LESSON 12

JOB INTERVIEW

AGENDA: YOU WILL LEARN

Vocabulary:
Writing a reach-out message.

Grammar:
Useful grammar for your resume.

Pronunciation:
Why recruiters might not understand your English.

Speaking & Soft skills:
Answering job interview questions.

Writing & Soft skills:
Creating a resume.

🎤 ❓ 📚 WARM-UP

Read the tweet. Have you ever bombed any interviews? How do you think you should prepare for an upcoming interview?

Halli ✔ @iamharaldur
Interviewing for a new job is stressful. I've bombed my fair share .

To get better at them I used to interview at a lot of places. Over time I learned the ropes and they became easier.

I highly recommend doing some practice interviews before you do the one you really want.

Bomb — fail terribly.
(My) fair share — quite a lot.
Over time — gradually
Learn the ropes — learn how a particular job or task is done.

READING

🎤 EXERCISE 1A

Look at the following common job interview questions. In your view, what do recruiters and hiring managers expect to hear when they ask them?

1. What can you tell me about yourself?

2. What are your strengths?

3. What are your weaknesses?

4. Tell me about a challenge you've encountered. How did you deal with it?

5. Have you ever received difficult feedback or had a disagreement with a coworker? How did you handle the situation?

6. Tell me about a time you helped improve or innovate something

7. What are your goals for the future?

🔤 📚 EXERCISE 1B

Skim the text and complete the answers with the words from the box.

won't be the case · to the table · feel in my element · conversion rate · work out
lately · came to mind · address · robust · ended up · rewarding · rolled out

When you're being interviewed for a job, the interviewer is looking to confirm three things:

1. Can you do the job? (Do you have the required skills and training?)

2. Will you do the job? (Are you motivated to take on certain challenges? Will you be able to grow in this role?)

3. Are you a good team fit? (Are you an easy person to work with? Will you fit in with the rest of the team?)

If you manage to check off all three points, you are very likely to get the job offer! It's important to remember that you can leverage every interview question as an opportunity to show that your skill set and values match the position's requirements.

What sort of questions are you likely to be asked and why do interviewers ask them? Let's take a detailed look.

1. WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF?

Focus: communication skills, job fit T.

The interviewer needs to understand if you can communicate effectively and have the right experience for the role. He or she needs to have a clear idea of what value you can bring to the company based on your answer to this question

I'm a full-stack developer proficient in designing user interactions on websites, developing and designing APIs and ensuring cross-platform optimization. I also have a background in design which allows me to 1)_____ when I'm collaborating with UI/UX designers on implementing new design features and understand their perspective which facilitates communication. I love designing 2)_____ applications that create an extraordinary user experience. I believe in life-long learning and always try to find more efficient ways of doing something.

2. WHAT ARE YOUR STRENGTHS?

Focus: relevant skills and competencies.

This question gives you an opportunity to showcase a specific skill set that make you a good match for the job or the project you're interviewing for.

I believe I bring a customer-centric perspective 3)_____ . I'm not just focused on making the customer happy, I think critically to come up with the optimal technical solutions that would 4) their pain points and fit their business needs.

I also make sure to set realistic estimates and manage expectations from very early on to eliminate any potential misunderstandings and bottlenecks in the future.

3. WHAT ARE YOUR WEAKNESSES?

Focus: self-awareness.

In other words: "Are you an arrogant jerk?". All you need to do here is show that you're a humble person who is open to feedback without focusing too much on personal flaws.

I can be a bit shy to speak in meetings. I am often under the impression that my ideas will be harshly judged even when I know that 5) _____ . I'm working on building up my confidence and not being afraid to pitch ideas or give my thoughts on an issue. 6)_____ , I've been attending speaking clubs where I get to talk to other people in the IT field and learn to make compelling arguments. It's still work in progress but I feel like I've improved a lot in the past couple of months.

4. TELL ME ABOUT A CHALLENGE YOU'VE ENCOUNTERED. HOW DID YOU DEAL WITH IT?

Focus: role-related skills, critical thinking.

This is an opportunity for you to present an interesting successful case from your experience.

The project I've found most challenging and 7)_____was hand-translating the assembly-language code, art and music for the arcade game Mortal Kombat so that the whole game fit inside of a joystick and maintained its original gameplay and timing.

