

Unidad 6

Integración de contenidos

In this unit we will integrate all the contents into a mock interview, which is a simulation of a real job interview used to coach job applicants for an actual employment interview carried out in English. Typically, a job interview is divided into introduction, core and a final greeting. We will go through the core interview with sample questions and answers.

The Job Interview*

Core questions

A. Questions about your persona

- 1. Questions about you**
- 2. Question about your strengths**
- 3. Questions about your weaknesses**
- 4. Questions about hobbies/interests**

1. Questions about you

Sample questions:

- *Tell us something about yourself.*
- *How would you describe yourself?*

Sample answer:

My name is Jane Doe. I come from Mexico, but I am currently living in Italy.

I have obtained a BSc in Geology and hold an MSc degree in Physics. I am currently working towards a PhD in Geophysics. (I graduated in Geology from the University of Bari, in 2010)

My qualifications also include knowledge of petrol research and 3 years 'experience in geological surveying.

Useful Grammar:

- Present Simple to express permanent situations, habits, routines, facts
- Present Continuous to express temporary situations, actions in course
- Present Perfect Simple/Continuous to express: – general experiences in the past without detailing when and where – experiences which began in the past, but are still in course (unfinished actions)
- Past Simple to describe finished actions in the past at a given, specific, or implied moment and place.

2. Question about your strengths

Sample questions:

- *What are your greatest strengths?*
- *What are your most positive aspects?*

Include 3-4 positive character traits:

trustworthy /honest/ persistent/ determined/ tolerant/ open-minded/ adaptable/ flexible /hard-working /reliable/ friendly/ loyal

Include 3-4 proficiency traits:

expert/ detail-oriented / team-player/ problem-solver /competent/ multi-tasker /achiever/initiator/ mediator/ quick-learner /Leader /efficient

Sample answers:

I am an honest, reliable, hard-working person. I also possess a positive outlook towards my profession and life in general. People say I am friendly and good at giving advice.

I have very good leadership qualities, as well as organizational and time management skills, but my greatest strength is my ability to handle multiple projects and meet deadlines.

Useful patterns:

- My greatest strengths are/include
- I am honest. (adjective)
- I am a good listener. (noun) ... • I would (I'd) say I am a • I would (I'd) define/describe/depict myself as.... • I consider myself to be.... • I think/believe I am... • People say I am....
- I have/possess good managerial skills. (noun)
- I am good at multitasking. (-ing form noun)
- I know how/am able to adapt to new work situations. (verb)

Useful Grammar:

Verbs:

- be, have, possess, manage, perform, be good at, can+ base verb, be able to, know how to...
- -ed/past participle form used as adjective: I am results-oriented/focused/organized.
- -ing form used as adjective: I am easy-going and hard-working.
- -ing form used as noun: Developing new work strategies is one of my strongest abilities.

Nouns to define your traits: I'm a good multi-tasker.

Adjectives to express traits: Colleagues say I am friendly and competent.

3. Questions about your weaknesses

Sample questions:

- *What are your greatest weaknesses?*

- *Which aspects or areas of yourself would like to improve?*

Sample answers:

I am always working on improving my communications skills to be a more effective presenter. I recently joined Toastmasters which I find very helpful.

Sometimes, I have trouble delegating duties to others. I've since taken courses in time management and learned more effective delegation techniques.

Useful Grammar

Linking words for contrasting:

- but, however, while, whereas, nevertheless

I am a little shy, but I am attending a theatre workshop to improve my confidence.

4. Questions about hobbies/interests

Sample questions:

- *What do you do your free/leisure time?*
- *Do you do any volunteer work?*

Sample answer:

Well, I really enjoy travelling because it gives me an opportunity to appreciate new cultures. In the evenings, I unwind by playing the piano. I am also keen on speed-walking and playing volleyball with friends. At weekends, I volunteer with the Autism Society where I spend time with children.

Useful Grammar:

Verbs to express:

- interests: like, love, enjoy, be fond of, be passionate about, be keen on, be interested in, be active in
- sports: practice/do/play • musical instruments: play

Nouns to express activities:

- -ing form: swimming, cycling, cooking...

