National
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ESOL
Listening Transcript

TUESDAY, 21 MAY

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM (approx)

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Instructions to reader(s):

Recording 1

The conversation below should be read clearly and naturally. After reading the introduction you should pause for 1 minute to allow candidates to read the questions. On completion of the first reading pause for 10 seconds, then read the conversation a second time. On completion of the second reading pause for 1 minute to allow candidates to write their answers.

Where special arrangements have been agreed in advance to allow the reading of the material, it should ideally be read by one male and one female speaker. Sections marked **(t)** should be read by the teacher.

(t) Recording 1

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Instructions to reader(s):

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(t) Recording 2

Listen to the recording and attempt the questions which follow. You will hear the recording twice.

You now have one minute to read the questions in Recording 2 before the recording begins.

(*one minute pause*)

TONE

Presenter Today on the Jobwise programme, we'll be talking to two people, Anna Barnes, an advertising executive based in Glasgow, and Peter Johnson, a GP in Aberdeen. And I think it's fair to say they have very different perspectives regarding the maximum length of time anyone should stay in a job. Hello to you both and welcome.

Anna Hi. Great to be here.

Peter Good morning.

Presenter So I'm interested in finding out, are the old days over, when people used to secure a job after leaving school or university and then stayed there until they collected their golden carriage clock?

Anna Oh, definitely. Changing your job every few years is considered the norm nowadays, at least in my field. I don't know anyone who's worked in the same company or organisation for their whole career.

Peter I have!

Presenter (*laughs*) We'll come to you in a moment, Peter. Anna, I'd guess you're in your mid-twenties?

Anna I wish! Early thirties, actually. But thanks for the compliment.

Presenter Still a different generation from Peter. Peter?

Peter Indeed. I consider myself an older worker. I've worked for the NHS for 42 years and spent 20 years at the same practice. And that's not particularly unusual. This is partly down to my role, which offers a great deal of flexibility and change, but I also think that people are inherently designed to put roots down.

Presenter Do you think it's a generation thing? So-called millennials, those born between 1980 and 1999, have very different expectations about jobs, don't they? Perhaps too early to put down roots?

Peter Of course when you're young it does no harm to move around a little and experiment, gain experience and so on. When I first graduated I did a couple of years' voluntary work in Malawi. But sooner or later young people need to settle down and actually start to grow in a job.

Anna Argh! I don't like the idea of putting roots down and growing in a job. I'm proud to say I've never done one job for more than three years. After a couple of years, sometimes months, I feel it's time for me to move on, to look for new challenges.

Presenter What you're saying, Anna, is in line with several surveys that suggest that younger workers aren't motivated by the same factors as previous generations, such as a job for life.

Anna That's definitely true. What's important for me is a good work-life balance and a sense of purpose, and financial success to a certain extent but not security at the expense of being tied down. I don't want to be stuck in the same boring job for life! I don't think I'm alone in that. I read somewhere that the average worker changes employer every five years or so.

Presenter But, is there a magic number? How long in a job is not long enough or too long? Is there a perfect number of years that'll make sure you don't stop progressing, but also doesn't make you look too, well, flighty?

Anna I suppose just three months in one role before moving on wouldn't look great, unless of course it was caused by a change in personal circumstances. But I don't think there's such a thing as a magic number.

Peter Three months is barely a summer job. I think a good ten years minimum will help one's career plans.

Anna Assuming you have any career plans, and whether you feel you get the right amount of challenge and flexibility. I think it's very specific to the person.

Peter The person and, surely the most crucial, is how big the organisation is. This must be a factor in determining how long a person stays. A smaller company often offers less opportunity for people to progress than a larger organisation, like the NHS.

Anna That's true.

Presenter Anna, do you agree that constantly moving to new roles without a good reason might make new employers wary?

Anna I don't agree. For me, it's important to have an open attitude to change. Also when you're regularly changing jobs you stay innovative and you continue to learn. You have to embrace new challenges . . .

