

SKILLS TEST 1

1
Will What are you doing tonight, Jack?
Jack Nothing special. I'm visiting my parents in the afternoon.
Will How's your dad these days? Is he better now?
Jack Yes, he is, thanks. He's feeling fit and well again.
Will And what about you?
Jack Well, actually, I've got a new job. I felt I needed a change after ten years in the same job. Anyway, I'm starting at eight a.m. on Monday.
Will Congratulations! So you're starting tomorrow?
Jack No, I actually meant next Monday – in eight days' time.
Will Well, we should celebrate! How about doing something tonight, say, around nine?
Jack Nine works for me. Do you want to come over for dinner?
Will That would be great!

2
Assistant 1 Can I help you?
Woman I'm just looking, thanks ... Actually, could you tell me where the sports shoes are?
Assistant 1 They're on the second aisle over there.
Woman Excuse me! Do you have these trainers in red?
Assistant 2 I'm afraid they only come in white and pink.
Woman OK, I'd like to try on the pink ones then.
Assistant 2 What size?
Woman I'm usually a size 7 but sometimes I need an 8.
Assistant 2 We don't have them in size 7. Would you like to try the 8?
Woman Yes, please.
Assistant 2 They look great. How do they feel?
Woman Very comfortable ... I think I'll take them!
Assistant 2 Great. You can pay over there at the checkout.

3
Hostess Didn't you like the prawns, David?
Guest No, I'm allergic to shellfish, I'm afraid.
Hostess Oh, sorry, I had no idea. I'll bring the dessert and coffee, then!
Guest That sounds lovely.
Hostess There's apple pie and ice cream – both homemade.
Guest Mmm, delicious!
Hostess How would you like your coffee? Black or white?
Guest Black, no sugar, please. Have you got decaf?
Hostess No, I'm afraid not.
Guest That's OK, regular's fine – it's still early. And I'd love some more mineral water if you've got some.
Hostess No problem. Still or sparkling?
Guest I don't mind. Whichever is cold.
Hostess Here, give me your glass. This is sparkling.
Guest Thanks, Mira. You're a fabulous hostess!

4
Good evening, this is the six o'clock news and here are today's headlines.
Swiss company StraubMeissner announced they have produced a new cancer drug. It will be available for sale as early as 2016.
Three people appeared in court today in connection with last month's theft of three paintings from a local gallery. If they are found guilty, they could face up to five years in prison.

Businessman Patrick Warren became the first person in history to get married in space. The unusual wedding took place on board the International Space Station yesterday morning. And finally, in the Champions League Final, Internazionale beat Barcelona 1–0 by a last-minute goal from veteran defender Zanetti. This was Zanetti's last game for the club.

5
Chris Hi, Sam! Are you leaving already?
Sam Hi, Chris. Yes, I am.
Chris Would you mind giving me a lift into town? My car's out of petrol.
Sam Actually, I'm driving to the airport to pick up a friend and I'm late already. Can I lend you some money for petrol?
Chris Thanks – I've got money but I can't drive to the petrol station with no petrol!
Sam Well, I could drive you to the train station. That's on the way to the airport.
Chris That would be great, thanks.
Sam No problem. But please hurry up. I really must leave now!

SKILLS TEST 2

Reporter Today, in our programme 'Life with a difference', I'm talking to Jason Mitchell. Hello, Jason, thanks for joining us.
Jason My pleasure.
Reporter So, Jason, I understand you're a vegan?
Jason Yes, that's right.
Reporter Does that mean you don't eat any meat or meat products?
Jason Well, it's true I don't eat any meat at all, but vegans are different from vegetarians because we don't eat anything that comes from an animal. That means, no dairy products like milk, butter or cheese, and no eggs, either. Many vegans also avoid using anything made from animal parts – they don't wear leather belts or shoes, for example.
Reporter How did you become a vegan?
Jason Well, I started out as a meat-eater. As a teenager, I loved a burger as much as any of my friends. Then, at university, I became interested in girls ...
Reporter I'm sure you weren't the only one ...
Jason No, I suppose not ... anyway, I became a bit of a fitness fanatic. I exercised in the gym every other day, and I started running in the evenings and cycling at the weekends. Changing my diet was just another part of changing my whole lifestyle to make me fitter and healthier ... and, as I was hoping, more attractive to girls ...
Reporter How did you get started?
Jason I read a lot about vegetarianism, and I decided to try a vegetarian diet for a month, just to see if it suited me.
Reporter And? What happened?
Jason I loved it! It was a lot easier than I'd thought it would be. I just ordered a cheese and tomato pizza instead of a chicken pizza, and I ate a lot more pasta. I didn't lose much weight, but I felt I had a lot more energy than before. At the end of the month, I didn't want to go back to eating meat again.
Reporter When did you make the next step?
Jason I was 24 when I met Anita, who later became my wife. We met at the gym! Anita was a practising vegan and she'd recently run the London Marathon, which really impressed me. I was a runner but I wasn't as strong and fit as she was. Anyway, I decided to try going

vegan and see if I could get fit enough to run the Marathon too.

