

# UNIT 5

## Advanced interview techniques

- Handling competency-based questions
- Demonstrating your skills
- Talking about your weaknesses
- Asking questions of your own
- Dealing with telephone interviews

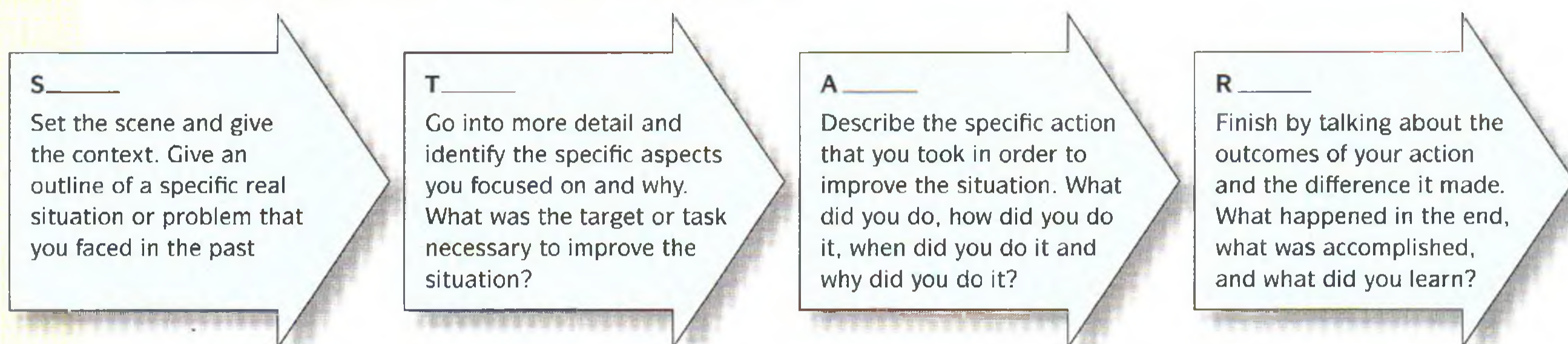


### Handling competency-based questions

Competencies are a combination of knowledge, skills and behaviour required to do a specific job.

- 1 a In pairs, ask and answer one of the following interview questions.
  - 1 Tell me about a time when you had to make a difficult decision.
  - 2 Tell me about a time when you *demonstrated good customer service*.
  - 3 Tell me about a time when you showed strong leadership skills.
  - 4 Tell me about a time when you played an important role in a team.
  - 5 Tell me about a time when you experienced pressure at university or at work.
- b ▶ 5.1 Listen to three people each answering one of the questions in Exercise 1a successfully. Identify which question each speaker is answering.  
Speaker 1 \_\_\_\_ Speaker 2 \_\_\_\_ Speaker 3 \_\_\_\_
- c In pairs, discuss how you think each story ends. What would be an impressive conclusion to each story, to really demonstrate that the speaker possesses the necessary competency?
- d ▶ 5.2 Now listen to the rest of the extracts to check your predictions in Exercise 1c. Were your ideas similar?
- e The questions in Exercise 1a are all examples of competency-based questions. In pairs, discuss the following questions.
  - 1 What is an interviewer looking for in competency-based questions?
  - 2 Why is it essential to prepare stories before your interview?
  - 3 How common are competency-based interview questions?
- f ▶ 5.3 Listen to two recruitment experts, Grace and Oliver, discussing competency-based questions and compare their ideas with your answers in Exercise 1e.

- g** A common technique for planning and structuring answers to competency-based questions is the STAR method. Look at the diagram below. What do you think the initials S, T, A and R stand for?



- h** ▶5.2 Listen to the extracts in Exercise 1d again. For each story, identify the four sections (S, T, A and R).
- i** Look at the sentences from the candidates' stories and answer the following questions.
- Which phrasal verb is used to describe an unexpected success?
  - Which phrasal verb is used to introduce an unexpected cause?
  - Which phrasal verb is used to introduce an unexpected result?
- It **turned out** that his accountant had been taken ill ...*  
*So we actually **ended up** getting paid within a week ...*  
*So it all **worked out** in the end.*
- j** Prepare a STAR diagram for one of the questions in Exercise 1a. Try to use the three phrasal verbs in Exercise 1i.

