

“Hurry up and Wait”

It’s a phrase used regularly at Adventure Teaching, and as you move further along in the process of finding a teaching position, you’ll see why.

Hurry up... and gather your visa documents.

Wait... for job offers to surface.

Hurry up... and make a decision.

Wait... for your Letter of Invitation to arrive from your Chinese employer.

Hurry up... and submit your visa application + passport to the Consulate.

Wait... for your visa to be processed.

Hurry up... and make travel arrangements – book your flight!

Wait... pack... throw goodbye parties...

Hurry up... and make the transition to living and working in China. (Whoa!)

This is the current reality of the English teaching industry in China. Westerners often find this process especially frustrating. We’re used to knowing months in advance exactly which day our new job starts, when we’re going on vacation, when the semester begins — and that doesn’t even compare to moving to a different country. But as you’ll hear us say time and time again, you’ll have to go with the flow and accept that this is just not the way it is in China!

Remember that our team has years of experience working in China. All of us have worked as teachers and have gone through the job-seeking process ourselves. We know what you’ll likely go through and we’re committed to constantly coming up with new ways to smooth out the process. Because we are working cross culturally, we must deal with circumstances we cannot always control. Every aspect of working in a foreign country requires flexibility and determination, and you’ll find that the job-seeking process itself is no different. But then again, you wouldn’t be reading this letter right now if you weren’t looking for an exciting and challenging opportunity, would you? We know that you have what it takes to succeed in China!

China’s English Teaching Industry: The Big Picture

Year after year, the English teaching industry in China gets more competitive. Just a few years ago, teachers with little (if no experience at all!) had a plethora of job opportunities to choose from. Today, thanks in part to ailing Western economies and a surplus of teachers in the US and Canada, schools in

China are picking from a wider pool of qualified graduates. Certain areas of China are even starting to trim down foreign employment – some provincial public school offices have recently announced a new policy that limits each school to hiring one foreign teacher.

Perhaps this makes the journey to employment in China seem intimidating to you, but fear not! English is still a big business in China, and it's only continuing to expand into all areas of the country. Several of the country's leading universities conduct their classes primarily in English, and the fiercely competitive private-school industry continues to grow steadily. And **you** are an integral part of the equation. Employers in China usually value energy and youth over experience and age when it comes to choosing foreign teachers. They want young, cool guys and gals like you to not only teach their students English, but to serve as a direct link to contemporary Western culture.

Although opportunities still abound, it is becoming increasingly difficult for teachers with limited experience to land jobs with specific location, salary, and age group preferences. At times we may advise teachers to broaden their parameters, because we know the industry very well and realize that their preferences might severely dampen their chances of finding a fitting position. Of course, we will match each applicant's proposed timeline and preferences as best as we can. Helping teachers is our priority at Adventure Teaching, and we will never intentionally mislead a teacher or recommend a location or situation that seems undesirable for the applicant. Our recommendations are based on experience.

Getting a Job: The Timeline

The English teacher workforce is constantly changing, and it's one of the most transient communities of people you'll ever encounter. Hundreds of teachers depart each month upon the completion of their contracts, while hundreds of others arrive for the first time. You'll find that your circle of friends in China may change significantly throughout the year.

The majority of applicants seeking jobs in China usually begin to receive offers about 30 to 60 days (only 1-2 months!) before their intended start date. Sometimes we are able to provide more notice about job offers, while at other times the jobs come up at the last minute. Don't read too much into this: the fact that a school is hiring last minute does not say anything about the quality of the school.

Expatriate Voices: Don't just take our word for it! We want you to hear from other members of the Adventure Teaching community.

We asked several "Adventure Teachers" what they did in the months leading up to the start of their contract, or what they would have done differently if they could do it all over again. Here's what they said about "**What should I do while I'm waiting?**"

Keep Busy: "Hurry up and wait? I didn't really feel like I was waiting at all, but now that I look back on it, it took three months for everything to be sorted. I guess that if I had nothing to do and was just waiting at my computer for emails all day, I'd feel like I was waiting. But I was working. Just keep doing your job or find one if you don't have one, something easy and simple. Stay available and Adventure Teaching will do the rest." Lecia, Beijing

Work at a camp: "I am pretty sure that as far as temporary work goes, working at a summer camp, or any camp, looks the best in the eyes of Chinese employers. They are looking for young, youthful, creative teachers who can come up with ideas on the fly: and many of them have their own 'English camps' during the off-season that feature camp-like activities. Not only that, but you'll stay busy and have a blast." John, Kunming

It's not uncommon in this industry! The hope is that you will be able to arrange your job and travel details as far ahead of time as possible, but there is always the chance that we may have to rush it. All we ask is that you remain as flexible and understanding as possible.

If there is a significant time gap between your Adventure Teaching phone interview and your intended start date, there may be a few weeks of little communication between us. As your intended start date approaches and more job offers surface, we will communicate with you much more frequently. If you would ever like an update on your process, don't hesitate to contact your placement coordinator. We'll be happy to let you know what is happening on our end.

Here are a few important tips to keep in mind when working with Adventure Teaching:

- Get your paperwork in ASAP. The applicants who prepare and send their documents the quickest are given priority. Gather the visa documents as quickly and accurately as you can.
- Communication is an integral part of the recruitment process. We assume that applicants who do not return emails or phone calls are uninterested in finding a job in China. If you go on a trip or do not have Internet access for a certain amount of time, please let us know when you won't be available.
- Keep us up to date on your contact information, especially your phone number.
- Read all the information you can find on our [website](#), and join our [Facebook](#) page! All of our material exists to answer any and every question you can think of, especially the questions you didn't know you were supposed to ask!

We look forward to helping you find a great job in China. The job search process will take some effort, but once you arrive in China it will be well worth it!