B. Questions about qualifications, work experience and career goals

5. Questions about the job you are applying for

6. Question about hiring you

7. Question about what you know about the company

8. Questions about present and past work experience

9. Questions about career goals

5. Questions about the job you are applying for

Sample questions:

- *Why are you interested in working here?*
- *Why have you applied for this post?*

Sample answer:

It would be a privilege to work in a reputable company such as yours. When I read about the opening, I found that my skills and qualifications matched the requirements. Furthermore, I believe your company will allow me to grow both professionally and as a person.

Useful Grammar:

Verbs: • be interested/attracted (by), appeal

Linking words to give reason: • because, as, since, for

6. Question about hiring you

Sample questions:

- *Why should we hire you?*
- *Give us a good reason for taking you on.*
- *Why do you think you are the best person for this position?*

Sample answers:

• *As I am a fresher, I have theoretical knowledge, but I can work hard and learn the practical aspects quickly. Moreover, I will make a great effort to fulfill my duties and responsibilities and contribute to the good progress of the organization.*

Useful Grammar:

Conditional form and sentences to express: • the likelihood of your working for them: *If I am hired, I can/could/will contribute significantly to the progress of your company.* • the possibility of your working for them: *If I were hired, I would make a great effort to learn quickly.*

Linking forms to state opinions: • *I believe/think that I....* • *In my opinion, ...* • *In my experience,....* • *I'd say that...* • *I am sure/confident that...*

7. Questions about what YOU know about the company

Sample questions:

- *What do you know about our company?*
- *Are you familiar with our company's current projects and future prospects?*

Sample answer:

I know it is one of the fastest growing companies in Europe and has many branches in different countries.

I have read it provides full support to its employees on a professional front and offers many career growing opportunities. I know it is currently working on a large-scale project in Bahrain and that its major competitor is SA GeoSci.

Useful grammar:

Superlative and comparative forms for comparing/contrasting:

I know it is one of the most successful companies in Europe with greater appeal to young prospective employees than other similar firms.

8. Questions about current and past work experience

Sample questions (current employment):

- *Who is your current employer?*
- *Why are you leaving your current job?*

Sample answer:

I am currently employed at SA GeoSci and have been working for them for the last four years. I have received great training and education there. However, I feel that the time is right for me to transition the outstanding skills and experience I have obtained there to a different job market, and I am confident I can bring these same skills to your organization.

Useful Grammar:

- Present Continuous to express current employment.
- Present Perfect Simple/Continuous to express past experience which has results in the present or is still in course.

Sample questions (past employment):

- *Tell us something about your previous employer(s)*
- *What were your duties and responsibilities?*
- *How long did you work for them?*
- *Why did you leave your last job?*

Sample answer:

I (have) worked for 3 years with the Saudi Arabia Gas Company where I am/was Surveying Director and am/was responsible for/in charge of conducting research on potential petrol reservoirs.

I enjoy(ed) this job quite a lot and my employer treats/ed staff with respect and always rewards/ed accomplishments. However, I now feel it is time for me to move on and acquire further work experience in different fields (or: I was laid off/ made redundant because the company relocated/ downsized/ needed to cut costs.

Useful Grammar:

- Present Perfect to describe work experience which began in the past, but is still in course
- Past Simple to describe past work experience no longer in course (where/when you worked)
- Present Simple to describe work routines and current employment

9. Questions about career goals

Sample questions:

- *Where do you see yourself in five years' time?*
- *What are your career goals?*

Sample answer:

Within 5 years, I would like to become the very best geologist your company has on staff. I want to work towards becoming the expert that others rely on. Hopefully, this will allow me to take on greater responsibilities with the company if the opportunity arises. I am also working towards additional certifications in the field to enhance my career prospects.

Useful grammar:

- Conditional Form to express future aspirations: *I would like to become Surveying Director.*
- Future Simple to express future aspirations: *I hope I will hold a high-ranking position in the company.*
- Present Continuous to express what you are currently doing to achieve those goals: *I am currently taking extra field-related courses to enhance my professional credentials.*

Patterns:

- *In the future, I would like to...*
- *Hopefully, I will...*
- *I hope to...*
- *My dream is to...*
- *My aspirations are/include....*

*Adapted for pedagogical purposes from : *Preparing for a job interview ... in English*. Prof. Victoria Sportelli. Department of Earth and Geo-Environmental Sciences, University of Bari.

PRÁCTICA

➔ *In pairs:*

Write down your own interview questions and answers by exploring the suggested and further grammar patterns and structures. Also, check appropriate terminology and pronunciation.

Practise the interview to communicate effectively in English.