## Demonstrating your skills

It is essential you provide evidence of how you acted in real situations in the past in order to show you have the transferable skills required for the job you are applying for.

- 2 a** ▶5.4 After applying for a variety of positions at leading international pharmaceutical companies, Communications Manager Vicky Tang is invited to attend an interview at Clyde & Johnson's. Listen to an extract from her interview and answer the following questions.
- Where is Vicky from?
  - Where did she go to university?
- b** ▶5.5 Listen to another candidate for the same position, Pieter Volker, responding to the same question, and answer the following questions.
- Where did Pieter do his first degree?
  - What did he do at the University of St Petersburg?
  - Where did he spend his student work placement?
- c** In pairs, discuss Vicky's and Pieter's techniques for tackling the question about their educational background. Whose technique is more successful?



d ▶ 5.5 Listen to Pieter’s answer again. Which of the following competencies does he demonstrate or suggest?

- customer service skills
  - flexibility
  - organisational skills
- teamworking
  - leadership
  - decision-making skills
- goal orientation
  - communication skills
  - interpersonal skills

e In pairs, talk about your educational experience. Try to demonstrate or suggest several of the competencies in Exercise 2d. Try to guess what competencies your partner is focusing on.

f ▶ 5.6 Listen to another extract from Vicky’s interview and answer the following questions.

- 1 What problem did Green Pharmaceuticals have?
- 2 What did Vicky do to tackle this problem?
- 3 What was the effect of Vicky’s actions?

g Vicky uses the STAR method to structure her answer. Underline phrases in her response that describe the four sections.

- 1 Situation (the problem Green Pharmaceuticals was facing)
- 2 Target (the solution to this problem)
- 3 Action (what Vicky did to solve the problem)
- 4 Result (the results of her actions)



At the moment I spend a lot of time travelling between Asia and Europe working with regional teams organising educational events, so I use both of these skills on a regular basis. Let me give you an example. As you know, the Chinese market is growing in all areas, including pharmaceuticals. However, at the time, Green Pharmaceuticals felt they didn’t have enough contacts in China. It was clear that the situation wasn’t very good for us. We needed to improve things. So in order to increase our number of contacts in China I decided to organise a pharmaceutical conference in Beijing. It was my responsibility to ensure that all the right people were invited. I really had to use all my skills at communicating, in both English and Mandarin, to persuade people to participate. In the end my hard work resulted in a successful conference, with our employees meeting and talking to the right people. As a matter of fact this conference was such a success that it is now an annual event, and has led directly to closer professional relationships between Green Pharmaceuticals and key contacts in China.

h Add one phrase from Vicky’s answer in Exercise 2g to each column in the following table.

| Situation                                          | Target                                                           | Action                             | Result                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| there was a time when ...<br>I discovered that ... | what needed to be done was ...<br>it was very important that ... | therefore I ...<br>I organised ... | this resulted in ...<br>this led to ... |
| _____                                              | _____                                                            | _____                              | _____                                   |
| _____                                              | _____                                                            | _____                              | _____                                   |
| _____                                              | _____                                                            | _____                              | _____                                   |

i Add the phrases in the box to the table in Exercise 2h.

I agreed to ...    I wanted to be a bit more ...    probably the best example is ...  
so I ...    So it all worked out in the end.    the problem was ...  
there was one time when ...    we actually ended up ...

**j** In pairs, take turns to ask and answer the following common competency-based question, 'Tell me about a time when you had to resolve a difficult situation.'

**k** ▶ 5.7 Listen to Vicky's response to the question in Exercise 2j. In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 What was the problem?
- 2 What did Vicky do to solve the problem?
- 3 What skills did Vicky use to solve the problem?
- 4 Would you have handled the situation in the same way?

**l** ▶ 5.7 Vicky uses a range of expressions to structure her answer. Complete her answer using the phrases in the box. Listen again and check your answers.

