

THE GOLDEN CALL



CARMEN LÓPEZ

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*Dedicated to all those who dream of spreading their wings
and who I hope will do so very soon with this book.*

1.- PREFACE

In Barcelona, at 6 am on a Sunday and just six weeks after the dreaded final interview, my mobile phone rang and a very long number starting with + 971 showed on my phone screen... My heart started beating hard and I jumped out of bed thinking what I should say. A mix of emotions and feelings was going through my mind and suddenly I started to sweat and have chills. Is it my *Golden Call*?

– ... Yes? (I did not remember how to answer a call in English and in those moments of tension, I literally translated it from Spanish).

– *Good morning, am I speaking to Carmen López?* –on the other end, a man with a deep voice and a marked Arabic accent spoke to me.

– *Yes, it's me* – At that moment something in me said that this call would mean good news and a change of direction in my life.

– *Good morning, I am Hussain calling from the HR department of Emirates airline and I am very happy to announce to you that you have been successful for the job of Cabin Crew and we would like you to join us on the 1st November. Is it OK for you?* – I was so nervous that I wasn't sure I had understood what he was saying...

– *1st November? Sure, sure!* – Because of my nerves and that it was barely 6 in the morning, I couldn't speak properly.

– Perfect, so I will be sending you via e-mail all the documents that we need from your side for your on boarding. *Mabrouk* Carmen, you are coming to Dubai!

I couldn't believe it! I had been selected to fly as Cabin Crew for Emirates! I wanted to jump and shout but it was too early in the morning and I didn't want to wake up my family with the "good news" that I would go for a few years far, far away...

2.- INTRODUCTION

Who has not dreamed with the idea of starting a new life from scratch, in a city where you don't have to worry about paying bills and where, on top of that, you “get paid to travel the world”?

During my eight years working as Cabin Crew and as a Recruiter for Emirates, I had the opportunity to see not less than 63 countries on 5 continents. And I'm not counting the destinations in which we could not get off the plane... Having visited 63 countries is a real madness, considering that there are currently 194 sovereign countries (countries recognized by the UN with self-government and complete independence) around the world. So in less than 30 years, I had visited almost a third of the planet. Through my social platforms and on a daily basis, I receive messages from boys and girls all over the world asking me what they can do to get a job at Emirates. I can feel it is a dream for them and they would do anything to work there. It never ceases to amaze me how a company can generate so much expectation. I would dare say that the desire to work for Emirates is stronger than the one to work for Google. Trying to analyze the different reasons why people wanted to work for Emirates and not for another Middle Eastern airline with similar conditions, benefits and destination network, I decided to ask my Instagram followers about their personal reason why they would want to work for Emirates and not for another company. And this is what they answered:

"Because it is the best airline in the world"

"Because Emirates looks for excellence in everything they do and I like challenges"

"It is a great opportunity to grow and learn on a personal and professional level"

"If I want to be the best Cabin Crew, what better way than to receive training from the best airline"

"Because I have always felt the need to be the best and to be with the best"

"It is the dream of my life"

The reasons that my IG followers mentioned were truly overwhelming. They spoke about dreams, about personal and professional growth and ultimately, they considered Emirates to be the best airline in the world. I also remember that in one of my coaching sessions where I help people to get a Cabin Crew job, a boy who was already flying for Qatar Airways still wanted to work for Emirates and was even willing to pay the fine at his current airline for breaking the contract and start a career with Emirates. I was extremely surprised that someone who was already working for a Middle Eastern airline which has a similar culture, religion, benefits and destinations, still wanted to join Emirates and was willing to do anything for it. But what does Emirates have that the others don't? Is it true that it is the best airline in the world?

I decided to check Skytrax statistics to see which airlines had been awarded “best airline in the world” and in fact, Emirates had received that award on several occasions. However, it had only obtained the recognition four times, the last one being in 2016. Companies that have won the most awards for best airline were Singapore Airlines, Cathay Pacific and Qatar Airways. But even with less recognition, Emirates was the airline most desired by everyone. So how did Emirates come to be the airline of choice for all aspiring Cabin Crew members? Why have Emirates Open Days become the most popular recruitment events in the world? Is all this phenomenon a marketing product created by the company itself or was it by chance? What does Emirates have that the others don’t? So I continued my analysis to understand why Emirates was so popular and, considering the option that perhaps aspiring Cabin Crew members might have “too high” expectations of what it would be like to work for it and live in Dubai, I decided to ask people who had already worked there and who, like me, had already lived the experience. For that, I joined a closed Facebook group in which all the participants are former Emirates Cabin Crew and I asked them about their experience in Emirates. Their answers were also amazing:

“Emirates gave me everything I have. I met my Emirati husband when he was at Training College. After 22 years, I am still here happily married with four children”

“Working for Emirates has been an opportunity to change, to learn and to know myself, in ways I had never thought I would”

“Emirates and Dubai were my first experience abroad, and the people I met, the experiences I had and the things I learned while I was there changed me as a person by opening my mind and pushing me to be strong during bad times, knowing how to appreciate the good ones”

“Emirates gave me some of my closest friends and brought me closer to who my husband is now”

“They were the best years of my life! Emirates was a before and after in my life. I wouldn't have expanded my mind and worldview if I had stayed home!”

“It was and amazing experience. I made great friends, lived in a big city, travelled all over the world... I became a better person thanks to that experience and it made me see the world with different eyes”

“I am very grateful for this great experience. Emirates changed my life. And it happened at the right time. Shukran, Emirates, for all the wonderful people I met working as a Cabin Crew member”

In 2011, Emirates received 112,235 job applications for the Cabin Crew role of which only 9,637 were interviewed and finally 3,372 candidates from 56 countries and 84 cities were selected. It is impressive how a company receives more than 100,000 job applications each year for a single role, and these figures are not including applications from pilots, airport personnel, main office, etc. Perhaps because Emirates was the first airline in the Middle East, because it is located in the attractive city of Dubai or because of the

millions of dirhams that the airline invests in advertising, but it is clear that the airline does not leave anyone cold and, seeing these numbers, it makes sense that in the face of such a demand, "the best airline in the world" wants to have "the best Cabin Crew in the world" flying their majestic planes to continue generating more desire and turning their Open Days into a real social phenomenon.

I am aware that I am blessed to have worked for so many years in Emirates as Cabin Crew, Cabin Supervisor, Image Hostess and Recruiter. And I don't have *special powers*, I don't speak five languages nor am I a professional model... If you are interested in knowing how I got the job and what my own experience in the United Arab Emirates was like, in my previous book *Life After Dubai* I explain my journey in detail. Truth is that without me knowing it when I first applied, I had the qualities and the profile that Emirates seeks for its employees. And surely many of you will wonder: what is the secret to join Emirates? Why do so few people get the desired Golden Call? Is it a matter of luck or is there something else?

It is true that when we have an interview, luck is also something that could exert a positive influence when it comes to having a good environment with your colleagues or chemistry with your Recruiter. However, and although it may disappoint some of you, *luck* does not fit into the Emirates equation in their recruitment processes. And that is why there are candidates who, despite having invested a lot of time and money attending countless Open Days, never go beyond the first stage. The objective of this book is undoubtedly to help you get the job of your dreams by

explaining what the recruitment process consists of and detailing what exactly Recruiters are looking for in each phase. In addition, I will be mixing theoretical elements of human resources with real examples of past situations that I have been able to observe through my more than 140 Open Days in which I have been responsible for the selection of Cabin Crew in Australia, South Korea, Tunisia, Malta, Greece , the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, France, Spain, Paraguay, USA, United Arab Emirates, Moldova and Portugal.

There's a lot to talk about, so “*sit back, relax and enjoy your flight*”.

3.- WHY IS CABIN CREW RECRUITMENT SO IMPORTANT?

Flying for an airline is the dream of many aspiring Cabin Crew wannabes but it can also be a nightmare for some people who, as consequence of having failed many recruitment processes, end up abandoning their dream of becoming a Flight Attendant. And although it could seem that an airline recruitment process could be similar to the one of any other company that also does massive recruitment, crew selection is much more complex due to safety and security regulations and, of course, its high demand.

There are still many people out there who believe that Flight Attendants are just waiters on board and that their duties and responsibilities are limited to offering food and drinks and embarking and disembarking passengers with a super big smile. But what happens when something outside the "normal" occurs? Who are scared passengers looking at when there is turbulence? Who is responsible for organizing an evacuation in an emergency? Who is responsible for putting out a fire on board? Who are you going to ask for help when your child has choked with a candy? Or when your mother has a heart attack? A doctor? It is at that precise moment that they remember about the Cabin Crew on board. Having said that, let me remind you that although Cabin Crew are indeed serving food and drinks on board with a big smile, their main responsibility

is to ensure the safety of the passengers and the aircraft. Furthermore, the crew on board are “key players” when it comes to air passenger transport. In fact, Spanish Law says that one crew member is required for every fifty passengers on a commercial flight. If there aren’t enough Cabin Crew to operate it, there is no flight, simple. It is true that serving tea and coffee and making passengers comfortable are also an important part of their job description. However, the Cabin Crew must always be on the alert to prevent any emergency situation that might arise on board. Flight Attendants are responsible for checking that the emergency equipment located on their assigned areas are working before each flight. In the event of an emergency, the crew on board have specific drills to perform as a team and they must be prepared to be firefighters when a fire has to be put out, doctors when it is necessary to practice cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or psychologists when a passenger has a panic attack, amongst others. And all these roles must be included within the same person, in addition to the fact that the Cabin Crew must have a pleasant appearance, smile even if they have only slept for three hours and be able to adapt to any situation or unforeseen event.

Cabin Crew members are also exposed to various risk factors on a daily basis that affect the progressive loss of capacities, amongst which are those linked to the atmospheric pressure of the work environment, thermohygrometric conditions, noise, vibrations, cosmic radiation, biological agents, the physical load and a lot of psychosocial factors. And these can lead to a significant deterioration in health in the long term, as well as

premature aging. For example, Flight Attendants, as well as pilots, suffer rapid pressure changes at each take off and landing, a situation that in the case of low-cost companies can occur up to four or six times a day. But despite all that, the Cabin Crew role is excluded from the “dangerous professions list” in the Spanish Social Security.

Most airlines spend lots of time and money finding the best Cabin Crew to fly their aircrafts. In a Cabin Crew selection process, Recruiters look for those candidates who believe they can better represent the airline, act efficiently in an emergency and develop excellent service on board. Through group and/or individual interviews, Recruiters analyze whether candidates have the skills required for the role through the various tests that comprise a selection process. But if attending a recruitment process for an airline is difficult, attending one at Emirates is even more. But just because it's difficult, it doesn't mean it's impossible. With the information that you will find in this book and with lots of preparation from your side, you will surely be closer to fulfilling your dream.

Although I focus on the Emirates recruitment process since it is where I have worked as Cabin Crew and as a Recruiter, in this book you will also find the guidelines to understand how recruitment in any airline or company works. You will also know why each of the tests is required and how you should face them to obtain the desired job. We could say that the methodology used by Emirates to select its employees is one of the most complete and structured at the moment, if not the best. Emirates have been the first airline to make “its famous Open Days” and over the years

we have seen how the rest of the airlines and other companies have gradually copied its model. Since I returned from Dubai, I have had the opportunity to work in HR in a few different companies and I must say, I was shocked to see how some companies still use very unprofessional and subjective methods to select their staff. Unfortunately, there are still some companies where a good selection of personnel is neither valued nor invested in, disregarding that recruiting and keeping a good employee will always be the best asset for the company. But the most important thing to remember is that even if you are disqualified from a recruitment process, you should not get discouraged but you ought to try to reflect on what the reason was, in order to improve for the next time you apply. It is also important to attend different recruitment events to gain experience and understand what to expect. Sometimes we could be so overwhelmed by the amount of people who attend that we feel insecure. Even I had been unsuccessful in two airlines, even though I successfully passed the Emirates Open Day the first time I went. But think about this: if I had not been ruled out in those previous selection processes, maybe I would have never applied to Emirates as I would have been working comfortably as a Flight Attendant in any of those airlines. And because "everything happens for a reason."

4.- THE BEGINNING OF RECRUITMENT IN AVIATION

Although many people assume that the first Flight Attendants were females, truth is that in 1911 the first people to be Cabin Crew were men and not women, and these were called cabin boys. Heinrich Kubis went down in history as the first Cabin Crew member in aviation. He was Cabin Manager (leading a team of 10 to 15 cooks and butlers) and he had 72 passengers under his responsibility. He served onboard several Zeppelins and he was working aboard the *Hindenburg* the day it caught fire. Kubis encouraged the passengers and the rest of the crew to jump from the windows and later he jumped himself at the moment when the plane was about to crash to the ground.

Between 1928 and 1929, the companies Western Airlines and Pan American World Airways were the first to hire male personnel, whose sole function was to serve food and drink on board their planes. What originally began as a job reserved exclusively for men, then it went through another stage in which the opposite occurred. In 1930, Ellen Church, thanks to her determination, became the first Flight Attendant in history. Nurse by profession, Ellen was also passionate about aviation, and one day she decided to approach the airline Boeing Air Transport in search of a job. After several interviews with the airline leaders, Ellen suggested the idea that nurses could be the most suitable auxiliary crew, as in the event of a pilot incapacitation they

could provide the most appropriate medical attention and the best assistance to passengers in case of motion sickness or fear of flying. The leaders of Boeing Air Transport, although initially hesitant about the idea of a woman flying regularly due to hormonal alterations derived from the menstrual period, they thought it would be a very good idea and they ended up hiring eight nurses called "The Original Eight" or "The Sky Girls" including Ellen herself.

The new Flight Attendants would soon become a key player in the aeronautical industry, and the first selection processes began. The nurses, apart from being highly qualified in medical matters, had to be single, under 25 years of age and had to have a minimum height of 1.60 meters and a maximum weight of 52 kilos. However, after the Second World War, the requirement to be a nurse started fading and the airlines gradually began to hire a more general profile. In Spain it was not until 1946 that the first commercial flight with air hostesses was made. To understand how the recruitment processes were at that time and how it has evolved since its inception, we spoke with Elvira, who was selected by Iberia in 1968. Elvira remembered that at that time, the minimum requirements to become a Flight Attendant with Iberia were already quite demanding, since you had to be between 18 and 24 years old, measure between 1.60 and 1.78 meters tall, be able to swim, do not wear glasses or contact lenses, have a minimum education, have a good physical presence and above all, be able to speak English. If you had all the requirements that the airline requested you in advance through their job advert, they would then invite you to a face-to-face interview at their main office in Velázquez

Street, Madrid. Before starting the selection process, the Iberia Recruiters made themselves sure that you had the minimum height by measuring you as soon as you entered the room. If you were taller than 1.60 meters, you could then continue with the rest of the tests on that day. The next stage was the English exam and if you were also successful, you would then go straight to the personal interview. Back then, the interview was really intimidating: the board of interviewers consisted of six people who were seated in a round table facing a chair where the candidate would sit and would be located in the center of a massive room. The questions weren't very difficult, but the fact that six people were analyzing all your movements made you feel really uncomfortable, as Elvira remembers. If you were successful, they would call you after a few days and assign you a training date. Elvira recalls how she was part of the first batch of Flight Attendants in Iberia. She is now 75 years old and despite hanging her wings years ago, she still has a sparkle on her eyes when she speaks about her years as a Flight Attendant and remembers how lucky she was.

But on the other side of the Atlantic, the airline recruitment processes were even more demanding and exclusive. In 1986, Pelusa was selected by Líneas Aéreas Paraguayas and at that time the airline belonged to the government, so they would operate military flights only. Pelusa recalls that on her interview day, the Recruiters checked her height, weight and her physical presence in addition to the fact that it was mandatory to know how to swim. English was also a minimum requirement, but a basic level was enough. Pelusa also points out that some of the girls seemed even runway models. The selection process also consisted of a

personal interview where questions such as "why would you like to fly with us" or "for how long would you like to be Cabin Crew" were asked. In LAP, playing sports was valued in such a way that even during the extensive three-month training, they had to play sports four times a week. However, the airline closed in 1994 and Pelusa was again selected in the Ecuadorian LAPSA / SAETA, which later became TAM and from TAM to the current LATAM, where she currently continues flying.

As we have seen, since we started having Cabin Crew recruitment processes, airlines have had mandatory role requirements that, if you wish to become a Cabin Crew member, you need to comply with. Many of those are still compulsory and kept in many airlines if you want to apply for a Cabin Crew role, such as having good appearance or being in good physical shape, being able to swim or having a minimum height of 1.60 meters. Fortunately, other requirements somewhat more restrictive and "sexists", such as being less than 25 years old, have been modified over the years. However, we do observe that most airlines have changed the way of recruiting their staff over time, although some airlines still prefer to do one-to-one interviews as an evaluation method instead of carrying out mass recruitment events, which are more cost-effective and practical to evaluate competencies. In the next chapter we will analyze the Emirates recruitment process from its inception to the present moment and find out if they were the first to have the famous "Open Days".

5.- THE EMIRATES RECRUITMENT PROCESS OVER THE YEARS

In March 1985, Maurice Flanagan (founding CEO of Emirates) was entrusted with the mission of creating an airline in 6 months with a budget of 10 million dollars. They told him that the airline “had to look good, be good and make money.” And as you know, the rest is history.

How did the Emirates Cabin Crew recruitment process look like at the beginning? Did they already carry out Open Days back in the 80s, or were there also one-to-one interviews, as in the case of Iberia or Líneas Aéreas Paraguayas? To analyze how the Emirates recruitment process has evolved over time, I decided to reconnect with former Emirates Cabin Crew through a closed Facebook group.

The first Cabin Crew selection process ever was organized in 1986, just a year after Emirates was founded as an airline. According to Mohammed, the way to select future Cabin Crew at that time was already complex if we compare it with that of other airlines in which only a personal interview was carried out to assess whether a candidate was suitable or not. At that time, Cabin Crew recruitment was held only in Dubai and consisted of two face-to-face interviews as well as an arm reach test. The first interview was carried out with the HR department and if successful, the second interview was with the Inflight Service Department. Despite the fact that the recruitment process

was entirely in English, there were no other ways to assess your English level. Since Emirates wasn't still traveling to recruit their Cabin Crew, the nationalities hired to fly with the airline were basically all nationalities residing in Dubai, such as India, Egypt, Pakistan or Bangladesh. However, in 1986 the minimum requirements to fly for Emirates were very similar to the ones that we have now.

