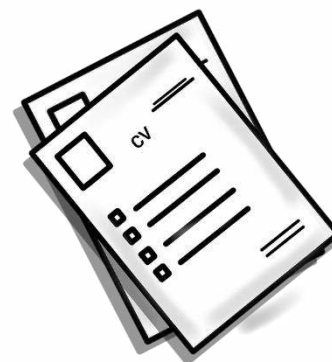


## Job Interviews

### Warm up

- How would you feel about doing a job interview in English?
- What are some common mistakes people make in job interviews?
- Do you think experience is more important than qualifications in your industry?
- What is a common job interview question that you really don't like?
- Do you remember your first ever job interview? What was it like?



### 1. Match the vocabulary in the box with the quotes from job interviews below.

e) hard-working	a) punctual	f) reliable	h) easy to get along with
g) analytical	d) ambitious	b) versatile	c) determined

- "I'm almost never late, I either arrive early or right on time."
- "I can do lots of different types of tasks. I have good technical skills, good people skills, and I'm good at organizing people. Oh, and I'm creative too."
- "Once I set my mind on a goal, I don't stop, no matter how difficult it is."
- "For me it's important to work in an environment where I have the opportunity to get promoted. I don't mind starting at the bottom, but I want to work my way to the top."
- "I'm usually the first to arrive at the office and the last to leave, and I only take breaks when I really have to."
- "I think one of my best qualities is that you can always depend on me to get my work done. If I say I'll do something, then I'll do it."
- "I'm very good at looking at a problem from all angles and figuring out the best approach. I always try to make decisions based on logic."
- "I'm really good with people. I work well with others, and most people like me."

### 2. Pairwork: Ask your partner if they think they are one of the phrases from exercise one. Your partner must answer yes or no, and then explain.


Eg. "Do you think you're punctual?"

"To be honest not really. I'm usually a few minutes late."

 3. Read the quotes from job interviews and match the underlined sections with their definitions below.

- a) "I majored in supply chain management"
- b) "I think one of my biggest strengths is my ability to organize people and delegate tasks."
- c) "I've been working at a make-up store for 3 years."
- d) "I resigned 3 months ago because I wanted to work in a job where I could push my career forward."
- e) "Unfortunately I was let go due to restructuring."
- f) "I worked at Denzel's Glasses as a sales representative for 3 years"
- g) "I have a lot of experience in dealing with staff disagreements"
- h) "I have a degree in economics, and I wrote my thesis on supply chain management."
- l) "My background is in law, so I can help with contracts and legal issues."

- 1. This is what I'm good at. *B)*
- 2 How long I worked at my previous employer. *F)*
- 3. This is the field I specialize in. *L)*
- 4. I lost my job, but not because of my personal performance. *E)*
- 5. The main subject I studied in university. *A)*
- 6. The length of time I have spent at my current employer. *C)*
- 7. I know how to do this because I have done it before. *G)*
- 8. This is my education in detail. *H)*
- 9. I left my job. *D)*

 4. In the next exercise, your partner will interview you for your dream job. Prepare by writing 5 to 9 sentences about yourself using the phrases from exercise 3

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 5. Read the job advertisements below and answer the questions below.

	<b>HR Manager wanted at <i>Fruitco</i></b>
	<p><i>The successful applicant must have:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 years' experience in HR</li> <li>• Tertiary education or higher</li> <li>• Management experience preferred</li> <li>• Must be energetic and hard-working</li> <li>• Must be proficient in payroll software</li> <li>• Should enjoy designing and implementing new strategies</li> </ul>

Tele-Sales Position Open

Looking for a fun, energetic working environment full of challenges and rewards? Looking to take command and be responsible for your own success?

Send your C.V and cover letter to [Timothyjones@snakeoilsalesmen.com](mailto:Timothyjones@snakeoilsalesmen.com).

Experience and qualifications not necessary, but a good attitude is a must!

Please note: all employees work strictly on a commission basic, no hourly rate available.

*Junior Tax Advisor Required at Large Investment Firm*

BSU Investments is looking for a thorough, reliable, analytical individual for a position in our tax department. Basic Tax Law certificate required, university degree preferred. This job requires long hours, a great work ethic, and an eye for detail. The successful applicant will have many chances to move up, and will receive comprehensive in-house training. This job is for a young professional with ambition and motivation.

Store Designer for Cosmetics Franchise Needed

There is a position available as a regional store designer for *Babyline Cosmetics*. The successful applicant will be responsible for all the stores in the greater London area, and as such a license is required. A background in design and/or cosmetics is preferred. This person must be able to decorate our stores with the subtle style that is *Babyline* is famous for. The applicant must also be able to dress and conduct themselves in a manner which suits our brand.

