Unit 8. Elevator pitch and Job interview

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1. Elevator pitch

Warm-up questions

1. What do you need to do when you need to persuade someone about something?

2. Why is it important to improve your persuasion skills?

3. Do you feel comfortable when presenting yourself to others?

4. What is the hardest part when you have to persuade someone about something?

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What is an elevator pitch

An elevator pitch is an opportunity to share a **brief summary** about yourself and the products you offer or a new business idea. An elevator pitch is not always used immediately, but should be prepared for any situation where you have to give a presentation speech to a potential investor, potential client or job interviewer.In fact, almost all of us have given an elevator pitch at some point, even if we didn't realise it. This is because there are many different types of speeches, such as those given in interviews or when new business opportunities arise, for example.

Elements:

- **Concise**: no longer than 60 seconds
- **Clear**: use language that everyone understands
- **Powerful**: use words that are powerful and strong (descriptive adjectives and interesting verbs!)
- **Visual**: create a visual image in your listener's mind
- **Tells a story**: explain how you solved a problem or overcame a difficult situation
- **Has a hook**: something that snags your listener's interest and makes him/her want to know more

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Steps

1. **introduce yourself**
2. **state the problem**
3. **present your solution**
4. **share your proposal**
5. **include a call to action**

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Video
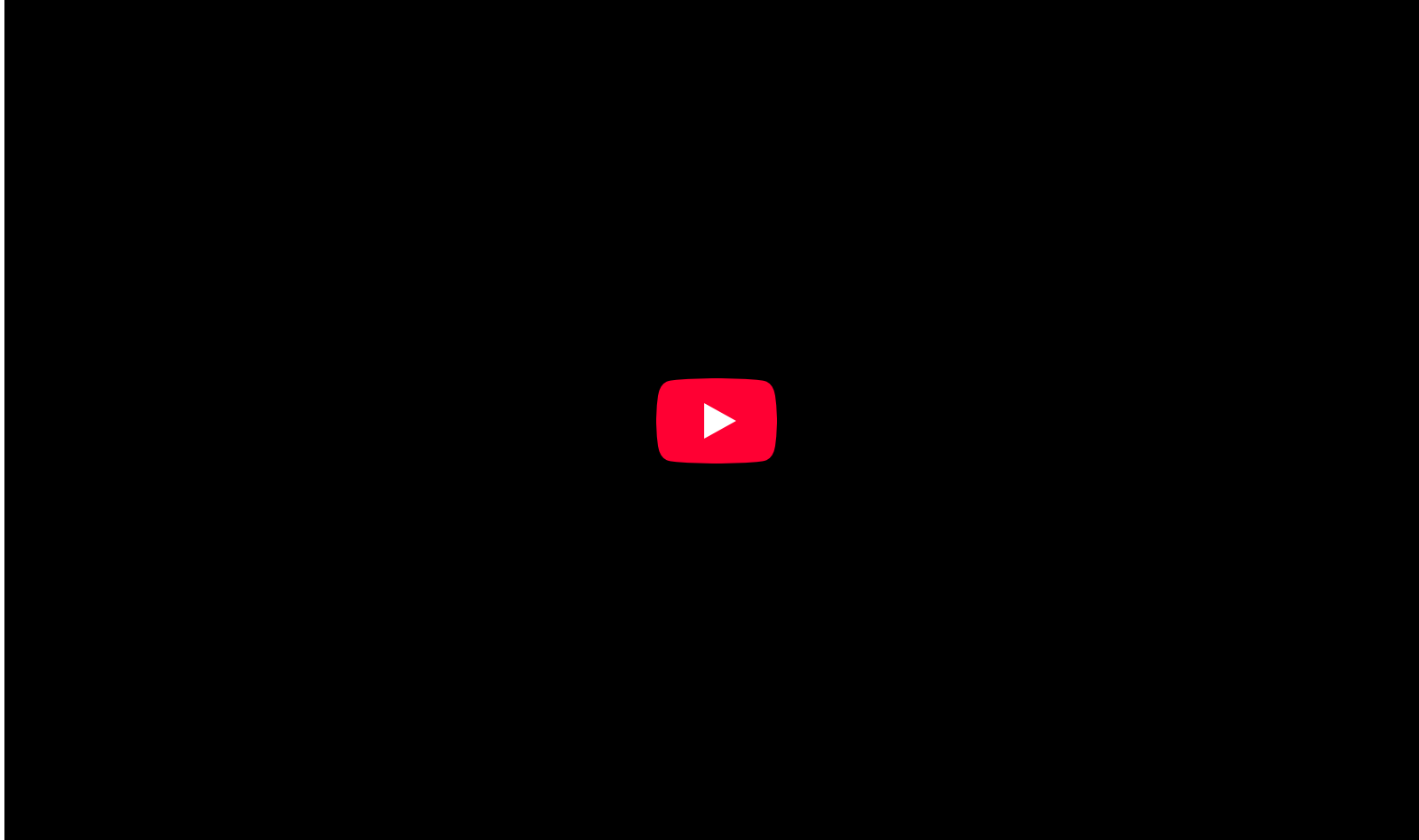
Expressions you can use:

Starting:
The thing about... is...
What I find most interesting about... is...
First of all,
To begin with,

Abbreviating:
In a nutshell...
To cut a long story short...

Addition:
What's more...
On top of that...
Besides that...
Apart from that...
Another thing to consider is...
We shouldn't forget about...

Fillers:
You know?
So,I mean,
In other words,

Contrast/comparison:
On the one hand/on the other hand...
However,
While/Whereas

Conclusion:
To sum up,
So in summary,
So as I was saying...

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Expressions you can use:

Establish the problem (usually with a hook):

When was the last time you...
Picture this:
Have you ever noticed...
Is it me or...
You know that feeling when...
Ever wished you could...
Let's be real here:

Differentiate yourself:

For over [x years], we've helped over [X target number] [achieve benefit].
Backed by/recommended by [known/influential/trusted institution or person].

Example

"Hey, I'm Neville. I graduated with a degree in computer science, and my co-founder worked on sales teams for 10 years. People in the office have a tough time communicating through email/text/chat. Our software is the one place you can communicate with your whole team. It stores all the files, chats, and communications between teams of over 5 people. Our product is 3x faster than Oracle.We only charge you if you get leads.We provide a 24/7 support engineer for a full year. Here's my card. Call this number and we'll setup a full demo for you, completely free."

1. Introduce yourself (+ Explain your qualifications)
2. State the problem
3. Give a solution
4. Give reasons why they will benefit from your idea
5. Enter how they can take action (call to action)

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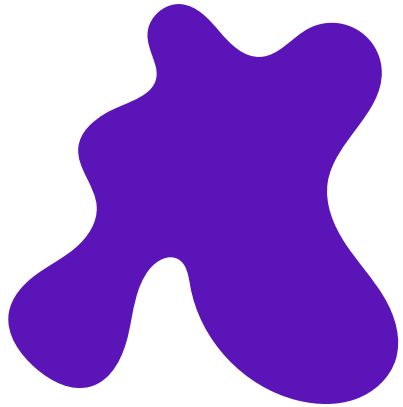
2. Job interviews
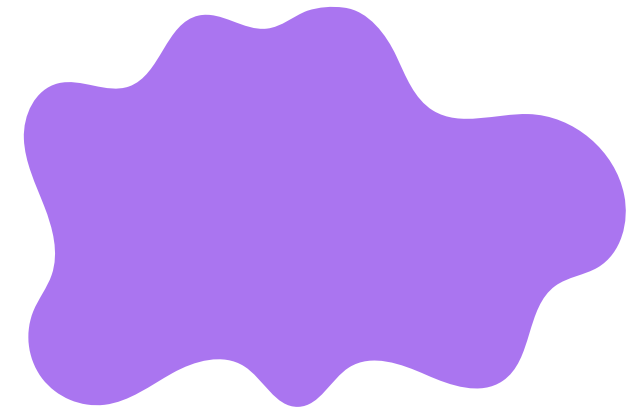
Warm-up speaking

1. What kind of questions do you find easier to answer: behavioural or technical/job-specific? Why?
2. What are your least favourite interview questions?
3. What do you think about unusual interview questions (e.g. 'If you could compare yourself with any animal...')?
4. What are the advantages of online interviews?

