

Talking About Your Job – Video

In this lesson, you can learn how to talk about your job in English. Talking about your job is useful in conversation and professional English. Where do you work? What do you have to do in your job? What kind of company do you work for? In this class, you can learn how to answer questions like this in clear, detailed English.

1. Introducing Your Job

(<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/work-together.webp>)

I'm a _____

I work in _____

I work for _____

How would you complete these sentences?

You could say something like:

I'm a writer. I work in online education. I work for a publishing company.

I work in... is used with a field (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/field.html>), meaning a type of work. So, you can say things like:

I work in finance.

I work in digital marketing.

You can also use *work in* with a place or a department of a company. For example:

I work in the HR department of a financial firm.

I work in a school, teaching modern languages.

Confused? You can see that if you use *work in* (<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/prepositions-to-in-at>) to talk about the type of work you do, you don't use an article like *a* or *the*.

If you use an article *a* or *the* after *work in*, it means you're talking about the place or department where you work.

I work for... is used with a company.

So, you could say:

I'm a salesman. I work for a mobile phone company.

I work for a law firm based in Frankfurt.

I run my own business, so I work for myself.

What can you say? Can you make sentences like this to say something about your job?

Pause the video and try to make a sentence. Say it aloud!

Next, let's add more details to your answer:

2. Describing Your Company

(<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/company.webp>)

I work for a _____ company which _____

Look at this sentence. We need one adjective, and the end of the sentence after *which*. Any ideas?

For the adjectives, think about these ideas: is your company big or small? Local or multinational (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/multinational-corporation>)?

For the part after which, ask yourself: what does your company do? Does it make things, sell things, organise things? Does it provide products, services, or both?

So, you could say:

I work for an international electronics company which makes tablet computers

I work for a German company which does market research for other companies.

I work for Unilever. It's a multinational company which has brands and offices all around the world.

What if you don't work for a company? Here are some things you could say:

I'm a freelancer. -> I work independently, for different people and companies.

I'm self-employed. -> I work for myself, either freelance or I have my own business.

I'm a business owner.

If you don't work, and people ask you what you do, what can you say?

Here are some useful phrases:

I'm between jobs at the moment.

I'm taking some time out to travel/spend time with my kids/write a book/recover from an illness/etc.

I'm retired.

I'm between jobs means that I've left one job, and haven't found another yet. This sounds nicer than saying, "I'm unemployed. (<https://thoughtcatalog.com/kelsey-batschelet/2013/09/7-words-to-use-in-place-of-unemployed/>)"

I'm taking some time out means I'm not working at the moment because I want to focus on something else.

What about you? Do you work for a company? What can you say about it? If you don't work for a company, how would you describe your work situation?

3. How to Describe Your Job in More Detail

Okay, so what do you actually do all day? Let's see how you can describe your job in more detail.

Look at these sentences:

I have to (<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/must-have-to-should>) _____

I'm responsible for _____

Most of my time is spent _____

Let's do some examples together. We'll start with a simple example.

I'm a nurse. I have to look after patients, give them medicine and make sure they're comfortable. I'm responsible for about 20-30 patients. Most of my time is spent talking to patients and checking that everything is okay.

Next, let's do a more detailed example.

I have to design websites to the client's specifications. I'm responsible for the whole design process, so I have to take the client's ideas and turn them into a finished product. Most of my time is spent experimenting with different designs and ideas and seeing what looks good, because attention to detail is important in this kind of work.

Can you say something like this about your job and what you do? Try to add details if you can.

4. Saying How You Feel about Your Job

Now, you can hopefully say something about your job and where you work.

But here's another question: do you like your job? Why or why not?

Hopefully, you enjoy your job! How could you describe a job which you like?

Of course, you could use general adjectives like *good* or *interesting*, but here are some specific adjectives you could use:

Stimulating -> Something which is *stimulating* is exciting and gives you energy.

Satisfying -> Means that your job gives you a sense of achievement.

Creative -> You can use your imagination when you work.

Rewarding -> This means your job gives you very positive feelings. It's often used to talk about jobs in which you help other people. For example, teachers or nurses might describe their jobs as *rewarding*.

Challenging -> *Challenging* can be positive or negative, but if you use it to talk about your job, it would have a positive meaning. It means that your job is difficult, but in an interesting way which makes you think and learn.

What if you don't like your job? Again, you can use general words like *boring* or *difficult*, which are fine but very basic.

If you want to be more creative with your vocabulary, here are some things you could say:

Exhausting -> Describes work which makes you feel very tired, either physically or mentally.

Thankless -> If your work is thankless, no one notices or appreciates what you do.

Mind-numbing -> Extremely boring.

Dead-end -> Describes a job which has no prospects for the future. If you have a dead-end job, you will never get promoted and the job will always be the same.

Soul-destroying -> Describes a job which is extremely unpleasant and boring, and which you really, really hate.

5. How to Make a Longer Answer

At this point, you should be able to introduce your work, say where you work, give details about what you do and say how you feel about your work.

Let's make some longer sample answers together.

First one:

I'm a pharmacist. I started my own small pharmacy, so I'm also a business owner. I have to work as a pharmacist, of course, giving advice to patients and making sure they have the right medicine. However, I'm also responsible for the pharmacy, so I have to manage my staff, do the accounts, and so on. It's stimulating work because I have to do many different things every day, so I never get bored.

Clear? Could you make an answer like this? Let's do one more:

I'm a writer. I work in online education. I work for a big publishing company, which produces different educational materials that are used all around the world. I have to write lesson plans and materials for teachers to use in the classroom. I spend most of my time thinking about how I can make different things fit together into a lesson. It's very challenging work and it can be exhausting, but it's also very creative and satisfying, because I know people all around the world are using lessons which I wrote.

Answers like these are helpful for situations such as job interviews or other types of interviews in English.

Want more practice? Watch this Oxford Online English lesson on job interviews

(<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/english-job-interview>).

Okay, now it's your turn! Try to make a longer answer like this talking about your job. Use the vocabulary and structure from this lesson to help you.

If you want, you can post your answer in the video comments. We'll give you some feedback on your answer.

Thanks very much for watching!