No matter your career path, having global skills is essential for 21st-century career success.

Traditional career readiness skills (the bottom eight elements in the model), are the skills that every student and young grad needs in order to land, maintain and excel at a job in any field. But in today's diverse and competitive workforce, you'll also need to develop the *3 Core Global Competencies* (the top three elements in the model). These three competencies are powerful by themselves but, when applied to the traditional career readiness skills, they will enrich your entire professional profile and help you succeed in diverse, intercultural teams!


CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS
Know About Others

CULTURAL SELF-AWARENESS
Know Yourself First

CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTABILITY
Put Your Knowledge Into Practice

GLOBAL COMPETENCE
IMPACT YOUR ENTIRE PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Communication

Critical Thinking

Leadership

Professionalism

Teamwork

Technology

Career & Self-Development

EQUITY & INCLUSION

REMEMBER:

Career readiness is about graduating with the skills employers expect you to have when entering the work force.

*Partially adapted from NACE's Career Readiness Competencies.

The 3 Core Global Competencies & Why They Matter

This model is a universal process for crossing cultures.
It is your starting point for getting your cultural bearings.

The 3 Core Global Competencies
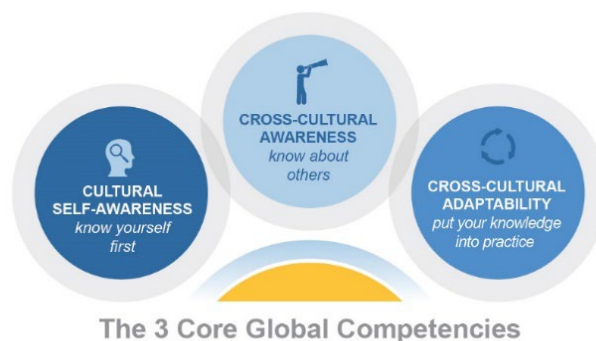
No matter where you work, you'll be called upon to navigate intercultural relationships.

These core competencies provide you with a framework to guide your learning objectives on-campus, off-campus and online. In essence, **it is a universal process for crossing cultures**. You can also use these components to help you speak professionally about your international skills. Employers will appreciate your ability to discuss each element individually, and to highlight connections between them.

| **1** CULTURAL SELF-AWARENESS *Know Yourself First* | **2** CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS *Know About Others* | **3** CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTABILITY *Put Your Knowledge Into Practice* |

Learning to see your home culture objectively is the first step to understanding others. With study, you'll learn how your own framework impacts your approach to management, education, hierarchy, communication and more. This gives you a useful benchmark for interacting with friends and colleagues abroad.

Key take away: You recognize that your culture's approach is just one of many possibilities.

Listening and observing are the foundations of good communication across cultures. Pursue immersive cross-cultural opportunities and aim to soak up every nuance. Practice being attentive to cultural cues and body language. Quickly analyzing such signals will help you build stronger cross-cultural relationships.

Key take away: You adopt an attitude of respect, open-mindedness, and a willingness to learn.

Successful global workers are flexible, modifying management and communication styles to suit new environments. Once you integrate self-knowledge and cultural awareness, these qualities will begin to inform your behavior, allowing you to better connect across cultures. There's great joy – and career value – in building cross-cultural adaptability!

Key take away: You're adaptable and able to adjust your behavior and expectations to suit the cultural environment.

Although each of the three core global competencies introduced above can be developed independently, they ultimately work in tandem and can best be understood as a network of knowledge, skills and attitudes that function together to impact your professional profile. For example, you must first develop cultural self-awareness and cross-cultural awareness to be fully capable of cross-cultural adaptability.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *MyWorldAbroad's 3 Core Global Competencies* was inspired by several authors, including Michael Vande Berg's Four-phase transformative training program, (see page 26, bullets-1,2,4; bullet-3 is covered in *MyWorldAbroad's* Succeeding Abroad section, course #105).

