

## Internships

### Lead-in

#### 1 Read these quotes. What is the context?

- a 'We were interviewing for an editorial role and asked the candidates why they wanted to leave their current job. One woman told us her editor was a total nightmare and was simply jealous because she had a better sense of style. It turns out that my colleague was actually good friends with the editor in question.'
- b 'We once interviewed a guy who said he wasn't sure how to answer our question so he called his mum! He actually put her on speaker phone and she told us how wonderful he was.'
- c 'I once interviewed someone for a top-level finance position who started taking off his shirt to show me the scars from a boating accident he was in. He wanted to show me why he'd been out of work.'
- d 'Once, an interviewee said he was so well-qualified that if he didn't get the job, it would prove that the company's management was incompetent!'
- e 'I interviewed a man who stated that, if he were hired, he'd demonstrate his loyalty by having the corporate logo tattooed on his forearm.'
- f 'We once interviewed a lady who pulled out a Polaroid camera and snapped a flash picture of me. She said she collected photos of everyone who interviewed her.'

#### 2 Discuss these questions with your partner.

- 1 Which do you think are true or untrue?
- 2 Order the quotes from the worst mistake to the smallest mistake.
- 3 Write out a list of interview tips, based on some of these mistakes.
- 4 Do you know any funny or strange interview stories?

### Input

#### 1 You are going to read an article on the advantages of internships. In your group, brainstorm:

- three advantages for students / recent graduates
- three advantages for employers

#### 2 Read the article to see if your advantages are mentioned. Underline any more advantages.

For college students and recent grads, landing a job in this tough economy is no easy feat. They can often spend months scouring online job boards, polishing covering letters and blasting out CVs to no avail.

What they really need to do is get an internship, which turns out to be the easiest way to secure a full-time job. Results from a survey that polled graduates and HR professionals in 2013 show that internships truly have become the 'new interview' in the job search process. Interns have a 7 in 10 chance of being hired by the company they interned with. In addition, they also get the chance to test-drive a career before committing to it. According to the survey, 66% of employers think performance in the interview and relevant work experience are the most important factors in their hiring decisions, and certainly much more significant than strong academic results.

Experience is important but doesn't necessarily rule out those who haven't had any previous work experience. Employers look at what the student has been learning at university, relevant projects, course work and extracurricular activities. In today's highly competitive environment, they want to see that a candidate has the hunger to be successful.

In interviews, employers look for self-awareness. In response to that dreaded question 'What are your weaknesses?' strong candidates demonstrate that they are doing something to improve in that area. Confidence is also mightily important, as are commitment, desire and passion towards one's career goals. Interviewers want to know that the candidate has given some thought to the position and that they are not just sending out CVs because there is an opening.

Internships for those who are still studying are crucial. Having an internship under their belts means that they will require less training and are probably better able to handle responsibility. In addition, their transferable skills are probably more refined. Students doing internships might be able to earn course credit and/or money, and gain practical experience by applying methods and theories learned in class.

Doing an internship gives the opportunity to network with professionals. Interns are surrounded by professionals in the industry they're seeking to access. These professionals could be future colleagues or a connection to their first job.

**3 Answer these questions according to the text.**

1 What do students and college graduates do to try and get a job?

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2 Once an intern gets an internship at a company, how likely is it that they will stay there?

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3 For companies, what is more important than academic marks?

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4 If you haven't got any previous work experience, what do employers look for?

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5 What do employers look for in the interview?

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**4 What else do you think employers look for in interviews? Discuss with a partner**

**Language focus**

**1 Look at the responses to this typical interview question. Who would you choose for the job and why?**

'What influenced you to choose this career?'

**Candidate A:** 'I enjoy facing and overcoming the challenges of selling. If I've practised my presentation and prepared myself for refusals, I feel very confident approaching people. The thing about sales is you get out what you put in and that really motivates me.'

