



# How to get the most out of your Gap Year Guide

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This Gap Year Guide will help streamline your decision making process in at least 3 ways.

It is designed to help you. . .

- 1- Speed up your decision making process while cutting down the information overload
  - 2- Get crystal clear on the 8 types of gap experiences and which is a best-fit for you
  - 3- Get your personal gap year “Readiness Score” in 3 simple steps
- And more. . .

The self-guided questions, walk-through video and scoring system will help you gain quick clarity on what is most important to you in your personal decision-making process while choosing the kind of gap year experience that would best fit your personal preferences and priorities.

To choose your right gap year category in under 15 minutes, go through this guide in 5 simple steps. . .

- 1- Pray for God’s guidance first before starting the guide
- 2- Answer the questions
- 3- Tally your preference scores
- 4- Share and review your desires and results with a few people you trust the most
- 5- Make your gap year decision with clarity and confidence!

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## ***Why this guide works:***

The Leaders at the Baton Exchange have over 10 years of experience helping Christian college students, graduates and 20-somethings from around the world develop their faith, leadership, and work experience in the Baton Exchange 1-year Leader Incubator Gap Experience. Through the years, we have helped many students, just like you, make the most important decisions about their personal gap year experience based on their personal goals, desires and leadership/career track. We know that the questions in this guide will help bring clarity to your decision making process in a short amount of time while reducing the confusion and overwhelm of this very important life & career choice. . . So let’s dive in!

# Step 1: Assessing Gap Year Readiness

You may want to take a gap year, but can you or should you? Take the assessment below to determine your readiness. Answer what reflects reality, not what you wish was reality. Note that this step is to assess your readiness, not a prescription if you should or shouldn't take a gap year. Also, the questions aren't weighted in importance. Some sections will have a much bigger influence on your readiness than others. So take that into consideration as you look at your totals.

Total up your ratings and check out your readiness to do a gap year.

## Resource Readiness (Rate yourself. 1- Not at all, 6- Very)

Question	Rating
Some gap years have participation fees. To what degree do you have access to cash or someone who may be able to help?	
The degree to which going without income during the gap year is manageable.	
To what degree are you willing to work hard before or during a gap year in order to pay for it if you don't have access to financial help?	
You can defer student loans with some gap years and not with others. To what degree might your college loan situation positively affect your ability to do a gap year?	
To what degree are you comfortable not having health insurance should you no longer be covered by your parents? (Typically covered until age 26.)	
Depending on the gap year you select, you may need to have a driver's license and transportation. To what degree are you prepared for that, if need be?	
To what degree would my parents or close community be supportive of me doing a gap year?	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

## Emotional Readiness (Rate yourself. 1- Not at all, 6- Very!)

Question	Rating
Many people do gap years because they want to learn about themselves or the world. To what degree do others say that you are humble, teachable or a good listener?	
How successful am I at developing and keeping meaningful relationships?	
To what degree have others said that you are flexible and adaptable?	
What's your toleration level for uncertainty?	
To what degree am I able to keep my emotions and behavior stable when things get of control?	
To what degree do you need supports in order to stay healthy and challenged in your daily life?	
To what degree are you ready to start gaining "adulting" life experiences?	

<b>TOTAL</b>	
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**Your Availability** (Rate yourself. 1- Not at all, 6- Very!)

<b>Question</b>	<b>Rating</b>
To what degree will you be available after graduation to do a gap year?	
To what degree will you be free from other commitments during a gap year?	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

**Readiness Scale**

16-42 Uh, Oh

43-68 "I'm Good"

69-96 Bring it on!

## Step 2: Determining your gap year priorities and preferences. Selecting the gap year category right for you. Priorities & Learning Styles

Rate yourself. 1- Not at all, 6- Very!

This part doesn't total, but simply helps you see what priorities stand out to you.

<b>General Preference Questions</b>	<b>Rating</b>
To what degree is it important that the experience help me to make wise time, money, life balance choices?	
How important is it that the relationships / benefits / community I gain through the gap year carry on after my GAP experience?	
How important is it that the gap year experience help me decide what I want to do with the rest of my life after college?	
The degree to which I am concerned about delaying my career by 12 months.	
The importance that the gap year directly increase my ability or capacity to influence people for good- or impact the workplace for Christ.	
I prefer to plan everything out myself.	
I prefer to have someone guide me through a process they have planned.	
I prefer to do things with a group.	
I prefer to go it alone.	
The degree to which activities are your favorite way to learn.	
The degree to which reading is your favorite way to learn.	