Anyway, what happened was    As soon as    I managed to  
I then    In the end    It was very important  
So I decided to    ~~There was a time when~~  
Unfortunately this meant that    which I'd organised beforehand

Okay. (1) There was a time when I was organising a conference here in London. It was a couple of months ago, and it was a really important conference. (2) \_\_\_\_\_ one of the main guest speakers, who was due to give the opening address, had his flight cancelled and wasn't sure if he was going to make it on time. (3) \_\_\_\_\_ the participants were happy with the conference, and I knew they would be disappointed if he didn't show up. (4) \_\_\_\_\_ try and find another flight for the speaker. After a bit of negotiating with a different airline, (5) \_\_\_\_\_ get him booked onto a slightly later flight. (6) \_\_\_\_\_ even if he came straight from the airport, he would still be a bit late for the opening address. I took a risk and hoped that he wasn't going to be delayed any more. (7) \_\_\_\_\_ he'd landed I contacted him, and when I knew he was in a taxi and on his way, which was about five minutes before he was supposed to be on stage, I got up on the stage. (8) \_\_\_\_\_ told the participants about the situation and I invited them to have some coffee and cakes while we waited, (9) \_\_\_\_\_. Actually, they liked this, as it was a chance to network a little and get to know some of the other conference participants. When the speaker did finally arrive, it was actually difficult to get everybody back in the main hall. (10) \_\_\_\_\_ I managed to keep everybody happy and ensure that the conference went as smoothly as possible.

**m** Which tense does Vicky mainly use to give the key events of her story?

**n** In pairs, discuss what makes the following sentence from Vicky's answer memorable.

*When the speaker did finally arrive, it was actually difficult to get everybody back in the main hall.*

**o** Interview anecdotes are more likely to be interesting and memorable if they include some surprising information. In Vicky's anecdote in Exercise 2i she introduces a surprising fact with the word *actually*. You can also use *in fact* or *as a matter of fact*. Make the following sentences more memorable using *in fact*, *actually* or *as a matter of fact*. Several answers are possible.

- 1 My boss wasn't convinced that it was worth investing in India. However, my research managed to prove that it was.
- 2 As a result of my actions, what could have been a disaster turned out to be a big success.
- 3 My work had really helped, and I thought that I would be invited to join the marketing team permanently, but I was invited to lead the team!
- 4 I believed my suggestions would lead to bigger profits. What I didn't expect was that profits at the company would grow by nearly 20%!

**p** In pairs, take turns to ask and answer one of the questions in Exercise 1a on page 59. Use the STAR diagram you prepared in Exercise 1j and expressions from this section to structure your answers. Try to make your anecdotes surprising and memorable.

## Talking about your weaknesses

### Turning negatives into positives

In an interview you will almost certainly face challenging questions which attempt to assess your suitability for the job. It is vital to avoid getting caught in the trap of saying negative things about yourself. Preparing for these 'difficult' questions will help you keep your answers positive.

**3 a** ▶ 5.8 A recent graduate, Jarek, has been invited for an interview with an international financial company. He arranges to meet up with his friend, Olivia, who has been working there for a couple of years. Listen to their conversation and answer the following questions.

- 1 Who is going to interview Jarek?
- 2 Why did Jarek quit his last job?
- 3 What general advice does Olivia give Jarek?

**b** Compare Jarek's and Olivia's answers to the question, '*Why did you leave your last job?*' Complete Olivia's answer using the words in the box.

although   develop   feel   further   liked   position  
stretched   working

Jarek's answer:

*I hated my last job, I couldn't stand the boss. He used to drive me crazy! ... I handed in my notice and left as soon as I could.*

Olivia's answer:

(1) Although I really (2) \_\_\_\_\_ my job, and the people I was (3) \_\_\_\_\_ with, I didn't (4) \_\_\_\_\_ I was being (5) \_\_\_\_\_ enough. I'm looking for a (6) \_\_\_\_\_ in which I can (7) \_\_\_\_\_ my professional skills (8) \_\_\_\_\_.