# The 3 Core Global Competencies in Practice: Know What They Look Like

We've examined the three core global competencies and why they're important. Now let's take a detailed look at how each one manifests in professional situations:

1 **CULTURAL SELF-AWARENESS**
Know Yourself First

2 **CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS**
Know About Others

3 **CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTABILITY**
Put Your Knowledge Into Practice

- You recognize that cultural self-awareness is a core component of being cross-culturally successful, and you strive to learn about your own culture through study and discussion.
- You understand how your home culture affects your approach to the workplace, including views on management, teamwork, hierarchy, communication, career progression, etc.
- You're able to describe the dominant features of your home culture as they manifest in the workplace and can explain them to compatriots and foreign colleagues.
- You're able to compare North American workplace culture with other workplace cultures.
- You're open to cultural self-analysis and reflection. You are aware of the impact your cultural norms can have on others. You nurture an understanding that other cultures are neither worse nor better, just different.

- You possess keen listening and observing skills and use them to understand cross-cultural environments.
- You're able to recognize nuanced cultural cues in conversation and business by observing body language, mannerisms, communication styles, social graces, etc.
- You possess an analytical mindset and an ability to think objectively about contrasting cultures.
- You're able to rapidly find and apply cultural knowledge through research and discussion.
- You aim to understand diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations and religions.
- You are open to language learning, whether you target just a few simple terms to promote engagement or aim for full fluency.
- You value and respect differences, approaching them with openness, sensitivity, inclusiveness and a lack of judgment.
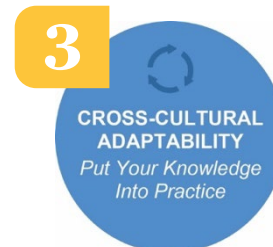
- You're able to vary your behavior in cross-cultural environments.
- You're able to deal with change and ambiguity and comfortably integrate into foreign and cross-cultural teams.
- You take a diplomatic approach to cross-cultural communication.
- You ask pertinent questions and pinpoint areas for personal improvement in cross-cultural situations.
- You're able to interact respectfully with people from different cultures.
- You're curious about other cultures and fascinated by behavioral patterns around the world. You're eager and motivated to improve your cross-cultural abilities, and you enjoy the process of adapting your behavior to be more effective in new environments.

In summary: Someone who possesses all three of these competencies will have a confident understanding of their home culture, easily recognizing that their culture's approach is just one of many possibilities. They will be open-minded and deeply respectful, with a love of learning and a willingness to adapt to new cultures. Finally, they will be a keen observer of cultural cues, staying calm under pressure and displaying a natural diplomacy and sense of humor.

The 3 Core Global Competencies: Boost Your Cross-cultural Learning & Skill Development
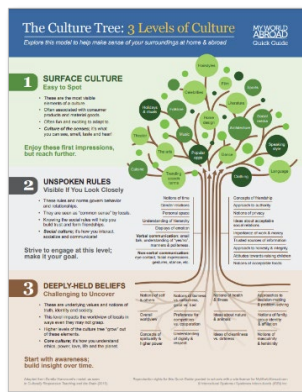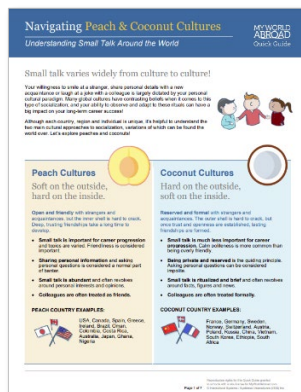

| **1** CULTURAL SELF-AWARENESS *know yourself first* | **2** CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS *know about others* | **3** CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTABILITY *put your knowledge into practice* |

A universal process for crossing cultures

The 3 Core Global Competencies

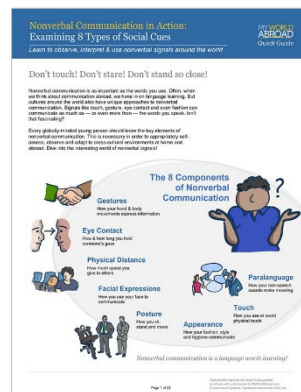## Apply the above model to any one of *MyWorldAbroad's* culture models below.

The Culture Tree:
The 3 Levels of Culture

Peach & Coconut Cultures:
Navigating Small Talk Around the World

Nonverbal Communication:
8 Types of Social Cues

The Culture Spectrum:
8 Behaviors in the Workplace

EXAMPLE: Apply *The 3 Core Global Competencies* to *The Culture Tree*

1 **Cultural self-awareness:** Firstly, consider *the Culture Tree* in terms of your home culture. Identify the leaves, trunk and roots for your specific experience as a North American.