The challenge was that even though this project was done with full cooperation of the game's makers, there was no source artwork for the game's art assets so I 8)_____ having to reverse engineer all of the art assets from ROM images.

We did this project in a few months, with one programmer (me), one artist, and the contracting services of a great sound guy. It got great reviews and was a big hit with the fans of the original game.

I've done other equally challenging projects but this one was the first that 9)_____ because of the pride I could take in the results.

5. HAVE YOU EVER RECEIVED DIFFICULT FEEDBACK OR HAD A DISAGREEMENT WITH A COWORKER? HOW DID YOU HANDLE THE SITUATION?

Focus: team fit, social and communication skills.

Show that you're someone who can work well with others and work on a team.

I choose to view conflict as an opportunity for positive change and improve-ment. In the past, I've always been able to resolve conflict by speaking to my coworker directly in a professional manner and trying to 10)_____ a solution that would be beneficial for our common goal.

If we're disagreeing about something that's going to fundamentally impact the project, we discuss it between ourselves and see if we can reach an understanding. If we fail to reach a consensus, I will escalate the issue to our Project Manager.

6. TELL ME ABOUT A TIME YOU HELPED IMPROVE OR INNOVATE SOMETHING.

Focus: motivation, job-fit.

If you can prove that you're able to innovate and drive the company forward, that will dramatically increase your chances of getting the job!

I once took over a mobile app project as a UX designer. I soon realized that the previous design had not been revised in a long time and had multiple UX issues. I spent a couple of weeks redesigning the UX and UI. The goal was to make the app more user friendly and improve the 11)_____ of free users to paying customers. After we 12) _____ the new design, the conversion rate went up by 50% and the app became more in line with the unique brand message.

🔊 **Listen to the recording of the text (track 12.1) and check your pronunciation.**

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📄 Review the glossary of the highlighted words from the text and make sure you understand the meaning of each phrase.

1. To be proficient in	To have expert knowledge in.
2. To feel in your element	To feel comfortable and knowledgeable.
3. Extraordinary	Exceptional.
4. Bring a customer-centric perspective to the table	Contribute a professional attitude that is focused on the client.
5. Come up with	Create / invent.
6. Pain point	A problem your (potential) customer is experiencing.
7. Pick up on	Notice or detect.
8. Optimal	The best possible.
9. Fit the needs	Satisfy the requirement / provide the right solution to the problem.
10. Estimate (noun)	An approximate calculation.
11. Be under the impression	Think / assume.
12. Harshly	Heavily / strictly.
13. Be the case	Be true in a particular situation.
14. Build up	Strengthen / improve.
15. Rewarding	Making you feel like what you did was worth the effort.
16. Reverse engineer	To take apart an existing product in order to understand how its parts work together.
17. Work out	Find an answers to something (often through negotiation).
18. Reach a consensus	Reach an understanding and agreement.
19. Escalate	To address the issue to your higher-up.
20. Take over	Assume control over the project or task.
21. Conversion rate	The percentage of users who take a desired action.
22. Roll out	Release / launch.
23. In line with	Aligned with.
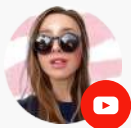
🎤 EXERCISE 2

Think back to your previous interview experience. What questions were you asked? What were your answers to them?

🎤 EXERCISE 3

Answer the questions from exercise 1A. Try to use new phrases you've learned from this lesson. You can also use useful phrases below.

USEFUL PHRASES

Linking words	Skills and interests	Describing results
Basically… In fact / actually… Fortunately… Unfortunately… I'd say..	I am passionate about… I am excited about… I have some experience with…	I figured out the solution by…(doing sth) We managed to meet the deadline by… What I learned from that was…

GRAMMAR

Prepositions

NOT SURE IF IT'S LATE AT NIGHT OR EARLY IN THE MORNING

📚 📖 EXERCISE 1A

Read the advert. What prepositions of time and place can you identify?

ONLY AT MOMENTUM 2019 ON MAY 20-23, 2019

Cutting-edge demos, real-world applications
by industry leaders, over 1,000 customers.