**c** In pairs, discuss how you would answer the following questions.

- 1 What are your weaknesses?
- 2 Tell me about something you have found difficult at work.

**d** In pairs, try to complete the following advice with a suitable word. Do you agree with the advice?

- 1 In response to open questions you should never actively volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ information during an interview.
- 2 Employers like to ask you to give negative information not to \_\_\_\_\_ you, but to see what sort of person you are.
- 3 You will seem much more employable if you can show yourself as someone who sees problems as \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 Questions about weaknesses are actually a chance to demonstrate how you tackle and overcome \_\_\_\_\_, and why you are the right person for the job.

**e** ▶ **5.9** Listen to three different candidates responding to a question about their weaknesses. Match the candidates (1–3) to the techniques they use for tackling this question (a–c). Which answer did you like the most? Why?

- a Talk about a character flaw that could ultimately be viewed as a positive characteristic.
- b Talk about something that is no longer a weakness. Mention how you overcame the weakness and that you have solved similar problems more recently.
- c Talk about a knowledge-based weakness, which is easily overcome. Mention why this weakness isn't a serious problem and what steps you are actively taking to solve the problem.

Candidate 1 \_\_\_\_

Candidate 2 \_\_\_\_

Candidate 3 \_\_\_\_

**f** In pairs, discuss the advantages of each technique.

**g** Which of the three candidates in Exercise 3e used the STAR technique to answer this question?

## Softening and emphasis

When answering interview questions that require negative information you should soften any negatives in your response and emphasise any positive information.

- 4 a** Look at the first candidate's response from Exercise 3e. In pairs, discuss why the candidate doesn't simply say, '*In the past I used to procrastinate.*' in their first sentence.

*Well, in the past I sometimes used to procrastinate a little. There were times when I used to put things off until the last minute, when completing an essay for university for example. But I realised that perhaps this wasn't the most effective way of working and so I started setting a strict schedule for all my projects well in advance and set myself personal deadlines. Using a schedule has really helped me and I'm much better organised now and able to take on more projects at the same time.*

- b** Underline any words or phrases in the extract in Exercise 4a that soften negatives and emphasise positives.
- c** ▶ 5.9 Complete the second candidate's response using *always*, *really* or *very*. Listen again and check your answers.

*Hmm. My weaknesses? Let me think. Well, in answer to your question you mentioned that the staff here use Apple Macintosh computers. I am not (1) \_\_\_\_\_ familiar with Apple Macs and I'm used to using Windows. However, I managed to learn how to use a number of programs (2) \_\_\_\_\_ quickly on my own and I'm sure I'd get used to using Apple Macs (3) \_\_\_\_\_ quickly. I (4) \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy using computers and new gadgets, and I'm (5) \_\_\_\_\_ keen to learn how to use new technology.*

- d** ▶ 5.9 Complete the third candidate's response by adding the words in the box. Listen again and check your answers.

a bit of   a little   a lot of   as ... as possible  
extremely   occasionally   very

*Weaknesses? Well, I can be <sup>a bit of</sup> a workaholic and always get involved in every project that I work on. I'm happy to spend time and energy making sure that every project is successful. So, when I feel that other members of the team might not be working as hard, I can get frustrated. I'm aware of this problem, and I try to solve situations like this by being positive and enthusiastic.*

- e** In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 What structure did the first candidate use to describe a problem that no longer exists? Why is this structure especially suitable here?
- 2 What tense did she use to show the present result of her new strategy for dealing with this problem?
- 3 The second candidate said that he wasn't familiar with Apple Macs. What structure did he use to show what he *is* familiar with? What structure did he use to show how he would become familiar with Apple Macs in the future?
- 4 What modal verb did the third candidate use to show that her weaknesses don't always affect her?

- f** Rewrite these descriptions of weaknesses using the expressions in brackets to soften the negative information.

- 1 I have difficulty making decisions. (occasionally / a little)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 I used to be too stubborn and it was hard to get me to change my mind. (a bit / sometimes)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 When working on projects I am a 'big picture' person. This means that I miss some details. (from time to time / might / minor)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**g** ► 5.10 Match the sentences (1–3) in Exercise 4f to the rest of the candidates' answers (a–c). Listen and check your answers.

