

Taking Time Off

Taking time off after graduation to pursue an alternative to the traditional 9 to 5 job or graduate school can be a valuable and enriching experience if planned carefully and thoughtfully. There are a wide variety of interesting opportunities you can pursue. For example:

- **WORKING ABROAD**
- **INTERNSHIP**
- **VOLUNTEER WORK**
- **TRAVEL**
- **TEMP WORK**
- *Pursuing a passion*

Important Questions to Ask Yourself

However, before proceeding, it is important to ask yourself some critical questions to help determine whether or not taking time off might be right for you.

- Why am I taking time off?
- What do I hope to achieve?
- How long do I plan to take off?
- How will I support myself?
- What do I plan to do afterwards?

**You will also need to take into consideration a number of other practical matters, e.g. managing your student loans and acquiring health insurance coverage.*

Possible Reasons for Taking Time Off

There are a number of different reasons you might decide to take time off.

- **Take a break before starting graduate school**
- **Gain additional experience in a particular field and/or build resume**
- **Pursue a passion or have a unique experience**
- **Desire to travel before “settling down”**
- **Take time to solidify career goals and figure out next steps**

ONLINE RESOURCES

INTERNATIONAL

- **General** – www.transitionsabroad.com and www.goabroad.com
- **BUNAC** (www.bunac.org) work abroad programs in Britain, Ireland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand as well as volunteer programs in South Africa, Peru and Cambodia
- **Council on International Exchange** (www.ciee.org) – teach abroad programs in Chile, China, Spain and Thailand
- **WorldTeach** (www.worldteach.org) – year-long and summer teach abroad programs in a variety of countries
- **JET Programme** (www.jetprogramme.org) – one year teaching program in Japan
- **Peace Corps** (www.peacecorps.gov) – two year volunteer program in various countries around the world

VOLUNTEER

- **General** – www.idealists.org and www.volunteermatch.org
- **Americorps** (www.americorps.gov) – the “domestic Peace Corps”; 10-12 month volunteer programs throughout the US
- **City Year** (www.cityyear.org) – year-long community service programs located in 17 cities across the US
- **Teach for America** (www.teachforamerica.org) – two year teaching assignments in underprivileged school districts throughout the US

OTHER

- www.coolworks.com
- www.gapyear.com
- www.jobmonkey.com
- www.backdoorjobs.com

Next steps: Make an appointment to speak with a Career Advisor!