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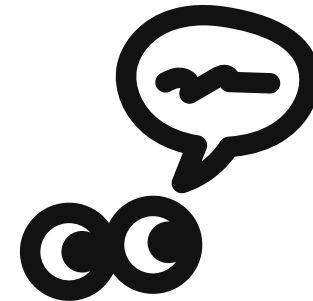
↓ 8 BODY LANGUAGE
TECHNIQUES
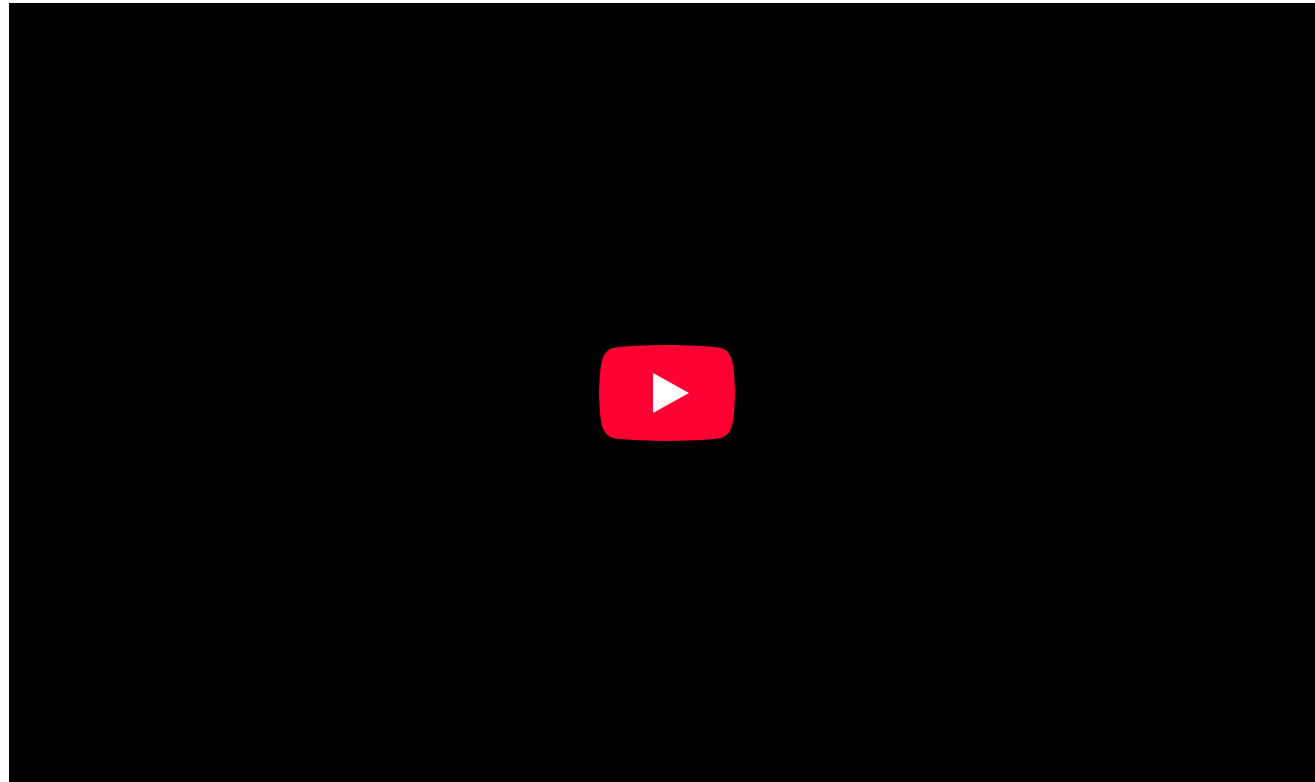
8 BODY LANGUAGE TECHNIQUES

1. **Maintain positive eye contact**: it tells them that you are a confident person.
2. **Sit upright in the interview chair:** it tells that you're professional and able to pay attention, TIP: place your hands on top of your knees to stay calm.
3. **Use your hands periodically during the interview to accentuate a specific point:** to look positive and enthusiastic.
4. **Avoid touching your face during the interview**: it looks like you are distracted and unable to sit still.
5. **Make sure you smile:** they will always smile back. employers want to hire someone positive.
6. **Make sure you listen:** it shows that you are involved in the process. demonstrate that you are listening with face gestures.
7. **Use your head while responding:** keep your head perfectly straight and look to the eyes (if you want to seem confident) or keep your head to the side (if you want to express understanding of a situation or seem sympathetic).
8. **Make sure you dress to impress:** dress smart

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did you choose to study your degree subject?

Focus on your genuine interests, and highlight how they align with your career goals. Mention how the degree matched your motivations, skills and competences.

Example: "**I chose to study** [degree subject] because **I've always been fascinated by** [specific aspect] and saw it as **a foundation for** pursuing a career in [specific industry]".

