

Preface

Working World: Careers in International Education, Exchange, and Development is intended to be a resource and a useful tool for job seekers in international affairs, particularly those interested in international education, exchange, and development. It is designed to ease the burden of the initial stages of career research and help you put your job search in broader perspective. The approaches and lessons shared throughout the book have evolved over the course of a rewarding career.

About twenty-five years ago, as a new director at the Institute of International Education (IIE), I was amazed by the many requests for “informational interviews” I received each week from job hunters. In the intervening years, the requests grew exponentially. Motivated originally by a desire to save time and yet provide sufficient help, in 1982 I initiated what became known as Roundtables on Careers in International Education and Exchange. After several years of conducting monthly roundtables at IIE with Alex Patico, in 1986 Archer Brown and Lorenda Schrader at NAFSA: Association of International Educators joined us by hosting the roundtables on alternate months.

Individuals seeking career guidance were invited to the IIE or NAFSA conference room on the third Thursday of each month. At the roundtable, each participant shared his or her educational and professional background and described the types of positions sought. Then the facilitators and fellow participants offered suggestions and contributed ideas for the job search. The roundtables proved much richer than one-on-one interviews because of the synergy that so many perspectives generated. A group of people inevitably has more knowledge of relevant job openings and successful job search tactics than one or two individuals do. Collectively, roundtable participants could recommend more resources to explore and offer contrasting analyses of trends in the field. In addition, the participants did not feel so alone as they interacted with others going through the solitary activity of a job search.

I gradually realized that the roundtables were much more than a time-saving device for a new manager. They were a particularly useful mechanism for recruiting new staff as well as a tremendous source of information about job seekers, the job search process, and job opportunities in the fields of international education, exchange, and development. The practical ideas, down-to-earth suggestions, and diverse resources offered in my first book on careers, published by NAFSA in 1998, were based on my experience working with hundreds of job seekers in our field for more than fifteen years.

Since that book was published I have given it to each intern at the National Council for International Visitors (NCIV) as a farewell gift and to other young people I wanted to encourage to enter these fields that I find so compelling. Years passed. My supply of books dwindled. Even before I gave the last of them away, I realized how outdated many of the resources had become. The need for a new edition was great not only because the Internet has greatly altered the job search process but also because the fields of international education, exchange, and development have expanded and evolved. In addition, there were other, more nuanced lessons about managing a career that I wanted to share.

This determination to write a new career book blossomed just as I was fortunate to have a young colleague on the NCIV staff who is an extraordinary writer. Mark has an agile mind, an ability to analyze his own experiences, and an engaging personality. Among other responsibilities at NCIV, he produced various publications and served as the editor of our newsletter. He was especially adept at keeping me on schedule writing my monthly column for the *NCIV Network News*. I was consistently impressed by his editorial suggestions.

I must confess that my initial motivation in inviting Mark to coauthor this book was to keep him at NCIV longer because he was so talented and he helped me be more productive. It was only later—after we started our active collaboration and ideas ricocheted between us—that I perceived the real value of juxtaposing my career veteran voice with that of his perspective as a young professional.

It was one of our spirited discussions that prompted our decision to include the profiles of outstanding professionals interspersed throughout part II. We realized that the book would be greatly enriched if we collected the views of others whose achievements we admired. We decided to include highlights of their careers, but we also asked them to distill les-

sons about networking, mentoring, and other topics that we discuss in part I of this book.

The book begins with some basic concepts to keep in mind as you launch a job search. The second part consists of selected resources that will prompt you to plan your next steps. In between, you will find the profiles of potential role models. You can learn much from their impressive cumulative experience and reflections. The book is designed to be a coherent whole with each chapter building on the preceding one. However, you can also pick and choose, as each chapter is written to stand alone.

Mark and I welcome your comments as well as your recommendations and suggestions for additional resources to be included in future editions. We hope this book will help you chart your course and shape your career in these growing and increasingly challenging fields.