Reporter So, you didn't become a vegan because of animal rights or to protect the environment?
Jason No, I just wanted to impress the girl I liked! The vegan diet was really hard for me at first. Cutting out cheese omelettes was especially difficult, as that used to be my favourite dish. Anyway, I thought I'd try for a few weeks and see how I coped.
Reporter What else did you give up?
Jason Well, I started using soya milk instead of dairy milk, olive oil instead of butter and so on. Most substitutes are easy to find in supermarkets, and taste just as good as dairy. The only substitute I really don't like is tofu – it tastes like rubber! But going vegan was definitely different from going vegetarian. In the first two weeks, I lost more than four kilos! I also found that I had to eat more, and I often felt hungry.
Reporter What about the Marathon? Did you manage to do that?
Jason Yes, I ran the London Marathon in 2010. Running felt better than before, and I could run faster and run longer distances. For a fitness fanatic, that's a big deal!
Reporter How do you feel if you eat out with friends who aren't vegetarians or vegans?
Jason It doesn't bother me although I notice they feel more uncomfortable eating in front of me. Diet should be your own choice – I chose mine for personal reasons.
Reporter Now, you've recently written a book called *Veg and Two Veg* ...

SKILLS TEST 3

1
Fiona
My husband and I have our own company. Five years ago we bought a baker's shop in town. We borrowed money from the bank and even had to sell our house. We moved into a tiny flat above the shop. It was difficult at the beginning, as we knew very little about baking and even less about being shopkeepers, but we learned the trade little by little and now the business is growing fast. Last year we bought another two small shops in town and we hired trained shop assistants. We both love our work, but we would like to start a family soon, and hopefully in a year or two, there will be kids running around, enjoying the life we have built for them.
2
Jason
I studied electrical engineering at university. When I graduated, I started work at a car factory. It was a well-paid job but very stressful. I had to work long hours and never had a proper holiday. After a couple of years I was fed up. I decided to travel around the world for six months, and when I returned, I found an advertisement online for a trainee electrician. I've always liked fixing things, and I love working on my own, so it suits me perfectly. I don't earn a fortune, but it's enough for me. My parents think I'm a failure, but I'm satisfied with life – I'm happy with what I have.
3
Peter
My parents wanted me to become a lawyer and earn good money. Well, my life turned out very differently. In my last year at university, I met my wife Bori, who's Hungarian. She always told me

Hungary was a welcoming society but when I first arrived there, I must admit it was quite a culture shock. I didn't speak a word of Hungarian and Bori had to help with the simplest things. But one thing I can do is speak English, so I decided to start an English school. At the moment, I'm the only teacher, but I know success will come. I intend to stay and make Hungary my home, so I'm not going to give up!

4 Donna

When I was a teenager, I dreamed about becoming a cycling world champion one day. I trained hard and never had a day off. Then I had an accident when I was 22. I was riding fast in the pouring rain, when I slipped and fell. I had an operation and then physiotherapy, but I think I already knew my sporting career was over. I became depressed and I had to get professional help to get over it. But I have learnt to accept it and these days I work as a sports consultant – I help other sportspeople deal with bad times and to set new goals for the future. It's not how I imagined my life would be, but at least I'm helping others so they don't have to suffer alone.

5 Chris

I spend most of my life in restaurants so I don't enjoy eating out that much. Sometimes I feel jealous of food critics – they're paid to eat the food even if they don't enjoy it. Perhaps I should have been a critic, too! I work at a beach café in Ibiza during the summers – I serve breakfast, lunch, dinner, drinks, you name it ... Out of season when the café's closed, I have a second job in a restaurant in Cambridge. But I always look forward to the summer because that means I can go back to Ibiza again. There's nothing I don't know about being a waiter – that's what I've been doing all my life. And I think it's a great way to earn a living.

SKILLS TEST 4

1
Caller Hello, can I speak to Mr Roger Wilson, please?
PA I'm afraid he's not in. May I take a message?
Caller Could you tell me when he'll be back?
PA He's expected back in the office on the 21st.
Caller Oh, I didn't realize he was away this week.
PA Yes, he's travelling on business. Would you like to leave a message for him?
Caller No, thanks, I think I'll try his mobile later.
PA Do you know the number?
Caller Yes, I do.
PA Shall I tell him that you called if he rings?
Caller No, I'll catch him later. Thanks. Bye!

2
Nick Where were you? I've been waiting for two hours!
Sean Hi, Nick! Sorry I'm late. I had to take Angie to hospital this afternoon.
Nick What? Is she all right?
Sean Well, she's OK, but they had to do an ultrasound scan.
Nick That sounds serious! I hope she's not ill.
Sean Erm ... it's not that. Well, Nick, it looks like I'm going to be a father soon!
Nick Wow! That's fantastic news! Let me get you a drink ... we should celebrate!
Nick Here's to your new baby! Cheers!
Sean Cheers! OK, now tell me your news ...
Nick Well, it's not as exciting as a new baby, but ...

