



The job interview

Lesson code: KSXN-XD7B-EF8T-9

UPPER INTERMEDIATE

1 Personal characteristics

In pairs, match the adjectives below with their correct definitions and discuss how important these characteristics are for your job or the job that you want to apply for:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. experienced | a. able to make yourself do something well |
| 2. self-motivated | b. able to talk to people easily and share information |
| 3. communicative | c. continually doing a lot of work |
| 4. enthusiastic | d. energetically interested in something and willing to be involved in it |
| 5. dynamic | e. having lots of ideas and energy |
| 6. hardworking | f. having skill or knowledge because you have done something many times |

2 The cv

Read the following cv summary and fill in the header for each section with 'EDUCATION', 'WORK EXPERIENCE', 'PERSONAL DETAILS', 'PROFILE' and 'SKILLS AND INTERESTS':

Andrea Patarino

Rome, Italy

_____ 1

Date of birth: 23 June 1980

Marital status: Single

_____ 2

A British Culture Studies and English Linguistics graduate with four years' experience in the field of international cultural cooperation. Self-motivated, dynamic and ready to meet new challenges.

_____ 3

2000-2005

University of Rome, M.A. in British Culture Studies

_____ 4

2003-present

Project co-ordinator, British Council, Rome, Italy

2002-2003

Internship, National Youth Agency, Leicester, UK

2001-2002

Tour guide, Tourist Information Centre, Rome, Italy

_____ 5

IT skills (good knowledge of Windows and Microsoft Office), fluent in English (Certificate of Proficiency obtained in 2003), well-travelled, enjoys reading and skiing.



3 Interview questions and answers

Look at the following 'difficult' questions that you might hear during a job interview:

- How would you describe yourself?
- What influenced you to choose a career in ...?
- How has your university education prepared you for a job in ...?
- Tell me about your current job. What have you been doing?
- How would you describe yourself in terms of your ability to work as a member of a team?
- Tell me about a major problem you recently handled. Were you successful in resolving it?
- How do you handle pressure?
- Why do you want to work for this company?
- What do you feel you have to offer this company?
- What personal weakness has caused you the greatest difficulty on the job?
- What would you say has been your most rewarding accomplishment?
- What are your goals for the future?
- What do you think you'll be doing in five years' time?

Now read the following job advert:

Language Worldwide is an established international language centre seeking a dynamic, self-motivated and responsible person for the position of project coordinator. Suitable candidate must be a university graduate and be proficient in at least 2 languages, including English.

Audio

Watch or listen to an extract from Andrea's interview at Language Worldwide and tick the questions that you hear.

Video

Listen again and put T (True) or F (False) next to the following statements:

1. Andrea has always been interested in the British/American language and culture.
2. His current job mainly involves preparing budgets for projects.
3. He has worked as part of a team.
4. He had to replace one of the speakers at a British Council event.
5. He believes the job he is being interviewed for is tailored to his skills and qualifications.
6. His most rewarding achievement has been successfully completing his university degree.
7. His main weakness is handling pressure.
8. His long-term ambition is to start his own business.



4 Key expressions

Complete the following collocations from the interview:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. be motivated | a. a well-established company |
| 2. manage | b. by challenge |
| 3. deal with | c. certain tasks |
| 4. motivate | d. deadlines |
| 5. meet | e. international projects |
| 6. work | f. others |
| 7. be part of | g. outside partners |
| 8. delegate | h. under pressure |

Now look at the following expressions from the interview and match them to their functions below:

I would describe myself as someone who is ambitious, hardworking and motivated by challenge.

As you can see from my CV, I've been working as a project co-ordinator for the British Council in Rome for several years.

My job has mainly involved organising special events

Against the odds, I managed to successfully work with our partners and reschedule the project events.

I guess at times I am a little reluctant to delegate certain tasks.

I would say successfully completing my university degree has been my most rewarding accomplishment.

My long-term goals involve growing with a company where I can continue to learn, and take on additional responsibilities.

Once I gain the necessary experience, I see myself moving on to a management position.

