



SFSU MATESOL Career Networking, 12/4/09

The MATESOL faculty and students would like to warmly thank our alumni for coming back and sharing information about your work experience and career path, as well as your insights and advice. Despite the tough economic conditions, we want to learn about hiring realities, what it's like to do your job, application strategies, career options, ways to build professional skills, and steps to plan for the future. In these challenging times, we draw strength and inspiration from our MATESOL network.

Here's a toast to our alumni & M.A. students: May the future bring rich opportunities and rewards!

Sample questions:

I was wondering if you can tell me:

1. What's a typical day like, at your job?
2. What are the biggest rewards in your current job? What are the biggest challenges?
3. What's the mood like right now at your school/workplace? Have there been budget cuts? How has that affected teachers/employees and students/clients?
4. What is the current hiring situation at your school/workplace?
5. What is your advice on how to get hired (when programs are hiring again)?
6. I was wondering if you could tell me about . . . (your salary, benefits, workload, working conditions. . .)
7. What do you have to do in addition to teaching? Do you develop your own materials/curriculum? Do colleagues/coordinator help and give support?
8. How did you get started after you graduated from the M.A. TESOL program? How did you end up where you are today? (What was your career path?)
9. What you did while in the M.A. TESOL program that was really useful when you started working? e.g., ALI, SHINE, working as a TA, student teaching in a specific locale, Composition/Reading Certificate.
10. Given the low pay and lack of job security in the TESOL profession, what are your survival strategies? How do you balance job(s), family, and personal life? (Admittedly a really tough challenge).
11. Questions to ask an adjunct (part-timer) employed at several schools/in several jobs:
 - a. Are you what they call a "freeway flyer"?
 - b. What's it like to be one?
 - c. How do you do it?
12. Questions to ask someone who has worked in a number of different jobs/settings:
 - a. How do the jobs compare?
 - b. What did you like best about each job?
13. Questions to ask a recent graduate who has been searching for jobs:

- a. What's the job market like now?
 - b. How have you tried to find a job?
 - c. How are you paying your bills and surviving right now?
14. Questions to ask those who left TESOL/left teaching:
- a. Why did you decide to make a career change?
 - b. What skills did you develop in your TESOL training that are transferable to other careers?
15. Questions to ask alumni who have taught/worked overseas (expats):
- a. How did you find your job abroad?
 - b. What are the biggest challenges in living in a different culture?
 - c. What were the biggest sources of job satisfaction for you?
 - d. Do you want to go abroad again?
16. Questions for international students to ask former int'l students:
- a. What are strategies for finding work for Post-Completion Practical Training?
 - b. How can NNESTs find work in the U.S.?