In 1993 and according to Marion, Emirates began to hold the first mass recruitment events with prior invitation. Apart from Dubai, the city chosen to host the first international recruitment event was London, where Marion attended. It should be noted that the relationship between Dubai and Great Britain has many years of history, since from 1766, Great Britain took control of the routes that linked them to the Persian Gulf and since then, Dubai became a protectorate of the British government, a situation that would prevail for almost two centuries. But going back to the main topic, when the first "off-base" events began to take place, the Emirates recruitment team realized that the airline was not as popular in Europe as it was in the Middle East, because of a certain "aversion" caused by the location of the job, as it was in an Arab country. It was then that they decided to include a short presentation of the airline and Dubai before starting the recruitment process, where they would explain how fabulous and glamorous life in Dubai would be for a Briton Emirates crew member, as well as some bits and pieces about Muslim religion. Being able to live in the sunny and hot city of Dubai was also a good "hook" for Britons who wanted to escape the British cold, according to Marion. As a new feature to the two face-to-face interviews, Emirates

Recruiters began to check visible tattoos on candidates as an essential part to continue in the process. So we can say that in 1993 started the first recruitment events as we know them now.

Towards the year 1996, the Emirates recruitment processes began to be carried out in other Anglo-Saxon countries, such as Ireland. Heather points out that the format they were using at that time was already quite similar to what we know today: the presentation included videos of Emirates and Dubai, individual interviews were based on previous experiences and they asked for formal full-length photographs. However, and although the recruitment events already included around 100 attendees, group interviews were not yet carried out and participants continued to require prior invitation from the agency that worked for Emirates, located in London.

But it wasn't until 1997 that Emirates began to hold their first international Open Days worldwide as we know them today, where Recruiters would travel to different cities around the world to recruit Cabin Crew. The events didn't require invitation and candidates could introduce themselves with their CV. The Open Days already consisted of eliminatory phases and as now, you would only pass on to the next stage if you had been successful in the previous one. In countries where English wasn't the first language, Recruiters would also add English tests as part of the process. It should also be noted that at that time and unlike now, previous experience as Cabin Crew was highly valued and they would invite you directly to the final interview, without having to do the other tests.

Over the next years, the airline continued to use the Open Day and Assessment Day formats to select its Cabin Crew in more than 150 countries. But because of the great global economic recession that took place during 2009-2010 and to avoid making collective redundancies to its employees, the Airline Management decided for the first time in Emirates' history to 'freeze' the entire selection of staff and, consequently, cancel all Open Days scheduled in all cities around the world. This situation lasted for a couple of years until fortunately, everything was reset again. The next major crisis that Emirates suffered was in 2016, due to the sudden increase in the price of oil and the enormous losses that this had caused the eastern airline. The company was consequently forced to suspend recruitment as it was in a rather dire financial situation and although the recruiting team was unable to say when they would start hiring again, they did announce that changes would be made to the recruiting process. During this no-interview period, the company only accepted online applications from which candidates would later be selected for video interviews. The chosen ones, in turn, would be invited to attend future Assessment Days in person. Emirates launched the new recruiting process in early 2018, when the airline's management gave the "green light" to start hiring again. However, the new model brought too many technical issues, and while Recruiters managed to hold a few invite-only evaluation days, they soon reverted to the old open-house recruiting approach.

With the Expo taking place in Dubai, 2020 was destined to be a great year for Emirates and for the city of Dubai. They had been preparing it for several years, and it was going to

be a new opportunity to promote and present the Emirati hub to the rest of the world and consequently, increase visibility, gain more tourism and generate more employment and income. Emirates also started the year with a multitude of Open Days on its agenda and a selection forecast of thousands of candidates from all over the world. But unfortunately, the new virus from Wuhan started the year by sweeping the planet. Covid-19 has caused one of the most serious crises that we know of in the air sector since the terrorist attacks of September 11th, causing all airlines to leave a large part of their fleet and their Cabin Crew on the ground and consequently, stop recruiting.

But truth is that until we put the pandemic situation to an end, the future of Emirates, recruitment processes and the aviation industry in general is a bit uncertain. We are living one of the darkest times in aviation, in which probably only the big airlines will survive. We can't do more than stay positive and optimistic and take this opportunity to prepare for our future. Aviation is cyclical and as in all crises, sooner or later it will end and the Cabin Crew job demand will be higher than the job offer. With this book you will get to know each and every one of the details of "the most famous and mysterious" recruitment process in the world, analyzing the reasons behind each stage and, most importantly, how the interviews are evaluated from the other side of the table.

6.- OPEN DAY vs ASSESSMENT DAY

Many people still get confused with what an Open Day and an Assessment Day is. The Open Day is an event in which no prior registration is required, and where Flight Attendants are recruited on a massive scale. Open Days are a fantastic opportunity for Cabin Crew applicants from around the world to present their resumés and photos in person to the airline's recruitment team. On the other hand, the "Assessment Day" is a massive recruitment event in which you must be previously invited through your online registration, as the initial CV screening is held online.

Open Days and Assessment Days can be organized in Dubai or in hotel convention rooms around the world. But one thing you most probably don't know is that whether the event will be open to the public or not is not a random choice at all. The Emirates recruitment process is carefully planned to be time-effective and cost-efficient. Another important part of the selection strategy is to determine where the recruitment events will be held. Apart from the obvious cities where there is a direct flight to Dubai or a plan to do so, there are also other demographic, political, geographical, volume, cultural or historical parameters that serve to analyze which the best locations are to recruit Cabin Crew. The frequency to recruit on selected locations isn't a random choice either. An example would be the Spanish cities of Barcelona or Madrid, where there weren't

any direct flights and Flight Attendants were only selected once or twice a year. But instead, when the daily routes were launched, the frequency of Open Days in Spain increased considerably to the point of having recruiting events every month, and not only in Barcelona and Madrid, but also in other cities in the country.

To determine if an Assessment Day or an Open Day should be carried out in a certain city for the first time, demographic figures were taken into consideration or, in another words, they checked if the number of young residents was enough to have a large amount of candidates attending the event. However, when we went to a new location in which we did not have previous data to compare with what would work best, an Open Day was usually held. The “rule” that we had in place was: if approximately 100 people attended an Open Day and there was only a Recruiter on site, the Open Day and the Assessment Day would take place on the same day. On the other hand, if there were more than 150 attendees, we had to divide the event in two days to better control the volume and evaluate candidates efficiently: CV collection on the first day and group interviews on the second. Another important aspect to mention in determining whether it was more feasible to carry out an OD or an AD was the “quality” of the candidates. In cities where it was observed, thanks to previous data, that the Open Day was attended by more than 1000 candidates but only a small percentage of candidates were selected for the next day's tests, the option of hiring a local agency to carry out the first initial screening was considered, in order to optimize the process and to make sure that the candidates who would attend the

event would have the minimum requirements to participate. An example of cities where agencies were used would be: Seoul, Bogotá, Tunis, Moscow, Sao Paulo, etc.

During mass recruitment events, Recruiters are watching candidates even before the day starts. That is why it is extremely important that candidates remain professional even in places where they believe that they are not being watched, such as restrooms. I remember that more than once I overheard bathroom conversations in which candidates were planning to lie about something on their profile such as tattoos. That is why it is important that you take care of every detail that may influence the Recruiter's decision to hire you or not: speaking with other candidates in your native language, arriving late after a break or yawning in the middle of a group activity could be key factors that will definitely play against you when it comes to being selected for the next phase. The issue of punctuality, for example, is one of the most important points that Recruiters check throughout the day and there is a reason behind: when you are Cabin Crew, you can't be late for your flight because the aircraft will never wait for you. But in Emirates, for instance, you won't go straight to the aircraft as you will need to report two hours and a half before the flight, in order to have the briefing with the rest of the crew. If you are late 30 seconds of your scheduled reporting time, the gate doors won't open (as they work with your finger prints) and you will be removed from the flight, marked as "absent" in your roster with a salary deduction and maybe your Manager will call you to have a "nice" chat about it. In addition to that, airplanes have a stipulated time to take off at each airport (known as "slot

time") which, if not met, causes delays and economic losses for the airline. Therefore, in a selection process, always be there before time, even when you return from a break. That will denote that you are a disciplined person that knows how to work around schedules and if recruited as a Cabin Crew member, the airline can trust you won't be late.

The Emirates recruitment events have a few stages where you only get to the next one if you have been successful and invited to do so. Besides this, Recruiters don't provide any kind of feedback on what has been the reason of your rejection. On top of that, the recruitment events are extremely long days where we have to control fatigue. Whether it is an OD or an AD, nerves can surface and they can be our greatest enemy, as even if we are a good candidate for the airline, being nervous or stressed can block us from speaking or we can even forget to smile, which could lead Recruiters to think that we don't have emotional control and we cannot cope with unexpected situations. We need to bear in mind that even if we are tired or nervous, we need to stay positive and calm, smile and enjoy the day. If after a day full of activities you do not smile and look stressed and tired, most likely you will not smile to your passengers if you haven't slept the night before or if you have a four-hour delay flight... Remember that Recruiters, through these types of events, will be visualizing you as if you were already Cabin Crew inside the aircraft through your every move.

7.- THE CURRICULUM VITAE

As a candidate, whether we apply online through the website of an airline or if we take our resume to a face-to-face recruiting event, it is extremely important that it is well prepared and that we give the importance it deserves, since it will be the first element that Recruiters will consider in order to assess whether or not our profile fits into the organization.

The curriculum vitae is the set of studies, merits, awards and experience that a person has developed or obtained throughout their professional and academic life. It is the document intended to present, in a single place, all the information that may be relevant in a selection process. It is also our letter of introduction to a potential job and it is ultimately what will represent and define us in the face of a job opportunity. It is very important to take the making of a good curriculum in a serious way, as the main objective is to awaken interest in the Recruiter who is managing the selection process and to "stand out" from the rest of the candidates who have applied for the same position. Therefore, if you don't feel confident organizing the most relevant data and highlighting in your CV what makes you a good fit as a candidate into the company so that it goes to "the screened candidates folder", it is worth delegating this task to an HR professional as your resume will be the first step that will make the difference when it comes to getting a job as a Flight Attendant in an airline. As a matter of fact,

I can give you support with your curriculum and interview preparation if you contact me through my website www.larecruiter.es. Note: there is a “translate into English” option available.

When preparing your resume, it is essential that you enhance your skills, experience, strengths and goals achieved, making sure the document is concise and reflects reality. Generally speaking, it shouldn't be more than a page if you only have a couple of years' experience and it should not exceed two pages if you are senior. Another important fact to remember when writing your CV is to make sure it's written with the job you are applying for in mind. Using an old resume that was used for another job most probably won't enhance the skills and qualities that the airline is looking for and that you surely have. This is why we need to present our skills and experience in a smart way for the reader. The main objective of a resume is to attract attention at first glance, as well as to demonstrate through our skills, experience and training that we are the best candidate for the position. As we mentioned earlier, it is recommended to have a curriculum for each job opportunity that we apply for. The vast majority of people only have one resume which they use for different job roles, companies or even sectors and this is a very serious mistake. For example, using the same resume that you used to get a job as a banker most likely won't help you get a Cabin Crew job, since each position has a different purpose and requires a completely different skillset and experience. For example, for the Cabin Crew role, it is much more important to mention that you have a First Aid or CPR course rather than detailing your computer skills or

programming experience. Other details, such as the formal photo, your height and weight, nationality, date of birth or if you have visible tattoos are necessary information that a Middle Eastern Airline Recruiter needs to check in advance to determine whether you fit the airline criteria or not, so it would be a good idea to include this information in the resume in first place.

When applying to a Cabin Crew role, it is important to take into account the minimum requirements that the airline publicly displays through its website, since each company has different must-have skills. Through the *job specification*, a company compiles all necessary requirements and qualifications for the satisfactory fulfillment of the tasks of an employee such as his level of studies, experience, skills, personality characteristics... The job profile represents a basis for the development of operating manuals and procedures that allow to standardize or normalize employee activities. It is a kind of parameter that is very useful in recruitment because by using it as a basis, the ideal candidate can be selected to fill it. With the right person in the right position, the purposes and objectives of the organization have a greater chance of being fulfilled. If we compare the job description of a pilot and the job description of a Flight Attendant, we can observe that they share some required skills such as working as part of a team, dealing with pressure or being able to multitask. However, although the two roles work together in an aircraft environment and they share the same passion for flying, the main duties and responsibilities of a pilot are completely different from those of a Flight Attendant.

Ideally, for a company to select a candidate, his resume should perfectly match the job description in question. But we must not forget that the minimum requirements are not only made up of a certain education degree or experience, but also the skills and competencies requested in the profile, directly or indirectly. We could say that a skill is the capability of performing a task, while a competence refers to when that task is completed with experience and knowledge. Thus, this difference refers to rank and how well a certain task is performed. For example, if we check the Cabin Crew job offer at the Emirates website, we can already see among the first lines that you should be a positive, self-confident, flexible and a friendly person, willing to help others. If we go further down, we can see that they also request candidates that are able to adapt to new situations and work with other cultures. In addition, it also says that these characteristics will be observed and evaluated during the recruitment process, and if we are smart enough we can predict what competencies the Recruiters will be checking on us.

A "smart curriculum" would be the one that includes all the information that the airline requests through its job advert and we consider that matches our profile, so that the Recruiter, at a glance, sees that we have the required skills and characteristics to get the job as Cabin Crew. It is extremely important that we only include the information that we can demonstrate. In other words, it is not recommended to lie in a CV as the Recruiters will be verifying, through various tests or activities, everything we have written in our curriculum and this will determine if they move forward with our candidacy or not. For

example, if our English level is intermediate but we indicate in our CV that we have a high level instead to avoid being ruled out during the first screening, our spelling mistakes or our wording in the resume will put us in evidence, as the English language is continuously evaluated at a spoken and written level during the selection process. Another example to illustrate why we should not include false information to capture the Recruiter's attention is for instance when we list "attention to detail" as one of our outstanding skills; however in the CV you can see mistakes concerning a bad use of fonts, bold, underlines or a blurred formal photo.

What would be the perfect structure that a Cabin Crew resume should have?

As we mentioned earlier, a smart resume should organize the information the Recruiter is looking for in an attractive way. For this reason, it is important to arrange our strengths at the beginning of the curriculum, so that they are the first to be looked at. For example, if we have lots of experience dealing with customers or we have carried out an exchange program abroad but we haven't studied anything after high school, we should include our professional experience first. However, if we hold a certain certificate or University degree that is aligned to the Cabin Crew role, we will then place our education first. Our CV should have the information divided into the following areas or blocks: personal information, general profile, key competencies or key skills, education, other education (if any), professional experience, languages and additional information. What we will always include on the header will be our personal information and our photograph for

easy recognition. It is not advisable to write “curriculum vitae” as the title, but instead we can include our name and surname in capital letters.

a) Personal information:

Our personal information section should include the following: name and surname, contact telephone number with our country code, date of birth, city of residence, nationality, email address, height in meters, weight in kilos and if you have visible tattoos. The information that we should not include in the personal data section because it is not relevant to a Cabin Crew position would be: marital status, number of children, postal address, age without including date of birth, last name before first name, etc. It is important that your e-mail address looks professional, as an email such as *sexyblonde69@gmail.com* could determine the Recruiters' decision on whether to advance with your candidacy in the process. Along with our personal data, we should include a passport-size photo with a big and pleasant smile, showing our teeth (remember you are applying to a customer service position). It is also important that the picture has a white background and you wear a formal attire.

b) Profile:

Depending on the airline you apply to, they will require a cover or motivational letter, so it should be sent along with your CV. In Emirates, for example, it is not required to include one, so this is why we will highlight, in three or

four lines, why we think we would be suitable for the role and our motivation to become Cabin Crew with them.

c) Key competencies:

We should include the key skills that we have acquired throughout our professional experience which, in the event of an interview, we can demonstrate through practical exercises or relating past experiences.

For example, if our professional experience has been limited to working as a nanny with a family, we can't write under this section that we are excellent team players, as when working as a nanny, you are not working in a team environment.

d) Education and experience:

There are different ways to organize education and work experiences in your resume time-wisely. However, it is recommended to place the most recent ones first for easy reading. It is important that in each experience we always specify the start date and end date, preferably with the "month/year" format. Always include the company you studied at/work for and the country where it is located. When relating your professional experience, please include the job title and two or three lines describing briefly the most important tasks that you have performed. If you have many temporary jobs or seasonal contracts in a certain period of time, it is recommended that you highlight it in your CV so the Recruiter won't assume that you voluntarily change jobs often. For example, if you haven't finished your studies, it is always better to indicate the years you have

already completed rather than not putting anything. If we are currently studying, it is recommended to indicate the month and year that the studies are expected to be concluded and if those could be completed online, in case you were successful for the Cabin Crew role in Dubai, for instance. Periods of time where you haven't worked or studied should be justified in the curriculum specifying the reason behind. Examples could be "caring for a family member"; "traveling in Asia" or "self-employed".

e) Languages:

The first thing a Recruiter will look at in the language section will be your English level followed by your native language. It is not the case of Emirates, but there are airlines that pay bonuses for speaking more than a language fluently. Please do not include languages that you speak at a basic level as they don't add any valuable information to your CV. It is recommended to classify the languages spoken according to the common European framework of reference for languages (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) or specify it with levels: basic, medium, medium / high, high, very high. If we have an international certification such as the *First Certificate*, it would be interesting to indicate it as well, noting the school where we have studied it.

f) Additional information

In this section you should include everything you think that can add value to your profile. It could be a specific skill or course (restraining, first aid), a volunteering job or having lived abroad. The topic of including hobbies is

optional. However, it gives indirect information on what the candidate is like. For example, if he/she plays football or professional rugby, the Recruiters could predict that he/she may have the ability or predisposition to work as a team. Or if the candidate draws in his spare time, perhaps he could have a creative approach to solving problems.

8.- PHOTOS

Many people think that what Recruiters look first at the CV when screening candidates are the studies and the experience. Although they are right, unconsciously the first look always goes to the photo. You will already know what they say about “an image is worth a thousand words” and portraying a professional and groomed image is mandatory when applying for a Flight Attendant role. For many airlines, image is one of the most important things. We could have a candidate with an outstanding CV experience but if he shows up to the interview with dirty hair or without having ironed his outfit, he most likely will be disqualified for his grooming as it is impossible to escape the effect of the first impression.

Appearance has a huge impact on the way other people perceive us. Educated by the media, we have a strongly developed stereotypical perception of people. To decide if a person is unconsciously attractive or interesting, we build an image of that person and then it is very difficult to change it. For example, if a person smiles frequently, we believe that they may be more friendly than another who does not have such ease smiling. But to form a first impression about someone we don't really need to see a picture or the candidate in person. They say we only need 20 to 30 seconds to get an idea of what a person is like, even without ever having seen a picture of them.