2 **Cross-cultural awareness:** Next, study your host country's identity for the leaves, trunk and roots. Speak to host country nationals and consult guidebooks to help you.

3 **Cross-cultural adaptability:** Once you have a solid grasp of your own culture and your host's, make use of this knowledge to create an adaptability plan, targeting areas where you might have to modify your behavior to be most cross-culturally effective in your host country. It will be easy to adapt to leaf-level culture, and with some effort, also to the trunk. The third level, the roots, is always the most challenging.

SURFACE CULTURE

UNSPOKEN RULES

DEEPLY-HELD BELIEFS
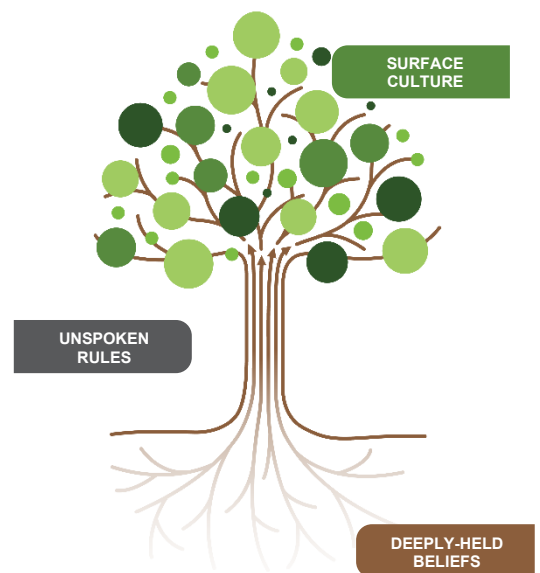
The 7 Traditional Career Readiness Competencies & How to Apply Them in a Global Context

NACE definition:

Below you'll find the traditional competency definitions, as seen in NACE'S Career Readiness Competencies.

Global perspective:

Below, you'll learn how each traditional workplace competency is enhanced by incorporating a global skill set.

4 — Communication

You can clearly and effectively exchange information and ideas with people inside and outside your organization.

You demonstrate verbal, written and nonverbal/body language abilities. You employ active listening, persuasion and influencing skills. You communicate in a clear and organized manner, framing communication with respect to diversity. You ask appropriate questions and promptly ask for guidance when required.

- You're perceptive and enjoy picking up on nuances of oral and written communication when working in intercultural teams.
- You can quickly adapt your communication styles to suit various cross-cultural situations.
- You're able to change your approach to socialization and humor depending on the norms of the culture you're working with.
- When language fluency varies among intercultural team members, you make an effort to write and speak in a way that everyone understands.
- When abroad, you use the host language as much as possible.

5 — Critical Thinking

You make decisions and solve problems using sound, inclusive reasoning and judgment.

You gather and analyze information from a diverse set of sources to fully understand the issues at hand. You're able to multi-task in a fast-paced environment and you proactively anticipate the needs of a project.

- You analyze the needs of cross-cultural managers and teams - and adapt your processes to deliver results accordingly.
- You stay aware of cross-cultural communication and relationships, adapting your behavior to achieve goals.
- You have a positive, problem-solving attitude. You enjoy the process of assessing what a cross-cultural team needs so that you can deliver the best solutions.

6 — Leadership

NACE definition:

You recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve goals.

You inspire and motivate yourself and others under a shared vision. You seek out and leverage diverse resources and feedback to make decisions. You use innovative thinking and serve as a role model, approaching tasks with confidence and a positive attitude. You encourage others and build mutual trust. You plan, initiate, manage, complete and evaluate tasks.

Global perspective:

- You're able to coach home and host country team members to understand each other's perspectives and working styles. You adapt your behavior to be an effective leader in cross-cultural environments.

- You understand the sensitivities and motivations that drive workers in different cultures. As such, you take steps to avoid conflict and know how to manage it when it arises.

- You communicate often and clearly to keep your team on track to reach stated goals. You know when and how to reward workers for their successes, according to the cultural environment.

- You nurture a positive, can-do attitude when managing expectations across diverse teams, and you don't shy away from a challenge.

7 — Professionalism

NACE definition:

You understand and demonstrate effective work habits according to the specific needs of various workplaces, acting in the interest of the organization and the larger community.