The degree to which discussions with experienced leaders are my favorite way to learn.

**CATEGORY A**

**Rate yourself. 1- Not at all, 6- Very! Then highlight or circle the items that you scored a "6".**

Question	Rating
I may want to give back by serving kids (e.g. inner-city youth, the unborn, orphans, the sick, etc...)	
I may want to give back by serving the marginalized (e.g. homeless, elderly, hungry, disabled, etc...)	
I may want to give back by serving in something whose primary focus is evangelistic outreach or discipleship	
I may want to give back by serving in some kind of conservation effort	
I may want to give back by utilizing my academic training	
I may want to volunteer my skills to build the capacity of a worthy nonprofit	

**CATEGORY B**

**Rate yourself. 1- Not at all, 6- Very! Then highlight or circle the items that you scored a "6".**

Question	Rating
I want to take advantage of this time of life to see some of the world	
I would like to travel to different states during my experience	
I want to experience other cultures	
I would like my experience to be in 1 location, state or city	
I would like to travel abroad	
Growing in my awareness of the world is important to me	

**CATEGORY C**

**Rate yourself. 1- Not at all, 6- Very! Then highlight or circle the items that you scored a "6".**

Question	Rating
I would like to gain practical work & life experience through the gap year.	
The degree to which it is important that the experience incorporates paid or compensated work.	
The degree to which I would like the experience to accelerate my career.	
The degree to which I want the experience to help me explore career options.	
The degree to which I am concerned that I do not lose ground by being out of my field of study/career for a year	

The degree to which I would like to develop my professional networks for possible future employment/career advancement	
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Other considerations:

- I would like my experience to align with my career & life goals.
- I would like to be more prepared for life after the experience.
- I would like to get a career advantage among my peers through the experience.
- I would like to utilize my academic training in the experience.

**CATEGORY D**

**Rate yourself. 1- Not at all, 6- Very! Then highlight or circle the items that you scored a “6”.**

Question	Rating
I want an extended, unstructured, unplanned period at home to discover more about myself.	
I want the primary focus to be on having fun.	
I don't want to work at all.	
I want to take a physical and mental break	
I want down time to delve into an area of interest, passion, or expertise	
I just want to relax and take a year off	

**CATEGORY E**

**Rate yourself. 1- Not at all, 6- Very! Then highlight or circle the items that you scored a “6”.**

Question	Rating
I want it to deepen my walk with Christ	
I want it to help me discover/define my calling	
I want it to help me discover more about myself	
I want it to help me connect my faith to work and life application	
I want it to help me increase my ability or capacity to influence people for good- or impact the workplace for Christ	
I want it to give me solid tools to help me answer life's big questions	

*Other things to consider:*

- The degree to which I want it to adequately prepare me for life after the experience.
- In what ways do you need to learn and grow in order to launch into your career confident in how you will live out your faith in the work world?

**CATEGORY F****Rate yourself. 1- Not at all, 6- Very! Then highlight or circle the items that you scored a "6".**

Question	Rating
I want to be better prepared for leadership	
I want it to accelerate my career.	
I want it to improve my people skills - my ability to work with people or team environment	
I want it to increase my ability to influence people	
I want it to help me discover more about myself	
I want it to develop my leadership skills	

**CATEGORY G****Rate yourself. 1- Not at all, 6- Very! Then highlight or circle the items that you scored a "6".**

Question	Rating
I would like to grow in my understanding and knowledge of biblical social justice	
I would like to give back by serving in something that primarily has an evangelistic outreach focus	
I would like to give back by serving in something that has a primary focus on discipleship	
I want it to help me impact the workplace for Christ	
My number one focus for the gap year will be on doing ministry or missions work.	
I want to do service in the name of Christ and the gospel.	

**CATEGORY H****Rate yourself. 1- Not at all, 6- Very! Then highlight or circle the items that you scored a "6".**

Question	Rating
I want it to help me develop spiritually/emotionally/relationally/professionally so that I am better prepared for leading a godly life at work and with future family.	
I want it to combine faith, discipleship, leadership, service, and practical work experience.	
I want it to be in the relational context of a community of peers, mentors and seasoned leaders as well as have the potential to broaden my personal and professional networks.	
I want it to incorporate some travel experiences that include both fun and learning.	
I want it to include local missional and ministry outreach, discipleship and service as well as learning more about biblical social justice.	