- describing your current job
- describing your personal qualities
- describing a personal weakness
- describing how you overcame a difficult situation
- describing your ambitions
- describing your achievements

5 Role play

In pairs, interview each other for a job of your choice. Use questions/expressions from this lesson and any others that you may need. Would you give your partner the job? Why/why not?



3 Interview questions and answers

Interviewer: How would you describe yourself?

Andrea: I would describe myself as someone who is ambitious, hardworking and motivated by challenge. My language and interpersonal skills have allowed me to successfully manage various international projects for the British Council over the past few years.

Interviewer: What influenced you to choose a career in cultural relations?

Andrea: Well, I've always been fascinated by the British/American language and culture, and how it has become so globally important.

Interviewer: Tell me about your current job. What have you been doing?

Andrea: As you can see from my CV, I've been working as a project co-ordinator for the British Council in Rome for several years. My job has mainly involved organising special events, such as the Social Diversity event which took place last month in Amsterdam. I have also helped prepare budget forecasts for various projects.

Interviewer: How would you describe yourself in terms of your ability to work as a member of a team?

Andrea: Well, during my period as a project co-ordinator for the British Council, I've had to work within an international team and deal with outside partners. I've had to motivate others to meet deadlines, and I get on well with everyone.

Interviewer: Tell me about a major problem you recently handled. Were you successful in resolving it?

Andrea: While I was co-ordinating a British Council project in Rome, one of the main speakers fell ill a few days before the event. Against the odds, I managed to successfully work with our partners and reschedule the project events. I was under a lot of pressure, but in the end the problem was resolved.

Interviewer: How do you handle pressure?

Andrea: I actually work better under pressure and I've found that I enjoy working in a challenging environment.

Interviewer: Why do you want to work for this company?

Andrea: Well, I am an ambitious person and I want to be part of a well-established company. I believe the job is tailored to my skills and experience, which include language skills and managing international projects.

Interviewer: What would you say has been your most rewarding accomplishment?

Andrea: I would say successfully completing my university degree has been my most rewarding accomplishment. I had to work pretty intensively since I was taking on several jobs to support my studies, including working as a tour guide for English-speaking visitors to Rome.

Interviewer: What personal weakness has caused you the greatest difficulty on the job?

Andrea: I guess at times I am a little reluctant to delegate certain tasks. I think this is because I am hardworking by nature. However, my current employer has told me that I've made significant improvements during the last few months of the job, and I believe I will continue to improve in this area.

Interviewer: What are your goals for the future?

Andrea: My long-term goals involve growing with a company where I can continue to learn, and take on additional responsibilities. Once I gain the necessary experience, I see myself moving on to a management position.



1 Personal characteristics

1. f 2. a 3. b 4. d 5. e 6. c

This exercise can be further developed by eliciting from the students any other characteristics that might be important, e.g. sociable, reliable, self-disciplined, etc.

2 The cv

1. PERSONAL DETAILS
2. PROFILE
3. EDUCATION
4. WORK EXPERIENCE
5. SKILLS AND INTERESTS

3 Interview questions and answers

Play the audio or video file. Alternatively, you can use your mobile device to scan the QR codes (make sure you have installed a QR code reader app and can access the Internet on your device).

Go through all the questions with the students first to ensure that they are understood.

Interview questions:

- How would you describe yourself?
- What influenced you to choose a career in ...?
- Tell me about your current job. What have you been doing?
- How would you describe yourself in terms of your ability to work as a member of a team?
- Tell me about a major problem you recently handled. Were you successful in resolving it?
- How do you handle pressure? Why do you want to work for this company?
- What personal weakness has caused you the greatest difficulty on the job?
- What would you say has been your most rewarding accomplishment?
- What personal weakness has caused you the greatest difficulty on the job?
- What are your goals for the future?

True/False:

1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. T 6. T 7. F 8. F

4 Key expressions

Collocations:

1. b 2. e 3. g 4. f 5. d 6. h 7. a 8. c

Function-expressions:

- a. My job has mainly involved ...ing; As you can see from my CV, I've been working as a...
- b. I would describe myself as someone who is...
- c. I guess at times I am a little...
- d. Against the odds, I managed to...
- e. My long-term goals involve ...ing; I see myself moving on to ...
- f. I would say has been my most rewarding accomplishment.

