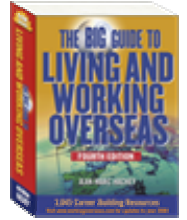

Teaching English Overseas: A Stepping Stone to International Careers

One billion people in the world want to learn English; so, finding an English teaching job overseas is simple. Almost everyone reading this article could be on a plane heading overseas to teach English within the next three months. Your teaching job is especially guaranteed if you are a native English speaker, have a university degree, and have taken a short training course to teach English as a foreign language, such as TESOL or TEFL. Opportunities abound in all non-native English speaking countries overseas (i.e. Not Australia, New Zealand or UK). The hot markets are Eastern Europe, Turkey, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Indonesia, China and Japan. In Western Europe, visa restrictions often apply, but there are still opportunities in Spain, Portugal and Greece. In Eastern Europe, accommodations and salaries can be restricting, but Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic are active in recruiting teachers. In Latin America, there is work to be found in Mexico, Costa Rica, Chile, Peru and Venezuela.



This article will show that you can harness the English teaching experience and transform it into the opportunity that suits your specific goals and objectives. For example, you can teach English in order to travel, learn a new language, or pay off student debts. What's more exciting is that you can teach English abroad to create a stepping stone to other professional international careers. The strategies suggested in this article are for the enterprising individual. You will need to take risks, go out on a limb, and plot your way to success, often while you are traveling abroad. However, the payoff is almost always guaranteed. So there is actually little risk of failure. Remember, one billion people want to learn English and this massive thrust will help you achieve your goals. Read on to find out more.

TEACH ENG. TO ACHIEVE YOUR COUNTRY SPECIFIC GOALS

It's easy to do a country-specific job search for teaching English abroad. This is different from other international job searches where it is difficult to do a country-specific search. In the case of professional international jobs, it is generally the international employer who will select your destination; and, for low skilled jobs, there are always problems with work visas. But when teaching English abroad, you can simply choose the country of your choice (where citizens are non-native English speakers), and make a living overseas. This is exciting news because you can teach English to achieve any number of parallel goals you have related to living in a specific country. Here is a list of ideas to get your imagination going.

- **Teach English to follow a spouse, lover, friend or relative to a specific destination.** There are many reasons to target a specific country to teach English: you fall in love with a French foreign student studying in the US and you want to return to their home with them; your spouse has an internship in Amsterdam; your best friend is living in a holiday home in Panama for a year; your long-lost relatives live in Italy; your uncle has just moved to Bangalore, India. In all these cases, you can join them and make a living by teaching English overseas.
- **Teach English to further your cross-cultural goals.** For instance, you can move to any country in South America, teach English on the side, and achieve a specific goal to improve your Spanish. Or, you may be studying Russian history, and be enthralled with learning about all things Russian - If you move to St-Petersburg or Moscow to teach English, you can finance your trip and achieve your ultimate goal of furthering your knowledge of Russia.
- **Teach English to pay-off school loans.** You can save as much as \$15,000 a year if you are frugal while teaching English in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan or Korea. For most other countries, English teachers receive a basic salary, just enough to live on while affording some local travel. You can, however, move up the salary scale by teaching extra courses, moving to better paying schools, and giving private lessons.
- **Teach English to finance travel.** If you want to travel by spending a month or more in different exotic cities, you can finance your trip by teaching English. There are short-term opportunities at private schools, and for the enterprising individual, you can talk your way into working as a live-in private tutor for children of wealthy families. When traveling, offer your services to hotels and tourist operators to teach English to their staff, and/or to edit the English text of brochures and signage.
- **Teach English to fulfil a retirement dream.** If you are approaching retirement age, and want a rich meaningful experience, consider teaching English overseas. There are no barriers when hiring abroad, so whether you are young or older, you have the same chance of finding work. So choose the country of your choice and take on a teaching position that matches your desires.

TEACH ENG. TO BREAK INTO THE INTERNATIONAL JOB MARKET

You need international experience before you can land a professional international job. But how do you get it? There are thousands of ways to gain international experience, but teaching English overseas can be a productive back-door strategy to landing the job you desire.

- **Teach English to others in your field of expertise (don't teach regular English).** This is a powerful strategy that will help you gain career experience. The classic scenario is the MBA student who has just graduated and is determined to land a business job in Hong Kong. The fastest route toward meeting Asian business decision makers is to teach business-English in Hong Kong; and who will you meet when teaching business English - business men who can offer you jobs. Others have

done the same in teaching science-English in a Chinese university, and music-English with Japanese cultural umbrella organizations. For a related example consider this - Costa Rica is the internet capital of Central America. If you are currently studying computer-English or graphic-design-English course at one of the specialized private sector schools located in San Jose, the capital of Costa Rica. You can craft your own customized course, or audit the Spanish course for terms to be taught in English (i.e. Develop a lexicon of English-Spanish terms specific to one field). With this strategy, you will certainly find many willing students, and at the same time, meet others in your field and improve your Spanish.

- **Teach English as a stepping stone to an English writing career.** Many lovers of English dislike the very thought of teaching. Don't despair. There are many opportunities to work abroad as English language editors, writers, reporters and communication consultants. Almost every major city in the world has at least one English language newspaper. Large corporations are always in need of English copy editors. Every tourist destination has the need for English writers. There are communications and public relations (PR) firms located in just about in every part of the non-native English speaking world, and they often have a need for English writers and editors. If you have web experience, (and you should have if you consider yourself a writer in today's age), you can become a web page copy editor and writer. All of these careers are possible, but you may have to teach first to make the required networking contacts.
- **Teach English to gain broad international experience.** Many university students want to have an international career, be it in engineering, political science, or economics; but, international employers require previous international experience. For the recently graduated university student, teaching English abroad is a sure-fire way to prove to international employers that you have what it takes to succeed in another culture. If you can't afford to study abroad, or if you can't find an international internship, then acquire your international experience by first teaching English overseas.
- **Teach English to gain professional experience while traveling.** If you are an enterprising individual, you can back-pack your way across Africa, for example, and present your English teaching and editorial skills on a volunteer basis. In the case of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), you may offer your services as an English editor for official reports to donor agencies. You could also offer to train their staff in the correct English when using MS Word or MS Excel, or in writing business correspondence, all with an emphasis on proper English. Another example for an enterprising individual would be to offer to write a tourist trail guide for an eco tourism organization. You may not get paid for this work, but it will help you build experience for your resume.
- **Teach English as a stepping stone to teaching in an international school.** Many qualified teachers want to break into the exclusive world of teaching at an "international school." These schools are located in almost every large city and deliver courses to the children of diplomats, international business executives and wealthy local elites. Without international experience, you will find it difficult to find a job in one of these schools. Teaching English overseas is a great stepping stone to prove your competency.
- Good luck and enjoy, teaching English abroad!