- a *A former colleague of mine told me that I was becoming difficult to work with. Well, ever since then I have put significant effort into my teamworking skills and now I actively ask for advice and suggestions from my colleagues when making decisions. Last year I was even asked to chair weekly staff meetings while our boss was away on business.*
- b *This is because I pay a lot of attention to detail and make sure that every single decision I make is the best decision possible. Basically, I'm somebody who carefully considers all of the available options before making a choice.*
- c *I've been aware of this for some time. So now when I'm managing a project I make sure that I have the support I need to keep an eye on specific minor details, leaving me free to concentrate on managing the entire project. I think successful management is about getting the right team together and then completely trusting them to do the job you've given them.*

1 \_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_

**h** Underline words in the extracts in Exercise 4g that emphasise positives.

**i** ► 5.11 Listen to a candidate, Adam, answering the question, 'What is it about your job that you dislike?' In pairs, discuss the techniques he uses to turn his response into an impressive positive answer.

**j** Match the negative expressions (1–6) to the more positive expressions (a–f). Which expressions did Adam use in Exercise 4i?

- |                                               |                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 I'm bored with my job. It's too easy.       | a I enjoy a great deal about my current job.                                                        |
| 2 I can't stand dealing with customers.       | b I'm keen to develop my practical skills.                                                          |
| 3 The place where I work is too small.        | c I'm looking for an opportunity to contribute these skills to a larger organisation such as yours. |
| 4 I don't have many professional skills.      | d I feel I'm best suited to working behind the scenes.                                              |
| 5 I only know the theory.                     | e I'm seeking fresh challenges.                                                                     |
| 6 There are things that I don't like at work. | f I'm seeking the possibility to develop further professionally.                                    |

**k** In pairs, take turns to ask and answer the following questions. Use the techniques and expressions in this section to soften any negatives and emphasise the positives in your responses.

- 1 What are your weaknesses?
- 2 Tell me about something you have found difficult at university/work.
- 3 What skills do you need to improve?
- 4 What kinds of decisions are most difficult for you to make?
- 5 What did you dislike about university / your last job?

## Asking questions of your own

It is very common for interviewers to close an interview by asking if the candidate has any questions they would like to ask. People who ask good questions demonstrate real interest in and knowledge of the job.

### 5 a In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 What sort of information should you try to find out during your interview?
- 2 What questions would you ask in an interview in your country?
- 3 Are there any questions you wouldn't ask? Why not?
- 4 Would you ask about salary?

### b Read the following extract from an article about asking questions in an interview. Which do you think is the best question?

#### Questions to ask

Job hunters are always being told to ask one or two killer questions in an interview. But how exactly do you go about doing this?

It's important to consider the culture of the organisation you are hoping to join and the personality of the interviewer. Be careful to adopt the right tone and convey a positive attitude. You want to ensure this

opportunity works for you, not against you.

Pick and choose from the following list of tried-and-tested questions.

- a *What are the most/least enjoyable aspects of the role?*
- b *You mentioned there would be a lot of researching. Could you tell me what your most successful employees find most satisfying about this part of the role?*

c *What are the most important issues that you think the organisation faces?*

d *Could you tell me more about the training opportunities you offer?*

e *Could you tell me how performance is measured and reviewed?*

f *Would there be a chance for promotion in the future?*

g *Do you have any doubts about whether I am suited to this position?*

### c Match the questions in the article (a–g) to the following expert advice (1–7).

- 1 This question can highlight that you are keen to develop your skills and add further value to a company. a
- 2 This question can emphasise your determination to make progress and to do so over the long term. —
- 3 This question can demonstrate your listening skills, and associates you with being successful in the role, as well as finding it satisfying. —
- 4 This question can show that you like to know what sort of challenge you are going to face and that you like to get properly prepared for it. —
- 5 This question can demonstrate that you appreciate the importance of delivering results. —
- 6 This question can show that you are interested in the employer as well as the job. It will be clear you have done some research, done some thinking, and are now keen to hear their analysis. —
- 7 This question is a rather bold way of emphasising some of your strengths. It suggests you are open to constructive criticism and willing to learn from the experience of others. In addition, it gives you a real chance to address any weaknesses the employer may think you have. Finally, it allows you to finish on a high, restating why you think you are the right person. —

**d** Look at four versions of the same question (a–d). In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 Which version is the most assertive?
- 2 Which version is the most delicate/tentative?
- 3 Which would you use?

