

THE HONEST, INSPIRING &  
MOTIVATING GUIDE TO

DEFINE YOUR  
PROFESSIONAL  
IDENTITY  
ABROAD



THE  
WORKBOOK  
FOR  
THE  
MODERN & AMBITIOUS  
EXPAT  
PARTNER

Hello you!

I am glad you found this guide and start your journey to find your professional identity during your time abroad as the Expat Partner.

Moving to another country and diving into an entirely new environment is a fantastic journey, and it is totally up to you how you approach this challenge and what you want to accomplish.

This guide wants to help you to see all different aspects of moving abroad and being the Expat Partner and prepare you for this step. This guide is full of inspirational stories, coaching tools, and guidelines to support you.

I would love to learn more about you and your very own story. Get in contact via my website or social media! It's my motivation to empower you by connecting you to others and by sharing all the great stories I learned along the way.

Thank you for your trust and congratulations on your bravery for going this challenging, exciting, and transformational path.

*Kate*

[WWW.SHARETHELOVE.BLOG](http://WWW.SHARETHELOVE.BLOG)

 [SHARETHELOVE.BLOG](https://www.instagram.com/sharethelove.blog)



# LET'S START THIS JOURNEY TOGETHER

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# 1

## INTRODUCTION

# WELCOME TO DESIGNING YOUR PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY ABROAD

Moving abroad for the assignment of your partner provokes the essential question of what you will do with your professional career during the time coming. Nowadays, many partners have already settled themselves in their profession back home, and by moving country, they not only have to become familiar with a new language and culture but also with the very substantial question of what to do with themselves, with their ambition and time, while the partner is succeeding in his assignment. This chapter gives you an introduction to the topic as well as the resources used. Enjoy!



### YOUR JOURNEY STARTS NOW

As you are starting to read this workbook, I assume that you had a professional background back in your home country and that you are thinking of ways to take this career with you abroad. Maybe you want to continue in your old career path; maybe you want to use this time to discover new career approaches or perhaps you ask yourself whether a professional lifestyle is personally important to you during the time abroad.

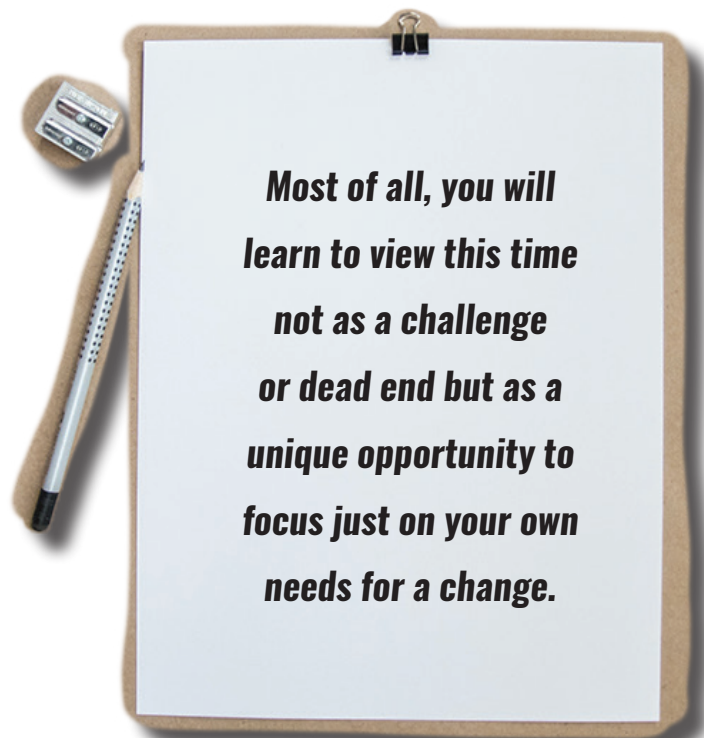
No matter what brought you here, I am so excited that I can share my own experience and learnings with you to structure your thoughts and to work on your mid-and long-term goals during the time abroad.

## WHY THIS TOPIC IS MORE RELEVANT THAN EVER

Nowadays, most Expats have a double-income relationship. As a consequence, one partner has to step back to facilitate this whole “moving abroad adventure” in the first place and to support the career of the other. According to several statistics out there, a vast majority of Expat Partners are women. While back in the 90s the question of how the Expat Partner can find a fulfilling professional life was not really in focus of companies and society, this is changing nowadays as especially younger couples are living a balanced lifestyle regarding professional occupation.