Imagine that you have two CVs in front of you and neither of them has a photograph. For example, in one of the CVs you see that the candidate works every summer as a volunteer in an orphanage for abandoned animals, he has not studied at the university but has been working as a waiter since he was 18 years old in three countries. Then you have another resume showing the candidate has studied at the best private university in the country, has spent every summer abroad doing internships in the most prestigious and internationally recognized companies, and lives in the best area of the city. Inevitably, you have already formed an image of each of them, without even having seen a photograph. Imagine then what the effect of the first impression would be, if we see the person face to face or if we see an image of that person on top.

The image that we must project in the photo of the CV will be different depending on the job that we want to apply for. For example, a Manager or a financial analyst will project a completely different image in the photograph from one who seeks work as a computer scientist or as a receptionist. Many people think that using the photograph of the passport or the driving license would be valid for the photo of the CV, or worse: some take advantage of a photo of a party or a wedding because they look good. But that invites us Recruiters to think: what motivation can a candidate have who is not even capable of taking the time to take a proper photo for the resume?

The majority airlines (except the ones in the UK and the US), in addition to the standard photograph that is included in the CV, request that a formal full-body photograph

should be included. As you can imagine, the image that crew members display is extremely important, since each and every one of them represent the airline and act as “brand ambassadors”. And that is why airline Recruiters need to visualize during the interviews "how the candidates would wear the uniform" if they are successful. However, some people think that when we talk about image we are talking about being attractive and this is absolutely false. Having a good and professional image means to have an easy smile and ultimately, comply with the grooming standards requested by the airline through its website.

The photos will be "the first impression" that the airline will have of us and the Recruiters will receive indirect information on how we comply with rules and procedures. For example, what do you think Emirates Recruiters would think if through their website photo guidelines they request that female candidates should send the formal photo in a white background and wearing a knee-length skirt, and a candidate sends it with a blue background and suit pants? Well, it could indicate that the candidate has not read the guidelines to apply online, or that it is difficult for her to comply with the rules and procedures asked by the company. In the Emirates recruitment process, the formal photo should be in a frontal posture with both hands visible and located on each side of the body, wearing a suit jacket and with a big smile showing your teeth. As for the type of suit, it must be dark in color with the jacket buttoned and a plain and white shirt, preferably. As a special recommendation for male candidates, they are not allowed to take photos with a beard or unshaven, and the hair must be cut in a professional and conservative style,

without toupees. Female candidates must pose with a knee-length skirt and always with open court shoes and stockings in a color according to their skin tone. Accessories such as watches, rings, chains, bracelets or glasses are not allowed in any case and only one earring will be allowed for each ear in the case of girls. In the event a candidate wears orthodontics, they will not be able to take their photos or participate in a selection process at Emirates until the treatment is completed and the braces are removed.

The subject of light plays a very important role in photos and that is why, preferably, we invest a little money in quality photos, taking them by a professional photographer. Poor lighting can cause glare or shadow on the candidate's face, or even if the photo is not taken at eye level, it can cause the optical effect of deforming his/her figure, making it appear thicker or less proportionate than it is. However, if we consider that at home we have a white wall, good lighting, a good camera and a good photographer, it could also be taken there as long as the photos are under the standards mentioned above. You also have to be careful with the size of the suit. Sometimes a suit, whether it is large or small, can play tricks on us and optically, it may seem that we have a few more kilos than we really have. As a trick for the girls, if the suit is too big (because for example they have lent it to us), we can hook a clip on the back of the jacket behind the waist, so that will accentuate and define our figure. Regarding the skirt, if we do not find a tube skirt that reaches the height of the knees and as a tip for the formal photo, we can unbutton the skirt and lower it a little, to make it optically longer, but making

sure that this trick is only for the purpose of the photo and we do not go with an unbuttoned skirt to an Open Day. In addition to a formal full-body photograph, Emirates requests a head and shoulders formal photo and two semi-casual photographs to be sent in the Cabin Crew application that should be presented at the final interview stage (see photo guidelines below).

Professional Grooming

- ✓ Hair neat and tidy
- ✓ Clean shaven


Must Have

- ✓ BIG happy smile
- ✓ Full length (the top of your head & your shoes must be visible)
- ✓ Hands straight by side with both legs together. Stand up straight.
- ✓ You must be directly facing the camera
- ✓ Photo cannot be altered / photo shopped
- ✓ Good lighting – no shadows
- ✓ Sharp and in focus

Business Attire


- ✓ Closed jacket
- ✓ Suit, shirt and tie
- ✓ No piercings visible
- ✓ No glasses
- ✓ No colour contact lenses
- ✓ No watches

Passport size photo



4.5cms x 3.5cms
1.78" x 1.38"

Full length photo



10cms x 15cms
4" x 6"

SMART AND SOPHISTICATED PHOTOS

1x full length (standing, photo from head to toe) and 1x close up (standing, photo from head to waist) casual photos. Please refer to the photos below. Your attire and surroundings should be conservative and reflect your professional image. You must be standing up, straight, facing the camera with your hands flat by your side.



Fantastic Photo

- ✓ BIG open smile
- ✓ Jeans
- ✓ Plain t-shirt (no designs)
- ✓ Clean shaven
- ✓ Hair tidy
- ✓ Sharp and in focus
- ✓ Only you present in the photo

No Accessories

- ✗ No bags
- ✗ No glasses / sunglasses
- ✗ No piercings
- ✗ No scarves
- ✗ No watches

No Layers

- ✗ No vests / tank tops
- ✗ No sweaters
- ✗ No jackets
- ✗ No cardigans
- ✗ No long sleeved shirts

You must upload 1 full length formal photo, 1 identical passport sized photos and 2 smart/sophisticated photos.

Follow the guidelines and photos provided below.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FULL LENGTH FORMAL PHOTO & PASSPORT SIZED PHOTOS

Professional Grooming

- ✓ Visible makeup
- ✓ Hair professionally groomed in a bun
- ✓ Hair neat and tidy

Business Attire

- ✓ Closed fitted jacket
- ✓ Knee length skirt
- ✓ High heels (closed toed / no ankle straps)
- ✓ Skin colour stockings
- ✓ No neck scarves, no jewellery
- ✓ No glasses, no colour contact lenses
- ✓ No watches

Must Have

- ✓ BIG happy smile
- ✓ Full length (the top of your head & your shoes must be visible)
- ✓ Hands straight by side with both legs together. Stand up straight.
- ✓ You must be directly facing the camera
- ✓ Photo cannot be altered / photo shopped
- ✓ Good lighting - no shadows
- ✓ Sharp and in focus

Passport size photo



4.5cms x 5.5cms
or 1.78" x 1.38"

Formal photo

10cms x 15cms or 4" x 6"



SMART AND SOPHISTICATED PHOTOS

1x full length (standing, photo from head to toe) and 1x close up (standing, photo from head to waist) casual photos. Please refer to the photos below. Your attire and surroundings should be conservative and reflect your professional image. You must be standing up, straight, facing the camera, hands flat by your side with your hair behind the ears and shoulders.



10cms x 15cms or 4" x 6"



10cms x 15cms
or 4" x 6"

Fantastic Photo

- ✓ BIG open smile
- ✓ Jeans
- ✓ Plain fitted t-shirt (not white)
- ✓ High heels (closed toed)
- ✓ Visible makeup
- ✓ Hair tidy
- ✓ Sharp and in focus
- ✓ Only you present in the photo

No Accessories

- ✗ No bags
- ✗ No glasses / sunglasses
- ✗ No extra ear piercings
- ✗ No neck scarves
- ✗ No watches

No Layers

- ✗ No vests / tank tops
- ✗ No sweaters
- ✗ No jackets
- ✗ No cardigans
- ✗ No long sleeved shirts

At first glance, it may seem that Emirates has many procedures and standards about the grooming for the photos and the interview. All of these “rules” give us a rough overview of how strict uniformity is. In a selection process, you will never be disqualified for wearing jeans or sneakers on the first day, but not submitting the right photos or not being properly dressed for the final interview as they instruct during the process may lead to “question marks” regarding your capability to follow procedures and consequently, you might not be successful for the job. As an example to illustrate how strict grooming is, an Emirates Cabin Crew member who is not wearing the right red lipstick or who is not being clean-shaven reporting to a flight can have serious consequences such as being issued a report or being removed from the flight.

9.- MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY AS CABIN CREW

Every day I receive messages from aspiring Emirates Cabin Crew members who comment: "I don't understand why I never get through the CV drop off, despite meeting all the minimum requirements they ask for."

This topic has always generated a lot of confusion amongst Cabin Crew wannabes and the truth is that meeting the minimum requirements of an airline does not imply that you have to successfully get through all the stages of the selection process, nor that the airline will select you. For you to understand better, we could compare the fulfillment of the requirements with what we currently know as the "right of admission" of some bars or clubs. Imagine, for example that time when you decided to go to that fashionable place in your city with your friends, and you thought that you were *super well dressed* for the occasion. However, for some inexplicable reason, the doorman, without giving you any explanation, didn't let you in ... Well, with the airline minimum requirements the same thing happens: you think that you go very well dressed, with an impeccable resume and photos, answering their questions in a professional manner and thinking that you meet all the minimum requirements posted in their job advert, and still not go beyond the CV drop off stage.

The reason behind is that in a recruitment process, there are other factors and/or requirements that, although they cannot be measured with the naked eye as easily as, for instance, your height or your English level, are also evaluated and equally important: we are talking about professional competencies, body language and motivation. When, for example, we attend an Open Day just “to see what happens” or without having a clear idea if we want the job, we may not be aware but Recruiters will notice that through our body language. An eye drop, a simple yawn, being five minutes late or talking to the candidate seated next to you while others are presenting their ideas during an exercise, will surely put us on the rejected candidates list.

When screening candidates, Recruiters also look for other important facts that are required for the Cabin Crew role and that they aren't open to the public on a selection process as they are changing all the time according to the airline's demands. As you may know, Middle Eastern Recruiters aren't allowed to give feedback to candidates at any stage of the process as they could face losing their job themselves and it would be very difficult to give it individually and manage frustrated candidates who believe they have the right profile for the airline. We could say that meeting the minimum requirements ensures that you have the opportunity to participate in a Cabin Crew selection process, but most airlines have defined and standardized a competency framework that will be required for each role to do that job, so Recruiters know exactly what they are looking for during a selection process. We will be commenting later in detail about the required

competencies that Middle Eastern airlines are looking for when recruiting for Cabin Crew, but to give you a glance of it, you can quickly have a look at the Emirates Cabin Crew job advert, where they explain the qualities that the Recruiters will be observing and analyzing during an Open Day and candidates will have to demonstrate throughout the selection process: “Candidates must be able to manage a fairly demanding work schedule, as well as have the ability to work with other cultures, be flexible, friendly and always ready to help.”

We will summarize this chapter by recalling the minimum requirements to apply for the Cabin Crew role at Emirates:

- At least 21 years old when joining
- Arm reach of 212 cm while standing on tiptoes
- Minimum height of 160 cm
- High school graduate (Grade 12)
- Fluency in English (written and spoken)
- No visible tattoos while you're in uniform (cosmetic and bandage coverings aren't allowed)
- Ability to adapt to new people, new places and new situations
- Have a healthy body mass index (BMI)

9.1.- AGE

“The age factor” is possibly the best kept secret of Emirates Recruiters. On their corporate website it says that the minimum age to join is 21 years old, but since there isn’t any maximum age permitted, how do we know if our age is limiting us from fulfilling our dream to fly for a Middle Eastern airline?

There is a reason behind the fact that the minimum age accepted to fly for those airlines is 21 instead of 18, as could be the case in other countries. As a matter of fact, the minimum age for driving, drinking and serving alcohol in the United Arab Emirates is 21 years old, and falsifying identity is punishable with jail. Considering that alcohol is served on all flights, except those where by law it is not allowed to serve alcohol on board, as would be the case of flights to Saudi Arabia, it would not make much sense to hire Flight Attendants who are not yet 21 years old as it wouldn’t be effective in terms of roster planning. Regarding to whether or not there is a maximum age to fly as a Cabin Crew member in Emirates, for example, the company has never commented on the matter nor has published a maximum age to apply for a Cabin Crew role. In fact, if we check other international airlines, none have a maximum age published on their corporate website, and this is to avoid possible lawsuits for discrimination issues. In the past, airlines used to have public age and gender restrictions, as we have already commented in chapter 4, “The beginning of recruitment in aviation”. But the truth is that it is currently illegal to discriminate against a person on the basis of sex, age, disability, ethnic origin, religion,

beliefs or sexual orientation for hiring in a possible job, whether as a crew member or any other position. For instance in the United States, the law prohibits discrimination when it comes to any aspect of employment, such as hiring, firing, compensation, job assignments, promotions, temporary layoff, training, fringe benefits, and any other term or condition of employment. To remedy non-discrimination, some countries, such as the United States or the United Kingdom, use the so-called “blind curriculum” which is the one that does not include age, gender, photo or even name. But in reality, and specifically for Cabin Crew roles, as it was explained earlier, Recruiters need to look at this information when screening candidates to assess professional image, for instance.

Although some airlines deny that they have a stipulated maximum age for hiring their crews to avoid lawsuits for discriminatory issues, the truth is that there are still many airlines that continue to have an unpublished maximum age, either for purely physical issues so that crews “appear prettier and younger” or to delay the effects of fatigue on their crew, since older crews are less resistant to work long hours. But how much can the age of a crew member influence in the Emirates Cabin Crew recruitment process? The truth is that when working as a Flight Attendant, age does influence you in many aspects: the older you are, the greater the risk of contracting cardiovascular diseases, the greater the probability of contracting fatigue, the more difficult it will be to fight against jet lag, or the more work it will cost you to work at untimely hours.

I still remember the first time I saw American crews of Continental Airlines or United Airlines when I worked as a hotel receptionist in Barcelona: I was shocked to see how old they all were (and when I say old, I mean that the youngest one could be 60 years old), as flying long haul at that age is not common in Europe. Both airlines had a daily flight from New York to Barcelona and you would see pretty much the same faces everyday. So every morning when they were checking in with us to collect their room keys, they would tell us how exhausted they were from the eight hour flight and the time difference. In most cases, this would be the only time that we interacted with them, as they were too tired to go sightseeing or having a few drinks with the rest of the crew in the lobby. And the funny thing here is that they were only operating four flights a month! Apparently if you work as Flight Attendant in the United States, usually you start your career being very young and operating short haul only. But when the time has finally come to be promoted to operate long haul flights, you are already quite senior in age and “you are not as excited to see the world” as you were still in your 20’s, obviously because your energy levels are not the same and probably because you don’t enjoy as much being out of base since you now have a family to take care of. Apart from the fact that spending that much time away from your family “is not that cool” at a certain age, on a physical level the performance on board can’t be the same as with age, fatigue is more accused.

Curiously, the hotel I used to work for also had an agreement with a Spanish regional airline, Air Nostrum, where at that time they were only recruiting very young

Cabin Crew. And when I say “very young” I mean that the maximum age you could join the airline was 26 years old! It was funny to see how different were both crews behaving at the hotel: “the old ones” were literally spending their layover inside their room ordering room service and Skyping with their families, while “the young ones” were going in and out the hotel to enjoy the beautiful city of Barcelona despite the fact that they were flying the madness of three turnarounds a day. As a former Cabin Crew having flown short and long haul flights, let me tell you that sometimes operating turnarounds could be more tiring than operating just a long haul or night flight, as short flights could have their corresponding delays, take offs and landings.

It should be noted that if we compare to Middle Eastern airlines, the number of flights regulated that a crew member operates in Europe and the US is lesser than the number of hours a crew member must operate in the United Arab Emirates. And this is in part thanks to the unions, as they are very powerful when it comes to fight for their employees rights, unlike the Middle Eastern airlines where unions are prohibited by law. Unions defend crew member rights and ensure that the number of hours worked, the minimum rest between flights or the total number of monthly flight hours is “fair”. For example, in Emirates there is no force or association that protects the rights of workers because, as mentioned earlier, it is illegal in the United Arab Emirates. As an example, while a normal flying monthly roster in Europe would be to fly between 70 to 90 hours, in Emirates it would be around 100 - 120. And

please note that the rostered flight hours are not the hours that you actually work but the hours you actually get paid.

When I was flying for Emirates, one of my friends was flying as a Cabin Crew member for British Airways instead, and we used to analyze the number of flights we both had each month and how many food and drink services we did in similar flights. For instance, on a “London Gatwick - Dubai” route, it turned out that British Airways was doing fewer services than Emirates and the crew even had time to rest on board or to read magazines after service. In Emirates, however, this was one of the most demanding flights in which you did not even have time to sit down and eat a sandwich due to the complexity of the services, the endless rounds of drinks and call bells. And as a matter of fact, in Emirates we weren’t allowed to read magazines in the galley at all.

What I am trying to say with all this is that flying for Emirates, Etihad or Qatar Airways could be very hectic, as the number of scheduled flights and the pace of work in Middle Eastern airlines is much higher than in other airlines and this is why the former prefer to hire younger crews who can “physically endure long working hours” and who won’t be complaining as much as senior crew members who will be tired and reporting sick more frequently than the younger. Concluding, if you are over 30 and you wish to start a career as a Cabin Crew, I recommend you apply to the US and the UK airlines which do not pay much attention to the age factor and their grooming guidelines aren’t so strict either, contrary to Middle Eastern, Asian or some Spanish airlines that, for

cultural or marketing reasons, “physique and age does matter”.

9.2. -REACH TEST AND MINIMUM HEIGHT

To have an arm reach of 212 centimeters and a minimum height of 1.60 meters are other important minimum requirements in order to be able to participate in the Emirates Cabin Crew recruitment process. I always get the question if the airline is flexible with height if anyone is 1.58 or 1.59 meters and the answer is always “no” and there is a reason behind.