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

2. Tell me something about yourself.

Keep it professional, focusing on relevant aspects of your background and experience.

Talk about some of your biggest achievements and your main skills.

"I have a **degree in** … and … **years of experience in** …"

"I like challenges, solving problems and coming up with solutions".

"I am a very social person and I think that shows in my work life. I love working with a lot of different people".

"I'm a very creative thinker. I have an open mind and like to explore alternative solutions to problems".

"I'm very organized in both my personal and professional life. I think this is a good trait as it enables me to be very productive on the job".

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

3. Why do you want this job?

Highlight how the job aligns your skills, interests and career goals.

"I'm excited about this role because **it allows me to leverage my skills** while working on challenging projects. I'm particularly **drawn to** your company's mission and values (mention them) and I believe **my experience aligns well with the requirements** of the position".

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

4. Why should we hire you?

Emphasize your unique strengths and how they will benefit the company.

"You should hire me because **I bring a combination of** [specific skills], a **proven track record in** [relevant achievements], and a **passion for [**industry]. **I am confident in** my ability to contribute to the team and help achieve the company's goals".

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COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

5. What will you do if you don't get this job?

Never say that you will do nothing. mention that you will work on personal projects that will allow you to continue learning, that you will do voluntary work or courses to further your education, or that you will study languages to improve your skills.Demonstrate resilience and a positive attitude.

"**While I am enthusiastic about the opportunity here**, if I don't get this job, I will continue to explore similar roles in the industry. I believe every experience contributes to personal and professional growth" // "Although I am very interested in working here, if I don't succeed I think it would be a good opportunity to work on personal projects and improve my language skills with other languages".

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COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

6. What are your strengths/weaknesses?

Strength: name some of your main strengths and focus on one of them. It is always good to give an example and that some of these strengths are the ones that companies have talked about in the job offer.

"One of my key strengths is my ability to [x], which has been pivotal in [x]".

Weakness: consider how you can turn a weakness into a strength. For example: "I am quite reserved and like to take my time in making important decisions. On the other hand, this trait has prevented me from rushing into decisions that could be detrimental to the company". // "I used to struggle with [x], but I've taken steps to improve by [mention steps taken or skills developed]".

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COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

7. What do you know about our company?

Conduct thorough research on the company's history, values, products/services, and recent news.
"I've researched this company extensively and **I am impressed by** its commitment to [mention a specific value]. I also noticed your recent [achievement], which further solidified my interest in joining the team".

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

8. How do you typically approach new projects?

Describe your systematic approach, including research, planning and collaboration.

"When facing a new project, **I start by researching** the objectives and requirements. I then create a detailed plan, allocate tasks based on team member's strengths, and maintain open communication throughout the project to ensure its success".

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

9. How do you handle stress?

Talk about healthy coping mechanisms and how you prioritize tasks to manage workload.

"I manage stress by prioritizing tasks, breaking down projects into manageable steps, and maintaining open communication with my team. Additionally, I practice [mention a stress-relief technique] to ensure I stay focused and effective during challenging times".

↓ COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

10. Why did you leave your last job?

Keep it positive and focus on seeking new challenges or opportunities for growth. Never speak badly about your superiors. try to make your answers have to do with the fact that you were looking for more opportunities for growth, more responsibilities...

"I found myself not challenged enough with the work, because **I felt there was a lack of room for growth".**

"I am looking for a new challenge and an opportunity to use my skills and experience"

"I am seeking a position with a stable company with room for growth and opportunity for advancement".

"**This position seemed like an excellent match for my skills** and experience, which I wasn't able to fully utilize in my last job"

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COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

11. How do you work in a team?

Emphasize collaboration, communication and your ability to contribute to a team's success.
"I believe in open communication and collaboration within a team. I actively listen to my teammates, share my insights, and value diverse perspectives. I am adaptable, supportive and always willing to take on tasks that contribute to the team's overall success".

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COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

12. Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

Align your answer with the company's growth and your career goals.

"In five years, I see myself in a more advanced role where I can **contribute to** [specific company initiatives] and **take on** increased responsibilities. I'm **committed to** continuous learning and development, and I believe that by then, I'll have **honed my skills** to make a significant impact in a leadership position within the company."

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COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

13 Do you have any questions you would like to ask us?

Always have a question prepared for the interviewer, as this shows interest in the offer.

"Can you share more details about the team I would be working with?" (This question shows your interest in your potential colleagues and how you might fit into the existing team).

