

# Gap Years

as skill-building experiences

Michelle Dittmer  
Co-Founder  
[michelle@cangap.ca](mailto:michelle@cangap.ca)



**Canadian  
Gap Year  
Association**

If you could take tomorrow off,  
no responsibilities, what would  
you spend your time doing?

(Pick your top 3)



Why did you choose those activities?



How did you feel when I gave  
you that freedom?



# Imagine being 17 years old today. Given a year, what would you do during that time?

- High Achiever – burnt out
- Explorer – wanting adventure and to understand the world
- With Barriers – lost a loved one, eating disorder, social anxiety
- Financial need – don't have enough to pay for post-secondary
- Direction Seeker – looking for what educational/career direction to follow
- Plan B – didn't get into the program of interest or left post-secondary after 1<sup>st</sup> semester or before graduation



For each of those activities, what skills would you have acquired?  
Enhanced?



# What is the Canadian Gap Year Association?

Research | Education & Advocacy | Resources



# What is a gap year?

- **CanGap Definition:** an intentional step away from normal routine to pursue personal, educational, professional growth through work, volunteer, travel and interest activities

\*\* with the express purpose of figuring out:

- Who you are
- Who you want to be
- What steps to take get to where and who you want to be.





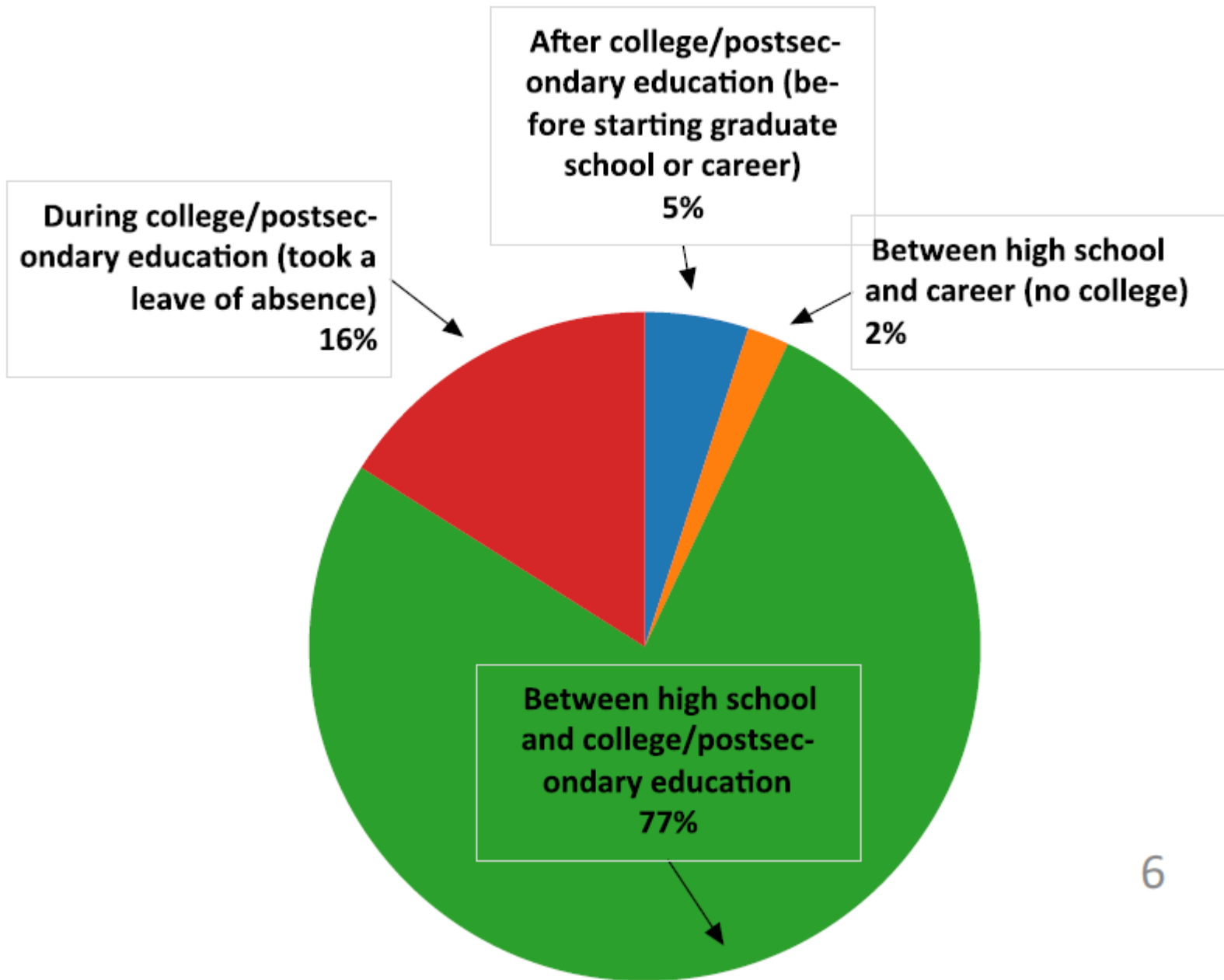
- Traditionally, gap years are taken after high school; however, we have noticed that a Canadian gap year is anytime between launching a post-secondary career through to post-graduation. It can be a full year, or a semester.
- Approximately 50% prior to entering post-secondary, 50% mid-post-secondary break



