

Writing Sample: LING 12

"There's an opportunity cost to everything," says Stephanie Lee in her article "Sometimes You Have to Quit to Get Ahead." One always has to give up something to get certain things they want. In fact, every choice is a tradeoff. After balancing the opportunity cost of both sides of the choice, one is able to know what matters to them most and make a decision. As a graduate who is seeking jobs, given two choices with similar salary and benefits, I prefer to work in a large megacity near coastal areas rather than in a medium-sized city near a prestigious university. While a medium-sized city is not as prosperous and developed as a big megacity, people who choose to live and work there can enjoy a relatively slower-paced and more simplified life and will not face as much competition and pressure as those who choose a large city. However, a large megacity still attracts me more in the sense that the resources and characteristics there help me lay the foundation of my future career pursuit, offer me with a diversified recreational life, and keep me constantly motivated.

To start with, a big megacity with international horizons and opportunities will be a great springboard for my future career goals. Large cities, especially coastal cities, are among the premier places to experience technological progress and market changes. People who work and live in those first-tier cities have the quickest and easiest access to up-to-date information all around the world. In Steve LeVine's article "In China, a Picture of How Warehouse Jobs Can Vanish," he quotes CTO Chen Zhang. "Everything is about scale...when scale comes, profit will come." Choosing to live and work in a large city is an investment, and one of the primary profits is the opportunity to take advantage of the resources available here. Majoring in economics, I am pursuing a career in the financial industry and aiming at creating my own business in the field of international trade. On the one hand, when it comes to some of the most significant elements for a business to succeed—the benefits of economy, the level of technology, and the quality of labor—the scale of a medium-sized city cannot be placed on equal footing as a megacity. On the other hand, coastal areas usually have a closer connection with international companies. Working in a big city near coastal areas, not only can I get familiar with how to run a successful business, but I can also learn the latest international trends in time. What Alec MacGillis calls "economic rationale" should be a decisive factor to judge if a city is worth investing and has a promising future. Thus, by gradually gaining experience and knowledge, I will have a better chance to get myself prepared for my future career pursuit in a large city instead of in a smaller city.