem right.

Align yourself with other women. If you're on a bus or train, sit next to women and when you're walking down a street and sense danger, walk with (or near) another woman or group of women (and men).

While on public transportation, if you're only option is to stand, stay near the doors and keep your backside to a wall.

Say you're married, whether you are or not. Most cultures don't understand how a woman could be traveling alone. If you wear a wedding ring (fake, if need be) and have a photo of your betrothed, you can at least say that he is waiting for you in the next town or is joining you later. While those who are more persistent may not care, this is often enough to put off minor advances from an interested man.

Hotel

While you might consider your hotel room to be your safe haven, you'll need to be on your guard even there.

When checking in to your hotel, never allow the desk clerk to speak your room number out loud. He or she should always provide it to you written down. Ask for another room if you suspect someone in the lobby has overheard your room number.

Get a room that's close to the elevator. Though it may be a little noisier, you don't want to find yourself stuck at the end of a long empty hallway. You're less likely to be heard if you need to call for help.

Avoid letting anyone into your room. If someone does come knocking, prior to opening the door, check through the peephole to determine who it is and call the front desk if you aren't completely confident it is a hotel employee. If a man does need to enter (an air-conditioning repairman, for example), leave the door open while he's there.

Grab a business card from the hotel on your way out and add the front desk's phone number to your cell phone so you can call if you're lost or need help.

Carry a rubber doorstop. Most hotel room doors open inwards. By placing a rubber door stop underneath the door, you ensure that no one can enter (with a key) if you are in the shower or sleeping. Not all hotel room doors have chains to keep out intruders.

Use a padlock. In many countries, a simple latch with a lock (provided by the hotel) on the outside of your door is all that prevents someone from breaking into your room when you've

stepped out for the day. Locking the door with your own padlock or combination lock will help ensure that no one can get into your room while you're out.

Use a cable lock and zipper locks on your luggage. If you're unable to use your own padlock on the door to keep out housekeeping or intruders, use a cable lock to secure your luggage to a piece of furniture in the room and then lock the zippers together using tiny locks. Casual thieves will be thwarted. Utilize the safe in the room for valuables (mp3 player, travelers checks, etc.) if you're able to create your own code for it.

When booking, stay at a small hotel rather than a large one. It will be easier for the hotel staff to identify you (or those who don't belong) as well as befriend you.

Choose a hotel that is on a street in a safe neighborhood. All it should take is a little research online or in a guidebook to give you an idea of how safe the area of town is where the hotel is located. You could also call the hotel and ask a female staff person for her opinion.

Leave the "do not disturb" sign on your door. This will give the impression that you are in the room and discourage someone from breaking in. Call the front desk if/when you need the room cleaned rather than leaving the "please clean" sign out.

Out and About

While you're out sightseeing, whether on foot or in a car, it's best to not draw attention to yourself and to take a few extra precautions that you may not incorporate into your daily routine at home.

Leave the bling at home. Even cheap jewelry or a fake Rolex can catch the eye of someone eager to turn your jewelry into cash. It's best to leave it at home rather than tempting a thief.

Don't carry around large maps. Instead, figure out your route in advance or carry a small map that you can discreetly peek at while walking down the street or when you duck into a café or shop.

Don't leave "tourist items" in plain view in your rental car. Slip maps and city guides under the seat and keep the rental agency information in the glove box.

Lock the car doors at all times, even when you're driving. While some cars do have auto-locking systems when you excel past 10 or so miles per hour, most require that you lock the doors yourself. This tiny gesture could prevent a major occurrence.

All this is not meant to sound scary. Solo travel really IS safe (and fun!) but you have to remember that no one is there to watch your back, so you've got to watch your own. With a little practice, the above suggestions will be second nature to you and you'll fully enjoy that amazing trip down the Yangtze.

Get a Job Teaching English Overseas Without a University Degree

Miel Kakashi

Have you been considering a job change? Are you looking for more excitement and a feeling of fulfillment in your career? If you have a high school diploma and you enjoy traveling, then teaching English overseas could be the right career choice for you.

Twenty years ago finding a job teaching English overseas with only a high school diploma was no problem. These days the only country that will take teachers without a university degree is China. Even China is beginning to require more of their English teachers. Many schools now ask for a Bachelor or a higher degree, but there are still good schools and training facilities that will accept native English speaking teachers without a degree.