# Profile of a gapper

- **Career Seeker** – those who don't know what career they want to get into and seek more time to explore options
- **Financial Need** – young people who need to earn some money prior to their next financial commitment.
- **Plan B** – people who did not get into a program of interest and are taking some time to come up with a new plan or strengthen their application for future years





# Relevant responses to why they took a gap year:

- 92% to gain experiences, personal growth
- 81% wanted a break from academic track
- 52% wanted to explore academic pursuits
- 44% wanted to explore careers
- 7% not admitted to college



# How do Gappers perform?



# What will they gain?

- AGA (2015 ) found:
  - Students return to post-secondary and demonstrate a higher GPA than peers that did not take a gap year
  - More engaged on the campus and achieve meaningful leadership opportunities
- Our gappers report:
  - More independence, more confidence, greater maturity
  - Stronger inter-cultural understanding
  - Stronger connection to the value of further study in a specific field
  - More clarity
  - More “in control” of their personal lives and mental and physical health



# What will they gain? Continued.

- AGA:

## **JOBS**

88% believe the gap year experience increased their employability.



## **SKILLS**

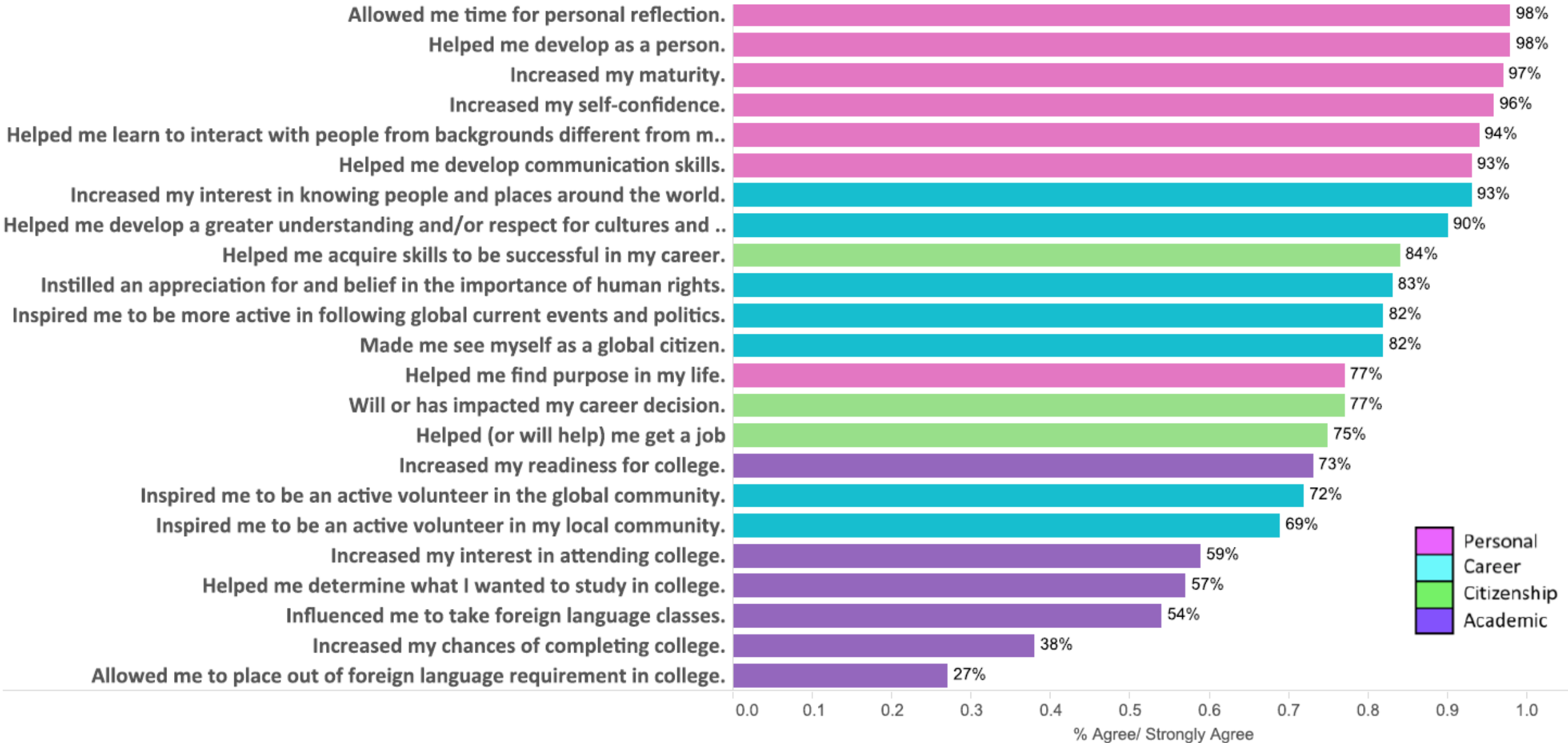
84% say their gap year helped them acquire skills to be successful in their career.