3
DE 1 Hello, Directory Enquiries, Alistair speaking, how can I help?
Caller Oh, hi ... I'd like the number for Sterling Travel in Camford.
DE 1 Could you hold the line, please?
DE 2 Hello, Directory Enquiries, Jonathan speaking, how can I help?
Caller Oh, hello ... actually, I just spoke to another operator ... Never mind. I'm trying to get hold of Sterling Travel in Camford.
DE 2 OK, sir. The number is 01685 988 766.
Caller Oh, I've tried that, and it doesn't work.
DE 2 Have you tried 01685 988 767 as well?
Caller No, I haven't. Can you repeat that, please?
DE 2 0-1-6-8-5 9-8-8-7-6-7. I can put you through now, if you like.
Caller Yes, please. Thank you.
DE 2 It's ringing for you now.

4
Kelly Hi ... sorry, you're Patrick, aren't you, Patrick Mulligan?
Patrick Yes, I am ...
Kelly I'm Kelly Davies, you know, from Delmont School?
Patrick Kelly! Hi! It's been ages ... How are you?
Kelly Great, great. I'm married now, of course ...
Patrick Yes? Any kids?
Kelly No. You?
Patrick No, no kids. Not married, either.
Kelly You haven't changed a bit, Patrick.
Patrick Well, you look different! You haven't always been blonde, have you?
Kelly No, not when we were at school together. But listen, I thought you were living in New York now ... How long have you been back in Britain?
Patrick I'm only visiting, actually. I came over for my sister's wedding ... Goodness, is that the time? I'm sorry, I've got to rush. Give me a ring tomorrow or Friday if you're free and maybe we could go for a coffee ... Here's my business card ...
Kelly OK, will do! Bye!

5
Reporter So, Steve – congratulations! That was a great show!
Steve Thanks. We had a great time ... the fans were amazing!
Reporter You're doing a European Tour soon, aren't you?
Steve Yes, we're in Germany in April, then we're doing a couple of shows in Scandinavia, then Hungary, Italy ...
Reporter Are you doing any shows in Britain?
Steve Yes, we're coming back to the UK to play at a festival. We're working with a symphony orchestra.
Reporter Wow! What kind of music are you going to play?
Steve Well ... we're planning to play famous classical composers' work – and add our own hard-rock flavour to the mix.
Reporter That sounds interesting! Can you buy tickets yet?
Steve No, tickets are going on sale from the 15th of May, and the festival takes place at the end of August.
Reporter Well, you must be really tired now ... thanks for talking to us, Steve.
Steve My pleasure. And don't forget August! See you there!

SKILLS TEST 5

Once upon a time there was a rabbit in Africa. He was walking by the river in the savannah one morning when he met a lion. The lion was sitting comfortably in the grass, doing absolutely nothing. 'What are you doing today, lion?' asked the rabbit. 'I'm building a house fit for a king. It's going to be the most amazing house in the world,' replied the lion.

'That sounds exciting!' said the rabbit. 'Can I help?' 'I have an idea. Why don't you get started while I'm having some breakfast? I'll join in later.'

So, the rabbit started gathering the building materials together while the lion had some homemade cereal with mango juice (he was a vegetarian lion, you see).

When the lion finished breakfast, he said to the rabbit, 'I think I'll need to be fit and strong to do the work, rabbit, so I'll do some exercise now. Please carry on with the building until I get back.'

The rabbit built the foundations for the house. In the meantime, the lion raced around and around the savannah. When he returned, he said to the rabbit, 'Phew, I'm exhausted. I think I'll need to lie down for a bit. Would you mind doing the walls? If you need me, I'll be over there.'

'Well, actually ...' started the rabbit patiently but the lion wasn't listening. The lion slept for an hour, two hours, three, then four. When he woke up, the walls of the house were already standing.

'Wow, that's incredible,' the lion said.

'Yes, beautiful, isn't it?' replied the rabbit.

'Goodness, is that the time?', the lion said. 'I think it's time for lunch. Oh, sorry, I have no manners! What about you, rabbit – would you like a biscuit or something?'

'Well, actually ...' started the rabbit, but the lion quickly said, 'Perhaps later, when we've finished the roof. It might rain in the afternoon.'

So, the lion ate his lunch while the rabbit put up the roof and started working on the doors and windows. Finally, the lion finished and walked back to the rabbit again.

'Listen, rabbit. I'm feeling a bit sick. I think I ate too much. I'll go to the chemist's to get some pills. Do you need anything?'

'Well, actually ...' started the rabbit, but the lion was already gone.

When he returned, the sun had already set and it was getting dark. The house stood proudly and magnificently by the river.

'How wonderful!' shouted the lion. 'Just in time before I have to go to bed. I'm so tired after working all day long! Good night, rabbit! So nice of you to help.'

'Well, actually ...' started the rabbit, but the lion quickly said, 'Of course, you can come and visit any time you want, rabbit. Have a safe journey home!' And with that, the lion shut the door and turned off the lights inside.

The moral of the story? Be careful who you work for – they might not be as grateful as they should be!