Teachers in China will find that schools most often offer a free accommodation, sometimes shared with another teacher. Other schools offer a teacher a living allowance to pay rent at an outside apartment. Each school offers different benefits but should provide health insurance of some type and a reimbursement for the plane ticket used to get to the country. Above all, if a school does not aid you through the process of acquiring a Z Visa which is needed to be legally employed in China, then you should look for a different institution.

If you do not have a degree then you should consider taking a Teaching English as a Second Language course. Various companies offer courses taking anywhere from 60 to 120 hours, but be certain that the company you choose offers a recruitment agency that will help you find jobs upon completion of the course. Having this certification on a resume makes you more attractive to a school and more valuable as a teacher.

If you do not have a degree it will be harder for you to find high paying teaching positions. It will be difficult, but not impossible. The best way to find a teaching position is to be prepared. You must have a passport to begin the process of searching for a teaching position with any school. You will need a full length body shot of yourself in professional clothing and a cover letter explaining your reasons for wanting to teach in China. The cover letter needs to include your teaching philosophy and the skills you have that make you a good teacher. In addition, you will need a resume containing any experience you may have relating to teaching, training or working with children.

When it comes to your cover letter and your teaching philosophy, you must determine what your teaching philosophy entails. In short, your philosophy of teaching is what your

approach to teaching will be. If your idea of a successful lesson is students interacting with the material and working together, then your teaching philosophy might look something like this: My teaching philosophy is one that includes students of every learning level being challenged using interactive lessons and peer help groups. If you have difficulty wording your philosophy, type it into a search engine and various sites designed to create teaching philosophies will be listed.

If you have a recruiter working for you, don't make the mistake of depending wholly on what they find for you. Search online, there are dozens of useful ESL job sites, the foremost being Dave's ESL Café. Check the requirements of each school as some will require a BA or higher. When you find a school that does not require a degree do not hesitate to send an inquiry. Start with a short email explaining your education, certification and experience. Attach your cover letter and resume and send it to any schools in which you fit their requirements. Take finding a teaching job seriously just like you would in your own country.

Offers will start appearing in your email, but don't jump at the first contract offered. Schools will want to have an interview over the phone or using Skype and you want to be prepared for these interviews with a few questions of your own. Ask about what health insurance they provide, the accommodations available, and the hours you are expected to work. A good school will answer these questions confidently and send you a contract containing all the information. Take your time and consider at several offers. Chinese schools don't often pay to bring you to the country but will most likely offer you a reimbursement to be paid at the end of your contract, so you want to be sure that you have a school you will enjoy teaching in and don't be shy in asking for testimonials from previous teachers at any school.

If you are diligent, you will have no trouble finding a teaching job in China without a degree. China has a wonderfully ancient culture that is waiting to be experienced and a diverse landscape ready to be explored. To teach overseas you don't need a university degree, just the desire to teach, travel and learn.

Although short, Bridget Lux's article about adventures overseas cuts into an often overlooked area, people. Bridget offers a personalized approach to understanding people while traveling overseas. The article offers a glance into the lives of the type people you might encounter overseas.

Europe offers World of Friendships

Bridget Lux

Europe offers so much in terms of art, architecture, languages and cultures, but for anyone interested in an international group of friends, this is the place.

The wide variety of people met while traveling through Western Europe tops my list of reasons I love it. As a fairly outgoing (and bar-going) person, I've never had a particularly difficult time meeting people, but traveling through Western Europe, it would have almost been impossible to not meet the constant carnival of characters floating through the cities. Especially since I was now one of them.

Naturally, while you're traveling, you're out and about. You're eating out, sightseeing, staying at hotels and generally spending your time in public. You also need a lot of help (or maybe that was just us). We had women help us with the transportation systems, men help us with our luggage, children help us understand a sign, etc. Through these various encounters, my traveling partner and I met a ton of people. Here are just a few of the highlights:

1. Harry from Columbia. While in Berlin, my friend Jules and I met a waiter who also plays professional volleyball, sings in a choir and is quite possibly the nicest guy I've ever met. Speaking fluent German along with English and his native Spanish, Harry took us to an amazing disco and the unsicht-Bar I wrote about previously.

2. Maggie from the Netherlands. Maggie is a private banker in Monaco who parties like a rock star and has become a most reliable friend. An incredible linguist, Maggie can talk to almost anyone we come across without a moment's hesitation.

