



Learn English Through
Stories.

U Series

Advanced Vocabulary

Adapted and modified by

Kulwant Singh Sandhu.

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Job Interview by K S Sandhu

Banta is preparing for an interview. He has always dreamed of working as a programmer in a dynamic tech company, and now his chance has arrived. Last month, he applied for a Trainee Programmer position at TechNova, a leading software development firm. After weeks of waiting, he was shortlisted and invited to an interview. Banta knew that when companies are recruiting, they often have a set of criteria, such as three years of experience in the field or a degree in a relevant area. Although he only had one year of experience as a trainee at F3 Telecom after finishing his Engineering degree, he believed his skills and enthusiasm made him a suitable candidate. He decided to do his homework thoroughly. He researched the company's products, markets, and competitors. He read about their latest AI-driven apps and how they were expanding into new regions. This preparation boosted his confidence.

The night before the interview, Banta asked his friend Mona to do a trial run with him. They practised common questions in the living room. Mona acted as the interviewer and asked, "Can you talk us through your CV?" Banta replied calmly: "Well, I studied Engineering and then took a job as a trainee at F3 Telecom, where I worked on debugging code and supporting software updates." Mona also asked, "Can you give us an example of how you've worked well under pressure?" Banta shared a story about fixing a critical system error during a tight deadline, staying focused until the problem was solved. On the day of the interview, Banta arrived early. As he entered the building, he paid attention to his body language. He gave a firm handshake to the receptionist and spoke up clearly when introducing himself. The interview was conducted by a panel, including his future line manager, Ms Smith, and two senior developers. Banta made eye contact with all of them while answering questions. The panel asked challenging but fair questions. One asked, "How would your colleagues describe you?" Banta answered honestly: "They would say I'm reliable, a good team player, and someone who learns quickly." Another question was about opportunities for professional development. Banta listened carefully and later asked his own question: "What does the in-house training programme offer for recruits?" Ms Smith smiled and explained the excellent support for skill-building.

Banta felt nervous at times, but he stayed composed. He spoke naturally, using examples from his experience to show he was an ideal fit for the job.

A week later, an email arrived: "Thank you for attending the interview last week. We very much enjoyed meeting you. We are delighted to offer you the position of Trainee Programmer. We believe your qualifications and experience will be an ideal fit for the job. Please review the attached document outlining your salary, benefits (including paid leave), and reporting structure, and sign where indicated. Return the document within five business days. Once we have received the paperwork, we will contact you to arrange your start date. We look forward to welcoming you as part of our team."

Banta read the message twice, hardly believing it. He had prepared carefully, shown genuine interest, and performed well. Now, a new chapter was beginning. He replied immediately, thanking them and promising to return the signed document promptly. With excitement and a little pride, Banta thought about his future colleagues and the projects ahead. His hard work had paid off.

4 Job interviews

A Preparing for interviews

When companies are **recruiting**¹, they often have a set of **criteria**² (e.g. three years of experience in the field, or a degree in a relevant area) which they use to find the most suitable candidates. If you are **shortlisted**³ for an interview, make sure you **do your homework** first: find out as much as you can about the company, its products, markets, competitors, etc. If you can, ask a friend to do a **trial run**⁴ with you. This will help **boost**⁵ your confidence. The interview may be conducted by a **panel** [a group of people], probably including your future **line manager**⁶. Don't forget to **make eye contact** with all the interviewers while you are talking. As you arrive for the interview, **body language**⁷ is important. Give a **firm handshake** and **speak up**⁸. This will help to create a good **first impression**.

¹ hiring (new staff) ² requirements you use to make a decision ³ selected from a larger group ⁴ a practice of something new ⁵ improve or increase ⁶ the person who is directly responsible for your work ⁷ physical movements which show how you are feeling ⁸ speak (more) loudly and clearly

B During an interview

These are examples of things that might be said at a job interview.

A: So, can you **talk us through**¹ your CV?

B: Well, I studied Engineering and then took a job as a **trainee**² at F3 Telecom.

A: I'd like to ask about opportunities for **professional development**³.

B: We have a very good **in-house**⁴ training programme for **new recruits**⁵.

Can you give us an example of how you've worked well **under pressure**?

How would your colleagues / your **supervisor**⁶ describe you?

I'm keen to **take on**⁷ more responsibility.