Don't miss three days of inspiring, informative content from global thought leaders, market disruptors, and trendsetters. It all happens in spring at Momentum 2019 at the JW Marriott, Phoenix Desert Ridge Resort and Spa in Phoenix, Arizona. The event begins at 1 p.m. on May 20 with Product Council Meetings. For 25 years, Momentum has attracted the best and brightest to come up and share their experience with everyone.

We will once again offer an intense learn-ing opportunity through our Product & Industry Immersion Sessions, held on Thursday morning, for an even deeper dive into some of our solutions with the product experts who know them best.

Conference dress code is business casual. However, the temperature in the meeting rooms is much cooler than it is outside. Layered clothing may provide the greatest comfort. Also, keep in mind that the weather in Arizona during May is changeable, so please pack according-ly.

📚 📖 EXERCISE 1B

Review and complete the rules.

TIME:

At — **time units that are specific** (at 12:15 p.m.) or **smaller than a day** (at midday, at night).

On — **days and dates:** Days of the week (on Monday), Dates (on the 6th of July).

In — **time units larger than a day:** in summer, in 1984, in October.

> **BUT:** for parts of the day we use **IN**: in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening.

Choose the correct preposition for each row:

1. at / on / in? 1960s, May, the middle ages, winter

2. at / on / in? eleven a.m., sunrise, midnight, dinnertime

3. at / on / in? Sunday, the 25th of December, Wednesday morning

PLACE:

At – **point, as a physical point or point as a place where you do something:** at work, I am at my desk, work at Google, at university, at the supermarket, at 22B Baker Street.

On – **surface:** on the 7th floor, the file is on my desk, on the river/ on the banks of Thames, on Baker Street.

In – **enclosed physical space (it has borders):** in this room, in the building, in an open-space office, in Brooklyn, in New York, in the USA.

> **! ON** is also used for public transport as a physical location (He must be on the bus right now).

Choose the correct preposition for each row:

1. at / on / in the table, the roof, the train, the West Coast

2. at / on / in elevator, cubicle, a block of flats, France

3. at / on / in 23 Hampton Road, the corner of the street, school, reception

📘 EXERCISE 2A

Complete the sentences. Use in, on or at.

1. I have a job interview _____ Tuesday morning.
2. I had to work ___ night yesterday, so I drank like a liter of coffee.
3. What are you doing ___ lunchtime?
4. Jack is going on holiday ___ the first week of August.
5. Are you free ___ April 13?
6. We have a production meeting _____ half-past one.
7. We're having a corporate team-building ___ Friday.

📘 EXERCISE 2B

Complete the sentences. Use in, on or at.

1. Tom is on a business trip _____ the Netherlands at the moment.
2. What's that black spot ___ the screen?
3. He's not answering the phone. He must be ___ the plane now.
4. Our office is ___ the 73rd floor.
5. I left my folder _____ the conference room.
6. When will you arrive ___ the office?
7. We have such annoying music ___ the elevator. I even started singing it ___ home the other day.

📘 EXERCISE 3

Correct mistakes in the text conversation.

@allmightywizard: What are you doing **in Wednesday** evening?

@IronWoman: I have an important presentation **at Tuesday**, so I'll have to stay **on work** late to prepare for it.

@allmightywizard: We could meet **on the evening** after the presentation, if you have time.

@IronWoman: Oh, I think I'll need a quiet evening **in home** after that.

@allmightywizard: How about going out **at Saturday** then?

@IronWoman: I wish I could. I have to meet my sister at the airport, she's coming home for the holidays.

@allmightywizard: I have another idea then. I can meet you **on the train station tonight.** How about that?

@IronWoman: Actually, tonight I'm pretty busy. We always have a lot of clients **at February.**

@allmightywizard: Sounds like a tough week. Are you free **in next weekend?**

@IronWoman: Sorry, next weekend is off limits. We have a girls' night out **at every third Saturday** of the month.

@allmightywizard: Do you ever have free time?

@IronWoman: Probably **on spring.**

@allmightywizard: **At November on a party** you told me the same about the winter and I haven't seen you since.

📌 Some prepositions are attached to certain verbs and used together as a phrase.

SEE LIST >>

🎙️ 📖 EXERCISE 4

Come up with 7 questions using the phrases from the phrase list on the previous page (they don't have to be work-related) and answer those questions or address them to a peer.