3. Laurent from France. As humble as he is, it wasn't surprising to learn that Laurent is a recognizable model and actor in France. Women flock to him at parties and yet he pretends not to notice. He and his friend, Patrick, took Jules and I on a plane flight from Nice to Cannes and back.

4. Sasha from Russia. Working a myriad of odd jobs to keep her visa status in France, Sasha is really an artist ready to break free. She speaks fluent Russian, French and English and has a beauty so deep it's hard not to be drawn to her.

The list seems endless: Tom from Mauritania, Danielle from Ecuador, Callum from South Africa, Shane from Ireland, Sophie from England, Andre from Belgium, Adam from New Zealand, Wendy from England, etc. And living in a place like the South of France offers an

endless supply of international visitors and residents alike. For anyone who is drawn to the exotic and international, visiting or living in Europe offers the perfect opportunity.

Living and Teaching in Asia

James M. Boldosser, Sr.

Okay, so I attempted to find a suitable article about living and/or teaching in Asia for my book. After an exhausting, several-day search, I have concluded that I am probably the best resource for this task. Don't get me wrong. There are countless sites and blogs related to living in Asia. Unfortunately, the content is so widely dispersed, you'd have to spend hours combing over the material just to get an idea of what to expect in Asia.

There are definitely some places expats should not live in Asia, albeit these places comprise a minority on the adventure scale. Needless to say, they exist. When one travels overseas, he needs to identify those places. Having lived and traveled in Asia for several years, I believe I'm qualified to discuss an overall perspective of Asia. Admittedly, I'm slightly biased, as I have spent the majority of my overseas life here. Moreover, most of my experiences have been positive. Given that caveat, I'll attempt to place my opinions on the shelf and present an unadulterated perspective.

Basic Advice

There are definitely various approaches to handling your first few days in Asia, regardless of your location. Prior to going to South Korea, which consequently I had not chosen to do (military tour), I was told that I should enter the country with an open mind, and that's just what I did. Because of this, I was able to navigate the stark, cultural contrast of an often mysterious and profoundly unique country.

Although adventure is exciting, and the non-existent plan sometimes equals an escape, one should definitely have, at the very least, a mediocre plan once the feet hit the ground. From taxis to dining, newly arrived expats should have some idea of what to pay, who to trust, and what to eat. Doing so will lead to a more enjoyable trip. From my experience, people who enter a country blindly, normally find their way to some expat forum with misconstrued complaints about how they were mistreated, abused, or otherwise clapperclawed.

Here are some down-to-earth bullet points that will assist in navigating Asia.

- Expect the unexpected and smile
- Everything is negotiable
- Smiles are universal in every situation, good or bad
- Most people want to help

- Adventure is everywhere, sometimes even unwanted
- Safety measures sometimes are rare
- Your clean is not everyone's clean
- It's okay to say no with a smile
- Some places have toilet paper, some don't
- Some places have toilets, some don't
- Most everything is for sale
- When in doubt, turn that sad-clown frown upside down; it'll make all the difference

I could go on, but the fact of the matter is, you're entering Asia. Things are much different than the Western world. Like anywhere, there are positives and negatives. Personally, I have experienced far more positives than I have experienced negatives. Let's talk briefly about food in Asia.

Food

It goes without saying that Asia offers a diverse menu. If it's edible, you'll find it in Asia. From chickens' feet in Jakarta, to dog in Seoul, the adventurous traveler is bound to find any taste to suit his desires. When it comes to food, my theory is that I'll try anything once. One of my most memorable overseas experiences occurred on the beaches of Jeju Island, South Korea. Eating freshly harvested clams purchased from the seventy-year-old haenyo (woman diver) is something my son and I will forever cherish. Munching on ten varieties of kimchi at the North Korean restaurant, Pyongyang, in Jakarta is a brilliant conversation starter. Arguably, food defines culture. Many of our nostalgically-driven memories often come from different seasons, gatherings with friends, family, and most notably, food.

People

I hesitate to even discuss people, as people are people wherever you go. On average, most people I have encountered in Asia are very friendly and more than willing to help in any way possible. My good friend Steven talks about a family with whom he spent the day while on adventure in Japan. He had just met the family and they offered to show him around for the entire day! This is common occurrence in Asia. There are some downsides to these good intentions.