*I noticed from your brochure that you are actively involved in several projects to support the local community.*

- a *If I were to work for you, would that be something I could get involved in?*
- b *If I work for you, will that be something I can get involved in?*
- c *If I worked for you, would that be something I could get involved in?*
- d *If I work for you, is that something I can get involved in?*

**e** Complete the following candidate's questions with your own ideas.

- 1 Could you tell me more about \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- 2 What are the most important \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- 3 Could you tell me how \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- 4 Would there be a chance \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- 5 Do you have \_\_\_\_\_ ?

**f** It is important to show you are listening actively to the interviewer's response to your question. In pairs, take turns to ask and answer your questions in Exercise 5e. Remember to show you are listening actively by:

- keeping eye contact with the interviewer;
- nodding your head;
- making noises and short comments to show you understand (*OK / Really? / I see*);
- paraphrasing what the interviewer has just told you (*so you're saying ...*).

## Dealing with telephone interviews

Employers often use telephone interviews for recruitment, as a way of screening large numbers of applicants before selecting a smaller pool of candidates for face-to-face interviews.

**6 a** In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 Would you prefer to have an interview face-to-face or on the telephone?
- 2 Why is it increasingly popular for initial interviews to be held over the phone?
- 3 What are the advantages of telephone interviews for the candidate?
- 4 When is the best time to arrange a telephone interview?
- 5 Why should you smile during a telephone interview?
- 6 What is the candidate's main aim in most telephone interviews?



- b** Read the following article and compare the advice with your answers in Exercise 6a.

## Tackling telephone interviews

It is common practice these days for initial first interviews to be held over the phone. The main reason for this is that it significantly reduces the cost for employers, who often use telephone interviews as a method of filtering candidates before moving on to face-to-face interviews. Telephone interviews also have benefits for the applicants as well. As well as the obvious financial saving, an applicant may feel more relaxed within their own environment surrounded by their CV and research materials to aid them. You also don't have to wear a suit! It is essential that you organise a time for a telephone interview that is convenient for you. You should suggest a time when you are unlikely to be disturbed, when you are in a quiet environment and you are confident that you have prepared sufficiently to convince the interviewer you are the right person for the job, or at least a second interview.

During the interview you should:

- smile, as this will help you to relax and project a positive image to the interviewer and will alter the tone of your voice.
- speak slowly and clearly. It's perfectly acceptable to take your time when answering questions.
- give short, memorable answers.
- use the person's title (Mr or Ms and their last name). Only use a first name if you are invited to.
- keep a copy of your CV open next to you, so that it's at your fingertips when you need it.
- have a pen and paper next to you so that you can make notes if you need to.

Remember that your goal is to try and set up a face-to-face interview. At the end of the interview ask if it would be possible to meet in person.

- c** Alex Mencken has recently applied for a number of administrative assistant jobs with theatres. A potential employer calls him for a telephone interview. However, as Alex has applied to many theatres he cannot remember the specific details about the theatre when he receives the unexpected call. In pairs, discuss what you would do in Alex's situation.
- d** ▶ 5.12 Listen to the telephone conversation between Alex and John Bradshaw from King's Theatre. What do you think of the way Alex dealt with the conversation? Do you think he handled the conversation well?
- e** ▶ 5.12 Listen again and complete the conversation.

**John:** Hello. Can I speak to Alex Mencken please?

**Alex:** This is Alex. (1) \_\_\_\_\_ ?

**John:** Hello, Alex. My name is John Bradshaw and I'm calling from King's Theatre regarding your recent application for a position with us. Is this a good time for you?