**Candidate B:** 'Selling is difficult but I like it. Getting lots of refusals can be upsetting but generally I'm confident when approaching people. When I'm in the mood for it, I'm successful and motivated.'

**2 Complete these sentences so that they are true for you.**

- 1 I enjoy facing and overcoming .....
- 2 I feel very confident .....
- 3 ..... really motivates me.

**3 Fill in the missing words in the sentences using words from the wordpool and then complete the sentences so that they are true for you.**

*convinced    centred    committed    expertise    exactly  
even    pursue    extensive    myself    more*

- 1 My background to date has been ..... around .....
- 2 As you can see from my academic, extracurricular and experiential background, I have .....  
to .....
- 3 I want to use my ..... to help people .....
- 4 This is ..... why I am ..... that I would be a .....
- 5 I plan to ..... a Masters degree to give me ..... knowledge of .....

**4 We can add words to sentences for emphasis. Read through these examples and then complete the response below with the correct words.**

**own** This intensifies possessive adjectives. (*It was my own initiative.*)

**very ... indeed** This can be used to intensify adjectives. (*It was very rewarding indeed.*)

**auxiliary do** This can emphasise the verb and is stressed in speech. It is often used in polite forms. (*I do hope I'll be seriously considered for the job.*)

**not at all / not in the least** These emphasise *not*. (*I wasn't at all put off by the level of challenge/I wasn't in the least put off by the level of challenge*)

**at all / whatsoever** These emphasise *no* and *none*. (*I didn't have any problems at all/I had no problem whatsoever*)

**even + comparative** This emphasises the comparative. (*She admitted things are bad, but argues they were even worse under the previous government.*)

'I got very good results in my final exams and I'm really glad all the hard work paid off. I ..... worried that I wouldn't do well but I was ..... surprised ..... when I got my results. I think this shows that I'm not ..... afraid of hard work. In fact, I'm really motivated by challenge. I feel an ..... bigger sense of reward when I think about how it is my ..... hard work that has got me this far. I ..... feel though, that I've still got a lot to learn.'

**5 ▶22.1 Listen to check your answers. Apart from the language the speaker is using, what makes the speaker sound convincing and confident?**

**6** Use some of the language from exercises 2–4 to make this response more convincing. Write out your answer and then read it to your partner.

'I think I am good at science. I really want to be a researcher. I am good at working in a team. I want to do a PhD. Scientific research is an interesting profession. I have a background in sustainability and climate change.'

**7** The article mentioned 'transferable skills'. What are these? Use the words in the wordpool to create nine transferable skills. You will have to use some of the words more than once.

*work   motivation   management   communication   skills   development*

- 1 team .....
- 2 personal .....
- 3 organisation and time .....
- 4 written .....
- 5 verbal .....
- 6 research and analytical .....
- 7 numeracy .....
- 8 personal .....
- 9 Information Technology .....

**8** Which of these transferable skills do you have? Can you think of any more? Discuss with a partner.

## Task

**1** The article mentions the typical interview question 'What are your weaknesses?' Brainstorm five more questions that interviewers might ask.

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**2** Complete these interview questions.

- 1 How / college experience / prepared / career? .....
- 2 What / suitable / this job? .....
- 3 Have / any questions? .....
- 4 What influenced / choose / career? .....
- 5 Describe / situation / worked / team. ....
- 6 What / expect / doing / five years' time? .....

**3** You are going to carry out a role-play in pairs. One person is the HR manager and the other is the candidate. Your teacher will give you a Marketing Internship advert.

If you are an HR manager, devise a list of questions you could ask.

If you are a candidate, think about how you will describe your skills and experience to get the job.

**4** Carry out the role-play.

5 Swap roles. Your teacher will give you a Sustainable Energy Internship advert. Carry out the interview.

6 If you are the candidate, ask the HR manager at least two questions about the Sustainable Energy Internship.

If you are an HR manager, decide whether you will give the candidate the job or not. Give the candidate some feedback on their performance.

## Review

