**Unpacking the Experience**

**Seeing the U.S. and the World in a New Light**You have probably changed your views on a number of things since you have been here. Many students have a new awareness of politics and the interpretations they get from the media of different countries and cultures. Some people feel either more critical of their own country or grateful for the things that they enjoy in their own country—or both. To sort through your changing perspectives, jot down a few ways in which your views have changed. Here are a few questions to get you thinking. Write your responses in the following chart:

1. What new experiences did you have while abroad that shocked or surprised you about the world?
2. Are there certain stereotypes you have let go of? Kept? Modified?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| How my views of the world have changed | How my views of my own country and culture have changed |
|  |  |

From: Mikk, B. K., Cohen, A. D., Paige, R. M., Chi, J. C., Lassegard, J. P.,Meagher, M., & Weaver, S. J. (2009). *Maximizing Study Abroad: An Instructional Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use.* Minneapolis, MI: Center for Advance Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA), University of Minnesota.

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**Professional Development**

One of the more difficult things to do when creating your resume and hunting for a job is to distill all that you have learned into a word or phrase that will be meaningful to a prospective employer. The question is how to convey that experience into skills employers are looking for, while still keeping it condensed for a resume and in an interview. Below are some words and phrases to help you articulate the skills that are often honed or developed through a study abroad experience. Consider what skills and qualities you have developed as a direct result of studying abroad. Try adding your own to the categories below.

Words and phrases to incorporate into a resume or cover letter:

Adaptable Motivated Self-directed

Responsive Exhibit Flexibility Organized

Independent Developed empathy Self-sufficient/reliant

Capable Self-awareness Tactful communicator

Appreciation of diversity Inquisitiveness/Curiosity Independence

Increased confidence Establish rapport quickly Ability to understand non-verbal cues

Tolerate ambiguity Demonstrate resilience

**Add your own:**

Skills that can be highlighted in an interview:

Willing to try something new Able to see things from different perspectives

Culturally aware Conscious of self-limitations

Enhanced global/cultural competency Increased critical thinking skills

Strong interpersonal and intrapersonal skills Sensitive to surroundings

Willing to take initiative and risks Communicate despite barriers

Handle difficult situations Manage stress

Ability to ask appropriate questions at the right time

**Add your own:**

Linguistic skills:

It is important to incorporate your language skills in your resume, and equally important to indicate accurately what those skills are.

Fluent Conversationally fluent Bilingual

Functional Ability to translate orally Ability to translate written work

Multilingual Proficient Proficient to varying degrees

Beginner Intermediate Advanced

**Add your own:**

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