In Indonesia, you might find five people offering directions to one location and receive five different instructions leading in opposition directions! This culturally-rooted desire to help

often prevents people from saying, “I don’t know.” Whatever the situation, remember, a smile goes a long way in Asia.

Lifestyle and Cost of living

Interestingly, an expats lifestyle in Asia is often similar or better than in his home country. That said, it is likely that your lifestyle in Asia will probably rank in the upper twenty-five percent when compared to the rest of the population. Employers know that westerners require a familiar lifestyle, some anyways. So yes, you can find toilet paper, Starbucks, and a Gold’s Gym just about anywhere in Asia. Your cost of living varies on your needs and wants. Overall, the cost of living in Asia is less expensive than many Western countries. With the tide of a changing, global economy, this is beginning to shift.

Teaching

It is easier to find an English teaching position in Asia when compared to anywhere else in the world. Moreover, your wildest adventures will likely take place somewhere in Asia. This is not to say that adventures don’t abound in other places throughout the world. It’s just that many places in Asia are less restrictive, warmer, and more willing to accept expat oddities as normal behavior, a glorious benefit for all the socially awkward. Teaching in Asia is flexible in terms of knowledge and experience; a welcome comment for many readers, as this article is likely geared towards someone considering an overseas trip. Of course, this doesn’t suggest that you receive “adventure money” for nothing; it simply suggests that your native English ability, coupled with a basic bachelor’s degree or English certification, is often the foundation for employment in Asia.

Whether you plan to stay overseas for a year, or plan a lifelong adventure, Asia is a must visit location for fun, adventure, and a uniqueness not available anywhere else in the world.

SAMPLE TEACHING CONTRACT

There are a number of example contracts on the Internet. The following contract was posted on Dave's ESL Café. Your contract terms might be different. It's important that you understand every aspect of your contract. If something is unclear, ask for written clarity. If you wish to gain direction on the contract with which you are presented, do not hesitate to post it in one of the forums I have provided.

EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT has been made this MONTH, DATE YEAR between being represented by established under the laws of South Korea at (hereinafter referred to as the "Employer") and , a citizen of the COUNTRY whose passport number is ____ (hereinafter referred to as the "Teacher") under the terms and conditions set forth below.

Both parties agree on the following terms and conditions:

CLAUSE 1 (APPOINTMENT)

- a. The employer agrees to employ the teacher during the period stipulated herein.
- b. The teacher agrees to accept the employment and will work in his/her full capacity for the school.

CLAUSE 2 (EQUAL IDENTITIES & WORKLOAD)

- a. The employer and employee are individuals of equal value and respectability coming together respectfully to exchange their services.
- b. The service of the employee is to offer certain agreed-upon one hundred ten teaching hours a month in the humane way he/she agreed upon here or hereafter. The employer will return the employee's energy and efforts with material and service support such as proper housing, salary, etc. as mutually agreed upon here.
- c. The said workload is equal to one hundred sixty-five teaching periods per month (one teaching session is equal to forty-minutes).

CLAUSE 3 (PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT)

- a. The total Agreement term is approximately twelve (12) months, commencing from Month, Date, Year to Month, Date, Year (the last teaching day of the teacher's twelfth teaching session.). The term of this Agreement includes an orientation period, twelve (12) consecutive teaching sessions, and all scheduled vacations and holidays that fall between or during teaching sessions.
- b. The teacher agrees to discontinue his/her residence in Korea under the visa status arranged and sponsored by the employer and leave from the status within five (5) days of termination of this contract.

CLAUSE 4 (THE TEACHER'S DUTIES)

During the terms of this Agreement, the teacher must cooperate and comply with the instructions and disciplines of the school. Assisting the Supervisor he/she must carry out assignments as directed by the employer. The Supervisor will be responsible for establishing and communicating the Standards of Performance as related to the above mentioned duties.