E.g. What podcasts/audio books do you like to listen to?

PRONUNCIATION

🔊 a♭c EXERCISE 1A

There are certain words that many job seekers tend to mispronounce. This may make it difficult for the recruiter to follow what you are saying and decrease your chances of moving to the next stage of the hiring process.

Listen to the track (12.2) and practice saying these commonly mispronounced words.

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- IDE (integrated developer environment)
- AWS
- API
- App (AppStore)
- Software
- Research
- Expert
- Expertise
- Report
- Company
- Career
- Course
- Also
- Allow
- Certificate

🔊 EXERCISE 1B

Practice saying the following sentences. Listen to the recording (track 12.3) and check yourself.

▶ |ılıllılıllı Open in Google Drive

1. I took a course on Product Management and recently got a certificate from AWS.

2. You can trust his expertise in Java and cloud integration. He's also an expert in network security.

3. He sent me a report on the IDE creation project

4. We did comprehensive research and discovered that our company needs to modify its KPIs.

5. You can't allow your software career to get stuck in a rut. You need to keep looking for better opportunities.

SPEAKING & SOFT SKILLS

🔠 EXERCISE 1

It's always a good idea to start the interview with a little bit of small talk and try to turn it into a conversation. You can use the following useful phrases to achieve that goal.

USEFUL PHRASES

Getting Started	Clarifying	Taking time to think	Being friendly	Wrapping up
How's it going? I'm doing good. It's a pleasure to meet you. You have a lovely looking office/poster behind you etc. Can you hear me ok? I'm sorry, I think I'm having an issue with my (headphones, video etc.)	Could you say that again? I didn't catch it I'm afraid. Just wanted to make sure I heard that correctly.	Let me see... This is a good question... I'd say... It's hard to think of something off the top of my head...	Not really / I wouldn't say so (instead of "no") No worries / That's cool / Sure, no problem Absolutely / Totally That's really interesting Sounds awesome	It was a pleasure talking to you Thank you for your time When should I expect to hear back from you?

🎤 EXERCISE 1B

Role-play an interview. Answer the 7 questions from the reading section using the useful phrases from Exercise 1A.

You can book an interview practice session over at English For IT.

BOOK SESSION >>

WRITING & SOFT SKILLS

✏️ 📚 EXERCISE 1A

Read the introduction.

==Do you have any questions for me?==

This is a question many interviewees don't prepare for. What can you possibly ask the interviewer? Why would they even ask this question in the first place?

By asking if you have any questions, the interviewer is oftentimes trying to ==gain a deeper insight into what sort of things you're motivated by== and what your values are. For example, if you ask whether working remotely can be an option, this will let the company know that you're not a big fan of working in the office.

It also provides an opportunity for you to ==learn more about the company== and figure out whether it's a place you'd like to work at.

Watch an interview with a professional recruiter over on our youtube channel where we dive into insider tips for interviewees.

WATCH INTERVIEW >>

Think of 5 questions you could ask the interviewer to better understand the company you're interviewing for and write them down. There are a few examples below:

- Can you tell me a little bit about the team / project I would be working on?

- Why is this position open?

- What will I need to do to be successful in this role?
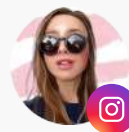
> ❞
> ## ANNGLISH TIP
> @annglish_
>
> *Key interview tip: do your research about the company prior to the interview!*
>
> *Make sure you head over to the **company website** and read about their mission and vision. This will allow you to make a better impression and ask relevant questions.*

GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS

Assets — any images, icons, fonts or any external resources that help a designer fulfill the UI part during development.

IDE — **An integrated development environment** (IDE) is software for building applications that combines common developer tools into a single graphical user interface (GUI).

ROM (read only memory) — non-volatile memory that permanently stores instructions for your computer, unlike RAM (random access memory) which is volatile and stores files temporarily.

Product Owner — a role on a product development team responsible for managing the product backlog in order to achieve the desired outcome that a product development team seeks to accomplish.

If you want a little extra practice:

Reading

Check out the list of 50 common behavioral interview questions. Feel free to use it to practice speaking.

GO TO ARTICLE »

Video

Do you want to work in Big Tech? You might want to hear a developer talk about his experience of interviewing at Amazon.

WATCH VIDEO »