

Lesson plan: Employability Skills - A job interview

Try this sample lesson from **Open Mind** Intermediate (B1+) level, which looks at the essential skill of preparing for a job interview, and demonstrates ways in which students can analyse the performance of other job interview candidates and then develop their own skills in this area.

Level: Intermediate / CEFR B1+

Time: approx 45-60 minutes (or longer depending on how the activities are used)

How to use this lesson:

The lesson can be used for the whole class, who can work in pairs. Download and print out the [Student's Book pages](#) so each student has a copy and download the related [audio files](#).

Step 1: Think about questions you may be asked. (Ex. B, Ex. C)

Step 2: Prepare answers that emphasise the key points you want to make. (Ex. F)

Step 3: Practise your responses. (Ex. G)

Lead-in

- Explain to the students that in this Life Skills lesson, they will learn useful skills for preparing for a job interview.
- **Highlight** the importance of preparing for a job interview. Ask the students to work in pairs. If they are in work, ask them to tell their partner how they prepared for their job interview. If they are still studying at college or university, ask them to describe to their partner what they would do to prepare for a job interview.

A

- Draw the students' attention to the photos of the people being interviewed. Ask them to think about how the people might be feeling and to make a few notes to describe them.
- Ask them to compare their ideas in pairs.
- Listen to ideas from several students, e.g. *The man looks nervous and uncomfortable, probably because he is in a job interview.*

B (audio 2.40)

- Explain to the students that they are going to listen to the interview. Afterwards, they must decide whether they would give the man the job. Why or why not?
- Play the recording once. Ask the students to compare their choices and reasons in pairs.

Audioscript

Interviewer: So, tell me about yourself, Mr Green.

Mr Green: Erm. Well, I live in Swindon, and I'm married with two children. I like playing golf and travelling. Oh, and I'm 29 years old.

I: OK. What did you do in your last job?

Mr G: A little of everything. You know, the usual things people do in an office! Filled out forms. Dealt with customers over the phone. That kind of thing.

I: And what do you think are your strengths and weaknesses?

Mr G: Oh, er, I'm not really sure. You should ask my wife. She may have something to say about that!

I: OK. Erm. Can you tell me why you want to work for us?

Mr G: Well, the salary is good and I'm bored with the job I do now, so it would be a good career move for me.

I: If we offered you the job, when could you start?
Mr G: I'm not sure. I'm going on holiday for four weeks next Monday. Any time after that.

I: And finally, Mr Green, have you got any questions?
Mr G: No, I don't think so.

I: OK. Well, thank you very much for coming.
We'll be in touch ...

C

- Tell the students that the text contains questions very similar to the ones they have just heard in the job interview, but that it also contains good advice on how to answer them.
- Point out that *FAQs* stands for *Frequently Asked Questions*.
- Ask the students to read the text and decide individually which question they think is the most difficult to answer, and why. Ask them to compare their answers in pairs.
- Elicit several responses from the class.

Extra: vocabulary

Focus on some of the vocabulary in the text. Write these words and phrases on the board: *give notice*, *link* (verb), *honest*, *calm*. Ask the students to work in pairs and find synonyms or definitions for each of these: *give notice* (tell your employer you are leaving your job); *link* (connect); *honest* (an honest person does not tell lies or cheat people and obeys the law); *calm* (a calm person is not affected by strong emotions such as anger, shock, excitement or fear).

D (audio 2.41)

- Explain that the students will hear a woman being interviewed for the same job as the man in Ex. B. After the interview, they must again decide whether they would give the woman the job. Why or why not? Make sure they understand that they need to provide a reason for their decision. Emphasise that there are no right or wrong answers. The answers will depend on the students' own opinions.
- Play the recording once.

Audioscript

Interviewer: So, tell me about yourself, Ms Martin.

Ms Martin: Well, I'm originally from Glasgow, in Scotland, and I'm married with a daughter. I'm 27 years old and I have a degree from Sheffield University.

I: OK. What did you do in your last job?

Ms M: I've been working as a legal secretary in a law firm for the last six years. My main roles were dealing with clients, preparing reports and organising legal files.

I: And what do you think are your strengths and weaknesses?

Ms M: Well, I think I'm very good at listening to people's problems and offering them good advice. So, I'm quite good at problem solving. And I enjoy working as part of a team and I think I have good communication skills. I can be a bit shy with people I don't know, but I'm trying to improve my confidence.

I: OK. And can you tell me why you want to work for us?

Ms M: Well, I really enjoyed my job as a secretary, but I didn't want to work in an office anymore. Becoming a community police officer would give me the chance to see the law from the other side. And it also means that I get to meet and deal with the public. Working in London has always been my dream, too.

I: If we offered you the job, when could you start?

Ms M: I'd need to give two weeks' notice, but I could start immediately after that.

I: And finally, Ms Martin, have you got any questions?

Ms M: Yes, I have actually. How many people do you employ here?

I: Well, at the moment there are probably about three hundred or so ...

E

- Ask the students to compare their choices and reasons in pairs.
- Listen to several ideas from the class.

Extra: listening for details

Write these questions on the board:

- 1 *How old is Ms Martin?*
- 2 *What was her last job?*
- 3 *What are her strengths?*
- 4 *What is her weakness?*
- 5 *What job is she applying for? and*
- 6 *How much notice does she have to give?*

Play the recording once. Ask the students to compare their answers in pairs.

ANSWERS

- 1 27
- 2 a legal secretary
- 3 listening to people's problems, offering advice, problem solving, good communication skills
- 4 She's a little shy with new people.
- 5 a community police officer
- 6 two weeks

F

- Read the instructions to the class. Make sure the students know what *positive answers* means (answers that accentuate strengths and positive aspects of your experience, e.g. as opposed to saying you want to change jobs because you dislike your current boss).
- Ask the students to work individually and think of a job they would like to apply for.

Alternative

If the students are having problems thinking of a good job, you could put the following list of jobs on the board for ideas: *vet, doctor, firefighter, lawyer, chef, mechanic, office worker, engineer, teacher, journalist, salesperson.*

- Ask the students to read the questions in Ex. C again and prepare their answers to the questions.
- Remind the students to look again at the interview technique tips for each question, to make sure that they answer the interview questions in the best possible way.
- Ask them to look at the **How to say it** box. Encourage them to use these expressions when answering the interviewer's questions.
- Monitor while the students are working. Remind them to provide full, open and honest answers.

G

- Read the instructions to the class.
- Put the students into pairs. Ask each pair to decide who is Student A and who is Student B.
- Ask the students to roleplay the job interview twice, with Student A being the interviewer for the first interview, and Student B for the second interview.
- Listen to several examples from the class.
- Ask them what parts of the process of preparing for an interview they found easiest and most difficult and what areas they need to improve on.

REFLECT

- Ask the students to read the **Reflect** question.
- Give them some time to think about different situations in the domains of **Self and Society** and **Study and Learning** where the skill of *Preparing for an interview* would be useful.
- Elicit the following ideas: using the same techniques when being interviewed in the following situations: when you need to find accommodation in a shared house or when applying to study at a college or university.

Teacher's notes taken from Unit 12 of *Open Mind* Intermediate B1+ and *openMind 2nd edition* level 3.

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