- a. The teacher must have adequately prepared for the class in advance.
- b. At all times during the terms of this contract, the male teachers should wear ties and the female teachers will wear dresses or dressy pantsuits in the school unless otherwise instructed.
- c. The teacher must be at the school one hour earlier than the first scheduled class in the morning and in the afternoon.
- d. In case the teacher is absent from the class, and thus unable to teach the class, even with a sudden notice, the employer will determine the situation and consider it as a sick day or a non-sick day.
- e. The teacher's work will include the followings :
 - a) Teaching of English language (Target students' ages: five to fifteen)
 - b) Development of educational programs and materials
 - c) Curriculum design and implementation
 - d) Indoors and outdoors classroom activities for/with students
 - e) Grading and assessment of students

- f) Student counseling or evaluation
- g) Attending at teacher's meetings, workshops and parents' meetings
- h) Other related activities

CLAUSE 5 (SALARY AND WAGE)

- a. The employer agrees to pay the teacher a monthly salary of 2,100,000 won for 110 teaching hours per month.
- b. The payment of the salary is to be made on 10th of the following month.
- c. Each teaching hour exceeding the 110 working hours (165 class: 40 minutes a class) is considered as overtime. And the payment for the overtime will be 14,000 won per 40 minute class.
- d. Attendance at scheduled staff meetings and workshops should be mandatory and are not accounted for the overtime.

CLAUSE 6 (WORKING HOURS)

- a. During the terms of this Agreement, the teacher should work in proper manner and under good cooperation with the Supervisor from Monday to Friday.
- b. The teacher can be requested by the Supervisor to participate in the scheduled staff meeting and workshop on Saturday.
- c. The employer cannot guarantee the teacher for such classes of specific times as requested by the teacher.

CLAUSE 7 (TAX)

Income tax and residence taxes of 3.3percent will be deducted off the salary according to the Korean tax law.

CLAUSE 8 (TRANSPORTATION)

- a. The one year contract comes with a round trip airfare
- b. The employer is to provide the teacher with an economy class ticket and transportation from the teacher's convenient airport to the teacher's residence in Korea. After completion of the one-year contract, the teacher will be provided with a return ticket.
- c. In case the teacher leaves the school before his/her contract period ends, the school will not pay for his/her return ticket.
- d. If the teacher leaves the school before six (6) months period of this contract for his/her own sake, the teacher must reimburse the school the cost of the ticket the school has paid for his/her trip to Korea or the school may deduct the same off the teacher's last month payment.

CLAUSE 9 (ORIENTATION PERIOD/ALLOWANCE)

- a. Upon arrival in Korea, the teacher may be allowed a few days' lead time for adjustment and preparation for school prior to beginning of his/her regular teaching work.
- b. The teacher will be listed on a payroll from the date of his/her arrival except for weekends and national holidays in Korea.
- c. During the orientation period the teacher should be inside the school making lesson plans and learning about the school systems. The rate of payment for the orientation period will be 30,000 won per a day and will be paid on 10th of the coming month. Orientations period is not exceeded five (5) days.

CLAUSE 10 (MEDICAL CHECKUP)

- a. The teacher is required to have a medical checkup in a Korean hospital in order to qualify for a foreign registration card. The teacher will be expected to pay for this employment related medical checkup (about 80,000~150,000 KRW). The teacher will also be required to submit a written self-medical checkup.

The form for this checkup will be provided.

- b. In the case that the teacher cannot be hired because of differences between the written self-medical checkup and the results of the medical checkup in Korea, the teacher must leave the country at his/her own expense and reimburse the school the cost of the ticket that the school has

paid for his/her trip to Korea. Differences found that would disqualify the teacher from employment will include undocumented drug use, infectious diseases, AIDS, mental disorders, and abnormal body conditions.

CLAUSE 11 (MEDICAL INSURANCE)

- a. The teacher will be covered by medical insurance under the Korean Medical Insurance Union, a private health organization.
- b. The half of the insurance premium will be paid by the Employer and the other half by the teacher. (For reference, the current public insurance premium rate is almost 3.0 % of a monthly income)

CLAUSE 12 (NATIONAL PENSION)

- a. The teacher must pay National Pension following the National Pensions Act.
- b. The half of the National Pension fee will be paid by the Employer and other half by the teacher. (For reference, the current fee rate for teacher is 4.5 percent of a monthly income.)
- c. When the contract runs out, the pension will be full refunded by Korean National Pension Service following the National Pension Act. (For reference, your salary is 2.1 million won --- total fee is 9 percent (189,000 won a month---you should pay 1/2 of total so 94,500 won) ---- you will be refunded total by National Pension Service.)

