International Careers Workshop

James Milner
Department of Political Science
Carleton University
James_Milner@carleton.ca
Program:

- What is an ‘international career’?
  - What can you do? What’s it like?
- Where are the jobs?
  - The various paths to an international career
- What’s in my tool-kit?
- How can I build my tool-kit while at Carleton?
- Why start now?
- How can I be entrepreneurial?
  - Tips and tricks
The international experience
Work with UNHCR

“Field”
- Refugee protection work (interviews and writing)
- Project planning and reporting
- Capacity-building and training
- Logistics and systems development

“Headquarters”
- Writing and disseminating policy
- Writing speeches and response documents
- Advocacy/lobbying with governments and NGOs
- Planning and programming
The myths and realities

“International jobs pay well and will let me escape!”

Pros:
- Satisfaction of direct contribution
- Adventure and new experiences

Cons:
- Mobility and impact on personal relationships
- Security concerns
- Flying cockroaches

Read:
- Philip Caputo, *Acts of Faith*
- Helen Fielding, *Cause Celeb*
Living overseas

- The Canadian work culture
- Culture shock
- Culture fatigue
  - Participation, find a sympathetic host national, take a break, take the familiar, maintain contact back home
- Issues for men, women, married, single, gay, straight
- Security concerns
  - Home invasions, street crime, political violence
- The challenge of re-entry
Entry-level jobs

- **Formal and informal** entry-level opportunities
- **Formal programs with GoC:**
  - DND: Policy Officer Recruitment Program
  - DFAIT: Foreign Service Recruitment Program
  - CIDA: Multiple opportunities
  - Public Service Commission
- The pros and cons of formal programs
Types of opportunities

- **Informal opportunities**
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
  - From the largest to the smallest
- International organizations
  - UN, regional organizations
  - JPOs, UNVs, deployment schemes
- Private sector and the rise of CSR
- How ‘international’ do you want to go?
  - Working internationally in your own backyard
- How do you find the hidden opportunities?
Credit where credit is due...


*which is now...*

*The Big Guide to Living and Working Overseas*

www.workingoverseas.com

... which you can access for free!
Free access to The Big Guide

- All you need is your Carleton e-mail address
  1. Go to: http://www.carleton.ca/isso/
  2. Click on ‘International Opportunities for CU Students’ on the menu bar on the left of the screen
  3. Click on ‘Other International Opportunities’
  4. Follow the links to the The Big Guide

- It is an EXCELLENT resource!
  - CV and cover letter writing
  - Database of jobs and internships
  - Useful planning tools
Characteristics for overseas workers

- **General traits**
  - Enjoy change, sense of adventure, open-minded, patient

- **Adaptation and coping skills**
  - Ability to deal with stress, flexibility, humor, understanding of culture shock, emotional stability

- **Intercultural communication skills**
  - Tolerance listening and observing skills, non-verbal communication skills, knowledge of other languages

- **Overseas work effectiveness traits**
  - Independence and self-discipline, resourcefulness, versatility, organizational skills, project planning skills, philosophical commitment, verbal and written communication skills, training skills, diplomacy
Your “international IQ”  (Hachey, 1998, 4)

- International employers look for your **professional** skills and your **international IQ**
  - Political, economic and geographic knowledge
    - What’s going on out there? What is the capital of Mongolia?
  - Knowledge about international aspects of your field
    - What are the needs out there?
  - Cross-cultural knowledge and skills
    - What does it take to be effective in another culture?
  - Personal coping and adapting skills
    - Can you deal with culture shock? Will you be able to cope with the realities of overseas work? The challenge of ETs
Your international tool kit

- Education
  - Undergraduate and graduate programs
  - Study abroad? Isn’t that expensive?
  - Building your network through research
- Work experience
  - Domestic and international
- Languages
- Skills
  - Can you dig a pit latrine? No, but I was a tour guide.
- Travel experience
  - Can you buy a ticket for the Shatabdi?
Overcoming the experience Catch-22

- ‘Only a third of jobs in this area are advertised’
- **Be entrepreneurial**
  - You can make your own luck
- Where do you want to be 5 years after graduation?
- Build your tool-kit while at Carleton:
  - Study abroad
  - Work in Ottawa
  - Internships: Home and abroad
  - Volunteer: Home and abroad
  - Summer work is your friend
  - Independent work and travel
Carleton’s support

