The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Veteran Expat Writes Employment Handbook for Novices

By Lena Smirnova

February 04, 2013



Bill Mayfield is utterly convinced Russia is ready to embrace more expat workers.

He's so sure it's not hard for foreigners — even those who don't speak a single word of Russian — to find work here that he's written a book about it.

"What are expats good at that Russians can't do? Not much. Russians can do things much better than them, but the expats know English. That is the advantage," said Mayfield, who works at an investment bank and wrote his book, "How to Get a Job in Russia," under a pseudonym.

Mayfield moved to Moscow in 1998 after first coming here in 1995 for a study-abroad program. He is now married to a Russian woman and expects his newborn child to get dual citizenship.

Russia is a top-notch destination for job seekers wanting to dip into the "serious cash [that's] sloshing around" and experience an "incredible nightlife," according to the book.

The 478-page bible for foreigners seeking work in Russia, available on Amazon.com, describes what job opportunities are available in different sectors.

The jobs range from the predictable, such as nanny and language teacher, to the more prestigious, such as jobs in advertising, investment banking, journalism and real estate. The book wraps up with 200 pages full of contact information for potential employers.

Mayfield said expats don't need a college major in Russian to come to the country and get a good job, though some jobs, such as journalism or language teaching, may require those skills more than others.

Most of the work available here doesn't require detailed technical knowledge or a special degree, he said. Expats can be promoted after proving themselves to be good workers. For example, a person can start as an editor for a bank's financial analysis publication and then move into a higher-paid corporate job.

"I have a liberal arts degree from college and am in my mid-20s. I don't think I have to tell anyone like me that's reading this review how difficult the job market is," wrote Tommy Largeletter in his book review.

He went on to say he has begun to look for a job in Russia and has already received "enthusiastic responses from employers."

Mayfield's book also gives practical advice on getting work visas, tracking down the cheapest airfares and negotiating apartment rents.

Despite the improvements he's seen in Russians' language capacities since 1998, Mayfield said demand for native English speakers will remain strong for the next five to 10 years at least.

"On the one hand, Russians speak English better than in 1998. On the other, Russia has become more internationalized," Mayfield said, adding that now more employers are looking to hire English speakers.

"There will always be demand for English-language speakers," he said.

Contact the author at e.smirnova@imedia.ru

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2013/02/04/veteran-expat-writes-employment-handbook-for-novices-a21263