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U.S. Department of State

Overseas Employment Resources for Families of U.S. Citizens Employed Abroad

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Resources for Job Search

There are several options to consider when searching for employment in your destination country, from public sector to private. Below are some resources drawn from different sectors to assist in your job search:

[Multilateral Organizations](#)

[U.S. Government Agencies](#)

[U.S. Embassies](#) (www.usembassy.gov)

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Multilateral Organizations

Job openings continually become available within UN agencies and other international organizations. Although these provide great opportunities for an expatriate family member, the job search can be long and arduous and should be started well ahead of your expected arrival abroad. The following links provide a list of international organizations and current job vacancies in the UN and other international organizations.

[List of International Organizations](#) (State.gov)

- *Note: Many IO's have offices and operations in cities around the world in addition to their headquarters location.*

[Current Job Vacancies in the UN and other International Organizations](#)

(State.gov)

- Job postings updated every 2 weeks

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U.S. Government Agencies

Many U.S. Agencies – diplomacy-oriented, aid-oriented and traditional – have operations internationally. Finding information about the operations of these organizations overseas usually consists of researching the organizations individually. The following are agencies that conduct business internationally:

- [Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service \(APHIS\)](#) [Dept of Agriculture]
- [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) [Dept of Health & Human Services]
- [Department of Defense \(DOD\)](#)
- [Department of Energy \(DOE\)](#)
- [Department of Labor \(DOL\)](#)
- [Department of State \(DOS\)](#)
- [Department of the Treasury](#)
- [Drug Enforcement Administration \(DEA\)](#) [Dept of Justice]
- [Federal Bureau of Investigation \(FBI\)](#) [Dept of Justice]
- [Foreign Agricultural Service \(FAS\)](#) [Dept of Agriculture]
- [Foreign Commercial Service \(FCS\)](#) [Dept of Commerce]
- [Internal Revenue Service \(IRS\)](#)
- [Library of Congress](#)
- [National Aeronautics and Space Administration \(NASA\)](#)
- [Peace Corps](#)
- [U.S. Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](#)
- [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services \(USCIS\)](#) [Dept of Homeland Security]
- [U.S. Geological Survey \(USGS\)](#)

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Non-Governmental Organizations

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can be a great way to connect with a community overseas. For a comprehensive list of country-specific and international NGOs, one should search online, but below are some examples.

- [Ashoka](#)
- [CARE International](#)
- [Caritas International](#)
- [Catholic Relief Services](#)
- [Freedom House](#)
- [Greenpeace](#)
- [Habitat for Humanity](#)
- [InterAction](#)
- [Mercy Corps](#)
- [Oxfam International](#)
- [Save the Children International](#)
- [Transparency International](#)
- [Wango: Worldwide NGO Directory](#)
- [WorldPress.org](#)
- [World Vision International](#)
- [World Wildlife Fund](#)

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Educational Institutions

International schools are often interested in hiring foreign-educated teachers to teach everything from beginning English classes to college-level courses in a whole range of subjects. Also, foreign-exchange programs for teachers exist in many countries. Below are some resources regarding teaching and exchange programs:

[Department of Defense Schools](#)

[Department of State, Office of English Language Programs](#)

[International Foundation for Education & Self-Help](#)

[International Schools Services Directory of Overseas Schools](#)

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Grant-Funded Research

Obtaining grants to conduct research in-country may be a valuable way of avoiding the traditional obstacles to working in the local economy, as well as to advance one's professional skills. Below are some resources and advice on how to obtain funding and undertake your research:

ResearchResearch: Process of applying for and receiving funding for research

Focus: Advice for grant applications

A number of institutions distribute research grants for particular areas of interest. Some of them are listed below:

- [Carnegie Corporation of New York](#)
- [Council on Foundations](#)
- [Foundation Center Grantmaker Information](#)
- [Foundations.org](#)
- [Fulbright Program](#)
- [Getty Foundation](#)
- [Grants.gov](#)
- [GrantsNet](#)
- [Human Frontier Science Program](#)
- [International Research & Exchanges Board](#)
- [John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation](#)
- [National Endowment for the Humanities](#)
- [National Geographic Society](#)
- [National Institutes of Health](#)
- [National Institute of Mental Health](#)
- [National Science Foundation](#)
- [Society for Research Administrators Int'l Grants Web Resources](#)
- [Spencer Foundation](#)
- [USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service](#)

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In-Country Employer Search

Below is a list of job-search resources and advice on finding employment in your destination country:

[Association for International Practical Training](#)

- Advice and services to international career-seekers

[Big Guide to Living and Working Overseas](#)

- Volunteer, internship and career information available in online or book format

[EURES: The European Job Mobility Portal](#)

- Job vacancy and work abroad information for Europe

[ExpatNetwork.com](#)