Let's start taking about the arm reach test before. For those who have never attended an Emirates Open Day, the arm reach test must be performed barefoot, on tiptoes and with both hands. Emirates' fleet has the Airbus 380 and the Boeing 777, both wide-body aircrafts and with the upper luggage compartments at a much higher height from the ground than an Airbus 320 or a Boeing 737, for example. In addition, ladies have two types of shoes that are included in the Emirates uniform: the boarding and airport heels and the service footwear, which is rather flat without much heel so that it is comfortable to withstand the hours of service on board and to alleviate foot swelling caused by having to work in a pressurized cabin. Another reason is that in the upper compartments of the aircraft cabin, which are used to store passenger's luggage, there is also emergency equipment and the crew must be able to reach those efficiently when performing their safety and security checks, as well as in the event of an emergency. On top of that, it's the responsibility of the crew member to reorganize the suitcases optimally and efficiently in their assigned areas when boarding is completed and before

securing the cabin for takeoff, as well as closing any open luggage compartments, which weigh very much! The recommendation is to open/close the overhead compartments in between two people, but those who have flown before will know that this is not always possible, due to the tight deadlines that the crew usually have to secure the cabin before takeoff when we need to speed up boarding. So this is why the arm reach test must be performed barefoot, on tiptoes and with both hands. As a matter of fact, it wasn't until 2016 that Emirates decided to add the minimum height requirement in addition to the arm reach test, and this also has a reason behind. Many Purser's on board reported to the Inflight Services department that some "short crew members" were not reaching the overhead compartments by themselves and, as a consequence, they were failing to perform the required safety and security checks prior to each flight, or they were not able to retrieve emergency equipment when needed, such as an oxygen bottle. Inflight services reported the issue to HR who, together with the Recruitment department, decided to include that new requirement to prevent that from happening again.

9.3.- EDUCATION

It is necessary for Cabin Crew applicants to have completed a Baccalaureate or the last year of pre-University education that includes twelve years of schooling. High School is a study program that follows secondary education, although in some countries it can be part of it. These are the studies that allow a student to obtain a Bachelor's degree, a requirement for continuing studies at university institutions. There are many doubts and confusion regarding whether in Emirates it is necessary to have studied High School or if you can also apply with an intermediate diploma. In principle, as long as you have completed twelve years of education and can prove it with a certificate or a degree, there wouldn't be a problem. But it is important to be able to present it at the time that Recruiters request it.

Some of you might be wondering why it is so important to have completed High School when applying to Emirates, comparing to other major airlines where secondary education is enough. One of the reasons why you must have studied for a minimum of twelve years is to ensure that future Emirates Cabin Crew successfully pass the eight weeks of initial training. It's a very deep training where you will have exams every day and you will have to be used to that level of studying. We also have many candidates that hold a University or a Master's Degree, which is an advantage, as once inside the airline, the company offers endless possibilities and opportunities for internal growth, either by promoting vertically to Supervisor or Purser on board, or horizontally by moving to other internal

opportunities such as Recruiter or Trainer. By ensuring that all candidates have the same minimum knowledge at the time of the recruitment, the airline makes sure that future Emirates employees start from the same base studies, whatever the entry door is.

Some of you are concerned with the fact that holding a University Degree that is not related to the tourism sector, such as Law, Architecture or Medicine, could work against you in a Cabin Crew recruitment process. You would be surprised at the number of psychologists, doctors or lawyers that are flying as crew in Emirates. In fact, what really matters to us Recruiters is the facing customer experience that you might have, whether it is in a hospital or in a gym, and the ability to demonstrate that you have the required skill set for the Cabin Crew role. Having said that and as mentioned before, it is not required to have any previous working experience to apply for the role of Cabin Crew; however, providing it will surely help you reach the final interview.

9.4.- ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Another minimum requirements that Emirates requests at its Cabin Crew role description is to have a fluent level of English, both at a spoken and written level, which will be continuously assessed during the recruitment process.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is a standard that serves to measure the level of oral and written comprehension and expression of a language. These standards make it possible to homogenize the level of knowledge of a language for people who want to opt for studies, jobs or internship programs developed in languages other than their mother tongue and these are grouped from level A1 (beginner) to C2 (master).

| MICERL | ACLES (Asociación de Centros de Lenguas en la Enseñanza Superior) | ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe) | ANGLIA (Assessing English for the international Community) | British Council & Cambridge University | Cambridge University (ESOL) | | | Escuela Oficial de Idiomas (ROI) 1629/2006 | Test Of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) | | TELC (The European Languages Certificates) | Trinity College(ISE) |
|--------|--|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|---|----------------|--|-----------------------|
| | | | | Int English Language Testing System (IELTS) | Main Suite & Young Learners | Business English Certificate (BEC) | Business Language Testing Service (BULATS) | | Escrito (PBT) | Internet (IBT) | | |
| A1 | A1 CertAclés | 0.25-0.5 | Preliminary | IELTS 1.0-2.5 | Starters/movers | | 0-20 | | 310-396 | 9-29 | TELC English A1 | Grades 1-2 |
| A2 | A2 CertAclés | 0.75-1.0 | Elementary Pre-Intermediate | IELTS 3.0-4.0 | Flyers/Key English Test (KET) | | 21-39 | Básico (B1 y 2) | 397-433 | 30-56 | TELC English A2 | Grades 3-4 (ISE 0) |
| B1 | B1 CertAclés | 1.5-2.0 | Intermediate | IELTS 4.0-5.0 | Preliminary English Test (PET) | Business Preliminary | 40-59 | Intermedio (B1) | 434-477 | 57-86 | TELC English B1 | Grades 5-6 (ISE I) |
| B2 | B2 CertAclés | 2.5-3.0 | Advanced | IELTS 5.0-6.0 | First Certificate in English (FCE) | Business Vantage | 60-74 | Avanzado (B2 y 3) | 478-547 | 87-109 | TELC English B2 | Grades 7-8 (ISE II) |
| C1 | C1 CertAclés | 3.33-4.0 | AcCEPT*Proficiency | IELTS 6.0-7.0 | Cert. in Advanced English (CAE) | Business Higher | 75-89 | | 560-587 | 110-120 | TELC English C1 | Grades 9-10 (ISE III) |
| C2 | C2 CertAclés | 4.5-5.0 | Masters | IELTS 7.0-8.0 | Cert. Of Proficiency in English (CPE) | | 90-94+ | | 590-677 | | | Grades 11-12 (ISE IV) |

Emirates; Etihad or Qatar Airways don't specify which is the level that you should have, as in the Cabin Crew job advert they request that you must have a "fluent level" to apply. But what level is considered as such? Most people use the term "fluency" and "speaking fluently" without knowing exactly what it means as this is a very relative term. For example, in Emirates, a fluent level would be to have a C1 as a minimum, as this corresponds to users who

are proficient in the language and trained for complex work and study tasks. However, in some cases, candidates with prior aviation experience with a B2 could also do well during an interview process. According to the CEFR, "a B2 level is capable of understanding the main ideas of complex texts that deal with both concrete and abstract topics, even if they are of a technical nature as long as they are within their field of specialization." Now, a person without previous aviation experience who, with a B2 and a bit of luck, manages to pass the personal interview in Emirates, could have comprehension problems during the training course, especially if they have never flown before, and this is because the level of specialization is very high and aeronautical concepts are often difficult to understand if you do not have a good base of English. Although we generally try to define language levels, the English level that each one of us have is quite relative, as the capacity for oral expression between one person and another can differ greatly, even if they both have the same base level. In the same way, it may also be that a person has an upper/intermediate level (B2) but he/she is not afraid of making mistakes when speaking, and he/she can do better during a job interview than a person who has a higher level.

As mentioned earlier, interviewers will be evaluating the candidate's English level throughout the recruitment process and not just at the time of taking an English test. As a matter of fact, from the very first moment that Recruiters read all resumes, they make sure that CVs are well written in English and without grammar or spelling mistakes. The information that the curriculum, once again, offers in this regard is just incredible. Furthermore, it is extremely

important not to lie about the English level, as interviewers can check if it's true by the way your CV is written and presented. English also plays a very important role in group dynamics and in personal interviews. Although you might show that you are an excellent team player during the group interview, if your level of English is not up to the standard, the interviewers will be discarding you anyway.

Pretty much everyone that lives in Dubai speaks English, but considering that there are around 150 nationalities and each one of them has its own peculiar accent when speaking English, even if you have “an Oxford or Harvard English level” it may be sometimes difficult to understand the Pakistani taxi driver, the Indian trainer or the Egyptian passenger because, probably like you, they are not native English either. In Emirates, we did have issues with some Korean Cabin Crew that managed to pass the interview or even the training, memorizing texts, but without having a good understanding of the language. Let me tell you a true story that happened onboard, for you to understand better how important it is to be fluent in English. There was once a first-class passenger who began to feel unwell and lost consciousness, so one of the crew at the front called the rear galley asking for more oxygen bottles. The crew that picked up the phone misunderstood the message and, instead of bringing the oxygen bottle, took the fire extinguisher... So being fluent in the language is not about passing the interview or the training, but to be able to communicate effectively in an emergency situation on board.

9.5.- TATTOOS

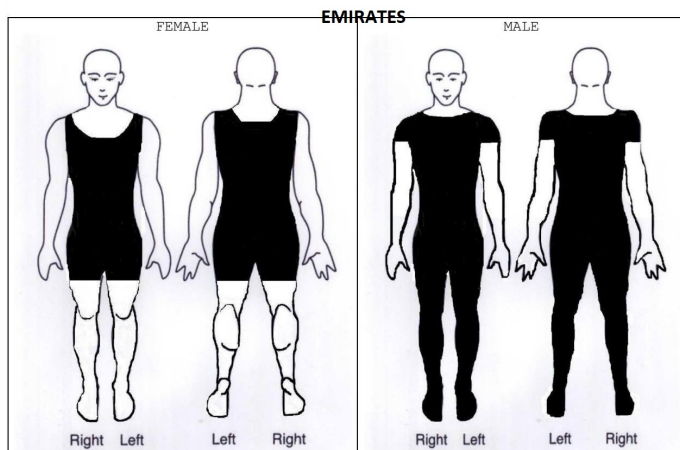
Although tattoos were actually used in Ancient Egypt as a form of artistic medicine, it wasn't until the 18th and 19th centuries that they were discovered by the explorer James Cook. At the end of the 19th century, articles can be found that talk about how the English aristocracy was inspired by Cook's travels and how the inhabitants of the Polynesian island's decorated themselves with "tataus", a Tahitian word to explain the drawings on the skin. Although, in theory, it was not until the 20th century that it spread among the working classes and soldiers, there are cases such as that of Olive Oatman, the first tattooed woman in the United States who was captured by the "Yavapai" and tattooed to be marked as a slave. Punk and the '90s are the starting point where ink drawings begin to be used more to impregnate the whole body. It is clear that this is nothing more than a very general brushstroke to understand how the world of tattoos has come to this day.

Tattoos have had many stigmas around them over the years, but in more recent times they have permeated social perception in a more positive way, incorporating themselves as another common daily complement. Whereas a few years ago it was unthinkable that many people from different sectors had a tattoo, at this time it is very normal for the skin of many to be marked with these designs. Tattoos are thousands of years old and each culture has adopted them differently. The normalization of the use of tattoos in the West today is part of a cultural openness, acceptance of human beings and greater

freedom experienced by new generations. However, there are many countries in the East where tattoos are not well regarded socially or are even prohibited. For example, despite the fact that Japan has a great tradition of drawings on the skin, due to a government ban in the 19th century, tattoos today are still associated with criminals because they identify with members of the “yakuza” or the Japanese mafia, for the only reason of being tattooed. In Sri Lanka and Myanmar tattoos are generally accepted, but a tourist could be in serious trouble if he wears one representing Buddha. In Myanmar, for instance a Spanish tourist was about to be deported for having a Buddha tattooed on his right calf. In Iran, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, tattoos are in some cases not well seen and even prohibited. In the United Arab Emirates there is a “fatwa”: a pronouncement by religious leaders that considers tattoos a form of self-harm. For Emiratis, tattoos are not very common and those who have one must remove it if they want to access jobs in the army, police or the airline industry, such as Emirates or Etihad.

Overall, the fashion of tattoos is not very compatible with those jobs facing the public in which the use of uniformity is required, as is the case of airlines. Yes, it is true that there are some airlines that are more permissive than others when it comes to tattoos, as they allow to have them as long as they are covered or not showing, but this is because tattoos are socially accepted in Western countries. When you wear the uniform, you are not representing your personal views or fashion, but the core values and beliefs of the company you work for. Imagine that you are serving a passenger and you have a tattoo on your hand that the he/

she disagrees with, for whatever reason. It may be that the image is offensive to some people, especially considering the various cultures that the Cabin Crew are exposed to in their every day lives. So the passenger in question will see the tattoo every time you serve him/her, and it could annoy him/her to the point of making assumptions about you and the airline, even causing that passenger to not travel the airline anymore.



The main problem is not having or not having tattoos or piercings. The problem comes when these are in areas that the airline has established as visible, even if apparently we believe that they are not seen in uniform. For example, in Emirates and in the case of male crew, arms are considered a visible area even if they wear long-sleeved jackets and a shirt. This is because in training college the uniform consists of a short-sleeved shirt in which tattoos would be seen. For the boys, visible areas would be all those that are in the neck, arms, hands and wrists. For girls, visible areas

would be all those that are in the neck, arms up to the wrists and practically the entire legs, ankles and feet (see picture below).

In my opinion, if you have visible tattoos and your dream is to fly for a Middle Eastern airline, you should remove them before participating in any recruitment process. But have in mind that removing the tattoo does not guarantee that you will get the job either. I remember during my own Emirates Open Day as a candidate, there was a girl who didn't declare a tattoo on her foot and the Recruiter didn't see it during the recruitment process as she managed to hide it very well with makeup. She was successful for the job and, once in Dubai during training, the Trainer noticed it and she was immediately dismissed from the company and deported back to Spain with the corresponding fine. She was very sad and regretful for what happened to her, so she decided to completely remove her tattoo with laser and try her luck again, this time with Qatar Airways. After more than 10 years, she is still flying there.

9.6.- BODY MASS INDEX (BMI)

The last minimum requirement to apply for the Cabin Crew role that is shown on the Emirates corporate website is that you have a healthy body mass index. But what is body mass index and what is considered "healthy"?

| | Clasification |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| <18,5 | Underweight |
| 18,5-24,9 | Normal weight |
| 25-26,9 | Overweight class I |
| 27-29,9 | Overweight class II (pre-obese) |
| 30-34,9 | Obese class I |
| 35-39,9 | Obese class II |
| 40-49,9 | Obese class III |
| >50 | Obese class IV (extreme) |

The body mass index (BMI) is a method used to estimate the amount of body fat of a person so as to determine if someone's weight is within the normal range or, on the other hand, is overweight or thin. To measure that, height and weight of an individual are related. This mathematical formula was devised by the Belgian statistician Adolphe Quetelet, which is why it is also known as the "Quetelet index" or "Body Mass Index" (BMI). The BMI is a number that is calculated by dividing the weight in kilos by the height, always in meters squared. For most adults, an ideal BMI is in the range of 18.5 to 24.9.

At Emirates, interviewers visually calculate if candidates have a healthy BMI. It can't be measured in any other way as, despite height and arm reach are checked, candidates are not weighed during Open Days. Some people may think that the airline is looking for "ultra thinness" in its crew but this statement is not logical, as super skin people can get sick more often or they could be less resistant to long hours. Having a healthy BMI is about finding the right balance between weight and height and having a proportionate figure.

It is important that Cabin Crew, specially those who fly long haul, have a healthy lifestyle and good nutritional habits. If successful for a Cabin Crew job in the Middle East, the change involved in living there and facing a "new life" in a new environment, with a new job, away from your family and out of your comfort zone, can cause stress and anxiety that can reflect on your BMI. It is also common amongst some crew members, to stop eating healthy and not exercising regularly due to fatigue and/or jet lag, or even consuming too much alcohol, which is also harmful to health, especially when your workplace is a pressurized cabin. Eating junk food is not a healthy habit since this consumption mainly leads to weight gain, but this is only the tip of the iceberg. Feeding yourself regularly on junk food or poor-quality ultra-processed products already registers more deaths worldwide than those caused by tobacco ... That is why once a year during the SEP (safety and emergency procedures) recurrent training, Emirates measures if Cabin Crew keep a healthy BMI, referring them to nutrition experts in case of deviation from what is considered normal weight.

It should be noted that by being a Flight Attendant, you must be “alert and agile” in any emergency situation that could arise. In case of evacuation, Cabin Crew must be able to evacuate a 500 passenger plane in 90 seconds and, to ensure its effectiveness, they must be extremely fast. But in addition to health-related factors to avoid getting sick regularly, as well as the ability to carry out an evacuation quickly in an agile manner, the aesthetic factor as such also plays an important role in most airlines recruitment.

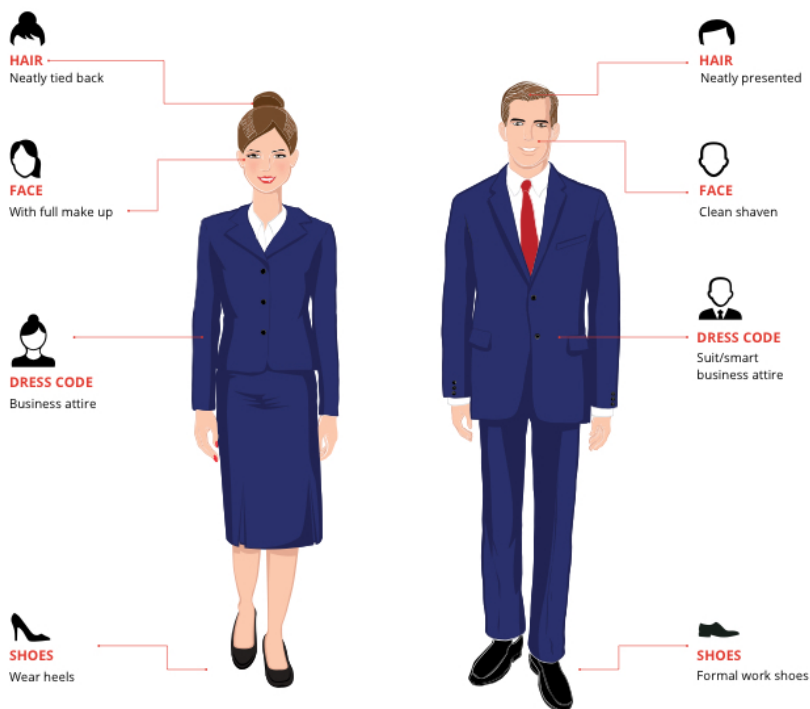
The case of a Malaysian Airlines Cabin Crew member who was fired for exceeding 700 grams of her BMI was very popular in the media. Although at first sight it might seem that it wasn't a fair decision, the courts agreed with the Malaysian company's strict body mass index (BMI). Apparently, the Flight Attendant was fired in 2017 for being above the "healthy" BMI to continue flying. Being 160 centimeters tall, she should have stayed below 61 kilos, as stipulated in the airline's manual. To her regret, she reached 61.7 kilos in 2015. The airline exposed that the crew member had been given 18 months to comply with the new rules, that she had not shown up for several of the weight control appointments of the company and that the weight control program was not discriminatory in any way, since it applies to all crew members. Malaysia Airlines explained that “its weight policy is necessary to maintain its image as a 'premium airline' ”.