You act with integrity and accountability. You maintain a positive personal brand in alignment with the organization and your career goals. You are dependable, consistently meeting or exceeding expectations and accomplishing goals. You're positive, attentive and prepared, always able to prioritize tasks and accomplish goals.

Global perspective:

- You're dedicated to calmly and creatively overcoming the challenges inherent in intercultural work.

- You have in-depth self-knowledge, which gives you a benchmark from which to understand and modify your behavior in multicultural environments, while remaining true to your identity.

- You understand that some cultures are relationship-focused rather than task-focused, and you're able to switch between these two modes as necessary.

- You're open-minded and comfortable adapting your professional dress, communication style and project flow to match the expectations of your intercultural team and managers.

- You're respectful and non-judgmental, willing to take on board any input that managers or colleagues might have about your work style.

	NACE definition:	Global perspective:

8

Teamwork

You build and maintain collaborative relationships with coworkers and supervisors, working toward common goals while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

You listen carefully to others, effectively managing conflict and respecting diverse personalities. You know how to employ your strengths, knowledge and talents to complement those of the team.

- When working with intercultural teams, you quickly recognize diverse management styles and modify your behavior accordingly.

- You recognize your cultural baggage and how it impacts your approach to teamwork. You understand that this is true for every team member.

- You're comfortable collaborating in diverse teams. You're open-minded and able to negotiate, share ideas and encourage others to share theirs.

- You easily adapt your approach to workplace hierarchy, goal setting and project management to suit foreign and intercultural contexts.

9

Technology

You understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks and accomplish goals.

You quickly adapt to new and unfamiliar technologies. You are able to identify appropriate technology for specific tasks and can apply technology to improve efficiency, productivity and decision-making to achieve strategic goals.

- You understand that international business relationships rely heavily on technology, and you know the ins and outs of every relevant platform and program.

- You harness the power of technology to successfully manage work relationships across time zones.

- You're a quick learner, able to dive in and learn new programs and systems quickly. You're comfortable adapting your workflow according to your manager's style.

- You have a positive approach to learning about new tools and platforms. You're willing to modify your use of technology to suit your host company.

10

Career & Self-Development

NACE definition:

You proactively develop yourself and your career through continual learning. You remain aware of your strengths, weaknesses and areas for development, while navigating career opportunities and networking.

You establish and maintain relationships with people who can help you professionally and you are able to advocate for yourself and others. You develop plans and goals for your future career; and you take action to seek out career-enhancing opportunities.

Global perspective:

- You recognize that developing your international skills is an important component of your total skill set.

- You cultivate and seek out mentors and fellow practitioners who operate in the international realms of your industry.

- You continually study professional cross-cultural techniques by attending international conferences, courses and doing your own research and reading.

- You're able to speak professionally about your international skills and have career stories to help you communicate your experience to employers.

- You're motivated to continue your global career development. You're willing and eager to constantly pursue cross-cultural learning environments and incorporate those experiences into your professional profile.

Equity & Inclusion

An important aspect of the 21st-century skill set.

We've chosen to highlight "equity & inclusion" separately here, since it's the only competency that's tied to an ongoing, large-scale, progressive social movement. Also referred to as "DEI" (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion), this competency emphasizes the importance of being able to engage effectively with diverse cultural perspectives, and to challenge systems of inequality, ensuring all voices are represented. Leading North American employers are now actively seeking candidates who demonstrate these skills, and every globally minded student should target this additional skill set.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Keep in mind that, although there is overlap, equity & inclusion is not inter-changeable with global competency. "Equity & inclusion" refers to skills used while working within your home culture. Global competency, on the other hand, refers to skills used while adapting and immersing in a foreign culture. International skills and experiences directly support the development of the equity & inclusion competency, but the reverse isn't always true.

Equity & Inclusion

NACE definition:

You demonstrate the awareness and ability required to engage and include people from different local and global cultures.

You engage in anti-racist practices, actively challenging the systems, structures and policies of racism and privilege. You solicit and use feedback from multiple cultural perspectives to make equity-minded decisions. You cultivate open-mindedness and adaptability, pursuing cross-cultural experiences to broaden your perspective.