A: We're looking to **fill the post**⁸ fairly quickly. If you are successful, how soon could you start?

B: The **notice period**⁹ on my present job is just two weeks, so I could start very soon.



¹ tell us about in more detail ² a person who is learning a new job ³ training given to employees to increase their knowledge or skills ⁴ within the company ⁵ people who have just joined (the company) ⁶ the person who checks your work ⁷ start to have ⁸ find someone to do the job ⁹ time you need to work in your job after you have officially told the company you are leaving

C A job offer

Dear Mr Malton,

Thank you for attending the interview last week. We very much enjoyed meeting you. We are delighted to **offer you the position** of Trainee Programmer. We believe your qualifications and experience will be **an ideal fit for**¹ the job. Please review the attached document **outlining**² your salary, benefits (including **paid leave**³) and **reporting structure**⁴, and sign where indicated. Return the document within five business days. Once we have received the paperwork, we will contact you to arrange your **start date**.

We look forward to welcoming you as part of our team.

Kind regards
Melanie Stephens

¹ very suitable for

² giving an overview of

³ time off you are paid for, such as holiday or parental leave

⁴ company structure and who you report to

Exercises

4.1 Look at A and fill in the tips for a successful interview.

- 1 Before the interview, your : find out as much as you can about the company and prepare answers to common interview questions.
- 2 If you can, do a to practise how you will answer the interview questions.
- 3 You need to create a good with the interviewers. Dress smartly and professionally.
- 4 Remember that your also plays an important part. Don't forget to smile! This will make you seem more friendly, and might actually your confidence too.
- 5 Make sure you greet your interviewer with a Make when you talk to them – look at them directly.
- 6 During the interview, describe all your relevant education and experience to show how you fulfil all the for the job.

4.2 Choose the correct word from A and B to complete the sentences.

- 1 I'm afraid you'll have to *speak up / eye up / head up*. I can hardly hear what you're saying.
- 2 We are *taking / recruiting / searching* people for our new branch in the city centre.
- 3 If we can't *fill / fulfil / supply* the post internally, we'll have to advertise externally.
- 4 If I get the new job, I will have to *take up / over / on* more responsibility, but I will get a salary increase.
- 5 I don't like working *under pressure / under stress / by force*. I end up making mistakes.
- 6 As part of the programme of *reporting structure / professional development / notice period*, we would like to invite you to a session on project management.

4.3 Rewrite the following sentences using expressions from A, B and C.

- 1 Could you tell us about your previous experience in this field?
- 2 I think we should give the job to Ruth. She seems perfectly suited to the team.
- 3 Employees are entitled to 30 days' holiday.
- 4 The group of interviewers will include your future line manager.
- 5 They just called me to say I have been chosen (as one of the best candidates) for an interview.

4.4 Look at B and C opposite. There is one mistake in each of these sentences. Correct the mistakes.

- 1 Please find attached a document overviewing your working conditions.
- 2 In some companies the leaving period can be as much as six months.
- 3 I'm going to be working as a superior, in charge of a team of 4 people.
- 4 The company doesn't do any in-office training. It's all done externally.
- 5 My begin date for the new job is 1 July.
- 6 I'm a trainer accountant. I haven't passed my qualifying exams yet.

4.5 Over to you

- What do you do before a stressful situation to boost your confidence?
- Would you rather have a lot of paid leave or a higher salary?
- Do you work better under pressure? Or do you prefer to have more time?
- Do you enjoy taking on extra responsibility? Or do you find it stressful?

Answers

Unit 4

- 4.1**
- 1 do ... homework
 - 2 trial run
 - 3 first impression
 - 4 body language; boost
 - 5 firm handshake; eye contact
 - 6 criteria
- 4.2**
- 1 speak up
 - 2 recruiting
 - 3 fill
 - 4 on
 - 5 under pressure
 - 6 professional development
- 4.3**
- 1 talk us through
 - 2 offer the position; an ideal fit
 - 3 (paid) leave
 - 4 panel
 - 5 shortlisted
- 4.4**
- 1 ~~overviewing~~ outlining
 - 2 ~~leaving~~ notice
 - 3 ~~superior~~ supervisor
 - 4 ~~in-office~~ in-house
 - 5 ~~begin~~ start
 - 6 ~~trainer~~ trainee