"What are the main challenges or priorities the team is currently facing?" (This question shows your proactive attitude to contribute to overcoming challenges).

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COMMON PHRASAL VERBS

WHEN TALKING ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR EXPERIENCE:

- Take on: accept responsibilities or a role. "In my previous job, I took on the role of team leader, which helped me develop my leadership skills."

- Carry out: perform or complete a task. "I have carried out several projects related to digital marketing and data analysis."

- Work on: put effort into improving something. "I'm currently working on improving my public speaking skills."

- Be in charge of: be responsible for something. "I was in charge of training new employees and managing schedules."

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COMMON PHRASAL VERBS

DESCRIBING SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Come up with:** think of an ideal or solution. "I came up with a new strategy to increase customer engagement."
- **Figure out:** find a solution to a problem. "I had to figure out a way to reduce costs without affecting productivity."
- **Bring in:** introduce or attract. I brought in new clients by improving our social media presence."
- **Keep up with:** stay updated. "I always keep up with the latest industry trends to stay competitive."

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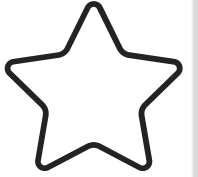
The STAR approach is a structured method for answering behavioural interview questions. Using the STAR approach helps you provide relevant information and demonstrate your skills and abilities through real-life examples. It also allows the interviewer to assess your problem-solving skills, decision-making abilities, and whether you're a good fit for the role based on examples from your past experiences.

STAR stands for:
- **Situation**: describe the context or background of the situation you were in
- **Task**: explain the specific task or goal you were responsible for within that situation
- **Action**: talk about the actions you took to deal with the situation and complete the task
- **Result**: share the outcome of your actions

EXAMPLE

Question: Can you tell me about a recent challenge you faced?

Answer:
- **Situation**: In my previous role, we encountered a significant decrease in customer satisfaction ratings.
- **Task**: My responsibility was to investigate the root causes of this decline and implement strategies to improve satisfaction levels.
- **Action:** I conducted multiple customer surveys, analyzed feedback data, and identified key areas for improvement.
- **Result:** Because of our efforts, we successfully implemented improvements, leading to a noticeable increase in customer satisfaction ratings.

Choose one of the situations and talk about it using the STAR approach (mention: situation, task, action, result).

1. Describe a situation where you had a tight deadline.
2. Tell me about a time when you had to adapt to a significant change at work.
3. Can you recall a time when you had to resolve a conflict between team members?
4. Share an example of when you had to make a difficul decision.
5. Share a recent accomplishment that you're proud of.
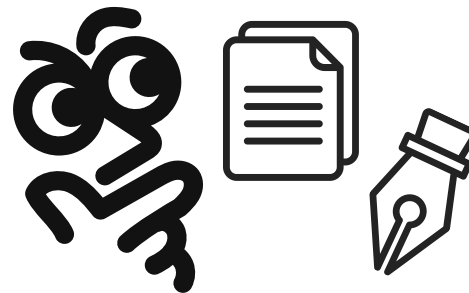
Complete the sentences with the words from the box in the correct form.

align well with - driven by - grasp of - fit for - seek - take on - weigh up

1. Despite working in this area for quite a short time, I believe I already have a strong _____ (understanding of) industry trends.
2. I felt ready to _____ (assume) new responsibilities, but I needed time to do some additional training.
3. After _____ (consider) all the options, I realized I'd reached the point where there was nowhere to grow.
4. I'm always ready to learn but I still check if the role _____ (match) my goals and values.
5. I was simply _____ (look for) opportunities the company couldn't provide.
6. While my experience may be limited, I think I'm a good _____ (suitable for) the role because of my creativity.
7. I was _____ (motivated by) a desire to focus on personal growth when I decided to take such a long break.

Complete the sentences with the words from the box in the correct form.

align well with - driven by - grasp of - fit for - seek - take on - weigh up

1. Despite working in this area for quite a short time, I believe I already have a strong **grasp of** industry trends.
2. I felt ready to **take on** new responsibilities, but I needed time to do some additional training.
3. After **weighing up** all the options, I realized I'd reached the point where there was nowhere to grow.
4. I'm always ready to learn but I still check if the role **aligns well with** my goals and values.
5. I was simply **seeking** opportunities the company couldn't provide.
6. While my experience may be limited, I think I'm a good **fit for** the role because of my creativity.
7. I was **driven by** a desire to focus on personal growth when I decided to take such a long break.