

TOP TIPS

*For presenting
yourself professionally*

THE EF ENGLISH LIVE GUIDE TO:

Interview English





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INTRODUCTION

*Essential English to impress
potential employers and
take the next step in
your career*

This guide provides the essential vocabulary you'll need to impress a potential employer and take the next step in your career.

To help you learn this new language in context, you'll follow Carla on her search for the perfect job, and see how she conveys her professional expertise in her interview.

You'll even pick up a few useful tips on how to successfully negotiate a salary package and understand a new contract.





PART 1

THE INTERVIEW

*Common questions and
expert answers*

COMMON QUESTIONS AND EXPERT ANSWERS

Carla's impressive CV and brilliant cover letter have earned her an interview. If she really wants the job, it's vital that she dresses professionally, researches the company and, most importantly, prepares answers to the questions she is likely to be asked.

These four tips will help you prepare for your interview:

✦ **Practice answering potential questions out loud**

Think about the questions you might be asked, prepare and learn your answers, then practice saying them in front of the mirror.

✦ **Be clear about your strengths and provide examples**

If you claim that you have a certain skill or experience, be sure to back it up with an example.

✦ **Identify a weakness that you have overcome**

Think of something you have improved on. Perhaps you used to be disorganised but taught yourself how to prioritise. This will show that you are keen to do a good job.

✦ **Work out your salary expectations**

Before you go to the interview, make sure you know what you would like to get paid, and the lowest rate you would settle for. Do not be pressured into accepting a salary package that is less than you want, or does not reflect your qualifications.

COMMON QUESTIONS AND EXPERT ANSWERS

How does Clara handle those common interview questions?

Clara's interview:

Interviewer:

Why don't you start by telling me a little bit about your experience?

Clara:

I have five years of experience in the industry. Currently I'm an Account Executive for several major clients in my company.

Interviewer:

Good. What would you say is your greatest strength?

Clara:

I handle change well. I was asked to be the team's leader when my line manager was on maternity leave. I really enjoyed the challenge of this additional responsibility. I was able to discover how to get the best from the individual members of the team. It also gave me the opportunity to propose and implement changes in the annual appraisal policies for the group. Now we use the process of 360 degree feedback in our appraisal system and the team members feel this makes the process much more objective.

Interviewer:

And what would you say is your greatest weakness?

Clara:

I've had trouble planning my time in the past, but I've made a big effort to work on this. I now prioritise all my tasks and plan everything ahead.

COMMON QUESTIONS AND EXPERT ANSWERS

Interviewer:

What would your co-workers say about you?

Clara:

One of my teammates once mentioned that I was the hardest working person he knows. My other colleagues have also told me that I'm an excellent source of feedback and ideas.

Interviewer:

What would you say motivates you?

Clara:

I've always been a conscientious person and I strive to do the very best no matter what position I'm in. Of course, I'd appreciate some recognition from my superiors from time to time!

Interviewer:

Okay, thanks for coming in. We'll be in touch.



REMAIN POSITIVE IN YOUR INTERVIEW; IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN YOURSELF YOUR PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS WILL SEE IT





PART 2

NEGOTIATING FOR THE JOB

*How to get a package
worthy of your skills*

HOW TO GET A PACKAGE WORTHY OF YOUR SKILLS

Clara has impressed the Hiring Manager with her excellent interview and has received a job offer. See how she negotiates for a salary package worthy of her skills and experience.

Three tips for negotiating your salary:

- ✦ **Research the salaries in your field**

Do a little market research so you know what salary range to expect.

- ✦ **Know why you deserve it**

If you're asking for more than what they're offering, be sure to make a solid case why you deserve a higher salary.

- ✦ **Be flexible**

Maybe your potential employer is offering you a slightly lower salary, but with better benefits. Perhaps they don't have the budget to give you the exact number you want, but you may want to consider accepting the job anyway if they're offering great healthcare, a free gym membership, or extra days off.



TOP TIP

To negotiate a better salary:

***Be flexible but know
your worth***



HOW TO GET A PACKAGE WORTHY OF YOUR SKILLS

How does Clara negotiate her salary package?

Clara's interview:

Hiring Manager:

I enjoyed meeting with you the other day and would like to offer you the position of Senior Project Manager.

Clara:

Thank you for the offer! I am honoured that you have selected me.

Hiring Manager:

We're happy to offer you a salary of \$30,000. Your salary package will include an annual Christmas bonus and medical benefits.

Clara:

Based on my current salary, I was expecting something a little higher.

Hiring Manager:

I understand. Unfortunately, that is all I'm authorised to offer. Would you consider the role if we offered you more vacation days and an annual gym membership?

Clara:

I'm very interested in the position but I'll need a few days to think it over. Can I let you know my decision on Monday?

Hiring Manager:

Sure. Let's talk again on Monday.



TOP TIP

Think it over

**Never feel pressured
to make an instant
decision**



PART 3

READING YOUR CONTRACT

*Important tips and
key terms*

IMPORTANT TIPS AND KEY TERMS

Clara has successfully negotiated a suitable salary package and is meeting with the Hiring Manager to sign her employment contract.

Contract reading can be a difficult task even for native English speakers. However, understanding some key words and phrases will make things clearer. Here are some tips for contract reading, and a brief guide to frequently used contract terminology.

Four tips for reading contracts:

✦ **Take your time**

It's important that you understand what you're agreeing to, so take as long as you need.

✦ **Don't be afraid to ask questions**

If something isn't clear, ask for clarification. Even native English speakers need help with legal contracts.

✦ **Never agree to performance requirements that cannot be measured**

Look for measurable performance requirements and ask for further explanation on vague measurements such as 'good' or 'satisfactory'.

✦ **Don't agree to anything you don't understand or are not 100% happy with**

It's important that you understand every aspect of your contract before you sign it. Seek legal advice if you are unsure of anything.



IMPORTANT TIPS AND KEY TERMS

Key terms:

⊕ **Party**

Contracts should always refer to **'Party A'** and **'Party B'**. Who is **'Party A'** and who is **'Party B'** should be made clear at the start of the contract.

⊕ **Article / clause**

An **'article'** or **'clause'** is an individual statement or point within the contract. People often refer to specific clauses when discussing contracts.

For example: "Article 4.2 states that you have no right to publish copyrighted material."

⊕ **Stipulate**

This verb means to specify or state a condition.

For example: "Clause 8.1 stipulates that employees must provide a doctor's note when missing more than three days off work."

⊕ **Condition**

A **condition** is a necessary requirement in certain circumstances.

For example: "You can have time off in lieu on the condition that your line manager approves it."

IMPORTANT TIPS AND KEY TERMS

⊕ **Legally binding**

If a contract is **legally binding** you must obey the rules of the contract or you can be taken to court.

⊕ **Null and void**

If a contract is **null and void**, it means the contract has no legal authority, and the terms are no longer valid.

⊕ **Breach of contract**

If you are in **breach of contract**, you have broken your agreement. This means you can be taken to court.



BE CAREFUL

Check your contract:

***Don't be afraid to flag
points you don't
understand***



Now that you've learned some essential English phrases for impressing a potential employer, it's time to put them into practice before your big interview.

Practice with us

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