

# InternationalTEFL.org's Four Steps to Teaching English Abroad

Making the leap to start working abroad can seem like a daunting change, but if you take simple, logical steps towards your goal, things will flow more easily for you, and you'll soon find yourself...

## Step 1: Commit yourself

This is actually the biggest step since it gets you moving in the direction you want to go.

**Do your research.** A well thought-out decision helps give you confidence in your decision. Take a look at different countries, requirements, and cultures. See if they fit the kind of experience you are looking for.

**Second thoughts and anxiety.** Even after you have made a solid decision, there will be second thoughts and anxiety. This is a natural process of change, but if you have made your decision firmly, the little worries won't be so big.

**Be happy about the unexpected.** Moving to a different culture means getting out of your comfort zone. Other countries and cultures rarely work the same way your native culture does; you can make this adjustment to a new culture a big part of your personal growth and understand how it expands of your world view.

Even if you have traveled extensively, working in a different culture is vastly different than traveling through it. Be prepared for even more understanding of a culture as a part of its working society!



## Step 2: Take the right course

Do your homework and select a course that will get you on the right track. How many hours are spent in class? How many practice teaching hours will you get? Will there be critique by an experienced instructor?

You are training to be an educator; the effort you put into the course will reflect on your commitment to educating others.

All of International TEFL's programs are run by experienced teachers and staff who want you to succeed in all regards as a teacher. Our staff will guide you to the right school to fit your needs.

"Success always comes when preparation meets opportunity"

– Henry Hartman

"All things are ready, if our minds be so"

– William Shakespeare

"The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires"

– William Arthur Ward

## Step 3: Traveling to your destination

Bring appropriate dress to teaching, not just what you imagine you'd like to wear. Ask other teachers in the area on online forums what is expected and acceptable in terms of dress, hair, covering tattoos, etc. Bring appropriate documentation- ask if you need original or copies/scans of degrees, certificates, transcripts, etc.

Determine if you want to fly one-way or round trip. When is your most likely return date? Ask your agent if you will be able to change the return date if necessary and find out what the associated fees are.

Talk to your TEFL school or contact about appropriate visas, lengths of stays, extensions. Communicate clearly with the consulate you are working with as to what your travel and visas are for and what documentation you need to get approved on the first application.



*One of the more traditional ways of travelling to your destination – Phuket, Thailand*

## Step 4: Finding a Job

A quality course will help with career assistance such as: CV/Resume advisement, potentials for work, good schools to work at, and jobs board resources. If it's a good course, employers will recruit their graduates, and there may be placement agreements between the TEFL school and

### **CV/Resume tips:**

Make your CV relevant to each job you apply for. If possible, customize it for each job application.

Have a second set of eyes go over to review and critique it.

Make sure your references are up to date and available. Call your references and tell them about your new adventure to get them excited about it as well and to have you fresh in their minds when they are called upon.

For Asian CV's, include a professionally-done photograph. No candid photos of you relaxing on your mom's sofa in your sweatpants.

Use a downloadable Word (or other) CV template to help keep your CV presentable and clean.

Note relevant experience; no need to include your paper delivery experience when you were 10 or your first gig at a burger joint.

### **Giving a good interview:**

Dress as professionally as you can.

Smile! Be polite. Look your interviewer in the eye.

Be honest.

Be engaging and interested in the job and the area you hope to teach in.

Exhibit good conversation skills- give responses that show you are interested, ask the interviewer questions.

Don't wait until you are done with your TEFL/TESOL course to start your job search. Unless you want to continue on traveling after your course, you can be working immediately after your course if you start your job search early.

Keep your options open. This is most likely your first job teaching, and it is like any other field in that regard. You should do a diligent job search and not be too picky about where apply. Once you get that first job you'll be gaining valuable experience and can continue to network after you start. Once you finish your first contract, many more options will be available to you, and you may very well find you're already where you want to be!

### **Prepare yourself and application materials**

If possible, give the employer the opportunity to meet with you face-to-face. Employers like to see some commitment by the prospective employee to make personal contact. Walk in or make an appointment.

Have both physical and electronic materials handy and well-organized. Have scans of your diploma, transcript, certificate, letters of recommendation, etc. handy on a thumb drive or email, and original documents or physical copies in plastic sleeves to protect them.