Global perspective:

- You recognize that every workplace, whether at home, online or abroad, requires cross-cultural sensitivity.

- You can identify your own cultural background and baggage. You are willing and able to alter behavior to suit diverse teams and environments.

- When working abroad, you're sensitive to the fact that the cultural and political discussions around diversity may vary compared with North America**.**

- You recognize that international experiences are crucial because they develop your global perspective and build your ability to be an ally to those from diverse backgrounds.

Training for 7 Traditional Career Readiness Competencies

Employers expect graduates to enter the workforce with the global competencies needed to navigate diverse cultures and workplaces. The following training suggestions are designed to build your career readiness, equipping you with practical skills for international settings. By participating, you'll learn to collaborate effectively, lead across cultures, and grow with a global mindset, preparing you for success in today's interconnected job market.

Editor's Note: Developing intercultural skills is a lifelong journey. Even seasoned interculturalists can feel challenged by the complexities of cross-cultural relations. For students and young professionals, the goal should be to recognize the fundamental components at play (by learning models of intercultural communication) and understand that deep expertise develops over time. Satisfy yourself with building a strong foundation now, knowing that mastery will grow with experience.

	Schools to offer this type of training	Outcome
Communications in a Global Context	Provide exercises in cross-cultural communication, such as managing language barriers, interpreting non-verbal cues, and using inclusive language. Role-play scenarios to simulate negotiations or presentations in a global setting.	Participants gain the ability to communicate clearly and effectively across cultural and linguistic divides.
Critical Thinking in a Global Context	Present global case studies requiring participants to assess international markets, political climates, and socio-cultural factors. Encourage analysis of global issues from multiple cultural viewpoints.	Learners develop a broader mindset, improving decision-making in diverse global situations.
Leadership in a Global Context	Teach leadership styles that accommodate different cultural values (e.g., hierarchical vs. egalitarian leadership). Include simulations where learners lead international teams.	Professionals become adept at leading diverse, multicultural teams with awareness of varying leadership expectations.
Professionalism in a Global Context	Address topics like global business etiquette, ethics, and professionalism standards across cultures. Provide training on building trust and maintaining credibility in international settings.	Learners understand how to conduct themselves professionally, respecting diverse work norms and maintaining ethical behavior globally.
Team Work in a Global Context	Facilitate cross-border team projects using digital tools. Teach collaboration techniques for teams from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, focusing on conflict resolution and synergy.	Participants become effective team members who can navigate cultural differences to achieve shared goals.
Technology in a Global Context	Offer hands-on training with global collaboration tools (e.g., cloud-based platforms, time zone management tools) and introduce emerging global technologies. Ensure learners understand tech-related global privacy and security regulations.	Professionals acquire skills to use technology for seamless global collaboration and understand the tech challenges of working across different regions.
Career and Self-development in a Global Context	Encourage learners to create a personal development plan that includes gaining international experience, continuous learning, and setting global career goals. Provide tools like mentorship programs, global internship opportunities, and resources for cross-cultural self-improvement.	Learners develop a mindset for lifelong learning and career advancement on a global scale, equipping them to navigate international career opportunities and adapt to the evolving global job market.
RELATED IDEA **Equity & Inclusion** in a Global Context	Provide interactive workshops on equity and inclusion in global settings, focusing on recognizing and addressing biases, promoting diverse perspectives, and fostering inclusive team dynamics. Include exercises in allyship, inclusive decision-making, and creating a welcoming environment for underrepresented groups.	Participants develop the skills to actively support and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in global teams, enhancing their ability to work inclusively and respectfully with individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Each competency would be developed through practical, scenario-based learning that ensures participants can apply these skills effectively in a globalized work environment. By focusing on self-reflection, global networking, and continuous skill-building, participants are empowered to take ownership of their professional growth.

Make the Most of this Model:
The 3 Core Global Competencies & Career Readiness

Take action with this model and your professional profile will shine.

Why

Why use this model?

- It helps you target a clear list of skills to develop during your studies.

- It helps you understand why certain skill sets are important in the modern workplace.

- It helps you chart your existing skills while determining areas for improvement.

- It allows you frame your school, work and travel experiences in terms of skills and career competencies, helping you speak professionally in resumes and job interviews.