- Country-specific job search and network in online forums

[Foreign Policy Association: Job Board](#)

- Internship, job and volunteer opportunities abroad

[Going Global: Country Career Guides](#)

- Country-specific advice on work permits, interviewing, resume/CV formation, networking and job resources

[Idealist.org](#)

- Wide range of job, volunteer, internship and organization postings

International Employer Search (compiled by Dept of State Family Liaison Office):

- [By Field](#)
- [By Region/Country](#)

[NetExpat.com](#)

[PartnerJob.com](#)

- A job search website for spouses of UN and OECD employees

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10 Steps to Planning Your Career Transition to Another Country

By Susan Musich

There are many things to consider when planning for a global career transition. Here is a checklist for job seekers to get you started:

1. Access any formal resources available to you, such as a career coach/counselor, an organization's HR support division, or other support contacts. Stay connected with this person throughout your planning, transition, time in country, and preparation to move to another country or back to the U.S. as this person/resource can assist you in ensuring continuity and progress in your career planning.
2. Find out your anticipated departure/arrival date for your new country.
3. Find out the restrictions and permissions for working in the destination country.
4. Identify organizations to research for possible job leads.
5. Identify contacts within those organizations to network and identify job leads.
6. Ask everybody in your current network if they know somebody working for and of the in-country organizations, even if the person they know works for a branch in another country.
7. Develop a networking resume with the assistance of your career coach.
8. Contact all the people identified for networking to identify the key leads within the country of destination. Contact these people in country to explain your transition and to discuss employment opportunities. Attach your resume.
9. Check out the web sites for your career field and destination provided to you by your career expert.
10. Research the business etiquette and communication culture for your country of destination.



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Some Global Twists to Your Globe-Trotting Job Search

by Susan Musich, Global HR & Mobility Specialist, Washington, DC, Copyright 2008

Whether you are moving from New York to the Netherlands, Rome to Rwanda, or Chile to China, the transition will be challenging, to say the least. You will—or have already—experience the highs and lows of packing up a home, you may have to prepare the children for the change in school, friends and social life, you will deal with visas, trying to coordinate the timing of everything, say goodbye to family and friends, and so much more. Oh yes...and if you're working, you most likely have to resign or take leave without pay.

If you stop to think about all of these tasks, it's pretty impressive that you know what to do, how to communicate it, and where to go to accomplish them—or at the least, you know who to contact for some guidance. In other words, you've adapted to the environment you're in—you've acculturated and you know who to contact to make things happen.

These very same qualities apply to a global job search. On top of that, just as organizations are getting more on top of how to streamline the relocation process, many countries and companies are looking for ways to streamline the process of hiring foreign workers, which bodes well for the skilled professional seeking employment. This, however, is another article altogether.

Chances are, though, that you won't have much time to think about planning for your job search in your destination location—don't worry, we've got you covered. Following are some tips to help jumpstart your job search once you're ready to launch your campaign in your new destination.

WHAT COUNTRIES OFFER THE BEST CHANCES?

Your chances will certainly vary from country to country. Looking for a job in Beijing is much more of a challenge than looking for a job in Beirut. Most wouldn't expect this to be true, but often it's the work permit that hinders employment and not the act of landing the job—although that can also be a challenge in many locations.

You should be talking with other spouses/partners in the country. Talk with those who have jobs and ask them for their best advice and also talk with those looking for work and ask them if they want to stay in touch for support—who knows, they may come across an excellent contact for you. Lastly, I have yet to find a single country on Planet Earth that does not engage in some form of “networking.” It may be called something else, but it rules the job search around the world.

WHAT EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR?

It varies from country to country, but in general employers who hire people on an international salary are looking for people who have unique skills that can't be found by locals in the country. Employers also want solid communication skills; often they want someone who can speak both English and the local dialect. It may be more of a challenge to find a job with an international salary if you only have a few years of experience. If you're looking in the development arena, you'll need to have at least a master's degree, but that's not always necessary in the private sector where experience is dominates the hiring decision.

You can help the employer view you as a solid candidate by making it clear what your unique value-added would be. You'll need to reflect this in your conversations with your network, with employers, on your resume, and in your interviews. Of course, you'll need to research the local talent to ensure you know that you're promoting yourself appropriately. You'll be surprised to find the increasing local talent in many developing countries.

HOW ARE THEY RECRUITING?

Employers and recruiters are using a variety of methods to recruit for positions around the globe. The internet continues to be popular for international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) where there are several low-cost, popular options including their own web site. Employers also recruit through word-of-mouth and referrals. In the private sector, this is very common. Some organizations contract out their recruitment services—in particular for more senior level positions. Larger organizations may have their own recruitment function in the country.

