

How to Teach English Overseas



**A Ten Week Plan
to a New Life Overseas**

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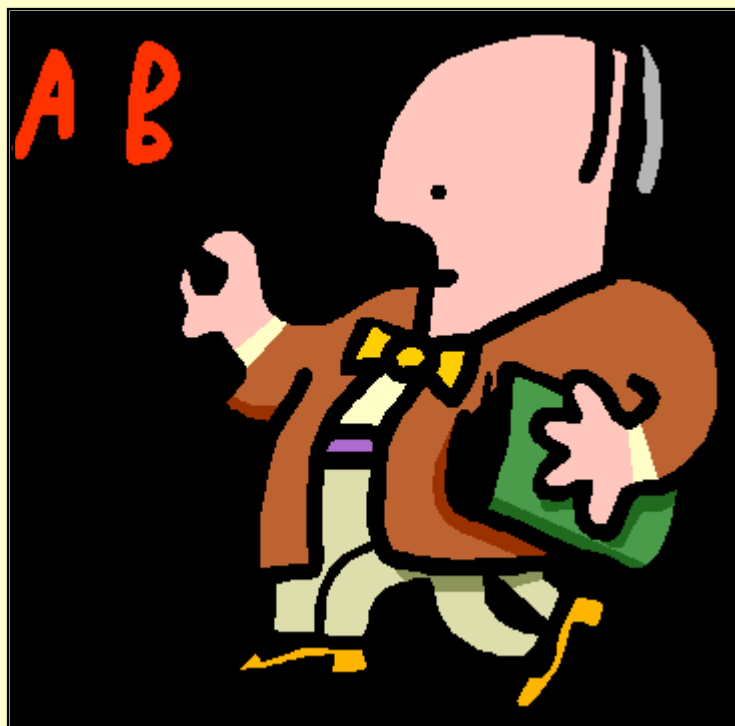
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Introduction

I. Twenty Questions

BEFORE WE START and you head down the road to creating a new life overseas . . .

Here are 20 important questions you should ask yourself before deciding if teaching English overseas is right for you.

Do you have a family that you are responsible for? How do they feel about moving overseas and living in a foreign land?

Do you have a spouse/partner? How they feel about giving up their job and accompanying you? Will they be able to find work overseas? Are they interested in teaching English also?

Do you have children? How will you educate them while overseas? How might they feel about giving up their friends?

Do you have debts that must be paid while you are overseas? Do you have a degree? (Though not required in many countries – it will affect your options and income)

Are there special medical issues for you or your family that must be considered?

Do you have the financial reserves to return to your home country and re-establish yourself if things don't work out? Or, are you willing to tough it out if you don't like it?

Have you ever taught before? Do you have any reason to believe that you might enjoy teaching English?

Have you ever traveled or lived overseas before? Did you enjoy it?

Would you find the daily problems of living and working overseas frustrating - or a refreshing challenge?

Do you get depressed or angry easily?

Those 20 questions are only a beginning. Once you can answer them positively and be honest with yourself about them – then you are ready to proceed.

II. What personal qualities and attitudes will help you succeed?

Have reasonable expectations about your new occupation and what it can and cannot provide for you. (this eBook will help you with that)

Understand that your new country will not be like your home country - solutions to problems that work at home often don't work overseas. Sometimes you really won't know how to solve a problem.

Know that most “personal” problems you had in your home country will probably also exist or reoccur overseas.

Know that you will have good days and bad days - just like back home

Know that you will probably experience good bosses, bad bosses, good jobs and bad jobs - again, just like back home.

Be flexible and learn to bounce back from unhappy surprises and/or problematic situations.

Be willing to work under different cultural expectations about your behavior, appearance and dress.

Manage your moods – keep yourself upbeat and avoid downbeat people.

View your success overseas as a personal challenge – be determined about making it work.

III. What Language Schools and Employers are REALLY Looking for . . .

Language schools, most likely where you will find your first job as an English Instructor, are businesses. The more students coming through the door and taking classes, the better their business does. If students talk to their friends and they come and sign up – things go even better. If they consistently sign up for the next class when the current one is finished – even better. Since attending a language school is an option and there are often competitors just down the street – often for the same or even a lower price – schools must attend to enrollment. If they

don't – they go out of business and no one – including you and/or me – has a job..

As a result of these demands on the success of the business, Language schools look for teachers that can keep students coming back to their classrooms again and again.

Think back to your favorite teachers when you were in school. Why were they your favorites? Were they friendly, helpful, intelligent, possibly even charming in their own way? Knowledgeable about their subject?

You probably answered “Yes” to all of those characteristics – and those are the very things that language schools are looking for. They would like their next teacher (You!) to be friendly, engaging, helpful, positive and encouraging.

By the way, did you notice that “Knowledgeable about their subject” was way down the list? Yeah.

When a school interviews you they are *first* looking for someone who give their students a positive experience and they also want someone who will be pleasant to work with.

The school, of course, would like you to know a little something about English, but as a native speaker you already have a huge built-in store of knowledge about the language. You have an excellent idea about what is right or wrong usage (though at first you may have difficulty explaining why – that comes later). You know when pronunciation is understandable or not – or when a sentence makes sense or not. These are the things non-native speakers regularly struggle with – and for you – no problem at all.

There is some excellent management research that shows that about 80% of people fired from their jobs are not fired because they lack the skills for their job. They are fired because of personal issues, attendance, punctuality, not following through and many other issues. Take this to heart – though you still have a bit to learn about teaching English – the biggest issue is just being able to get along and being a decent person to be around. And non-Western cultures tend to value the “get along” characteristics far more than our native cultures.

Now you know. They are just looking for someone pleasant and positive. Is that you? If not – TEFL may not be your best career choice – it is a VERY people-oriented profession.

Okay – let's get organized to head overseas . . .

Notes:

Begin Week I on the Next Page