What is the secret to having a successful career in today's world economy?

Having a successful career in today’s world economy requires first and foremost an understanding of this global structure. Recently, a grocery store in Germany removed all of its imported products from its shelves and only left the German-made ones. The resulting image was striking: a nearly empty grocery store. This example, in a simple way, elucidates the meaning behind a new, world economy.

With the fast-paced evolution of technology that has transpired over the past 25 years, it’s no wonder that the world, and its citizens, has struggled to comb through all the change and occasional confusion that has resulted with this technological acceleration. “Staying ahead of the game” in terms of technology is a day-to-day struggle even when just living in a small city anywhere in this world. Therefore, finding the secret to becoming successful in this new global economy can be challenging. The secret, however, comes down to three basic things: experience, empathy, and empowerment.

Seeing the image of the empty grocery store in Germany is one thing, but actually visiting the global powerhouse of Germany can open up a whole new perspective for a successful career seeker.

I, myself, have gained this type of new perspective several times in my life thus far. On the surface, I have visited 13 countries and immersed myself in two foreign languages. A six-month stint in Spain during my college years introduced me to a new, European viewpoint. A viewpoint entrenched in centuries of tradition and history. After college, I spent 18 months teaching English in South Korea, an experience ripe with new adventures and learning. The home of Samsung and Hyundai, I learned about the power of a collective, national mindset that has achieved first-world status in less than 60 years.

This thirst for experience will teach any individual aplenty and undoubtedly prepare them for a successful career, but it is with these experiences that empathy becomes so important.

Anyone can see the world, but to fully grasp its magnitude and richness one must learn to possess empathy in order for the experiences to fulfill a successful career. A new idea can only be great when it can help thousands or millions of people; and, to know if your idea will have such a large scale, you must empathize with those all around the world.

Lastly, there is the secret of empowerment. Having these experiences and learning this empathy can open the doors of confidence and composure. Understanding the way the world works requires this feeling of empowerment. It requires an experienced background and being a well-grounded pragmatist. An individual only becomes successful when he or she learns this three-pronged secret and steps confidently onto the global stage.