You can improve your chances of grabbing the attention of the recruiter by determining the best way to get your resume/CV in front of them. To do this, you will need to research how the organization recruits for jobs in your country. Do they make the decision locally? Do they have to go through an office in another country? You will find this out through your network. You will also find out through your network the best way to move

your resume/CV forward. In many cases, there is an internal person—who becomes part of your network—who offers to move your resume/CV through the best channels.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES?

International employers are faced with a multitude of challenges, and hiring an international employee presents its own set of challenges. An employer needs to make sure the work permit is secured, ensure the local laws are adhered to, and address other human resource issues. However, one of the greatest concerns an employer has is whether or not the person is a “fit” for both the organization and the local team. This “fit” becomes much more complex in a multicultural environment. The employer may wonder if the person will be culturally-sensitive to the local staff, or will the person be able to communicate in a culturally-appropriate manner to clients and senior-level officials who may visit the office.

You can improve your chances of landing a job by observing the business culture as it relates to communication, networking, negotiating, men and women, age, language, greetings, gift giving, and other areas that those in your network may inform you about. To learn about this, it is best you speak with those who have been in the country a few years and have fully acculturated and can give you some examples of what works and what doesn't work. Be sure to ask them when to employ these cultural nuances and with whom. The more you practice, the more you will become acculturated and enjoy your experience as well.

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Further Education

While many individuals are hesitant to give up a career opportunity to pursue further education, attending an accredited institution can be a valuable way to obtain a long-term visa for residing in-country. At the same time, you can do anything from gain language proficiency in order to meet certain employment criteria to earn a degree.

Some helpful study abroad and scholarship opportunities can be found from the resources below:

[IIE Passport](#)

- Study and internship abroad opportunities

[Rotary International Ambassadorial Scholarships](#)

- International study grants for undergraduates, graduates, and professionals

[World Wide Colleges and Universities](#)

- Listing of colleges and universities in every region

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Work Permits

Each country has its own laws, practices, and procedures regarding how foreign nationals can obtain employment in the domestic labor market. Some national policies are very liberal, whereas others refuse employment rights to foreigners. While several international organizations have negotiated employment rights for the spouses and family members of their employees, the majority have not been successful or have not attempted any agreements. The following links provide information on the legal state of work permits abroad:

[Work Permit Components](#)

[Fragomen Country Briefs](#) (Fragomen.com)

- Provides some country-specific requirements

[WorkPermit.com](#)

- Advice and resource website on immigration and work permit issues

[LabourMobility.com](#)

- Advice on the legal and cultural intricacies of international job searches

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Work Permit Components

The application requirements for obtaining a work permit vary greatly with each country. Countries assign agency responsibilities for work permits differently, often dividing the responsibilities between federal and provincial jurisdictions. In the latter case, some applications must be directed to and receive approval from both levels of government. Additionally, some procedures must be initiated by the company offering employment, when a country requires that employment be obtained before the work permit. Most governments list the requirements and documents on their consular or embassy websites. In general, please be aware that many countries will require some or all of the following:

- Extensive application forms
- Birth certificate (original or a notarized copy)
- Record of criminal history (obtainable from the local police)
- Certificate of health
- Passport (original or a notarized copy)
- Passport-sized photos
- Proof of ability to support yourself financially during your stay
- Proof of insurance: health, travel, and accident
- Proof of lodging
- Job offer letter
- Residency permit
- Processing/Application fee
- National Labor Market Test (i.e., a government determination as to whether the domestic/local labor market needs or can handle more workers in a particular profession)

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Formal and Informal Networks

Some of your best resources can be people who have gone through the process of finding employment in the country in which you will be living. The expatriate forums listed below may be of some value in connecting with and getting advice from such people.

[Allo' Expat Worldwide](#) (alloexpat.com)

- Country-specific forums, classifieds, news, and activities

[Expat Expert](#) (ExpatExpert.com)

- Info on living and working abroad, chat groups, and useful links

[Expat Forums](#) (ExpatForums.com)

- Forums on various subjects related to living abroad

[Expat Network](#) (ExpatNetwork.com)

- Expat communities, money, job search, and news

[Expat Women](#) (ExpatWomen.org)

- Resources for women living abroad including interviews, blogs, and family support

[Net Expat](#) (NetExpat.com)

- Addresses challenges and issues related to working abroad

["Networking Effectively Around the Globe"](#) (S. Musich)

[The Riley Guide: Network, Interview, & Negotiate](#) (www.rileyguide.com)

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Networking Effectively Around the Globe

By Susan Musich

Whether you refer to it as connecting with others, making contacts or meeting people, the word “networking” is simply another term for the way people connect on a level that allows them to connect with another person who may (or may not) have either an interest relevant to your interests or has information that would be of interest and/or help to you. However, keep in mind that to be most effective when networking involves building a relationship with the other person by working collaboratively in a variety of ways. It is not a one-way street. Networking is most successfully when it becomes a mutually beneficial business or genuine personal relationship.