10.- GROOMING FOR THE INTERVIEW

Oscar Wilde once said: “There is never a second chance for a first impression”; and this saying couldn’t be more right in recruitment. It is not just about attending the selection process in a suit or red lips. It is about captivating the attention of Recruiters with your professionalism, your smile and your good appearance. Many times, when I was working as Cabin Crew for Emirates, passengers used to ask us at the end of the flight: “how do you guys manage to keep that impeccable image throughout the whole flight?”

During the eight weeks that the training lasts, a day is exclusively dedicated to teach new joiners how they should project a professional image that is aligned with the Emirates brand. This is called the “The Grooming Day” and this is the time when they show you, amongst other things, how to wear “the famous red hat”. Emirates take the grooming of their crews very seriously to the extreme of removing you out of a flight if you are not shaved properly or if you are not wearing your uniform well ironed. On each flight, cabin supervisors have to write reports on their team’s performance in which their conduct and image are evaluated, to verify that they comply with the standards established by the company. Those who always have a perfect grooming or an exceptional performance are awarded and recognized by the company. However, those who do not meet the standards on a regular basis could end up suffering disciplinary actions and “unwanted visits” to

their Manager's. It is important to remember that Emirates, Etihad or Qatar Airways are airlines located in Muslim countries and that is why on the interview day, we must not forget to project an image that is consistent with its conservative religion and culture, such as not wearing transparencies, necklines, or extremely short skirts, in the case of girls. This is crucial, as those first 5 seconds that you meet with the Recruiter are essential to making a good impression. What is the professional image that we should portray in an Open Day?



As a general rule, candidates should opt for dark suit colors like black, gray, navy blue or brown, and stay away from bright colors like green or pink, or floral or animal prints. Of course, it goes without saying that we should always go to an interview or recruitment event with the suit washed and well ironed. With regard to footwear, and in the case of girls, wearing high-heeled shoes will give you a good posture, making you feel taller and more self-confident. Check that your shoes are perfectly polished and choose a classic and comfortable style, since you will spend many hours on your feet. If the shoes are new, do not forget to always carry band-aids in your bag and wear socks in a tone similar to your skin. With regard to colors, it is advisable to wear black, brown, beige, dark gray or navy blue shoes. In general, light colors, sports shoes, sandals, boots, excessively high heels, inserts or fashion pieces are not allowed. Female candidates should always wear a suit formed by a blazer and a skirt, in a sober color. A skirt is “feminine” and is also a mandatory part of the uniform. It should be neither too short nor too long: the minimum length should point towards the middle of the knee and the maximum length towards the middle of the calf. If you prefer, instead of the suit, you can also wear a business dress under the blazer. Male candidates should accompany the suit with a tie in a simple design and pattern that matches it and the shirt.

A Flight Attendant always maintains an impeccable hairstyle and we must wear the same for our interview day. If you have long hair, tie it in a low bun at the back of your head and secure it with some pins and a little hairspray. As a general rule of thumb, if your hair can reach your

shoulders, it should be tied back. Male candidates must make sure their hair is well cut and must be clean shaven. With regard to makeup, it should be used only by girls and should be very natural. It is important that the eyes are not excessively made up, avoiding extremely smoky eyes and metallic tones. A little blush should also be used following the natural contour of your cheeks. And as a final touch, a red lipstick so that Recruiters already imagine you as "a true Emirates stewardess". With regard to accessories and when in doubt, it is best to keep them to a minimum. The earrings should be small and preferably made of diamonds or pearls and one per ear. Earrings are only allowed in girls. For the day of the interview, it is allowed to wear glasses, although you must make sure not to wear them in the formal or casual photos. However, wearing orthodontics is not allowed either on the day of the Open Day or in the photographs.

One of the things that airline interviewers pay more attention to, is the hands of our candidates. Having bitten or excessively long or dirty nails can spoil your career as a Flight Attendant. Cabin Crew offer food and drink with their hands and they are the first thing passengers notice. Therefore, dirty fingernails or poorly groomed hands can affect the overall image that a passenger has of the airline in which he/she is flying. As a matter of fact, in Etihad you must show your hands during the selection process. In others like Emirates, candidates are not asked to show their hands, but that does not mean that Recruiters do not notice. I

n conclusion, try to show confidence in yourself but without falling into the trap of being arrogant. Imagine that you already have the job and above all: smile! A smiling, positive face will immediately make the person you talk to perceive you as a friendly, helpful, positive person and easy to work with. During the day, mingle with as many people as you can, smile and speak to everyone. This will show your communication skills and ability to work with all types of people. You may not see the Recruiters there, but trust me, they will be watching you.

11.-PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES OF THE CABIN CREW ROLE

Before telling you what the core competencies of a Cabin Crew member are, I will explain in detail why they are used in recruitment. Professional competencies are all those abilities and aptitudes that people have and that allow them to develop a job successfully. They are general descriptions of the behavior to properly perform a particular role at the required level. Competencies are concerned with how an individual performs a particular element of his/her role, rather than simply knowing what he/she is doing.

There are three types of competencies: basic, technical and transversal. The basic ones are those that allow access to a job. An example would be the knowledge of the English language. Technical competencies refer to the ones acquired after having undergone specific training and are specific to a job. For instance, a person who has been trained in cooking should have acquired technical skills such as the use of knives, cooking techniques or organization of a kitchen. Technical competencies are different in each profession and are usually acquired by carrying out specific training. And last but not least, the transversal competencies are all those skills and aptitudes that make an employee develop her work effectively. Some transversal skills are: teamwork, customer service, initiative, flexibility, etc.

Generally speaking, airline Recruiters value all types of competencies, but the transversal ones will help you differentiate from others during a recruitment process. Why do airlines use competencies to evaluate candidates and employees? Because they offer the following:

- A consistent measure of performance, which makes it easier to be objective when evaluating candidates/employees.
- An effective tool to help Managers give constructive feedback.
- A self-assessment tool to help people identify developmental needs.
- A mechanism to support the development plan of an individual's current role and his/her future potential.

Ultimately, it is through competencies that organizations can ensure that their employees are productive, effective and that they can professionally develop their full potential. But not all jobs require the same skills, not even in the same company. For example, the core competencies of the pilot role are not exactly the same as those of a Cabin Crew, despite the fact that both work inside an aircraft. The professional competencies of a Cabin Crew member could be grouped into: excellent service, teamwork, flexibility, adaptability, results orientation and resilience.

11.1.- SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Given the enormous competition and offer of so many similar services and products in the market, the permanence in the future of any company depends on providing good customer service. To be successful, it is essential to know the client's needs and provide a service that exceeds expectations in speed and friendliness.

In an airline environment, and if we check what has been the passenger's experience before boarding an aircraft, we will see that they receive many "inputs" about the airline, even before stepping into the aircraft. For instance, if someone has had issues with his/her baggage or with his/her reservation, he/she will board upset and in a bad mood and most likely, he/she will complain about the disastrous service he/she is receiving from the airline if, for example, there isn't his/her meal option on board. As a consequence, a customer may decide not to fly a certain airline again, simply by the fact that he considers that a Flight Attendant has not been "kind enough" with him or maybe because the Cabin Crew have not smiled to him during service. In some airlines and as stipulated in their manuals, the crew would refer the passenger complaining with an email address so that the customer could make a formal complaint after the flight and the crew can forget about it. However, in Middle Eastern airlines such as Emirates, Etihad or Qatar Airways, it is the Cabin Crew's responsibility to turn this "bad experience" into a "memorable one" through the service recovery techniques learned during the initial training. Similarly, a passenger who has had a very good experience on board may decide

to enroll in the airline membership loyalty program and with this become a frequent flier.

As you can see, the decision on whether a passenger will repeat his/her experience with an airline or not falls exclusively on the crew on board or even solely on the Cabin Crew member who is delivering the service. Cabin Crew are airline's ambassadors and in the case of Emirates, passengers are already predisposed to feel a "unique and unrepeatable experience on board" as if they were real "sheikhs", because this is what the airline has promised to them throughout the many marketing and advertising campaigns. To better understand what the difference is between delivering a service and delivering an outstanding service on board, I will give you an example of what would be an excellent service on board and another in which, according to the prism of a structured interview at Emirates, the candidate would not be competent in "service excellence".

"You are doing the food service on board and although there are two options available (chicken and beef) showing on the economy menu, you have run out of chicken. You head to the back galley to look for more, but the supervisor warns you that she doesn't have any more chicken left and that you should try selling the beef option. Most passengers accept that the chicken option is no longer available, except for one who, with very bad manners, insists that he would like to have the chicken option because he has paid for it and it's included in the ticket. What do you do?"

a) You apologize to the passenger but tell him that there is no more chicken available in economy class and you offer him the beef option like you did with the others. The passenger still doesn't agree to have the beef and you can see that he is starting to get angry. You tell him that he needs to understand that "the plane is not a restaurant" and that you don't have any more chicken option on board. The passenger finally tells you that he prefers not to eat without taking his eyes off from TV.

b) You apologize to the passenger but tell him that there is no more chicken available in economy class and you offer him the beef option like you did with the others. The passenger still doesn't agree to have the beef and you can see that he is starting to get angry. You tell him that you completely understand and that you will see what you can do for him. You go back to the galley to call business class to see if they have any chicken or other available options to offer him. Unfortunately, they haven't any chicken left, but they have lamb with roasted potatoes. You explain to the passenger that you have searched the entire plane and that unfortunately there is no chicken left; however, you can offer him "lamb with roasted potatoes from the business class cabin". The passenger thanks you for your dedicated effort and with a big smile, he graciously accepts the opportunity to eat a dish from a premium cabin".

I assume that with this example you have already understood the difference between "serving a customer" and "offering excellent service to a customer." If the first option was the one that happened, the passenger would surely tell his acquaintances about the bad service he

received on board and perhaps even make a formal complaint. Or even worse, instead of complaining to the airline, he would decide not to fly again. According to data from the American Management Association (AMA), “a dissatisfied customer tells an average of 10 people about his dissatisfaction” and the AMA reveals another devastating fact: “companies do not receive any complaints from 90% of the customers they have lost”.

The mission of Recruiters is to “capture” through the different recruitment stages, which candidates have the “predisposition” or the “innate ability” to offer an excellent service to customers, amongst other skills. As mentioned before, Middle Eastern Cabin Crew must not only limit themselves to fulfill the service on board each flight, but they must also exceed customer’s expectations, by seeking solutions to their problems or even anticipating to their needs, in order to always offer a memorable and excellent experience. Those candidates who have previously worked in 5-star hotel chains or luxury companies will find it easier to pass the Emirates recruitment process, because they have been trained in service techniques and procedures. As a matter of fact, the Ritz-Carlton hotel chain has one of the most distinctive corporate cultures in the accommodation sector and its motto is printed on a card that employees always carry with them: “We are ladies and gentlemen at the service of ladies and gentlemen”. It could also be the case that a candidate, without much working experience, could reach “that level of excellence” because that innate ability is established in his/her behavior. However, although this person may successfully pass the Open Day with his/her personality, he/she would probably have difficulties in

answering competency-based questions during the final interview, as at this stage, candidates should recall specific examples of past working experiences. For this reason, and even if it's not a minimum requirement, it is highly recommended to have at least one year of experience prior to attending an airline interview, to ensure that you will be able to recall examples from your previous jobs.

11.2.- TEAMWORK

Teamwork is, along with service orientation, one of the candidate's most sought competencies in recruitment processes. Today in almost all professions, or even I would say in all, we "need" other people to be able to carry out our daily tasks and responsibilities at work. Even I, as a Recruiter, didn't know that IT people had to work as part of a team as well, instead of individually as I had always thought. In fact, I didn't find out this until I started working in a computer company and I had to recruit computer programmers and other technical roles. There I also learned that the concepts of "extroversion" and "introversion" have nothing to do with the ability to work in a team effectively, or with the ability to offer an excellent service to customers.

Teamwork is an inherent practice to the human condition. Since the appearance of the first societies, humans have developed the ability to associate with the members of their clans and tribes to ensure their survival, meet their basic needs and improve their living conditions, and much of that still remains in place. Despite the new technologies and the internet, teamwork continues to be a resource for development in different areas. Companies are usually made up of large and varied staff, which requires coordination strategies to achieve corporate objectives. However, teamwork is not the only form of performance in professional fields, but it is the one that has produced the best results so far. Individual talents are essential for performance, no doubt, but they are much more so when

they are integrated into groups with a series of specific objectives.

In an aeronautical environment, although from the outside it seems that each worker has his or her own role in a normal operation, the truth is that an aircraft *wouldn't be flying without teamwork*. For example, many people will think that it's the pilot in command's responsibility to perform the takeoff maneuver; however, it is also the duty of the copilot who helped reading the pre-flight checklists, the flight dispatcher who coordinated with passenger boarding and loading of cargo, the Cabin Crew who secured the cabin and armed the doors, the mechanics who fixed a last minute malfunction, the operators who loaded the suitcases, the air traffic controller that marked the slot time for the aircraft so that it can proceed to take off, and a large etcetera.

But going back to one of the Cabin Crew's most wanted skills, let me tell you that Flight Attendants don't work as a team only to secure the cabin or to perform a service on board. As a matter of fact, and in the event of an emergency situation, although each Cabin Crew has specific drills to perform according to their position in the aircraft, they must also demonstrate as a team that they are capable to solve any expected or unexpected scenarios. For instance, having a Cabin Crew member that brings you a second bottle of oxygen on time can be crucial for a passenger who is in critical condition to stay alive, or a Flight Attendant supplying you with fire extinguishers and another one calling the flight deck when you are fighting a toilet fire because a passenger has smoked a cigarette can make the difference between being alive or dead. Besides

all this, and in the event of an evacuation, the crew must evacuate all passengers in less than 90 seconds. Do you think that this would be carried out in a successful manner if the crew weren't working as a team? For some of you these scenarios may look extreme, but remember, that you are flying at 39.000 feet and there are no doctors, no fire fighters and no police on board, and the Cabin Crew is on their own to take care of passengers at all times. And that is why in the recruitment process, the interviewers analyze in detail which candidates have the ability to work as a team through different stages such as group and individual interviews and role plays.

11.3.- FLEXIBILITY

We all think that we are flexible when things don't turn out the way they should, but truth is that not everyone has the ability to be flexible in certain circumstances, with different people or even with the way to handle certain unexpected situations. But let me tell you a secret: if your plan is to work in aviation, you definitely have to be very flexible.

Flexibility could be defined as the ability to adapt to different situations and people. It is the skill used when we adapt to constant changes that occur and that involves understanding and evaluating different positions or conflicting points of view. A person who is flexible listens, analyzes, values and reevaluates his perspective, trying to give the best of himself for the needs of the customer. So as you can anticipate, the competency of flexibility is quite linked to being able to provide an excellent service to customers. Flight Attendants must serve passengers without mental rigidity, allowing empathy and adaptation to customer needs. Especially in Middle Eastern airlines such as Emirates, Etihad and Qatar Airways, it is even more important to be flexible and have an "open mind" mentality as passengers and co-workers are from more than 150 nationalities and everyone's culture has their own way of doing things or approaching certain situations.

During a selection process, there are several indicators that can show Recruiters the level of flexibility from candidates. Examples of low flexibility could be:

- Through group or individual interviews, prejudices, stereotypes, discriminatory attitudes or rigid opinions are detected before people for reasons of race, religion, sex.
- In group dynamics or role plays, a certain rigidity is observed in the resolution of setbacks with passengers and with colleagues.
- In individual interviews, a pattern is detected in the curriculum in which the candidate shows a continuous change of jobs.
- At any point in the process, a certain “resistance” or little cooperation is detected in the face of certain aspects of the process itself, the internal procedures of the company or with the human resources department (for example, when we send the photos and other documentation).

However, it should be noted that crew members must always be flexible in situations related to on-board services, but never when referring to situations in which safety could be concerned. This is important to remember for a face-to-face interview, as this will be the time when the competency of flexibility will be assessed in detail. I will share with you a true story so you can see it. If a passenger stands up in the middle of the breakfast service when the food and drink carts are out in the cabin, the Flight Attendants must be flexible and understand the needs of the customer, by moving the carts from the aisle so the passenger can use the restroom, even if temporarily they have to stop the service. However, if the same passenger

needs to go to the toilet once the cabin is secured and the security checks have been passed to the purser so she can inform the flight deck, under no circumstances will the crew let the passenger go to the bathroom even if it's an emergency for him/her, since we would put at risk the safety of the cabin, the aircraft, the passengers and the rest of the crew.

11.4.- ADAPTABILITY

The competency of adaptability is at the same time linked to the flexibility one and it is actually quite common to confuse them because of their similarity. Being able to adapt to new situations, environments or circumstances means accepting 100% the current situation and implies leaving something of what one is used to in order to be someone else. Throughout history, humankind has adapted to floods, climatic changes, invasions, wars, poverty or epidemics like covid-19. Who would have said time ago that we would get used to living with a surgery mask on? And this is because humans are animals of habit. They got used to living in the trees, then occupied abandoned caves, became completely nomadic and got used to settling in one place until they finally became sedentary. In today's world in which we live, it is increasingly common to have to change residence, job, office or even country and the truth is that not everyone has the same ability to adapt to changes, especially when they are last minute or not promoted by oneself.

In more and more companies, it is essential to know how to adapt to any change that may arise; be it a change of corporate image or culture, a change in structure, a change of boss, takeovers from one company to another or changes of office or base. That is why it is important to select personnel “who know how to adapt” to the possible changes that could happen without presenting a strong resistance to change, as those who have such a resistance always see the negative aspects, or even feel insecure with changes. But in aviation, everything is possible. As a crew

member, you may originally have a flight scheduled from Dubai to Bangkok and due to a last-minute change in your roster, you end up flying to Toronto instead. Or you could be inside the aircraft ready to take off with all passengers on board, but due to a technical problem and after a couple of hours on ground trying to fix it, you finally disembark the aircraft and move to another one to start the whole process again. Or maybe after several hours of delay on ground you are no longer “legal to operate the flight” and you return home without having get paid anything on that day, since you didn’t generate any flying hours as “the salary counter” begins once the aircraft starts moving.