- ** A NOTE ON VOCABULARY: While the NACE vocabulary is excellent for setting objectives, it doesn't outline the practical skill vocabulary you'll need to sell yourself during the job search. Find advice and a detailed set of professional and cross-cultural skills in *Selling Your International Skills*.

How

How to use this model.

- **Rate your competencies** with *The 10 Global Competencies Self-Assessment Table* [Word document] to see where you stand and what plans you have to improve. Save this document in a secure location for future reference.

- Maintain an updated your *Table* of competencies that you are in the process of developing.

- Aim to build experience and understanding of all ten competencies before graduation.

- Refer to your *Table* before and after every major school project, international experience, work placement and skill-building activity.

- Conduct a self-assessment to see how many areas you improved and update your resume as needed.

When

When to use this model.

- **First & second year:** Get familiar with the competencies and set off on a gentle path toward building these skills.

- **Second year:** Begin building the *3 Core Global Competencies* (see pages 2-4). These often take the longest to develop and are frequently overlooked within the standard skill-building framework. Start by studying intercultural processes, and then move on to building cross-cultural experience at home and abroad. Start small, and work towards going abroad (in person or virtually).

- **Third year:** It's time to get serious. Conduct a self-assessment of skills within the framework of the 10 competencies. Set out a concrete plan to improve your strengths and target any skill gaps. Aim to find skill-building opportunities off-campus and outside the classroom.

- **Fourth year:** Continue to build credentials in a purposeful way. This is the year that you will also transition into "job search mode." Research and develop a skill vocabulary that suits your professional personality and career goals. Begin the lifelong work of career management, starting by learning all aspects of the job search process.

Make It Work for You!

Every student's skill-building journey is unique. The *10 Global Competencies for Career Readiness* provides you with a blueprint for career readiness. And although you should aim to build capacity in all 10 areas, feel free to get creative in terms of how you go about it. You might choose to hone in on a few specific competencies in each year of your studies, or you might move ahead on all 10 consistently and incrementally. No matter what, enjoy the process!

Tools to Support Your Journey

Bridge the gap between your learning objectives and day-to-day goal-setting.

The Student Bulletin (view sample issue)

It's been proven time and time again that nudging (consistent reminders) can help you meet your personal and professional targets. If you haven't done so already, why not do your future self a favor and sign up for the *Student Bulletin* by registering for access to *MyWorldAbroad*? This is a simple way to get monthly calls to action straight to your email inbox.

The Global Mindset Maps

The *Global Mindset Maps* help you bridge the gap between learning objectives and day-to-day goal setting. They help you take practical action to meet the targets of building the *Global You* and the *10 Global Competencies for Career Readiness*. As you work towards grasping the concepts outlined in these models, follow along with the mindset maps to make the most of every day, month and year of your degree. Good luck!

The 1-year Global Mindset Map (view)

Wondering where to begin when building the Global You and the *10 Global Competencies for Career Readiness*? Zoom into the school year with these month-by-month suggested key actions to supercharge your semesters. This map also features self-reflection checkpoints and bonus reading materials. Customize with *My 1-Year Map Template* [Word document].

The 4-year Global Mindset Map (view)

Get a bird's eye view of your entire undergraduate career! This easy-to-use chart-style tool helps you identify opportunities and key actions across six different categories, starting in your first year. Categories include: Develop the Global You, Go Global On Campus, Get International Experience, Build Career Credentials, and more. Customize with *My 4-Year Map Template* [Word document].

Speak to Your Advisors about the 10 Global Competencies for Career Readiness

There are staff members at your school dedicated to helping you achieve your international and career goals. Consider printing a copy of the 10 Global Competencies and chatting with advisors about how you can build career readiness during school. They will likely have surprising and creative suggestions for you!

Speak to your study abroad advisor:

The advisors in your school's study abroad office will be able to help you identify programs, clubs and experiences focused on boosting your cross-cultural and international skills. Don't forget to chat with your advisors about your global goals.

Speak to your career advisor:

Advisors in your school's career center will be well acquainted with the importance of career readiness competencies. Visit with an advisor early in your school career to talk about skill-building objectives and how best to prepare for the job search after graduation.

Speak to your professors:

Professors with international work experience may have advice about building global career competencies, and the particular skills that may be of use in international industries and cross-cultural work environments.

See the
Article Version

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