



Highlight your Study Abroad Skills in a Job Interview

First, think about some of the skills you may have gained/developed through study

Ability to establish rapport	Diversity appreciation	Motivation
Ability to handle stress and unfamiliar situations	Familiarity with local customs	Open-mindedness
Ability to make transitions	Flexibility	Perseverance
Adaptability	Goal establishment	Positive outlook
Adventurous spirit	Independence	Research experience
Analytical experience	Initiative	Resourcefulness
Assertiveness	Intercultural competence	Responsibility
Creativity	Language proficiency	Self-confidence
Cross-cultural communication	Listening and observation	Self-reliance
Curiosity	Managing, organizing, or leading others	Teamwork
		Time management

Second, reflect on the following prompts to help you identify and articulate specific indicators of the skills you learned abroad:

Identify an experience that would demonstrate that...

1. You have a basic command of the local language and be able to use it in a practical situation (Student in Spain, apartment, work, took classes)
2. You can take personal risks and act independently
3. You can creatively solve problems by applying familiar concepts to unfamiliar situations
4. You can contribute to an ethnically diverse team
5. You can be self-confident yet able to listen and learn from people whose value systems are different
6. You can be flexible and adaptable to rapidly changing situations

Third, use the experiences and situations described above to answer behavioral questions asked in an interview.

These interviews are based on the premise that your past performance is the best predictor of future performance in similar circumstances. Interviewers seek specific examples to get as detailed an understanding as they can about the way candidates have responded in similar

situations and challenges. They are looking for proof that you can demonstrate the desired capabilities in the real world. There is a three-step process to answering these questions:

- Situation: Describe a challenge you faced similar to the example posed by the interviewer.
- Action: Explain the actions that you took to resolve the situation.
- Results/Outcome: Detail the beneficial and positive outcomes that came from your initiatives.

Below are some questions commonly asked in the behavior-based interview:

- Tell me about a time when you changed your approach to a project after starting it. Why did you feel it was necessary to make the change? What was the result?
- Give me specific examples of several projects you were working on at the same time. How did you keep track of your progress? How did they turn out?
- Describe a time when a team members openly criticized you for something. Why were you criticized? How did you respond? What could you have done differently?
- Give me a specific example of a time when you had to meet a deadline, but your professor wasn't available to answer a question and you were unsure how to proceed. What did you do? What was the outcome?
- Tell me about an interpersonal conflict you have had with someone and how you dealt with it.
- Tell me about a time when you were a leader of a group. What was the most difficult thing about that experience?
- Tell me about a time when you were working as part of a team and someone else wasn't pulling their weight. How did you handle it?

Source: Adapted from Bay Area Lessons from Abroad & Matherly, C. (2005). Effective Marketing of International Experiences to Employers. In M. Tillman (ed.), Impact of Education Abroad on Career Development (9-10). Stamford, CT: American Institute for Foreign Study.