

# MIDWEST ACE E-NEWS

May 2010  
Volume 1, Issue 22



Midwest Association of Colleges and Employers  
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## ***Can You Be a Successful Expatriate?***

*The answer may be in how well you know yourself*

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It's not easy to begin a new life and a new job in a foreign country. There are unforeseen challenges in the way of lifestyle, standards of living, and office protocol to name a few. The thought of the differences you might face halfway around the world may either invigorate or frighten you. By personally reflecting on a handful of questions, you are likely to find out whether you have the potential to be a successful expatriate.

***Question #1: Are you adventurous and outgoing with high self-esteem?***

If the answer is yes, odds are you have what it takes to pursue a global job opportunity. The ability to embrace unknown situations works to your advantage. Flexibility and adaptability make the transition from home to your new host country a smoother one. Most happy expats possess these traits.

***Question #2: Will this move enhance my career?***

Knowing the answer to this question may make some of the challenges of your big move worth it. If a job opportunity is in your field and involves taking on more responsibility than you would be given in your home country, the long term 'where' of it tends to matter less. International experience can provide advantages in an increasingly global world. This truth can help you overlook or better deal with a possible incompatible culture—at least for a while.

***Question #3: Will this move benefit me financially?***

Our global economy has suffered over the year, but that doesn't mean there is a lack of opportunities. If you fill a niche a local cannot,



you can make it easier for a prospective employer to hire you in the new location. Make sure to find out whether you will be paid in the local currency or in dollars. Either can be fine, but if you agree to be paid in the local currency, know the risks. If that currency becomes devalued, you may suffer financially.

***Question #4: Have you any first-hand experience of the country where you are job seeking?***

A glossy brochure or a colorful website cannot compete with experiencing the country for yourself. When seriously considering a move to any country, it is worthwhile to plan a trip there before accepting a job offer. Find out if you are comfortable with the local standard of living, the culture, the terrain and the weather. Living long term in another culture can be rough no matter the benefits, so remember you know who you are better than any recruiter. Experience life there as a tourist, volunteer or study abroad student first, and you will be better prepared to make the big leap.

Working abroad is not for everyone, but answering these few questions might tell you if it's for you.

**About the author**

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Mary Anne Thompson is the Founder and President of Going Global, Inc. ([www.goinglobal.com](http://www.goinglobal.com)) a subscription database service which contains career and employment information for more than 80 locations. More than one million users enjoy Going Global's unique content, which is researched in-country by local career experts and updated annually. She is also an author, lecturer and frequent guest on various media outlets, including NBC and CNN International. Previously, Mary Anne was a lawyer who served as an attorney and advisor to President Ronald Reagan in the White House.



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