Gap Year

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Introduction

Are you ready for the “real world?”

- What is the “real” world anyway?
- You are not alone!
- Why be in a hurry to be boring?
What I plan to cover

• Defining “Gap Year”
• Why take a Gap Year and what do you want to get out of the experience?
• What can you do in a Gap Year? Overview of ideas and resources
• What do employers and grad schools think about a Gap Year?
• Things to think about
• Possible drawbacks
Taking “a Gap Year” Defined

• “Gap Year= A British-English term, “Taking Time Off,” “Year Out,” “Delaying The Real World,” “Deferring,” or “Overseas Experience”
• A prolonged period (often, but not always, a year) between a student's completion of either high school or college before entering college or pursuing graduate school or a profession
• Some students spend time traveling, others spend time working, and many combine these
Work World Delights You Won’t Miss

- Timed lunches
- A boss
- 10 days of vacation per year
- “Did you get the memo?”
- A coffee addiction
- 4 x 4 working space
- Itchy nude stockings, shirts that have to be tucked in and stiff collared shirts and ties
Why Take a Gap Year?

• A break from academic study
• A chance to gain new skills
• Independence
• Time to earn money
• Improve career prospects
• A chance to help others
• An adventure of a lifetime
• Broaden horizons
What Do You Want from a Gap Year?

It’s important to think about your aspirations and needs to decide how and where to spend your time

• Domestic?
• Developed or developing country?
• Voluntary or paid?
• Work experience?
• How long? A year or a few months?
What can you do in a Gap Year?

• Gain career experience with an internship
• Earn money
• Live and study overseas
• Experience a new culture
• Teach
• Take a language course
What can you do in a Gap Year? (Cont.)

- Go on an expedition
- Relish freedom
- Volunteer overseas or in the US in social, environmental or developmental projects
- Follow the Rolling Stones or a band of your choice!
Want to be overseas? What opportunities are there?

- Teach ESL
- Tourism/Travel Industry
- AuPair
- Agriculture
- University Programs
- Service Industry
- English-Language Publications
- Your Hometown!
Staying here in the US?

• Now may be the perfect time to “up and move” to a city or try out a career you have been thinking about.

• Or simply move somewhere with friends, etc.
Staying here in the US? (Cont.)

• Fun work with others in the “same boat”
  Camps/Resorts/Ranches/Lodges

• Jobs in the Arts
  Film/Theater/Entertainment/Writing/Music/
  Photography
Volunteer with a stipend and maybe even benefits

- Everett Public Service Fellowships (10 weeks)
- NYC Urban Fellows Program (9 months)
- Mickey Leland Hunger Fellows Program (1 year with 2 six-month placements)
- United Way of Tri-State Fellows Program (6 months)
- Green Corps (1 year)
- National Religious Volunteer Programs (varies)
Popular Programs

- US Peace Corps
- JET (Japan Exchange Program)
- New York City Teaching Fellows
- Teach for America
- Americorps
- WWOOFing
- BUNAC
What do graduate schools and employers think of a well-used Gap Year?

- Gives a wider understanding of the world
- Develops non-academic skills
- Improves communication skills
- Shows initiative and independence
- Demonstrates ability to work with others
- May have direct relevance to graduate program or company goals
Additional things to think about...

- Network, network, network!
  Alums of IC, family, friends, friends of friends, etc.

- Apply for grants/fellowships for abroad and home through Cornell University
  Idealist.org
  *Delaying The Real World*
Additional things to think about… (cont.)

- Accommodations
  Craig’s list
  Hostels
  Internet resources

- Remember to be safe!
Possible Drawbacks

• Money/cost
• Loss of academic motivation
• Some choices involve an element of risk
• Pressure from those around you to “grow up”
• May be far away from family and friends
Sources for Presentation

- *Delaying the Real World: A Twentysomething’s Guide to Seeking Adventure* by Colleen Kinder
  - [http://delayingtherealworld.com/intro.html](http://delayingtherealworld.com/intro.html)
  - *Advice and Opportunities for the Year Out*
    - [www.longroad.ac.uk/accreditation/guidance_higher/documents_pdf/0203year_out.pdf](http://www.longroad.ac.uk/accreditation/guidance_higher/documents_pdf/0203year_out.pdf)
Questions???