- a) Which job requires a lot of travel? *Store designer*
- b) Which job does not pay a standard salary? *Sales representative*
- c) Which job requires a university degree? *HR Manager*
- d) In which job would being a team leader be relevant work experience? *HR Manager*
- e) Which position has the most chance of being promoted? *Junior Tax Advisor*
- f) In which position is personal appearance particularly important? *Store designer*
- g) Which of these jobs look the most appealing to you?
- h) Which job do you think you would be best at and why?



6. Listen to 3 interviews for the position of HR manager at Fruitco and answer the questions.

Interview 1: Linda

- a) Why did Linda decide to study IT? *Job opportunities are good and she's good with computers*
- b) Why does Linda think a degree in IT would be useful for a HR manager? *Because IT is useful in almost every job these days.*
- c) What experience does Linda have in HR? *She worked as a junior HR manager at a hospital*
- d) Why did Linda decide to move from IT to HR? *She likes dealing with people*
- e) What does Linda like most about HR? *Interviewing people*
- f) What do you think are the pros and cons of hiring Linda? Do you think she made any mistakes in her interview?

Interview 2: Joe

- a) What did Joe study? *Human Resource Management*
- b) Why does Joe think his lack of experience could be a good thing? *Because he doesn't have any habits from old jobs, and can learn to do things the Fruitco way.*
- c) According to Joe, what is Fruitco's reputation as an employer? *Very good*
- d) What experience does Joe have in managing people? *He was a manager at a café for 2 years.*
- e) What does Joe say is his biggest weakness? *Organisational skills*
- f) What do you think are the pros and cons of hiring Joe? Do you think he made any mistakes in his interview?

Interview 3: Melissa

- a) Why did Melissa decide to pursue HR instead of law as a career? *She finds it more interesting*
- b) What experience does Melissa have in HR? *She worked at Cable-Connect for 6 years as a HR manager.*
- c) How many promotions did Melissa get at Cable-Connect? *3*
- d) How did Melissa deal with dissatisfied staff at Cable-Connect? *By firing them and restructuring the teams.*
- e) Why doesn't Melissa have any references from Cable-Connect? *She didn't get along with her precious boss, and thinks he wouldn't give her a good reference.*
- f) What do you think are the pros and cons of hiring Melissa? Do you think she made any mistakes in her interview?

 **7. Pairwork: you and your partner are going to interview each other for a job. Follow the steps below.**

Step 1. Choose any job you like and write down any qualifications or experience you have that may be relevant to this field.

Step 2. Tell your partner what job you have chosen, what the main responsibilities are, what skills and qualifications are important in this job, and what type of person the interviewer would be looking for.

Step 3. Your partner should choose 5 questions from the list below and write 3 questions of their own.

- What are your main qualifications?
- What experience do you have in this field?
- What do you think your biggest strengths are?
- I can see here that you worked at....., what were your main responsibilities at that job?
- Why did you leave your previous job?
- Can you tell me about a time you had to overcome a particularly challenging problem at work?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Why do you want to work for this company?
- How would you describe yourself as a worker?
- What do you find rewarding about working in this field?

Step 4. Roleplay an interview for the job. Your partner will ask you a question, and for every answer you give, your partner will try to improvise follow-up questions.

Eg "So what were your main responsibilities at your previous job?"

"Well I was a team leader for a small group of IT experts, so my main responsibilities were to delegate tasks and make sure the team members worked together."

"I see, and what was the most challenging part of that position?"

### Interview 1

*Dave: So Linda, I can see here from your CV that you studied I.T. What lead you to studying that?*

*Linda: Well to be honest I mostly chose I.T because I heard the job opportunities were very good, and I've always been good with computers, so I thought why not? I graduated in 20012 with a bachelors degree in information technology and a major in business communication. After university I got hired by a company called Health-Tech that made software for hospitals, and I worked there for 3 years.*

*Dave: And what exactly did you do during that time?*

*Linda: Well my main responsibilities were fixing bugs and glitches in the software, but I also often would work as an intermediary between the hospital staff and the Health-Tech.*

*Dave: I see... well I have to be honest, it's quite rare that we get someone with a background in I.T apply for a position as a HR manager.*

*Linda: I can understand that. A degree in I.T may not be directly related to H.R, but believe me, someone who is good with computers is useful in pretty much every department and industry these days.*

*Dave: That's very true. And I see that after working for Health-Tech you worked for 5 years in a hospital in a H.R department.... How did such a big career change happen so suddenly?*

*Linda: Well on paper it looks like a big change, but the hospital I was hired at was actually the same hospital I dealt with in when I worked at Health-Tech. You see the Head of HR at the hospital had to call tech support a few times over the years, and she always ended up talking to me. She liked me and was impressed with my skills, and one day just told me she was looking for a junior HR manager, and that I should come in for an interview.*

*Dave: And what made you say yes? Why did you want to move from IT to HR?*

*Linda: Well easily my favourite part of the job at Health-Tech was dealing with and helping people. I was one of the only people there who actually wanted to take tech support calls. The others all preferred the technical side of things. I wanted more interaction with people, and HR seemed like a good choice for that.*

