



ADVICE & TIPS – TURKEY



Turkey has restrictions on several graduate professions, for which only Turks are allowed to work. These include: medical doctors, dentists, midwives, pharmacists, opticians, veterinarians, chemists, judges and lawyers.

Graduate opportunities are limited by professional competence, though there are a number of opportunities in English language teaching. Those seeking to be language teachers must be native English speakers, hold a degree in any discipline, and have gained a TEFL qualification. It appears easier for work visas to be gained from within the country, which means first entry would be under a tourist visa of approximately three months.

Engineering graduates are needed particularly due to the oil and gas pipelines that are under development and additionally the regeneration work undertaken in the GAP project in the East of the country.

Language is not necessary for gaining employment, though it is obviously advantageous. Many professional Turkish workers speak English to a high degree. Turkish language tuition exists in the UK at various colleges.

You do not necessarily need to be in the country before looking for work, though for some positions, such as English teaching, it is advisable. There are a wide variety of language schools and their quality and treatment of employees varies widely; a first-hand view can help you see what otherwise may be disguised by a clever website.

The Curriculum Vitae

The basic components of a Turkish job application are the same as in most other countries. Prepare a cover letter and a curriculum vitae (CV). The curriculum should be around a page in length (two if absolutely necessary), and it should be well-organized and easy-to-read. In addition to your name and contact information, list work and education experience in chronological order, in the third person singular (using he, she, or your last name).

Include contact information and addresses for past employers. Your prospective employer may choose to contact them. If you do not include reference contact information on your CV, your employer will probably ask for it if he selects you to interview.

Your cover letter should be no longer than three or four paragraphs, and it should focus on your qualifications for the position. Avoid exaggerating qualifications whenever possible. Turkish employers are known to check up on application information. Fraudulent or exaggerated information will cost you an interview.

Some positions will allow you to apply online – this is increasingly popular in Turkey. If you submit your application online, make sure that your curriculum's format will not cause problems if it is scanned or digitized (no "example" lines or italic text).

Finally, submit your application in the appropriate language. If you are applying at a western company with a branch in Turkey, English should be fine. If you want to work for a Turkish employer that caters specifically to the Turkish market, you will be better off having your CV and cover letter translated into Turkish.

The application procedure

Behave in a Turkish interview as you would in any other. You should dress formally, and take special care to be on time.

Be polite and thorough when you answer questions, but avoid rambling or monopolizing conversation. The interviewer is certain to ask about your Turkish language skills and your living arrangements in Turkey. Answer honestly, but remember that your integration into Turkish culture will be looked on as a positive.

Interview lengths will vary. They could last anywhere from a half hour to two or more, especially if you are asked to take a skill test (common for IT and related jobs). Again, avoid exaggerating your experience. As a general rule, don't claim anything you can't prove through your CV or a reference.

Depending on the job, you may have to interview several times before your employer makes a final decision.

What's it like working in Turkey?

The Turkish working week generally runs from Monday to Friday, though there is flexibility for many Muslim workers to attend Friday prayers. There are five set annual public holidays: New Year's Day, Children's holiday, Ataturk and sport day, Independence (victory) day and Republic day. In addition to the above, there is a three-day holiday at the end of Ramadan and a four-day holiday at the end of the Sacrifice holiday.

Salaries for foreign nationals are generally paid in foreign currency, or otherwise if in YTL, the salary is negotiated on an annual basis to a foreign currency equivalent.

The cost of living is very low, and even more so outside the large cities. Many companies provide accommodation for their foreign employees.

The number of normal working hours for an employee is 45 hours per week. Anything exceeding that is considered as overtime and overtime work is granted 50% extra wage.