## **CAREER**

60% Say their gap year helped define their current career path.







Variable	Time 1: 1 to 2 years		Time 2: 5 to 6 years		Change between T1 and T2	
	Percent employed full-year	Average earnings	Percent employed full-year	Average earnings	Percentage change in employment	Percentage change in earnings
	percent	dollars	percent	dollars	percent	
Sample size	3,592	3,042	3,592	3,042	...	...
<b>No post-secondary education</b>						
High school droppers	58.60	11,448.34	74.64	21,279.51	27.37	85.87
High school only	71.37	14,587.20	75.70	22,708.62	6.07	55.67
2nd chance at high school, no post-secondary education	55.06	11,193.63	64.67	21,448.29	17.45	91.61
<b>Direct route to post-secondary education</b>						
Non-gappers-post-secondary leavers	72.52	16,848.22	88.20	26,561.02	21.62	57.65
Non-gappers-trade / other	71.77	23,369.80	84.30	33,379.59	17.46	42.83
Non-gappers-college	82.57	23,223.04	87.92	32,057.93	6.48	38.04
Non-gappers-college-university	90.21	26,678.15	89.77	38,349.62	-0.49	43.75
Non-gappers-university	80.44	25,177.35	88.54	43,958.44	10.07	74.60
All non-gappers	79.71	22,398.52	87.88	33,299.24	10.25	48.67
<b>Indirect route to post-secondary education</b>						
2nd chance at high school, some post-secondary education	59.14	14,332.72	82.84	24,698.55	40.07	72.32
Gappers-post-secondary leavers	67.92	17,616.65	86.97	30,378.79	28.05	72.44
Gappers-trade / other	73.18	21,484.78	86.89	27,883.77	18.73	29.78
Gappers-college	76.93	20,183.08	83.39	29,563.63	8.40	46.48
Gappers-university <sup>1</sup>	84.51	22,532.18	95.90	42,399.85	13.48	88.17
All gappers	74.27	19,835.51	86.14	30,524.96	15.98	53.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>72.21</b>	<b>17,787.87</b>	<b>82.15</b>	<b>28,008.69</b>	<b>13.77</b>	<b>57.46</b>

... not applicable

1. Includes gapper-college-university as well.

# How CanGap can help Gappers and Families

## Gappers

- One-on-one consulting
- Gap Year Planning Workshops
- Online information Webinars
- In-person Information Sessions
  - April in Ottawa, GTA, Vancouver
- April Launch – Parent Supports
  - “Fueling Successful Launches – A Parent’s guide to supporting the transition to young adulthood through the gap year pathway.”
- July Launch – Gap Year Planning
  - “Making it Count! - A gapper’s guide to planning a kick-butt year of meaningful experiences that will create memories and develop skills to last a lifetime”
- September Launch – Gap Year “Authentication Program”
- December Launch – Gap Year Re-Entry
  - How to leverage your gap year experience for education, career and beyond