From the moment you receive “The Golden Call”, the process of adapting to your new life in Dubai begins. The future crew member will have to adapt to: living in a foreign country, the Muslim religion, having new social restrictions, a new job, a new house, new flatmates, living away from the family, getting up at 3 in the morning and going to sleep at 3 in the afternoon, jet lag, the Dubai weather, the food... and the list is endless. As we have mentioned earlier, not everyone is prepared to endure that many changes and in such a short time, without leaving a psychological mark in them. The predisposition to change is different in each person and the Recruiter's mission is to analyze whether “that person will be able to adapt well to all the changes that will be implied”. For example, a candidate who has never lived outside his family nucleus will probably suffer more adaptation problems living away from his family and sharing a flat with strangers than perhaps another who has already shared a flat and/or lived abroad.

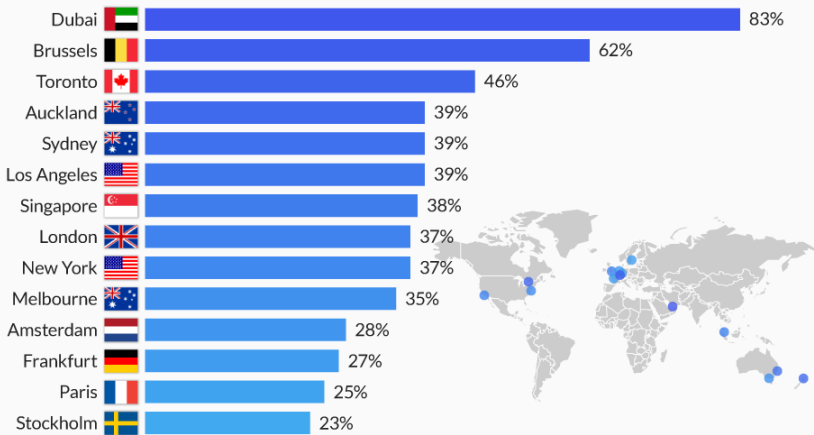
For sure you have now the big picture of why crew should have the ability to adapt quickly to unexpected situations or circumstances, and this is why airline Recruiters deeply analyze through the recruitment process whether candidates have this competency or not.

11.5.- CROSS CULTURAL AWARENESS

According to the 2015 World Migration report, Dubai has become the most cosmopolitan city in the world. Although the country is small in size compared to other cosmopolitan cities in the globe, the UAE has welcomed many international migrants who come to the country to earn a living as workers or entrepreneurs. If we look at statistics, only 15-20% of the total population of Dubai could be classified as "local" to the country. This means that expats make up around 80 to 85% of the population.

The world's most cosmopolitan cities

Foreign-born population in major cities in 2014 (in %)



But although Dubai is a cosmopolitan and multicultural city, we must not forget its Islamic and Bedouin identity and the special relevance that religion has for its

inhabitants, which is traditionalist and conservative. In addition, we can observe the influences of its Islamic and Arabic culture in its architecture, music, clothing, gastronomy and lifestyle. I can assure you that hearing the prayer five times a day won't go unnoticed by you! However, while the UAE is "somewhat more liberal" and multicultural than other stricter Islamic societies such as Saudi Arabia, you must not forget that they are also under the Sharia Law and you can get in trouble facing fines or jail time if you do forbidden activities which are generally considered normal in the West. If you want to find out more about the Sharia Law and how life in Dubai is for an expat, I strongly recommend you read my first book *Life after Dubai*.

The truth is that not everyone will be able to live in an Islamic society with so many rules and regulations. To give you a couple of examples, Dubai is a city where you cannot eat pork or consume alcoholic beverages, and buying those for your own consumption is also very limited; and if you are not married, you are not allowed to live with your partner or get pregnant, as if they catch you, you will face jail time. The cross-cultural awareness competency is mostly checked by Recruiters during the final interview, as candidates need to demonstrate through past experiences whether they are able to adapt to other cultures and religions showing respect and tolerance. But it is not only about being respectful with the culture and the religion of the city that welcomes you, but also with the more than 160 nationalities that make up the on-board crew and passengers. Nevertheless, as if working in customer service wasn't challenging enough, imagine how difficult it is to

make all passengers happy, especially considering the fact that what is considered positive in a culture may be contemplated as lack of respect in another. There are hand or head gestures, expressions or greetings that in our countries we tend to do with a certain naturalness, but for example in other countries they are considered a discourtesy to the point of being punished with jail time. Below you will find some examples for your reference:

- Shaking your head from side to side: in many countries it means "I don't know" or "I am not sure" while in India it means "no."
- Thumbs up: while in Anglo-Saxon countries putting your thumb up means "okay" in other countries like Iran it is an obscene insult.
- Moving the index finger to call someone: usually we use it to indicate someone to come, but for example in the Philippines, this gesture is only used to call a dog, and whoever does that to a person can face jail time.
- Make the "V" for victory with your fingers: In the UK, New Zealand, Australia and Ireland this is taken as an insult.
- Looking into the eyes: it is a gesture of frankness in Western cultures; however, in Asia or the Middle East it is understood as disrespectful and above all, if a man looks into the eyes of a woman it can be taken as a sign of sexual interest.

- Finishing your plate: just as in the West, finishing your plate is a sign of respect, but in the Philippines for instance it is frowned upon.
- Chewing gum: in countries like Japan or Singapore, chewing gum is considered a violation of social norms and in Singapore, you can be fined if you throw it on the street.

Obviously as a candidate you don't need to know all this before attending an interview, but if for example you have been exposed to other cultures or ways of living when you did your academic exchange program in Sweden, when you worked in that Indian restaurant or when you lived with a Moroccan, most likely you will have developed this competency and it will display during an interview when relating past experiences. And also it will help Recruiters know that the cultural shock when moving to Dubai won't be as big as in a person who has never lived abroad, or who has never had any interaction with other cultures as, if successful for the job, this person most likely won't be able to cope with the change and will be breaking their employment contract before time.

11.6.- RESULTS ORIENTATION

Results orientation is the professional competency that refers to the performance of a task that goes in line with a certain objective. To achieve this, a broad overview is required as well as a detailed understanding of the processes that lead to a certain goal. Results orientation is also the capacity of those who are not satisfied with simply performing the job correctly, but who want to go further and seek excellence. For this reason, it is a competency closely related to quality. But this cannot be carried out individually, as it requires the coordination of several factors. Therefore, it is very important to develop this ability together with teamwork.

We could say that being result oriented encompasses everything that has to do with the achievement of objectives and the ability to prioritize tasks or being detailed oriented. It is extremely important that a Cabin Crew member is competent in this area, since a Flight Attendant's day-to-day is related to strict time limits and deadlines, set by the takeoff and landing times of an aircraft. A Flight Attendant will have to organize his/her errands and his/her rest before reporting to a flight and carefully plan the amount of sleeping hours before each flight. On board, the Cabin Crew usually have several important tasks that will overlap in which they must react quickly and prioritize the most important ones in an organized way, remaining calm and without losing quality when delivering service to customers. It will also be during the final interview stage when interviewers will have the

opportunity to verify if a candidate is competent in that area or not.

11.7. RESILIENCE

Resilience is the ability of a person to overcome traumatic circumstances by being able to return quickly to a previous good condition. Sometimes life puts us to the test and presents us with situations that exceed our capacities: an illness, having broken up with a partner, having lost a job, the death of a relative, financial problems or, without going that far, the stress that generates a pandemic situation as the one we are living now with Covid-19. In life, there are different circumstances that can push us to the limit and make us question whether we have the strength and will to move forward. But at this point we have two options: let ourselves be defeated and feel that we have failed, or overcome the situation and come out stronger, by being resilient. Nevertheless, it should be noted that *resilient people are not born but made*, which means they that have had to fight against adverse situations because they have tasted failure several times and have not given up, by finding themselves on the edge of the abyss and have developed the necessary skills to face the different challenges of life.

If we extrapolate this term to the aeronautical sector, and taking into account that safety and the capacity to react in a fast manner play a very important role in aviation, we can imagine that this competency will also be heavily looked at by Recruiters. Cabin Crew members must be able to deal with adversity and this has nothing to do with years of flying experience. To give you an example, a Flight Attendant that has flown for 10 years and suddenly one day suffers a reverse when flying or in his/her personal life

could be unable to recover, may collapse and he/she could be "traumatized for life." Or it could also be the case of a fresher that on his/her first flight has to deal with a death on board but surprisingly he/she copes with the situation in an effective manner and he/she recovers quickly.

You will all remember the plane crash caused by the co-pilot of the German Wings aircraft in 2015 who deliberately crashed an Airbus 320 into the French Alps, killing all 150 people on board. To this day, the reasons that prompted the pilot to do that are still unclear as well as if the depression he suffered began years after he joined the airline or perhaps he already joined with it. I actually don't know what the recruitment process for German Wings is like and whether the capacity of being resilient under traumatic circumstances is actually checked, or if they even have a competency framework in place at all. But *maybe* if his ability to deal with setbacks had been checked thoroughly during his interview, he could have shown small signs of not being resilient, because no one in his/her right mind crashes a plane "for not having a good day". Obviously, Recruiters are not doctors and when it comes to a mental disease such as depression, it is very difficult to detect or diagnose a person's capacity to react under unexpected situations. It should be noted that during a recruitment process, pilots do also undertake psychological and personality tests, but in no circumstance these evaluations will tell us if a person has a mental disease or not. However, during a behavioral interview and through candidate's examples, interviewers extract valuable information that allow them to determine whether that

person is resilient or not. What characterizes a resilient person?

- Resilient people are aware of their potentialities and limitations. They know what their main strengths and abilities are, as well as their limitations and shortcomings. In this way, more objective goals can be set that take into account not only their needs and dreams, but also the resources available to achieve them.
- Resilient people trust their abilities. By being aware of their potentialities and limitations, resilient people trust what they are capable of. If something characterizes them, it is that they do not lose sight of their goals and feel confident of what they can achieve. However, they also recognize the importance of teamwork and do not withdraw, but rather know when to ask for help.
- They are flexible with changes. These people are not closed to change and are always willing to consider different alternatives, without obsessively clinging to their initial plans or a single solution.
- And last but not least, resilient people see difficulties as an opportunity to learn. Throughout life we face many painful situations that demotivate us, but people with a high level of resilience are able to see beyond and do not get discouraged. These people see the difficulties that life gives them as an opportunity to generate a change, to learn and grow.

12.- STAGES OF THE EMIRATES RECRUITMENT PROCESS

As we have seen in chapter 4, the stages of the selection process have had no substantial variations since the first mass recruitment events in 1993, with the exception that now a part of the process is done online. Before covid-19 entered our lives, Open Days began with a presentation, followed by a CV drop off, an arm's reach test and would end up with a couple of group dynamics. Candidates who successfully passed all activities would then be sent some online tests (English and psychometric) prior to the final interview which was also done online. But once it's certain that airlines start hiring again, the current Emirates selection model might be reviewed and adapted to "the new normality" to reduce the volume of candidate's assistance by including more online activities. Nevertheless, even if Emirates modify the stages or decide to include new elements, the candidate profile that the company looks for would remain the same, and thanks to this book you will have all the information that you need to fulfill your dream of flying.

It is a common practice that when someone wants to attend an Open Day (either in Emirates or in any other airline), he/she usually asks acquaintances or friends who have already gone through the process, wanting to know "every detail and every question" that they have been asked, regardless of whether they have been selected or not. It is also

common to search for information through the internet and social networks to find out what exercises and questions have been raised. But the reality is that this system could be "a double-edged sword" that can have a negative effect on the applicant, as this information can confuse them, because "acquittances or social media influencers just share what has worked for them" and this doesn't mean that will work for you. It should be noted that these people, even if they have all their good intentions, are just sharing their "personal experience and their particular vision" about what airlines look for in a selection process. What has worked for that person who managed to get hired in an airline does not have to work for you... Neither his/her previous experience is the same as yours, nor is his/her English level or not even the scenario in which the situation happened.

For instance, if in a group dynamic where it is discussed who should be the passenger given the last seat available on the plane with the inflight entertainment working properly, a candidate chooses "the pregnant lady" from all the available passengers and he/she successfully passes the group interview, it does not mean that if another person in another Open Day also chooses the same customer, he/she will be successful to the next round too. Perhaps in the first scenario, the pregnant lady was the passenger that everyone agreed and the conversation amongst them was harmonious and calm, showing that they know how to make decisions as a team. But, if in another group dynamic with another set of people the passenger that the majority of the group decides is "the famous YouTuber" and the candidate who has been advised to choose the pregnant

lady doesn't agree with the rest of the team, it can create a discussion and the Recruiter might think that he/she is not able to reach an agreement with the team. The truth is that unless you have not been in an airline HR department, it is very difficult for you to know what the strategies and techniques that airlines use are to select the very specific profiles that they require. And that also applies to Cabin Crew whom, as a consequence of this pandemic situation, take advantage of the despair of Cabin Crew wannabes, and they offer coaching sessions without having any knowledge or experience in the subject. When I was flying for Emirates, one of the most popular "galley talks" was to try to guess what it was that we all had in common to be that 3% of the lucky ones who got the job. And I can assure you that it wasn't until I worked as a Recruiter that I found it out...

Of course you should look for information from all possible sources to go as prepared as possible to an Open Day, but you should also be careful to select truthful information only. It is fine for other people to detail us what the phases of the selection process are like, to know what to expect and how we should prepare, but stay away from the advice given by non professionals, since they can only take you further away from your dream of flying. It should be noted that usually on each airline corporate website it's indicated what the selection process phases are like and what to expect from them.

12.1.- CV SCREENING

As it was pointed out earlier, the initial CV screening can be performed online or face to face, but even if it is one way or another, Recruiters always look for the same thing. But what is exactly what they are looking for in that particular stage? Basically, what those responsible for the selection of an airline company are looking for when screening CV's, whether in person or online, is the compliance of the minimum requirements. However, if the curricular screening is performed face-to-face (what we also know as CV drop off), Recruiters will also look at candidate's professional image, their non-verbal language and their ability to communicate in English, among others. That is why this first part will always be much more effective if interviewers have the candidate in front of them, as they can easily detect if they are trying to hide anything through their photos or resume. When candidates register online for a selection process, sometimes they tend to lie or hide factors of their candidacy that they sense could be grounds for discarding. For example, in their CV they can write that their height is 1.60 meters when in reality they are 1.58 meters tall, or that they speak English fluently when perhaps they are not even able to carry on a conversation... But even if the candidate has lied in his/her online application just for the sake of being invited to an Assessment Day, Recruiters will also evaluate if the information provided is correct and if this person has lied, he/she will also be discarded in this first phase.

a) Online CV screening:

When a high level of attendance is estimated in a certain city, the airline chooses to add an online curriculum screening in addition to the one that will be done during the recruitment event, with the aim of filtering those who meet the criteria. That is why in this scenario, the CV and the photos are even more relevant in this phase, since it is the only reference that Recruiters have of a candidate.

b) CV drop off:

The face-to-face curriculum screening is one of the most feared phases within the Cabin Crew recruitment process, since it is undoubtedly the stage in which the largest volume of candidates is discarded. In this first stage, apart from checking whether or not the candidate meets the minimum requirements to be Cabin Crew, Recruiters already begin to imagine how candidates would behave on board the aircraft if they were already Flight Attendants. And all these must be done in less than two minutes.

What do Recruiters check and how during these two minute frame? Their curriculum, their photos and their professional image.

Curriculum:

- The CV must be well structured, without spelling or grammar mistakes and written in English. Under no circumstances will a curriculum in another language other than English be accepted.

- Be careful with the English level that you use in your CV and try to be as humble as possible as Recruiters will compare the level you indicate with the way that the curriculum is written. It is very common to see "high level" and then the writing of it does not make any sense.
- Because any nationality can participate in an Open Day or an Assessment Day (for example, a Dominican applying to a selection process in the United States), Recruiters need to know what every candidate's nationality is as well as their native language, since Emirates only recruits native languages.
- The baccalaureate must be completed and a certificate of completion will be requested during the final interview stage. In Emirates, not having a high school diploma or more than 12 years of study is a non-negotiable requirement.
- Recruiters also pay attention to date of birth as they want to make sure that the candidate is over 21 years of age. As said, there is no maximum age published for Emirates; however, the truth is that most of the "senior" candidates tend to hide their age and date of birth in the curriculum because they feel that perhaps it could go against them and to avoid being discarded at such an early stage. But even if you try to cover it, Recruiters can also calculate a candidate's age from the date he/she finished high school.
- Although it is not a requirement to have previous experience in customer service, it is highly recommended

that the candidate has at least one year of professional experience, either with non-regulated jobs or internships. In addition, it will be difficult to pass the final interview as the Recruiter will be asking for examples of past situations at work only.

- Last but not least, there is certain information in the CV that can make us stand out from the other candidates and that it can help us "jump" to the next phase. This is generally the case for candidates who have lived or worked abroad, or those who have prior flying experience.

Photos:

- Candidates must submit a formal “full body” and “head and shoulders” photograph scanned attached to the CV, according to the standards that you will find in each airline’s website.
- In this first phase of the process, Recruiters will mainly check if a candidate could be an Emirates Cabin Crew member and how they would portray the uniform through the pictures.
- Interviewers will also make sure that the photos do not have photoshop or any photographic retouching and, with the candidate in front, they can detect if the candidate has whitened their teeth, has softened acne, or has reduced his/her waist in the photo...

Professional image:

- It is not about being an Abercrombie or a Victoria Secret model, but for the Cabin Crew role, it is important to have a good professional presence.

- Recruiters will do a quick visual candidate check and analyze aspects such as tattoos, marks, scars, acne or serious skin problems, piercings, teeth, hands, smile, etc. They will also visually analyze if the person has a good height/weight ratio and they will compare it with the photos submitted.

- If a candidate didn't iron his/her suit, came with dirty hair or wearing torn stockings, he/she won't be projecting a professional and cared image, and that may be reason enough to be discarded from the process. On the other hand, someone who is attending an Open Day wearing jeans but showing a groomed image has more chances to pass this very first stage than a person wearing a suit but with signs of poor personal hygiene and grooming. Remember that Recruiters are visualizing candidates "as they would report to a flight" but if they are already showing a disheveled image during the selection process, how might they report to work once they got the job and the initial excitement fades on?

- And last, professional image is not only projected with our looks or the clothes we wear, but also with the tone of voice we use, our non-verbal language or even the way we move. Cabin Crew members are the airline's employees who spend most time with passengers and consequently,

they are mainly responsible if they get a good or a bad experience on board. For this reason, we could say that Flight Attendants are “the airline’s ambassadors” and this is why having a well groomed image and a professional body language is key in such a role.

