

## A job interview

### Lesson description

In this lesson you will take part in a job interview. You will learn useful language for describing yourself and talking about your strengths and weaknesses. You will also look at ways to ask for detailed information.

### Aim

Asking and answering questions in an interview

### Language

- Talking about personal strengths and weaknesses
- Asking for detailed information

### Task

The task for this lesson is for learners to role-play a job interview.

### Materials

Handout

Audio 35.1 and 35.2

Photocopiable (cards for Task)

### Suggested running order

Lead-in	Students talk about their experience of job interviews, and look at job interview questions.
Input	Students listen to part of a job interview and identify the candidate's strengths and weaknesses. They listen again to focus on expressions used to talk about strengths and weaknesses.
Language focus	Students listen to parts of the audio to focus on how to ask for detailed information, then practise orally.
Task	Students prepare and carry out two role-plays of job interviews.

### Lead-in

**1** Students work in pairs or small groups to talk about their previous experience of job interviews, then feed back to the class. If they are students, you could ask if they were interviewed for their university place. What is the worst interview question they have heard? For example: *If you were an animal, what would you be?*

**2** Students read the questions in speech bubbles and match each to a topic.

1 c

3 a

5 h

7 f

2 e

4 d

6 g

8 b

- 3 Students think about questions the candidate might ask the interviewer. There are any number of questions they might ask. Circulate and check that the questions are well written.

## Input

- 1 ▶35.1 Explain that students are going to listen to part of an interview. Play the audio for them to make notes about the candidate's strengths and weaknesses. Ask students to check their answers with a partner before they feed back to the class. You could ask students if they think the candidate will get the job. Invite them to give their reasons.

*Strengths: creative, flexible about where and when she works*

*Weaknesses: not very computer literate (spreadsheets and presentations software)*

- 2 ▶35.1 Play the audio again, pausing as necessary, for students to identify the expressions the candidate uses to talk about her strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>I think I'm quite ...</i>	<i>I'd have to say that ...</i>
<i>I consider myself to be ...</i>	<i>I don't have much experience with ...</i>
<i>I'm happy to ...</i>	<i>I know I could be better at ...</i>

- 3 Students add the expressions in the box to the table in 2.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>I pride myself on ...</i>	<i>I'm not particularly good at ...</i>
<i>I like to think I'm ...</i>	<i>I'm probably too ...</i>
<i>I'm proud of the fact that ...</i>	<i>I've been told I can be a bit ...</i>

**Note:** Point out that if you talk about your weaknesses in an interview you should always indicate how they will be overcome (e.g. in the audio she says she's not very computer literate but then qualifies it).

*Well, I know how to use a computer obviously, but I don't have much experience with spreadsheets and presentations software. I know I could be better at those areas with a little training.*

## Language focus

- 1 ▶35.2 Students listen and complete the extracts from the job interview. The gaps they complete are all questions asking for more detailed information.

1 *Can you be more specific?*

2 *What in particular do you find difficult?*

3 *Could you tell me exactly*

- 2 Students brainstorm more questions they could use to ask for more detailed information.

### Suggested questions:

*Can you tell me a bit more about ...?*

*What do you mean by ...?*

*Could you clarify ...?*

*Would you mind explaining ...?*

- 3 Students think of ways to ask for more detailed information about each topic. There are any number of possible answers, so do this as a whole class activity to ensure that students have correct answers. Alternatively, give one topic to each group and get them to present their answers to the class.

## Task

- 1 Students work in pairs. Give each pair a job advertisement card from the photocopiable material. The students decide who is the interviewer and who is the candidate. They then prepare their questions. (You could let students with the same roles prepare together.)  
  
Refer students back to the topics in Lead-in 2, but depending on time you may just ask them to focus on particular areas, e.g. questions about strengths and weaknesses, and questions from the candidate.
- 2 Allow students a certain amount of time to role-play the interview. Monitor as much as possible during the interview and note examples of good language and errors for the feedback stage.
- 3 Students now swap cards with another pair and swap roles with their partners, so that everyone gets a chance to be the interviewer and the candidate. Give students time to prepare their questions.
- 4 Students role-play their interviews.
- 5 Invite students to comment on their experiences of the interview. What could they have done better? Would they have got the job?  
Feed back to students on their language and review learning objectives.

## Audio script

### 35.1

- I So now, I'd like you to talk a little bit about your strengths.
- C Strengths? Yes. Well, I think I'm quite a creative person. I consider myself to be ... well, I consider myself to be quite flexible.
- I Flexible? Can you be more specific?
- C Yes, of course. I'm very flexible about when and where I work. I'm happy to work at weekends, in the evening and so on if needs be, and I'm happy to relocate if necessary.
- I What about weaknesses? Do you think you have any weaknesses?
- C Mmm ... that's more difficult. I'd have to say that I'm not very computer literate.
- I No? What in particular do you find difficult?
- C Well, I know how to use a computer obviously, but I don't have much experience with spreadsheets and presentations software. I know I could be better at those areas with a little training.
- I Oh, I see. Well, that's not a problem. We can give you some help with that. Just one last question. Where do you see yourself in five years' time?
- C Ah. To be honest, I hadn't really thought that far ahead, but I'd certainly like to continue in the area of conservation.
- I Yes. Good. Now, is there anything you would like to ask me?
- C Yes. There is actually. Could you tell me exactly when the job is likely to start?

**35.2****1**

I So now, I'd like you to talk a little bit about your strengths.

C Strengths? Yes. Well, I think I'm quite a creative person. I consider myself to be ... well, I consider myself to be quite flexible.

I Flexible? Can you be more specific?

**2**

I What about weaknesses? Do you think you have any weaknesses?

C Mmm ... that's more difficult. I'd have to say that I'm not very computer literate.

I No? What in particular do you find difficult?

**3**

I Yes. Good. Now, is there anything you would like to ask me?

C Yes. There is actually. Could you tell me exactly when the job is likely to start?