Peter That's all very well, but I'd question one's ability to commit to an organisation. It suggests to me that you are **unable** to adapt to new environments and challenges if you're changing jobs every couple of years.

Anna Absolutely not! In my sector, job hopping's considered to be a necessity in order to keep up with changes in the market.

Peter But that worries me. It's well known that the NHS is constantly losing staff and their expertise. Having to recruit and retain replacements is costly.

Anna That may well be the case, but I am speaking for the individual, not organisations.

Presenter And on that note, we're going to have to end there. Peter, Anna, many thanks for joining us.

(*10 second pause after first reading*)

TONE

(*1 minute pause after second reading*)

TONE

Instructions to reader(s):

Recording 3

The conversation below should be read clearly and naturally. After reading the introduction you should pause for 1 minute to allow candidates to read the questions. On completion of the first reading pause for 10 seconds, then read the conversation a second time. On completion of the second reading pause for 1 minute to allow candidates to write their answers.

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(t) Recording 3

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(*one minute pause*)

TONE

(m/f) Hi there, and welcome to another edition of Education Issues. Now, some of you will have children who are thinking of going to university, so this may be most relevant to you, but it's an issue that affects many of us. I'm talking about two-tier admission to university. Recently, the Scottish universities agreed to a system whereby instead of having an accepted entry level they'll publish a minimum level, which will be lower.

At this point, youngsters who have been in care will be guaranteed a place if they meet the requirement. Then, those who come from the poorest 20 percent of families, although they won't be guaranteed entry, will also be judged against these lower exam grades when a university is — and I quote — 'confident that the applicant has more potential than they have had a chance to demonstrate'. Those from middle-class backgrounds seeking a university place will continue to be assessed against the tougher, existing thresholds.

This can be seen as a response to slow progress in attracting university students from the most deprived fifth of the community. The current figure is 14 percent and the target is to raise that to 20 percent by 2030. Of course, that figure of 14 percent isn't equal across the board. St Andrews, for example, has a notoriously poor record in attracting disadvantaged students, though it has made some progress recently.

Now, you can imagine the controversy all of this has caused. Many middle-class parents, perhaps the majority, feel that it discriminates against their children. And to this you can add the fact that students from poorer backgrounds are more likely to drop out before the end of the course.

But hold on a minute, here. Don't rush to phone me, or bombard me with texts just yet. There may be another side to this picture, because recent research by the University of Aberdeen has established that students from state schools are likely to do better at medical school than those from private schools. This is despite the fact that students from

the private sector score slightly higher in the entry tests. Professor Jen Cleland, the lead author of the paper, said that state school students tend to be more motivated and resilient than their privately-educated counterparts. She also said that because they may have had less support in place, once they get to university, they may already have well-developed non-academic attributes such as motivation and resilience.

So let me throw in a few thoughts from my own experience. I was sent off to a private boarding school at a fairly early age. Unlike many of my friends I quite enjoyed it, but most of our time was supervised. In the evening we had prep — or preparation — what you would call homework if you lived at home. So I sat in a room with the other pupils, no distractions and a million miles away from the experience of some state school pupils doing their homework. And we had small classes with enthusiastic teachers. The school partly depended on its exam results to recruit new pupils, so it ran like a business to make sure it got them. (pause) And I'm pretty sure my exam grades were boosted by that experience.

Now, when I went to university and tasted freedom for about the first time in my life, well, I didn't fall apart, but quite a few of my friends did. A couple of them just couldn't adjust to the discipline of having to study without being told to. One left and the other scraped through with a 3rd class degree. On the other hand, some ex-pupils from my school did very well. (*begin fade*)

So it's complicated, and here to discuss the issues with me are my two guests . . .

(*10 second pause after first reading*)

TONE

(*1 minute pause after second reading*)

(t) You now have one minute to check your answers.

(*1 minute pause*)

(t) This is the end of the listening test.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]