# How CanGap can help Career Professionals and Post-Secondary Institutions

- Being a resource for your clients/students
- Connecting Gap students with counsellors/schools/programs/resources
- Promotion of scholarships
- Consulting on policy development
- Co-designing gap year/experiential semester learning programs
- Supporting researchers interested in this field of study
- Membership Opportunities



# February is Gap Year Exploration Month

## #explorethegapyear

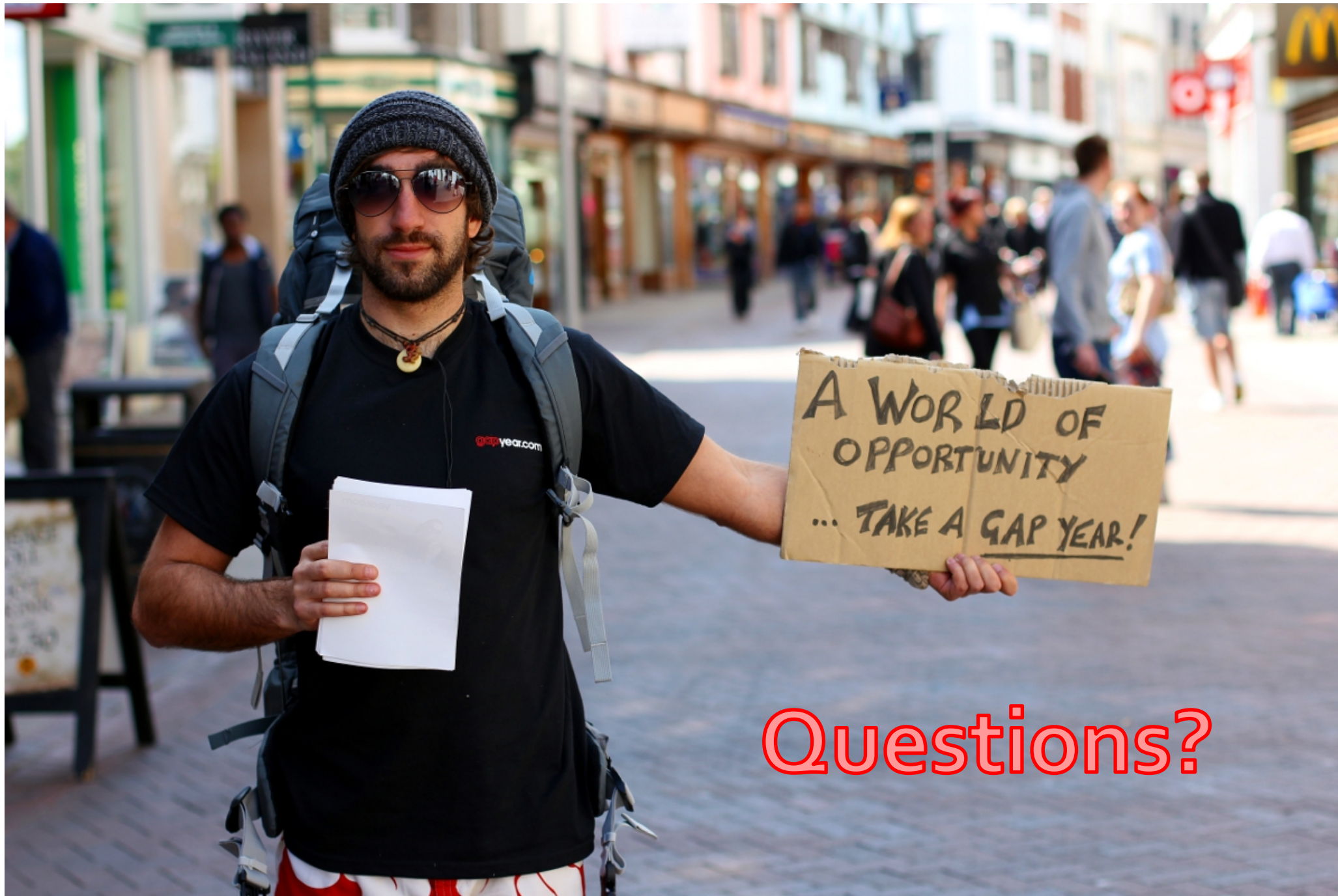
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[www.cangap.ca](http://www.cangap.ca)





Questions?



# Connect with us:

Cangap.ca

[michelle@cangap.ca](mailto:michelle@cangap.ca)

647-821-7060



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