Many of you may be saying: “How can I offer something to another person when I’m unemployed and looking for a job?” This article will give you some tips and strategies on how you can do this effectively and with minimal work. This will hopefully reduce that feeling of being overwhelmed by the process while improving your effectiveness with the technique.

The TOP 5 of WHY: Why would you network?

1. To meet others who provide tips on whom to meet and who can help you further your career and job search goals.
2. To meet people who can provide information -- either general or specific -- on the local job market.
3. To meet people who might have ideas about (or knowledge of) jobs that would be relevant to your career interests.
4. To connect with resources -- including organizations, employers, and cultural information -- that will help you make decisions on jobs and career opportunities.
5. To identify challenges and opportunities that would impact the effectiveness of your job search.

The TOP 5 of WHO: With whom do you network?

1. People who might have contacts in organizations and people who have information about your career field.

2. Professional peers as they often know where the jobs are in their/your career field more so than many of their managers (although sometimes it may be appropriate to meet with the manager).
3. People who know lots of people to refer you to even though you may be once or twice removed from the person with whom you may finally want to connect.
4. People in organized expat communities as many know what is going on among the international and even local organizations. Such communities include expat women's groups such as those formed through www.ExpatWomen.com, social groups, PTAs, children's sports activities, adult sporting events, country clubs, embassy activities, and many other organizations. *(See links at end of this article.)*
5. Prior to your move, meet with other people (expats) who either lived in the country where you are moving to or people (country nationals) who may be in your pre-departure town (such as Washington, DC, New York, Geneva, Rome, Beijing, or other city). For example, if you are moving to Nairobi and currently living in Johannesburg, you may want to try to meet with other Kenyans in Jo'burg as well as non-Kenyans who at some point lived in Kenya but now are living in Jo'burg.

The TOP 5 of WHAT: What can you do to maximize the effectiveness of the networking experience?

1. Do not lead any initial meeting or connection with the request that they help you find a job or tell you if they know of any jobs.
2. Start most conversations by getting to know the other person a bit and sharing information about yourself, such as the country you came from, why you're in your current country and what you two may have in common, such as regions of the world where you lived or knowing people in the same organizations. Bring brochures or small booklets or either your previous country of residence or your native country to share with the person, as many people are often interested in your experience in other countries.
3. If you're meeting with a person in your career field, share some of the latest research in your field that you may have found either in print or online through professional/trade journals, or publications such as the *NY Times*, *Herald Tribune*, *Harvard Business Review*, and any of the numerous sources available to you (Note: you can do this either in the meeting or offer to send it after the meeting).

4. Spend some time asking them about how they got into their job. You can learn a lot through listening to others' experiences. Also ask a few questions about the job market, the organizations that seem to employ people in your career field and what their perception is of the opportunities in the community. Ask what their best advice is on how to break into the market.
5. Always wrap up a meeting by asking if they can recommend anyone else to speak with in your career field. Also ask them if you can stay in touch with them to touch base on your job search and to, perhaps, tap their expertise if you get "stuck" along the way and to keep them informed about your search. This is often very effective to keep the door open with a professional contact.

The TOP 5 of WHEN & WHERE: Where and when do you meet?

1. Follow the cultural norms of the country. If it's a social contact, meet for tea, coffee, lunch or what ever would be considered acceptable in that culture.
2. For most business-related contacts, it's often appropriate to meet at their office.
3. Always seek out people to chat with at events, parties, and social gatherings. You should probably avoid too much chat about your job search, but ask them if you can follow up with them at their office or during lunch.
4. It's often best to ask business contacts to meet during a natural business break, such as during a work day tea or coffee break or lunch.
5. Keep your meetings to the time you requested, such as 30 or 45 minutes--or a time period appropriate to the business or local culture--unless the other person insists you two can chat for more time.

Good luck with your networking!

Susan Musich, Managing Director, Passport Career, LLC (<http://www.passportcareer.com/>) & Global HR & Mobility Specialist. Copyright 2008

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Cultural and Business Etiquette

Working and living overseas can present you with a lot of changes from the work environment you are accustomed to. From the overarching business operations to the mannerisms required when accepting a business card, it is essential to research the cultural norms in the country in which you are about to do business. The following are resources that can keep you up to date on what is acceptable and what is considered impolite in other countries:

[International Business Etiquette Internet Sourcebook](#)

- A listing of websites on regional differences in business etiquette, maintained by the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Service.

[The Other Customs Barrier](#) [.pdf]

- An article by the U.S. Department of Commerce commenting on cultural etiquette issues relevant to business transactions, as well as a description of further resources.

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