



The Importance of Modern Languages in the World of Work

SCILT Business Brunch

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Did you know?

75% of the world population speaks no English and only 6% are fluent in English.

Source: Talking the talk, so that Scotland can walk the walk
(Scottish Government, 2012) -

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2012/05/3670/downloads>

Good morning!

- Guten Morgen!
- Bonjour!
- Buenos días
- Goedemorgen
- お早うございます!

صباح الخير

My language learning

- GCSEs, Highers & A-Levels: **German, French**
- BA(Hons) European Studies & Modern Languages (**German, French, Dutch**) – Manchester, 1992-6
- Self study and summer school (**Japanese**) – Japan, 1996-8
- PGDip Languages & European Marketing (**German, Spanish**) – Edinburgh Napier, 1998-9
- Work-related courses (**German, French, Dutch**) – Edinburgh, Berlin, Brussels, 1999-2009
- Private lessons (**Moroccan Arabic**) – Morocco, 2012-2015
- Night class (Berlin, 2003 & Edinburgh 2018) and MSc Islamic & Middle Eastern Studies (**Modern Standard Arabic**) – Edinburgh University, 2016-18

Why study languages?

- Interest in languages, cultures, people, travel
- Necessary for further study or career aims
- Personal/family connections
- It keeps your brain more agile
- Why did I study languages?

Using languages in the world of work

DIRECTLY

- Language is your business (translator, interpreter, teacher)
- International colleagues, suppliers, customers and competitors (international business, diplomacy)
- Essential information in foreign languages (intelligence, market info, journalism)

INDIRECTLY

- Living abroad
- “global mindset”
- Intercultural and interpersonal skills, ability to understand different cultural contexts and viewpoints
- Knowledge of one language helps in learning another

My experience

I have used my language skills in these areas:

- Teaching English abroad
- Private sector internship
- Government & diplomacy
- Non-profit/international development sector
- Freelance writer, travel adviser
- Consultant to small and medium-sized companies

Teaching English Abroad



Year Abroad in Germany



Working for government



Communicating in a foreign language



Learning Arabic

ل ي ن ح م د ي

Y D M H N Y L

لين حمدي

الجبر

الخوارزمي

قهوة

قطن

سكر

سفر

Conclusion

- Languages can be useful not only directly in your work, but also indirectly
- Although you may work in English, you may use languages for your day-to-day life living abroad
- Also, employers value the inter-cultural insights and awareness that language learning or a period living abroad can bring
- In addition, your personal life and brain health can be greatly enhanced by your ability to speak a foreign language!



Get in touch!



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Further resources

- On studying languages:
http://www.whystudylanguages.ac.uk/ks3/why_languages/
- On bilingualism: <http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20160811-the-amazing-benefits-of-being-bilingual>
- Jobs using foreign languages:
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sponsored/education/the-axis/your_career/11617360/graduate-linguist-jobs-foreign-languages.html
- Support to teach or study abroad:
http://www.europa-pages.com/france/grants_funding.html
- Become a language assistant:
<https://www.britishcouncil.org/language-assistants/become>
- JET Programme: <https://www.jet-uk.org/index.php>
- European Fast Stream: <https://www.faststream.gov.uk/european/>