CLAUSE 13 (VACATION & HOLIDAYS)

The teacher will be allowed for vacation and holidays as specified by the school. There will be five (5) vacation days in summer and five (5) vacation days around Christmas/New Year.

CLAUSE 14 (ACCOMMODATIONS)

- a. The school will provide the teacher with private furnished accommodations, kitchen, bathroom , air condition and washer, single housing with single bed. Selection of the apartment will be determined by the employer
- b. Furnishings being provided by the employer include: television, refrigerator, washing machine, bed, two-burner gas hot plate, and telephone, blanket, pillow, etc..
- c. The cost of monthly service, utilities, and telephone charges for the accommodations will be paid by the teacher. (For reference, house expenses is 50,000 won a month)
- d. For the first six months, the Employer will collect the deposit of 100,000 won each month, in order for the employer to pay off the bills of utilities and telephone charges, which the employer is to receive during the two months after the teacher has left.
- e. The deposited money will help pay off the bills and the balance thereof will be transferred to the teacher's account back home.

CLAUSE 15 (ANNUAL BONUS)

Upon completion of this one year contract, the teacher will receive one (1) month salary of 2,100,000 won as a severance payment in accordance with Korean Labor Laws.
This payment will be made at the time of completion of the contract period.

CLAUSE 16 (DISMISSAL OR VOLUNTARY RESIGNATION)

- a. The employer reserves the right to dismiss the teacher from employment for the following causes:
 - a) Neglect his/her duties stipulated in this agreement
 - b) Frequent absences from work
 - c) Has received two warning letters
 - d) The inability to perform the duties stipulated in this agreement
 - e) The teacher's criminal or misconduct

- b. The employer agrees to dismiss the teacher from employment giving 20 days' notice. However, in case of the teacher's criminal or misconduct, he/she is to be dismissed from employment immediately with no warning or notice.
- c. In such case as the teacher resigns from employment, he/she can do so giving 40 days' notice to the employer.
- d. In either case of dismissal or resignation before completing nine (9) months period of this contract term, the teacher must reimburse the employer the ticket cost paid for his/her trip to Korea.
- e. The teacher is not allowed to teach a private class outside the school unless otherwise agreed by both parties. If the teacher teaches a private class outside the school without the employer's permission, it would result in dismissal of the teacher, in which case the school has no obligation to pay the teacher a severance payment and the cost of his/her return ticket.
- f. The teacher happen Clause 10 –b problem, the teacher must reimburse the employer the ticket cost paid and the teacher has to leave Korea.

CLAUSE 17 (GOVERNING LAW & JURISDICTION)

- d. This Agreement is governed by the law of the Republic of Korea.
- e. This Agreement is made final and firm unless any material modification or amendment to this Agreement is executed with the full knowledge and consent of the undersigned and incorporated into this Agreement.

EMPLOYMENT LINKS

I have included several online employment links as starting points to your overseas adventure. I can't endorse any site over another, but I can tell you that I have used the first site, Dave's ESL Café. You will likely find many other sites that offer similar positions by conducting a simple Internet search. I like these sites, as they are straightforward and easy to navigate.

Dave's ESL Café: The Internet's meeting place for ESL + EFL teachers + students from around the world. I have personally found positions through this site. It's definitely a good starting point for job searches. www.daveseslcafe.com

ESL Jobs Board: This site has many, current job opportunities. There are many ads throughout this website, so ensure you are clicking on material within the site. www.esljobsboard.com

ESL Focus: Search hundreds of categorized, archived, and up to the minute ESL / EFL jobs and resumes from around the world. Employees browse hundreds of jobs, post resumes, and meet people. www.eslfocus.com/jobbank

EXPATRIATE FORUM LINKS

Again, I'm unable to recommend one site over another. However, I have always found it incredibly useful to pose questions on forums or search for answers to questions. Most forum members offer a great starting point. There are many expat forums out there. In many cases, forums are specific to a location. For instance, while living on Jeju Island, my wife and I were members of a forum specific to the island. Generally, you would access these location-specific forums once you're on location. The forums below are used for both pre-arrival and post-arrival questions.