## YOUR TAKE-AWAYS

In the following, we will dive deeper into the journey of defining a professional identity abroad. We will shed light on the general circumstances, see how others are dealing with this question, re-evaluate the meaning of a career and learn how to put yourself out there to get recognized. We will work on your brand and develop your profile to not only make you available but also competitive. You will learn how to use this expat assignment as your competitive edge. Most of all you will be empowered to view this time not only as a challenge or dead end but also as a unique opportunity to focus just on your own needs for a change.



I will add my personal experience from time to time throughout this book. It is important to me to speak open and honest about the whole experience and learning curve so that you can see we all share similar thoughts and struggles. So here a few words about me:



### My Expat Story

I am 31 years old and left a promising career in marketing and consulting back in Germany to join my husband on his professional mission in the United States, Chicago. I am an entrepreneur and love to learn something new each day. I get frustrated by standstill and inspired by art. I was always very international-minded and studied and worked abroad before in the United Kingdom, Spain and Taiwan. When my husband came home with the proposal to move abroad for a job as an Expat I was really excited. However, at the same time, I knew that something would be different this time. We are not going abroad to our dream destination, and I had to quit my job which was going well and offered me great opportunities to shape my career. My sense of adventure won, and we packed our bags.

Beforehand, I prepared some job options for me abroad by activating my existing network. The adoption phase would be more on a cultural level than personal - so I thought. When we arrived in the States, my work permit got delayed and when this finally got solved my promised job opportunities came to nothing. As a consequence, I had to start from scratch, and the big question came up: What do I want to do? Not often in life do you face the opportunity to start fresh without having to give something up. We always dream of "one day I will do this" or "one day I will quit my job and"... however, most of us stay put and prefer to play safe. When searching for a job from scratch, I faced some discrimination, a more significant cultural barrier than anticipated and I had to deal with a lot of rejection. My self-esteem went down and after some gloomy days I start to think: I can't be the only one in this situation. I started researching and found out that I am indeed by far not the only one and that most of us go through this period when becoming the somehow dependent Expat Partner. I met many Expats, powerful women, really strong-minded and inspiring. Interestingly, all of them had one thing in common: they often faced an iron ceiling professionally, and this influenced their self-esteem and career path.

I started my blog [www.sharethelove.blog](http://www.sharethelove.blog) to educate about that and to tell my story openly. I started an intense coaching education to support Expat Partners even better as I realized how much good coaching brings to the table in this situation and then I went on and gathered all the learnings and stories in this workbook you are reading right now. It was quite a journey to get here and I hardly ever have learned so much about myself and developed so far personally in such a short amount of time.

## WE ARE SITTING IN THE SAME BOAT

As exciting as this whole journey has been I still think that I would have loved to be prepared for some of the obstacles I had to face beforehand. While I am a true believer that you have to go through some challenging situations in your life to grow it is still nice to have some company and perspective along the way. There is trust in the knowledge that we are not alone and that this experience is coming in waves, pushing us down, lifting us up but always have the potential to end somewhere.

With this workbook, I want to be your inspirational guide, your best friend who understands like no-one else what you are facing right now and your career coach.



This book will be a guide, a source of information but also a workbook for you to figure out what is best for you and where you should channel your heart and energy to. Make the most out of this journey and allow yourself to be selfish for once by reading this book, doing the tasks and only thinking about **yourself**, **your** values, **your** beliefs and **your** future.

Only by being aware of what you are personally aiming for you can be a supporting partner and support your loved ones during this crazy, eye-opening, challenging and incredible rollercoaster.

**MY PERSONAL ADVICE:**  
**MAKE USE OF THIS GREAT GLOBAL EXPAT COMMUNITY**  
**& REACH OUT.**

## THE STRUCTURE OF THIS WORKBOOK

Writing this workbook, I was thinking back to my younger self - more than a year ago. I thought about all the questions I had and how confused I was in my immediate future in this foreign country. While you can find all useful information about how to translate your CV into English and things like that I was stuck with the very question before: What should I do and in what direction should I be heading. I was attending several workshops, training, talked to recruiters, coaches and took many more steps and slowly but steadily I learned how to find my professional identity as an Expat Partner.



This is not a process which takes just weeks but months if not years. Therefore, I decided to shorten that experience for others by gathering all the useful information I learned but also adding active exercises to it as it is not about theory but taking action. The small activities throughout the workbook help you to adapt the reading to your very own situation and lifestyle and let you draw your conclusions. Many of these exercises are coming from my coaching background and are ideal for rethinking your current beliefs and ideas and form a view of your future you.

Living abroad you will go through various developments, and you will notice a shift in your mindset over time. Therefore, I added a section in the back where I repeated all the exercises so that you can re-do them at a later stage of your development. In that way, you can go back in time and compare how you changed and what that means to you.

Thanks for sharing the love and be ready to learn and indulge yourself in the quest for  
**FINDING YOUR PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY ABROAD**

*Kate*