**Alex:** Oh, (2) \_\_\_\_\_. Unfortunately I have about ten minutes before I have to leave. Is that enough time, or can you call back later this afternoon?

**John:** That would be fine. (3) \_\_\_\_\_ ? I'm free after 2pm.

**Alex:** How about 2.30?

**John:** Perfect. I'll call you at 2.30.

**Alex:** Great. (4) \_\_\_\_\_ .

**John:** Yes. So do I. Speak to you later. Goodbye.

**Alex:** Bye.

**f** ▶ 5.13 At 2.30pm Alex is sitting comfortably, he has thoroughly researched the position at King's Theatre and he has a copy of his CV in front of him. When John Bradshaw calls for the interview, Alex is feeling well-prepared. Listen to an extract from the interview and answer the following questions.

- 1 What responsibilities does John mention?
- 2 Would the successful applicant receive help to do this job?
- 3 Why does Alex have problems hearing John?
- 4 How does King's Theatre support new talent?

**g** ▶ 5.13 Listen again and tick (✓) the phrases you hear.

- 1 I'm sorry, could you say that again? ✓
- 2 I didn't quite catch what you said.
- 3 I'm having trouble hearing you. Can you hear me clearly?
- 4 Could you explain what you mean by ...?
- 5 So, if I understand you correctly ...
- 6 Do you mean ...?
- 7 Could you elaborate a little on ...?
- 8 Could you tell me what that would involve?

**h** Decide whether the phrases (1–8) in Exercise 6g ask for repetition (R), clarification (C) or more information (I).

1 R    2 \_\_\_\_    3 \_\_\_\_    4 \_\_\_\_    5 \_\_\_\_    6 \_\_\_\_    7 \_\_\_\_    8 \_\_\_\_

**i** ▶ 5.14 Complete the following extracts from telephone interviews using the phrases in Exercise 6g. Listen and check your answers.

- 1 **Candidate:** Could you explain what you mean by piece rates?  
**Interviewer:** Piecework is a form of performance-related pay, where you would be paid a fixed piece rate for each unit you produce.
- 2 **Candidate:** I'm sorry, could you say that again, as \_\_\_\_\_ ?  
**Interviewer:** Yes of course. My name is Mr Johnson and I'm calling to discuss your application for an internship here at Ariel Publishers.
- 3 **Candidate:** \_\_\_\_\_ that when the company is busy I would be required to work overtime?  
**Interviewer:** Yes. But of course overtime rates are higher than normal pay.
- 4 **Candidate:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Interviewer:** Yes, I can hear you perfectly this end, although if you can't hear me well, perhaps I'll try and call you back on a landline.
- 5 **Candidate:** Your advertisement mentions administrative work. \_\_\_\_\_  
**Interviewer:** Well, basically it means keeping our records up-to-date and sending a weekly email to our clients.
- 6 **Candidate:** \_\_\_\_\_, what you're saying is the job may involve some overtime?  
**Interviewer:** Yes, but you would be paid extra for this.

**j** In pairs, practise the dialogues in Exercise 6i.

**k** In pairs, role play a telephone interview. Sit back-to-back.

Student A, you are the interviewer. Interview the candidate for a job you know well. Use the following phrases.

Let me start by outlining the main aspects of the position and then we'll see how closely your skills and experience match the job. OK?

One of the main responsibilities of the post holder is to ...

Another part of the job is ...

The role would also require ...

What experience do you have in the area of ...?

Tell me about a time when you had to ...

How do your skills and experience match the requirements for this position?

Student B, you are the candidate. Answer the questions honestly. Use the following clarification phrases.

I'm sorry, could you say that again?

I didn't quite catch what you said.

Could you explain what you mean by ...?

So, if I understand you correctly ...?

Could you elaborate a little on ...?

Could you tell me what that would involve?

After the interview, give feedback to each other. Swap roles and practise again.

**l** In pairs, tell your partner about a job you would like to be interviewed for. Look through units 4 and 5 and choose five questions to ask your partner, based on the job they have chosen. Then take turns to ask and answer your questions. Try to use the techniques from these units to make your answers as impressive as possible.