- *Defining Dreams* and the priorities of ‘global identities’ and ‘community engagement’
- University is committed to helping students build experience and develop your tool-kit
- Launch of ‘Co-curricular Record’ initiative
  - [http://carleton.ca/ccr](http://carleton.ca/ccr)
- Start now! Take advantage of being here!
- Liaise with your Program Administrator
- But no degree will guarantee a job…
  
  ... so you need to be entrepreneurial
Study abroad

- Link your studies with your interest in international careers through a **study abroad program** in 3rd year
- Carleton has agreements with universities in more than 30 countries, managed by **ISSO**
  - [http://www2.carleton.ca/isson/exchange/](http://www2.carleton.ca/isson/exchange/)
- **Deadlines in early December**
- **PSCI programs** (see Department web-page):
  - North American Mobility Program
  - Canada-European Community Program for Cooperation in Higher Education and Training
  - [http://www2.carleton.ca/polisci/current-students/study-abroad-programs/](http://www2.carleton.ca/polisci/current-students/study-abroad-programs/)
- Link study abroad with work abroad
Work in Ottawa

- **The ‘Capital Advantage’**
- **More than 900 potential employers:** MPs, Senators, government departments, NGOs, embassies and high commissions, lobby groups
- **Federal Student Work Exchange Program**
  - Combines pay with work experience
- **Co-operative Education**
  - [http://www.carleton.ca/cdce/](http://www.carleton.ca/cdce/)
- The direct approach
Internships

- What is an internship?
  - No simple answer
- Why intern?
  - Experience for free labor
- Finding the right internship
  - What do you want to gain? Where?
- Formal programs
- Creating your own internship
  - Networks and courage
- Negotiating salary and benefits
Internship opportunities

- Consult *The Big Guide*
- Youth International Internship Program
- World University Services Canada (WUSC)
- Aga Khan Foundation Canada
- UN Agencies:
- Broader lists: www.campusaccess.com/internships/
Is it a good opportunity?

- **Questions to ask of a host organization:**
  - Costs of the internship: Who pays what?
  - History
    - How long have they been in operation in that location?
  - Support
    - What kind of support network is available to you?
  - Supervision
    - What kind of supervision will you receive?
  - Finances
    - What are the practices of the host organization? Who audits the books?
  - Security
    - Where are they asking you to work? What is the UN security phase? Ask questions if it is III or higher.
Volunteer

- **Building skills** and experience as a volunteer
  - Management and fundraising experience
  - Lobbying and advocacy experience
  - Program and finance experience
  - Working with particular populations or groups
- **International**: Supply and demand
- **On campus**: Range of campus groups
  - [http://www.cusaonline.com/club_main.html](http://www.cusaonline.com/club_main.html)
- **In Ottawa**: What you can do with a day a week
  - Many more community organizations, working on a range of domestic and international
Paying for experience

- Gaining international experience can cost money
- How much should you pay for experience?
  - A flight to Nairobi can be $1,200
- The importance of long-term investments
- **Ontario International Education Opportunity Scholarship**
  http://www2.carleton.ca/graduate-studies/news/ontario-international-education-opportunity-scholarship/
- **Other strategies:**
  - Monthly commitments:
    - $50 a month for two years gives you $1,200
  - Tax free savings accounts
  - More than just paying the bills
The job search

- The same approach for now as for later
- Self-evaluation: What do I have to offer?
  - Assessing your skills
  - Target job type
  - Write your CV
- Research: Where do I look?
  - Reactive (job ads) and proactive (networking)
- Applying for the job: How do I make my pitch?
- The process:
  - Could be 9 months, or 72 hours
  - Keep track of details
  - Telephone interviews from Kenya or face to face in town
Where to look on-line?

- http://www.reliefweb.int/vacancies/index
- http://www.idealist.org/if/as/Job
- http://www.charityvillage.ca/
- http://fly.web.net/ccic
- http://jobs.guardian.co.uk/
- http://www.oneworld.ca/ and http://uk.oneworld.net/
- http://www.canadem.ca/

And how to keep track…

But remember, only about 30% are advertised
This is just the beginning...

Remember:
This is a long process, but you can make your own luck.

Good luck!