



# Importance of Language and Culture for Globally Competent Engineers

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# Attributes Employers Seek – Top 10

Attribute	Percentage
Leadership	80.6%
Problem-solving skills	75.3%
Communication skills (written)	74.7%
Ability to work in a team	74.2%
Analytical/quantitative skills	72.0%
Strong work ethic	73.1%
Communication skills (verbal)	67.2%
Initiative	66.7%
Computer skills	64.5%
Technical skills	64.0%

# Attributes Employers Seek

Attribute	Percentage
Detail-oriented	57.5%
Flexibility/adaptability	57.5%
Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)	57.0%
Organizational ability	49.5%
Friendly/outgoing personality	33.3%
Strategic planning skills	32.8%
Creativity	25.8%
Entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker	25.8%
Tactfulness	23.7%

# Influence of Attributes

Attribute	2013 Average Influence Rating*	2012 Average Influence Rating*
Has held leadership position	4.0	3.9
Major	4.0	3.9
High GPA (3.0 or above)	3.8	3.6
Involved in extracurricular activities (clubs, sports, etc.)	3.6	3.7
School attended	3.1	3.0
Has done volunteer work	2.8	3.1
Is fluent in a foreign language <sup>1</sup>	2.4	N/A
Has studied abroad <sup>1</sup>	2.3	N/A

<sup>1</sup>Attribute not included in prior years' surveys.

\*5-point scale, where 1=No influence at all, 2=Not much influence, 3=Somewhat of an influence, 4=Very much influence, 5=Extreme influence.

# Qualities and Skills that make a (Great) Leader

- Honesty/trustworthiness
- Communication
- Emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management)
- Sense of humor
- Confidence
- Commitment
- Positive attitude
- Creativity
- Courage
- Ability to inspire

# International Minors

- Typical components
  - Foreign language
  - Related humanities/social science courses
  - Engineering and culture/global business
  - International experience (study, research, work or service)
- Examples
  - University of Illinois
  - University of Maryland
  - University of Michigan

# University of Illinois

- 21 semester hours
- Courses focus on region in which student plans to study (e.g., culture, history, geography, politics)
- 9 semester hours must be in courses other than language including one 300-400 level course
- One course from political science/economics list
- Minimum 6 weeks work or study in chosen country

# University of Maryland

- 15-18 credits (9 credits must be upper level)
- International Business Cultures for Engineering and Technology (3 credits)
- Global Studies Minor Signature Course
- Foreign language and culture studies related to locale of experience, internationally-related or international engineering-related courses.
- International engineering experience (study, research, work, service)



# University of Michigan

- 16-20 credits
- Develop at least two of the international minor's core skills
- Foreign language proficiency equivalent to fourth-semester college-level
- International courses that focus on non-US cultures/countries (3 credits must be 300-level or above)
- Intercultural communication
- Engineering Across Cultures course (1 credit)
- Relevant overseas experiences (minimum 6 weeks)

<http://www.engin.umich.edu/minors/international/requirements.html>

# What about students not completing an international minor?

- If you are in an international Engineering office, do you provide recommendations for language and culture preparation? When?
- Does your campus international office provide recommendations? When? During the application phase or only during pre-departure orientation?
- Are students left on their own to figure out what preparation they should be making and how to go about doing so?

# Language Preparation

- Enroll for regular language classes
- Pre-departure language/culture program
- Cultura-type Program ([cultura.mit.edu](http://cultura.mit.edu))
- Conversation partner
- Language software
- Foreign language movies/tv
- Foreign language news sites

# Culture Preparation - General

- Maximizing Study Abroad  
(Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, Lassegard)
  - Understanding culture shock/stages of adjustment
  - Iceberg analogy
  - Phases of cultural awareness
  - Model of intercultural sensitivity
  - Intercultural communication
- Cultural dimensions
  - Hofstede ([geert-hofstede.com](http://geert-hofstede.com))
  - Trompenaars/Hampden-Turner

# Culture Preparation - Specific

- Courses, locale specific (e.g., history, geography, government, art history, literature)
  - Online resources
    - Embassy or government websites
    - US Department of State ([travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov))
    - News websites
    - CIA World Factbook ([www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov))
    - Culturegrams ([www.culturegrams.com](http://www.culturegrams.com))
    - World Business Culture ([www.worldbusinessculture.com](http://www.worldbusinessculture.com))
  - Talk with current/former exchange students
- Pre-departure orientation

# Returning Students

- Debrief experience
- Update resume to include study abroad experience
- Articulate study abroad experience to an employer

# A Final Question

Is there any interest in working as a group to pull together resources that are posted in StudioAbroad? Or on the Global E3 website?