When a candidate hands over a resume, the Recruiter usually asks one or two questions. The objective is mainly to break the ice and to see how applicants express themselves in English while they quickly check the CV and the photos. Interviewers don’t have a question framework they should ask, so they can inquire anything related to your resume, like for example if you are currently working, if you have flown before or about the motivation to work for the airline. It could also be the case that due to a high volume of attendance, you don’t get any questions at all. The question about the motivation could be asked several times throughout the process. Although it may seem like a simple question, it gives interviewers lots of information about what the real reasons are that push this person to “leave everything behind” and start a new life in the Middle East. Not all candidates have the same motivation to join Emirates and interviewers are only looking for those “who have real passion for the role” and those who are aware of the new lifestyle that, although exciting, can sometimes be very difficult. An applicant wanting to work for Emirates just because it’s the best airline in the world, because they love customer service and they love traveling or even because they are jobless, will definitely not be enough for an airline to hire him/her.

During a recruitment process, Recruiters must make sure that they do not make any poor hiring decisions as it could go against them. Hiring a Flight Attendant that breaks the first three-year contract means a very high cost for the airline that obviously it doesn't want to assume. To name a few: the recruitment itself, the outbound flight to Dubai, accommodation, transportation, training, simulator, uniformity or medical tests are costs directly associated with each candidate that, when they decide to leave for good before the first year, are not covered. As a curiosity for you to know, a candidate is not profitable for the airline until he/she completes their three-year contract and that is why it is extremely important that the right motivation is detected during recruitment. I remember when I was leading Open Days as Emirates Recruiter, I came to hear real barbarities when asking applicants about their motivation to join. Below you will find some examples of what you should never answer.

"Because I do not have a job"

"Because I want to travel around the world for free"

"Because I have heard that conditions are very good"

"Because I have experience as a waiter and I think it's a job I could do"

"Because by being an Emirates Cabin Crew I can help my family financially"

"Because I would like to try a new experience"

“Because my dream is to be a pilot but it is very expensive”

By answering these, you would be showing that the motivation to apply as a Cabin Crew member would be purely “a means to achieve something more” and Recruiters can sense that, after the excitement period ends and because of a poor motivation, you might not be providing a great onboard service, and if the airline demands something from you at a later stage, most probably you could also end up showing signs of resistance or disagreement and you might end up causing trouble and complaining about everything on board.

Being honest and talking from my own experience as Emirates Flight Attendant, I can assure you that it isn't an easy job at all. You will face very complicated flights (either because of the passengers, because of your supervisor or because you weren't able to sleep well the night before), in which you will want to resign and, unless you really love your job, you might end up doing it. And in addition to that, remember that you will also face the challenges of living in a Muslim country with a hellish heat almost half of the year. As a sweet reminder, if you would like to know more about what life in Dubai is like, I recommend you read my first book *Life after Dubai* where I explain in detail all the perks and challenges as a Middle Eastern crew.

Summarizing, what Recruiters are looking for is true passion towards the company and towards the position and you have to be careful that the answer does not sound prepared or rehearsed. So I propose that you do an act of reflection and put your ideas in writing as to the true

motivation to work for the airline of your dreams. The CV drop off is your moment to shine and to get the best of yourself.

12.2.- GROUP ACTIVITIES

Once the CV screening is completed, interviewers invite all candidates to leave the room while they decide which ones go on to the next phase and which ones are rejected. Selected candidates will go directly to the next phase: the first group dynamic.

The first group activity is called “Ice Breaker” and candidates are seated in a circle of 20-25 people maximum where the activity consists of working in teams of two. In this first group exercise, Recruiters don’t analyze competencies and they just observe how candidates communicate to each other, what their professional image is like, their English level or any pending doubts that have remained from the previous stage: does the candidate have a tattoo on his/her neck? Is his/her body mass index correct? Has he/she completed High School? How old is he/she? While applicants prepare for their presentations in pairs, Recruiters call candidates individually to confirm pending doubts about the curriculum and to check the arm reach and height test. As explained previously, those tests are directly related to emergency and security issues, so consequently if any candidate does not comply with the requirement, he/she will be invited to leave the room right after the group exercise. In this small chat with the interviewer, you might be asked about your motivation again or a small behavioral question, which will be explained in detail later on. Once the first group activity is completed, candidates are invited to leave the room again and Recruiters decide which candidates will go ahead in the selection process.

The second group activity is a real group interview which we could define as “a verbal discussion where the objective is to discuss a topic or solve a problem as a team within an atmosphere of harmony and respect and in a limited period of time”. In the Emirates recruitment process, group dynamics have approximately six to nine candidates and a topic is proposed where the group has to offer a common solution. Recruiters observe behaviors and competencies that during an individual interview are difficult to spot, due to the impossibility of being able to see applicants “act live” in hypothetical situations. It is important to know that group dynamics have no solution and in the end, there are no winners or losers.

What are the competencies that are usually observed in group dynamics?

a) Teamwork:

This is undoubtedly the most important competency analyzed in this type of activity. Knowing how to work as a team is essential to be able to perform the role of a Cabin Crew, and this is the skill that we want to find in all candidates. But how can you demonstrate that you are able to work as part of a team in a group dynamic? By empathizing with your colleagues, establishing common goals and involving the entire team in decision-making. Despite that, try to avoid being the group leader or imposing your ideas on the rest, as this will not benefit you in any way and it will be an indicator that will warn us Recruiters that you do not know how to make decisions or solve problems as a team.

b) Communication:

Being able to communicate with others in an effective manner is definitely a very important factor in a group interview. Think it that way: if you don't share your thoughts and if you don't interact with others, *Recruiters won't have anything to write about your performance*, and remember that they are actually checking if you are suitable for the Cabin Crew role. But this doesn't mean that you should be talking all the time just for the sake of chatting. My recommendation is to offer two or three interactions within the group and most importantly: listen to what your colleagues are saying. Active listening encompasses the best of communication: actually hearing and understanding what's being said, processing the information and responding in order to clarify and elicit more details. Active listening is the foundation of effective communication. On many occasions, we are more worried about what or when we should speak, instead of actively listening to others. Remember also that non-verbal communication is almost as important as oral communication and just with our body language or with our tone of voice, we could be communicating signals without being fully aware of it. As a matter of fact, there have been a number of studies on the complex topic of nonverbal communication with varying results. However, most experts agree that 70 to 93 percent of all communication is nonverbal. One of the most well-known research projects on nonverbal communication was led by Dr. Mehrabian in the 1960s.

We could be very quiet in a group dynamic but through our posture be sending signals to interviewers that we are bored, disinterested or even disagreeing with the topic that is being discussed. For example, if during a group dynamic a candidate is not paying attention to what others are saying and he/she seems to be distracted, it could indicate Recruiters that this person is not listening because he is not really motivated or because he/she is not understanding what is being said in English. Be enthusiastic and positive with the group but mind your posture at all times, remembering that you are being evaluated in a recruitment process for an airline.

c) Excellence in service:

As you might know by now, apart from ensuring the safety of the passengers inside the aircraft, the other important Cabin Crew role is to offer a service on board. Therefore, interviewers should also evaluate the capacity of each candidate to provide an excellent service beyond the customer's expectations. Recruiters would like to see candidates that excel delivering a service and who have a high level of creativity in problem solving, seeking consensus and being nice to peers. But how to demonstrate excellence in service in a group dynamic? Easy: listen to what the customer has to say, empathize with him/her, apologize, offer an alternative and forget the word "no".

d) Professionalism:

It is very important that during the discussion, candidates maintain a professional posture and have an appropriate

tone of voice, especially when things do not go as they should because the conversation has turned around, or they feel that their opinion is not heard.

Below you will find some general tips on how to behave in a group dynamic:

- Contribute to the conversation but without wanting to dominate the rest of the group.
- Don't talk too much and avoid being the center of attention. Because of our nerves, sometimes we tend to dominate the group.
- Don't be silent. Sometimes we do not open our mouth throughout the exercise, because we never seem to find the right moment to give our opinion.
- It is important that we bear in mind that the formula "less is more" is key in group dynamics. Taking the initiative is good (especially if you are in a very quiet group), but it also implies a certain risk of danger, as initiative could be easily confused with imposition if we don't control it well.
- When the exercise starts, it is advisable to always wait a couple of minutes to see where the conversation goes to continue building consensus and in order to achieve the group's common goal.
- Mind your body language by maintaining a professional and open posture.

- If you notice that a candidate has not contributed anything to the conversation, you can ask him/her what his/her opinion is by saying his/her name if you can.
- Smile. Sometimes we are so nervous about the selection process itself that we forget the most important “weapon” that we have to sell ourselves: our smile!

Usually when we are immersed in a group dynamic, we are so worried about using the correct words in English, or to spot when the right moment to talk is, that we forget the most important thing: demonstrate that we are able to work as a team. Listen to your colleague when he/she is expressing his/her opinion on a topic and when it is your turn to intervene in the conversation, refer to his/her idea without discrediting it and then add your comments. For example: "I agree with Cristina regarding ____ but I also think that we could also ____".

When the group dynamic is completed and if the Recruiter needs so, an additional role play exercise could be added. Role plays are exercises in which candidates should imitate crew or passengers in a hypothetical scenario inside the plane. Usually, interviewers would be evaluating candidates who are taking the Flight Attendant role, but those who take the candidate role should be careful not to be too harsh with their colleagues, since they could show that they don't know how to work within a team. We could say that the "luck factor" also plays an important part in a group interview but unfortunately, this is something out of our hands... It might be the case that you belong to a group in which there is good harmony and

chemistry, or you may participate in a very competitive one in which you have to deal with dominant candidates who prevent others from expressing their opinion.

12.3.- ONLINE TESTS

Hiring and recruitment are important processes as they aim to bring in talented people into an organization. Employees are the backbone of any business helping the company soar new heights by enhancing productivity, growth, and success. Therefore, it goes without saying that such processes should be planned well and carried out with the utmost care in order to deliver effective results and derive maximum benefits. In the process of hiring and recruitment, the idea is to get to know the candidates well and compare their qualifications, skills and traits with those required for the job role. A job-fit candidate can do wonders for the company, whereas a mismatch is a problem in every aspect.

The traditional methods of hiring and recruitment involve the use of resumes and interviews. They neither yield the best insight about the candidate, nor do they allow for reliable and right hiring decisions. In fact, resumes can be misleading, candidates may put up their best for interviews, and interviewers get blinded by their own set of biases and prejudices. All of these factors contribute to an unpredictable hiring decision, which is usually a hit-or-miss case. In addition, the traditional method is unstructured, time-consuming, effort-intensive and expensive. That is where the new age online test for recruitment comes in handy. Having said that, in this section we will focus on how Emirates online tests should be carried out, although they can be applicable for any other airline or organization.

Some years ago, English and psychometric tests were part of the activities that were carried out in an Open Day

and/or Assessment Day. The problem was that by taking these tests in person, the recruiting events were very long and candidates were exhausted at the end of the day, so they were not having the right state of mind. On the other hand, these tests can be easily completed at home and because they are timed, it's difficult to try to copy them or alter the results. Subsequently, this structure has changed and both tests are performed online prior to the final interview.

a) Psychometric tests:

Although there are no correct or incorrect answers in this type of evaluations, psychometric tests are somewhat more complex to complete. Interviewers identify the people who can best fit in the Cabin Crew role and those whose values and aspirations are better aligned with the ones of the company. As mentioned, Recruiters can't evaluate candidates just with the information that appears on their CV or with the one they demonstrate throughout the different stages of the Open Day. Although these techniques are of course useful and necessary in a recruitment process, sometimes Recruiters could be biased as these procedures are not 100% objective. Some candidates, either because they are savvy or because they have experience conducting job interviews, know how to act and guess the answers that Recruiters are looking for. But thanks to psychometric tests, the fit of the candidate to the Cabin Crew role can be evaluated in a much more precise, comparable, fair and effective way.

Psychometric tests are a common recruitment tool used in airlines and in multinational organizations, as the information obtained is used to identify capacities, values, aptitudes, skills and professional competencies. Psychometric tests determine which candidates would have the best fit with the airline values, predicting job performance and applicant's behavior. It is worth mentioning that the test results should always be used as a support tool for the final interview, and they should never be used independently to make hiring decisions.

b) English tests:

Although it's mandatory that candidates complete an online English test prior to the final interview, as mentioned earlier, the English level of each applicant is being checked throughout the process. We could say that the English evaluation that is sent to candidates is quite easy and usually everyone passes it. It's a multiple choice test with actually very simple grammar concepts that, if you really have a good level of English, you don't have to worry about at all.

Recruiters are responsible that all the candidates invited to the final interview have an appropriate level of English to make sure that they can successfully pass the interview in this matter. However, it is also true that in some cases, and because it's not a very difficult assessment, candidates are too confident and they fail for not having read the questions or the answers properly.

Another drawback that can arise when performing an online English test is that they are timed and some candidates feel pressure because of this matter. The positive part of completing tests online is that candidates can perform them from their homes, but other logistical problems may also arise due to not having computer resources or the appropriate environment. So even though the English test is apparently simple, it can take you away from the interview for not giving it the importance it requires, as if you fail it, the final interview will automatically be canceled.

Below you will find some general tips and tricks that will help you complete the online tests in a successful manner.

- Online tests must be carried out individually, in a computer and ensuring a good internet connection in advance.
- Choose a quiet space where you will not be distracted or interrupted during the time of the test: put your mobile on silent and tell your roommates not to bother you as a single alteration in the results could give a wrong feedback from your profile.
- The online tests are timed. It's important to keep time in mind, but try not to obsess over it.
- Read the questions carefully and calmly. The majority of errors are usually caused because we are not paying enough attention.

- If you have a choice, it is better that you do the psychometric test in your native language to make sure you understand well what is being asked. Usually the system allows you to change the language, before taking the test.
- Always imagine how you would act in a professional environment.
- Do not lie. Some questions will be repeated and if you do not tell the truth, you can make the mistake of answering a different thing in each question.
- Relax and enjoy! You are closer to fulfilling your dream of flying. If you have come this far, you already have more than half the way done.

12.4.- THE FINAL INTERVIEW

The final interview is undoubtedly the most difficult stage of a recruitment process and although reaching this stage is quite an achievement, it does not mean that you have the job already. Since candidates face such a long and tedious process, especially with Middle Eastern airlines, it is common that when we reach the final step, we tend to relax. While it's true that reaching the final interview is a very good sign, as it means that most likely we have all the qualities that the airline seeks in an employee, the game isn't over.

We could define a job interview as a conversation or exchange of ideas between two parties (interviewer and interviewee) in order to obtain valuable information. In recruitment, interviewers seek the best candidate for the requested position, according to the needs of the company. But when it comes to mass recruitment processes, the positive part is that Recruiters don't need just a person to fulfill the role, but the "not so positive part" is that candidate comparison methods are used to help Recruiters select the best ones. There are several types of interviews depending on the approach and structure, and each airline is responsible for deciding which type of interview is the most effective to select its future employees. However, most international airlines choose to conduct the same style of interviews. These could be classified according to their structure and according to their approach.

Interviews according to structure:

a) The *structured interview* is made up of a series of predetermined and invariable questions that all applicants must answer for a given position. The questions are prepared in advance in each area and before the interview, by the interviewer.

b) The *unstructured or free interview* is one in which you work with open questions without a pre-established order, acquiring characteristics of conversation. This technique consists of asking questions according to the answers that arise during the interview. In addition, this type of interview has a rough idea of what is going to be asked and is improvised, depending on the candidate's responses.

c) The *semi-structured interview* is the one that combines structured questions with open ones. It is the most common type of interview that will allow you to show your ability to openly defend your candidacy.

Interviews by approach:

a) In a *curriculum interview*, the Recruiter focuses on the data in the curriculum and on any doubts he may have. These are usually questions related to professional experience, training or knowledge.

b) In the *competence interview*, all the questions revolve around the candidate's professional competencies. The interviewer is interested in knowing how the people he interviews work. The purpose of the competency interview

is to detect whether the person has previously shown the necessary behaviors according to the requirements of the workplace. The questions will address how we resolved a situation in the past. They will ask about specific situations, behaviors carried out, responsibilities and results obtained, for example.

Interviews in Middle Eastern airlines (Emirates, Etihad and Qatar Airways) are usually structured and competency-based, although sometimes some unstructured or curricular questions can also be included, if the occasion calls for it. With this type of interviews, Recruiters seek to analyze and anticipate how a candidate's future behavior will be once selected, based on how he/she has acted in the past in similar situations. In this type of interviews, answers such as “it has never happened to me” or “right now I don't remember” are not valid and could be the cause of not getting the job. So as an advice, you should prepare well in advance all those experiences or situations that have happened to you with customers, Managers or coworkers, for instance, and recruitment professionals highly value it. In an interview, it is important that your message is structured and clear, and you know how to communicate in an effective way. When explaining past experiences, please remember that the Recruiter wasn't there and he/she will have to evaluate if you are competent or not based on what you said. And apart from that, there is the challenge of having to do it in English, if that's not your first language.

Below you will find some common behavioral questions asked during interviews and what would be expected to be answered:

- a) *Describe a situation in which a customer has complained to you.* Here Recruiters would like to see your ability to solve problems and to offer an excellent service, apologizing and offering alternatives.
- b) *Describe a situation in which you have anticipated the needs of a customer.* Here Recruiters would like to see your ability to offer an excellent service and how to impress the customer by going beyond his/her expectations.
- c) *Describe a situation in which you have had to solve a problem as a team.* Here Recruiters would like to see if you are comfortable working as a team or if you tend to have a more individual approach to conflict resolution.
- d) *Describe a situation in which you have had to adapt to a last minute change.* Here Recruiters would like to see if you are able to adapt to last minute changes, or if you are resistant to change.
- e) *Describe a situation in which you have taken into consideration a customer's culture or religion before offering a service.* Here Recruiters would like to see your ability to deal with other cultures and religions as both, Emirates and Dubai, are multicultural.
- f) *Describe a situation in which you have suggested a new idea to your Manager.* Here Recruiters would like to see how creative you are in a certain situation.

Bear in mind that in each interview you might get a different set of questions, as these will be asked based on the results obtained from your psychometric tests, to probe if you are competent or not in a certain area. Although psychometric testing is a very valuable tool that provides lots of information to the interviewer about a future candidate's performance, the objective of these tests is to probe if the information obtained from the tests is reliable comparing it with the candidate answers. I am going to give you an example so that you can understand better. Imagine that you are interviewing a candidate for the role of Cabin Crew and the psychometric test suggests: "He is a person with a tendency to make decisions independently without having the support of the group". As you already know, teamwork is a key competency for this position and we would need a solid response from the candidate to double check what the test advised.