Expat Forum: From the site, "We are quickly realising our aim to be the largest community of expatriates on the internet." www.expatform.com

Expat Blog: From the site, "Expat blog is dedicated to expatriates who want to share their living abroad experience. You'll find in this section all the information you need to move abroad."
www.expatsblog.com

Dave's ESL Café: The site provides a vast collection of topics for discussion, including location specific topics. <http://forums.eslcafe.com/job>

Lonely Planet: From the site, "Join fellow travelers to exchange travel information, advice, hints and tips. Get help, get connected, get inspired and have your say."
www.lonelyplanet.com/thorntree/index.jspa

BASIC CERTIFICATION INFORMATION

I have chosen not to include websites related to this information, as there are far too many from which to choose. As you begin to research positions, you'll notice some certification requirements. There are many online, certificate programs. Be careful, as some employers will not accept certificates earned online. I would consider your employer's requirements first. Many ESL teaching jobs do not require any form of certificate.

TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)

CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults)

CELTYL (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Young Adults)

TEFL (Teaching English as a foreign language)

SAMPLE RESUME OR CV

Resumes vary depending upon a person's experience. In addition to the information we already discussed, keep it simple, direct, without fluff, and remember to highlight your skills, education, or experience that meet the job's needs. Most important, don't lie.

This sample resume is geared toward someone who has teaching experience. If you don't have teaching experience, that's fine. Consider changing the "elementary teacher" section to "Objective" or delete it all together. Some resumes simply have an education section, experience section, and reference section. It's up to you.

William M. Strider

13206 Valley Drive – Alford, Florida 32420, United States

Hp: 850-555-1235 - e-mail: William.strider45116@resume12348.com

ELEMENTARY TEACHER

Student and classroom community-focused teaching professional with a genuine interest in student success and growth. Emphasis is placed on empowering students to become lifelong learners. Creation and implementation of transdisciplinary units and lessons, including incorporation of various aspects of technology within instruction. Importance placed upon addressing individual learning styles in a manner that promotes understanding, comprehension, and success in and out of the classroom.

EDUCATION

Master of Arts in Network Design

University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, USA, (2011)

Teacher Certification Program, Elementary Education

Western Governors University, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA (2009)

Bachelor of Science, General Studies

Northern Virginia Community College, Woodbridge, Virginia, USA, *Cum Laude* (2006)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Granville Public School – Woodbridge, VA, USA

7/2009 – Present

Elementary Teacher (Gr. 5)

Develop and incorporate units of inquiry within the framework of the Primary Years Program (English, Math, Science, History, Religious Studies). Participate in extracurricular activities (i.e., IT Committee, Junior School Newspaper Committee, UOI Grade-Level Representative,

English Grade-Level Representative, Technology Related Integration Activities (i.e., Moodle, Google Docs, etc.).

Strictland Central School – Woodbridge, VA, USA 8/2008 – 6/2009

Behavior Interventionist (Gr. 1-7)

Behavior and academic support for students with learning disabilities, social/emotional issues, and other impediments that discouraged student success within a classroom environment.

Learners English Camp – Seoul, South Korea 5/2007 – 7/2008

English Teacher Support (Gr. 3-10)

Helped to develop and incorporate English-language, transdisciplinary lessons with an emphasis on reading, writing, and speaking. Daily class structure varied, as this position was an after-school, lesson-based learning environment of 7-18 students per class.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Developing Confident, Competent Communicators (Excellence in Writing) – Teaching and Learning through Inquiry (Kath Murdoch) – PYP Inquiry Workshop – Designing Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (Cantor & Associates) – Foundations of Reading and Literacy (Cantor & Associates) – Teaching Reading in the Elementary Grades (Cantor & Associates)

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

- **Intern - Western Communication Group**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James M. Boldosser, Sr. is married with one son. He currently resides in Indonesia where he teaches at a prestigious international school. He is previous U.S. military and has a background in consumer finance and IT. He holds a B.S. from Johnson State College and a M.A. from Liberty University. In his spare time, he enjoys traveling, competing in triathlons, writing, and community-service related activities

CREDITS

Chapter 1. Roberts, Michael. (2009). The Great Recession. Associate Professor of Finance at Wharton.

Chapter 2. Numbeo. www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/rankings_by_country.jsp. Permission to use as indicated by Creative Commons, creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0.

Expert Articles. Beth Whitman, author of Safety Tips for Solo Women Traveler, is the Founder of Wanderlust and Lipstick, www.WanderlustAndLipstick.com.

Expert Articles. Bridget Lux, author of Europe Offers World of Friendship.

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