*Dave: And what do you like about working in HR*

*Linda: Well as I said I like working with people, but I would say my favourite part is interviewing people. I find it really interesting to try to find the right person to fit into the team.*

*Dave: And how would you describe your approach to interviewing people?*

*Linda: I would describe my approach as more intuitive than analytical. I think CVs, qualifications, and experience are all important, but I think the most important thing is how you feel about the person, and whether or not they would fit into the corporate culture.*

### Interview 2

*Dave: So Joe, what makes you think you would be a good fit for the position we advertised?*

*Joe: Well a lot of things. Your ad said that you're looking for someone energetic and looking to implement new strategies, and that's definitely me. Also as you can see from my CV, I studied human resource management. I graduated last year and now I'm eager to start working in the field.*

*Dave: I see, and you have no experience working in HR?*

*Joe: Well no... but in a way, I actually think that could be an advantage. If you take someone who has experience, they already have a lot of habits and ideas about how things should be done, and old habits die hard. With me I am ready to learn, and I can learn to do them the way Fruitco likes.*

*Dave: Interesting. And I see here that you wrote a thesis in your degree. What exactly did you write your thesis about?*

*Joe: I wrote my thesis about what the role of a human resources department is in a modern company, and how human resources needs to change and evolve in the future. That's one of the reasons I really wanted to apply here. Fruitco is quite well-known for treating employees well, and that helps me as employee, but also makes working in human resources a lot easier.*

*Dave: That's an interesting perspective, but you're right, we try to treat our employees well. We give them plenty of annual leave, a good salary, and we try to treat everyone equally. I have to say though, my main concern is that you may be underqualified. As a HR manager, you would have two team members working beneath you, and you would have to learn to manage and delegate tasks. That can be quite difficult if you have no experience.*

*Joe: Actually I do have experience managing people. If you look at the "work experience" section of my CV you'll see that I was a manager at a café for 2 years. In that time I learned how to organise people, how to delegate tasks, and how to deal with staff issues, and how to conduct job interviews. I know it's not the same as a HR manager, but I believe a lot of the skills I learned there would be relevant in this position. One of my references is Timothy Dunn, he is the owner of the café I worked at, and he will tell you that I was very good at managing a team of people.*

*Dave: Interesting, I'll be sure to contact him. And how would you describe yourself as a worker?*

*Joe: I'm very energetic and friendly. I would say I'm easy to get a long with, and for me it's really important to work as part of a team. I'm a people person.*

*Dave: And what would you say is your biggest weakness?*

*Joe: Honestly I would say it's my organisational skills. I am trying to improve, but sometimes I am a little disorganised.*

### Interview 3

*Dave: So Melissa I have to say right off the bat, your CV is quite impressive. Let's start with your qualifications. It says here that you have a double degree in human resources management and law. What makes you want to pursue human resources instead of law as a career?*

*Melissa: Well to be honest because I find it more interesting. I majored in tax law, and the salary for a tax lawyer is very good, but to be blunt, the work is quite boring.*

*Dave: And what do you find interesting about HR?*

*Melissa: I enjoy the challenge of figuring out how to make people and teams work harder and more efficiently. In my previous job I worked as a HR manager for an internet company called Cable-Connect.*

*Dave: I can see that, 6 years and 3 promotions, it sounds like you were quite popular.*

*Melissa: Well, I was popular with my boss, but not exactly with the rest of the staff.*

*Dave: Why not?*

*Melissa: Well when I entered the company, they had a major problem with morale. Staff were unhappy with their salary, wanted more annual leave and sick leave, and were generally dissatisfied with the conditions.*

*Dave: and Cable-Connect wasn't doing anything to improve that?*

*Melissa: Oh they were, they just weren't taking the right approach. They were trying to negotiate with the workers, and in my opinion being too weak. I immediately restructured the teams, and fired some of the staff who were causing all the problems.*

*Dave: Oh? That seems quite aggressive.*

*Melissa: It seems that way, but it worked. I think that HR departments have become too soft. It's our job to keep the employees in line, and sometimes remind them that they're replaceable. Of course it's good to have satisfied employees, but you don't want to spoil them.*

*Dave: Interesting. I have to say we normally take a different approach at Fruitco, but I see your point. And I see here that you don't have any references from Cable-Connect. Why is that?*

*Melissa: Well my boss was satisfied with my work, but he and I didn't get along very well. He often thought that I was too hard on the employees, and he stopped bringing me to interviews because he felt my questions were too direct. I didn't ask him for a reference because I didn't think he would give me a good one.*

*Dave: I see. Thanks for your honesty. And how would describe yourself as a worker.*

*Melissa: I think I have an excellent work ethic. I am usually the first to arrive at the office, and the last to leave. I'm punctual, reliable, and I take my work very seriously.*