In order to assess whether the candidate makes decisions independently or as a team, we could ask: "Please tell us a situation in which you have sought a solution to a problem as a team." And in here you might face different scenarios:

a) The candidate is not able to describe any situation in which he has sought a solution as a team because in fact, he never did it. In this scenario, the candidate would be marked as "not competent" within the teamwork area.

b) The candidate says a "rehearsed answer" and through probing questions, we find out that he is lying and trying to impress us. For example, these types of answers are given when in real life, success or achievement has been

attributed to someone else but in an interview, the applicant “decorates it” and makes it his own. In this scenario, the candidate would also be marked as “not competent” within the teamwork area.

c) The candidate gives you a solid example of how he was able to solve a problem as a team, contradicting what the psychometric test suggested. In this scenario, the candidate would be marked as “competent” within the teamwork area.

Surely at this time you are thinking... how come there could be discrepancies between the psychometric test results and the answers given by the candidate during a final interview? Well, the answer is simple. Psychometric tests are just support tools used by Recruiters to obtain prior information about candidates, and if the test says that a person has a predisposition to make decisions independently, it does not mean that he/she does it. In an interview, the Recruiter assesses whether the candidate is competent in all different capacities expected for the role of Cabin Crew (remember chapter 11 for detailed information) but, what happens when a candidate fails in one? Usually, if a candidate does not provide a solid example to one of the questions asked, or does not come up with an example at that time, Recruiters would ask a similar question whose answer would give us the same information. If the candidate is finally considered as not competent in that area, he/she would not be recommended for the job. Please bear in mind that candidates must be competent in all areas to work as Cabin Crew for Emirates and they do not check only that. In fact, everything is evaluated:

punctuality, grooming, having sent all documents on time, the online test results, the content and job breaks shown in the CV, the English level, his/her professional attitude, his/her smile... Remember that “a job interview is like a first date”, and just like someone who is trying to like another person when looking for a potential loving partner, candidates also tend to show their best behavior in an interview to please Recruiters. However, if on this first date candidates don’t even make the effort to smile, come with a non-presentable resume, do not send all documents requested and on time and fail in providing proper examples, the Recruiter will doubt about their professionalism and about their motivation towards the job.

13.- THE GOLDEN CALL

If successful for the job, you should be receiving a call from Dubai congratulating you for the job within the next three to six weeks from your interview date. However, if you did not submitted all documents on time this call might not be “The Golden Call” as yet. Having said that and before you get a heart attack when you see the +971 number appearing on your mobile phone screen, please make sure that there aren’t any pending documents to be sent during those waiting weeks. It is extremely important that all documents are sent on time because failing to do that could negatively influence your application and consequently, you could end up not receiving “The Golden Call” even if the Recruiter who is managing your file wants to recommend you for the job... But if the Recruiter only recommends, who is then the one who decides who joins the airline and who does not?

Emirates Recruiters have a checklist with all the forms that need to be included in each candidate's file during a Cabin Crew recruitment process. This file will be prepared if the recruitment team decide to recommend the candidate for the Cabin Crew role. The file should have the candidate's updated resume, the certificate of completion of last studies (high school or university degree), the photos, the English and the psychometric test results, the interview notes and the recommendation form. So if you are one of those who receives a call from Dubai in which they ask you to resend the photos or to send any pending documents, do

so as soon as possible from the moment you get that call, as it is definitely a sign that they want to recommend you. But as said, if you fail to send the documents after the deadline Recruiters tell you, you will lose your golden opportunity to fly for Emirates. Once the Recruiter has assembled the candidate's file, he/she delivers it to the recruitment director who will do a thorough check on whether the candidate fits the role or not. This is actually the stage when the applicant's photos are important, as the recruitment director didn't have the chance to meet the candidate in person and he has to make hiring decisions according to the Recruiter's notes and the documents that he/she submitted. But the director is not actually the one who decides either. He signs off candidates and acts as a "filter" before the files go to the next person in line: The Divisional Senior Vice President Service Delivery. So if you manage (or have managed) to receive the famous call, that is because one of the most important people in the airline has seen your file, and has decided that he wants you to be part of the best airline in the world. On the other hand, if after the final interview the recruitment team decides not to recommend a candidate for the job, they store all the documents from this candidate with the rest of the documents of this campaign in the file room and for 4 years.

"The Golden Call" is, as it is known in the airline's jargon, the call a candidate receives from Dubai when he/she has been successful for the job of Cabin Crew. As a matter of fact, receiving any call from Dubai is always good news, because if they are not planning to recommend you, you wouldn't get a call but an email.

Before, the time that candidates had to wait between the final interview and the long-awaited call was always six weeks. *Six long weeks* in which there were days when you were dreaming of a new life in Dubai discovering the world, although there were also days when you were revisiting what you did or said during that last interview and you crumbled at the thought that perhaps you had not had so much feeling with the Recruiter as you thought... But the good news for you is that before covid-19 came into our lives, Emirates reduced the waiting time from six to three weeks. In addition, with the current online application system, you have the opportunity to regularly check the status of your application, so you can sense if you are going to receive your golden call soon...

Pretty much everyone knows what the golden call means, but not everyone knows where this term comes from or when it started to be used. In my time, I knew that I had to wait a few weeks to receive the call from Dubai that would change my life, but I was not very aware of why it was called this way. I assumed that it was called “golden” because of the preconceived image that I had of the city of Dubai as luxurious, opulent and full of gold. And I also remember that all Emirates documents had a printed logo in gold. To investigate further what the beginning was, I decided to contact the Facebook group of former Emirates crew to which I belong, in order to have more information on the subject. In the early 90s, Emirates did not call successful applicants to inform them that they had been selected. In fact, what they did was sending straight away an offer letter via Fedex with all the joining information. At the end of the 90s, Emirates began to change its strategy

matching with the birth of "Hotmail" and the expansion of e-mails, starting to make the first calls followed by an email. But it wasn't until 2001 that we have evidence of the first call to a candidate, in which the human resources person referred to the term of "Golden Call" to inform an applicant that he/she had obtained the job.

Receiving the Golden Call has definitely changed the life of many people and no doubt, I could say from my own experience that it was one of the most magical moments I have ever had. A colleague of mine described receiving The Golden Call as "the most exciting moment of her life after having children". How big is that?

So I really hope with all my heart that this book helps you achieve your golden call wherever that be, or at least be closer to your dream, since here you will find, in first person, all answers and secrets from someone who has been both sides of the table of the most envied recruitment process in the world. Remember that I am also at your disposal through my Instagram account at @carmenlarecruiter and through www.larecruiter.es (there is an English language option available), where I offer personalized advice that, together with this book, are the perfect formula to get the job as Cabin Crew. Remember that you are the only person responsible for making your dreams come true, and now you don't have any excuse not to do it.

Let's take off together!

14.- FAQ

1. Could a candidate reach the final interview without having any professional experience?

It is not the usual thing, but there have been cases in which candidates without any professional experience have reached the final interview and have gotten the job! In this case, candidates strived to offer good examples about their past experiences doing internships, volunteering or non-regulated jobs, or even practicing sports.

2. If I have failed the final interview, do I have to repeat the whole process?

Yes, absolutely. You have to wait a few months to be able to register for an Open Day again. The recruitment department will inform you accordingly about the amount of months that you need to wait, but lately it was a 6 months frame.

3. Can married candidates apply?

Yes, of course they can. Recruiters won't be asking you if you are married or single. The only exception is that if a candidate is married, his/her spouse will have to manage his/her work visa himself/herself and live in another accommodation until you successfully pass the probational period and you can apply for the outside living allowance.

4. Can candidates with children apply?

Of course they can, but children won't be able to live with you in the company apartment. But if your husband and children live in Dubai already, of course you can live with them after the probation period.

5. Does it go against your application if you have a University degree?

Of course not! Emirates highly values that its Cabin Crew have university studies.

6. Is the “reach test” performed with one hand or two?

It is usually with two hands, unless you are a tall person that can reach comfortably.

7. Is speaking the Arabic language a plus?

Unless you are native Arabic and you can speak it and read it properly, it will not help you in the recruitment process.

8. In an Open Day, do boys have more or less chances than girls?

Boys have the same possibilities as girls in a Cabin Crew recruitment process, but it is true that the airline tries to have at least 30% boys in each flight.

9. If you have a medical problem, can you participate in the Open Day?

Medical evaluations are done after receiving the Golden Call. However, bear in mind that joining the airline is subject to a satisfactory medical check.

10. What if in an Open Day I am late after a break?

It makes a pretty bad impression on the Recruiter when a candidate is late after a break, especially in aviation interviews, in which punctuality is extremely important, as an aircraft will never wait for you.

11. What happens if at the time of the interview I have not yet delivered all the documents?

In principle, for the final interview you must have already sent all the required documents and photographs. However, in case of need, the Recruiters may allow you a few extra days to send in the pending documents.

12. What happens if I fail the English test?

If you fail the online English test, you are automatically discarded from the process and your scheduled final interview is canceled.

13. Is it possible that after receiving the Golden Call and the date of joining, everything is canceled?

Yes, it could be. Normally, this happens when pathologies or diseases that are declared on the medical questionnaire interfere with the performance of the Cabin Crew role. But you must not lie either, as before starting the training you will have a complete medical check-up in Dubai and if you do not pass it, you will be sent back to your country of origin and even with a fine, for having lied in the questionnaire.

14. Can I go to an Open/Assessment Day in another country? Do I have more or less chances?

Yes, of course you can attend them in another country and you have the same possibilities to get hired. However, travel and accommodation expenses would be on your own.

15. I speak 4 languages. Is that good for Emirates?

Unless all 4 languages are native, it is not relevant.

16. Will the Emirates Open Days format be back?

Nobody knows how the post-covid-19 selection processes will be.

17. What happens if I fail the training?

If you fail an exam you have two chances to pass it, but bear in mind that each time that you fail, the cut-off mark is higher. If you still don't pass them, you have to repeat the entire week and they place you in the previous batch. If you still do not pass, you won't be able to fly without the

training, so you will be returned to your country by paying a fine.

18. When will Emirates recruit Cabin Crew again?

That is the million dollar question, but in my personal opinion that won't happen until everyone is vaccinated, the pandemic situation is over, the aviation industry recovers, passengers start flying again and the economy reactivates.

19. What if I'm nervous during final interview and words don't come out?

It is normal to be nervous before any job interview, but if the words do not come out, we can interpret that you do not have a good English level because you are not able to maintain a normal conversation under pressure.

20. Can I attend an Emirates Open Day if I do not have a Cabin Crew certificate?

Of course. Having a Cabin Crew certificate is not a requirement, but if you have it, it could help you in a personal capacity to familiarize yourself with the basic operations and emergency equipment when not having previous flight experience.

21. Can I attend an Emirates Open Day if I don't have a European passport?

Of course! All passports are accepted in Emirates, as everyone will need a working visa in Dubai which will be managed by the airline itself.

22. As a male candidate with a beard, should I shave for an Open Day?

Although it is not necessary to shave for an Open Day, I do recommend doing it so Recruiters see that you are aware of the airline grooming standards. You will only have to be shaved for the final interview and when taking your photos.

23. For how long is the initial contract in Emirates?

It's a three-year renewable contract.

24. What happens if I get pregnant during the first contract?

During the first three-year contract, you cannot get pregnant even if you are married.

25. What happens if I lie with my date of birth and later I say that it was a typographical error?

Recruiters don't like lies and we already know that some candidates over 35 or 40 years old try to hide their age in that way. So it will not do you any good to lie, because at the final interview stage you will be asked for your passport

and when they see that you lied, you will be automatically rejected.

26. If I am over 35 years old but I have flying experience and good looks, do I have a chance to join Emirates?

Unfortunately in the Middle East there are very few airlines that accept crew members at that age, even if you look younger. As explained in chapter 9, it is not about the looks...

27. If I wear reading glasses, could I attend an Open Day with them on?

Of course you can, but the photos must be taken without glasses.

28. Can I bring a bag to the Open Day to store my CV, mobile phone and a bottle of water?

Of course you can, as long as it is aligned with your professional image.

29. Can I attend an Open Day with an expired passport or without any passport?

Of course you can. However, it is recommended that you have your passport issued or renewed as soon as you can, as this could interfere in your on boarding process once selected.

30. If I am a pilot student, do I have a better chance if I start as Cabin Crew in the airline?

Absolutely not. The pilot and Cabin Crew recruitment processes are done separately and there isn't any internal vacancies to become a pilot. In addition, if Recruiters see that your motivation to be a Cabin Crew is just because of that, you will be automatically discarded from the process.

31. I am 20 years old but I still have a few months to go until I turn 21. Can I attend an Open Day?

Yes, you can show up for an Open Day or register online up to four months before your 21st birthday.

32. Is it mandatory to wear a formal attire to an Open Day/Assessment Day?

It is not mandatory, but it is highly recommended, although for the final interview and for the photos it is a requirement to be dressed in a formal way.

33. Are girls with short hair accepted at Emirates?

Of course! As long as the hair does not reach the shoulders' level, it is not necessary to wear it in a bump.

34. Can I attend an Open Day if I wear braces?

It is recommended that you do not attend an Open Day and that you do not take the photos until the orthodontics have been completely removed.

35. How recent must the photos be submitted?

I would recommend no more than six months in advance.

36. Is the minimum height of 1.60 meters the same for women and men?

Yes, it is the same for both.

37. If I'm 1.58 or 1.59 meters tall, do I have a chance?

Unfortunately not.

38. Do Recruiters have a fixed number of candidates that should go to final interview?

Absolutely not. The more the better, and this will be a sign that the recruitment event has been a success.

39. What do Recruiters do with all the CVs delivered in the open days: do they throw them away?

All documents are kept in a file room for approximately four years, and after that time they are destroyed.

40. When is the right time to mention that you have lived in various places?

In the resume!

41. Can a veiled Muslim woman fly for Emirates?

For security reasons, the veil is not part of the Cabin Crew uniform in Emirates. However, in airport uniforms, for instance, the veil is part of the uniform should you need it.

42. Do Emirates stewardesses work in heels inside the aircraft?

No, in the Emirates Cabin Crew uniform there are two types of footwear: high heels for boarding, disembarking and off-plane travel, and flat shoes for service.

43. Could you live in the Middle East if you are gay?

Of course you can! As long as you don't openly display your sexual orientation during the recruitment process and you don't show affection in public when in the Middle East. Remember that the airline and the country are Muslim.

44. Do Emirates, Etihad and Qatar crews have to pay for transportation or their uniforms?

No, they do not have to pay for anything, not even for shoes, as they do in some airlines.

45. What if they call me for "The Golden Call" but at that precise moment I am unable to answer the call?

They usually call two or three more times. But as a tip, always write two contact numbers on your CV, activate your voicemail and during those weeks of waiting, never put your mobile phone on silent.

46. What happens if you quit during the first year?

You would have to pay the proportional part corresponding to what the airline has invested in you (training, accommodation, round trip tickets, etc).

47. If I couldn't complete the last year of my University Degree, should I still include that in the CV?

Even if you have not finished your University studies, it is always good to indicate the years you have completed and you can put between brackets the reason why it is not completed (financial issues, work/study incompatibility, change of residence, etc).

48. Does the airline have preference to recruit certain nationalities?

Recruitment is not based on nationalities; however, sometimes it is based on the native languages that the airline needs, since there must be at least one person who speaks that language on each Emirates flight. For example, on a Dubai-Madrid flight, there should be at least one person who speaks Spanish, apart from the Arabic native speaker requirement which is mandatory in all flights.

49. Is it necessary to have previous experience as Cabin Crew?

No, in Emirates it is not a requirement to have previous flying experience.

50.What professional experience is required to be successful for the job?

The ideal previous experience for Middle Eastern Cabin Crew would be any that is performed in front of customers and working as part of a team.

15.- ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carmen was born in the lovely Barcelona in July 1980. From a very young age, she was passionate about discovering new cultures and traveling to new places, a fact that led her to live a total of ten years outside her home country (two years in England and eight years in Dubai) before she was twenty. Carmen studied Tourism and Hotel Management at the University of Barcelona and started working within the hotel industry before her flying career took off in London. After a couple of years, she was selected to fly for Emirates as Cabin Crew, where she was quickly promoted to Flight Supervisor and later to Emirates Recruiter, where she led the famous Open Days for three years. Combining it with work, Carmen continued studying a postgraduate in Marketing Management and got certified at “The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development” (CIPD), which is a professional association for human resource management professionals. After eight years living in Dubai, she decided to put an end to it and returned to Spain where she is still working in recruitment and as an interview coach. In her first book *Life after Dubai* Carmen tells us about her experience as Cabin Crew and Recruiter and how she suffered from culture reverse shock when moving back home, after living so long abroad. If you are interested in reading the book, it is also available in Amazon.

If you want to keep in touch with Carmen and follow her day to day, you can do so through her Instagram account @carmenlaRecruiter. Or if you would like Carmen to

prepare you for your airline interviews, you can contact her through her website www.larecruiter.es.

INDEX

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Preface _____ | 6 |
| 2. Introduction _____ | 8 |
| 3. Why is Cabin Crew recruitment so important? _____ | 14 |
| 4. The beginning of recruitment in aviation _____ | 18 |
| 5. The Emirates recruitment process over the years _____ | 22 |
| 6. Open Day vs Assessment Day _____ | 27 |
| 7. Curriculum Vitae _____ | 31 |
| 8. Photos _____ | 40 |
| 9. Minimum requirements to apply as Cabin Crew _____ | 47 |
| 9.1. Age _____ | 50 |
| 9.2. Reach test and minimum height _____ | 56 |
| 9.3. Minimum education _____ | 58 |
| 9.4. English language _____ | 60 |
| 9.5. Tattoos _____ | 63 |
| 9.6. Body mass index (BMI) _____ | 67 |
| 10. Grooming for the interview _____ | 70 |
| 11. Professional competencies of the Cabin Crew role _____ | 75 |
| 11.1. Service excellence _____ | 77 |
| 11.2. Teamwork _____ | 82 |
| 11.3. Flexibility _____ | 85 |
| 11.4. Adaptability _____ | 88 |
| 11.5. Cross cultural awareness _____ | 91 |
| 11.6. Results orientation _____ | 95 |
| 11.7. Resilience _____ | 97 |
| 12. Stages of the Emirates recruitment process _____ | 100 |
| 12.1. CV drop off _____ | 103 |
| 12.2. Group activities _____ | 112 |
| 12.3. Online tests _____ | 119 |
| 12.4. The final interview _____ | 124 |
| 13. The Golden Call _____ | 131 |
| 14. FAQ (frequent asked questions) _____ | 135 |
| 15. About the author _____ | 147 |