

APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY: HOW TO SUCCEED IN AN INTERVIEW

Worksheet 1

13A Applying to university

The interview

A Have you ever had an interview for a school or a job? What happened? How did you feel? Describe the experience to your partner.



B Listen to three extracts from university admission interviews and answer these questions.

- 1 What general question does the interviewer ask each candidate?
- 2 What is the main reason given by each candidate in answer to this question?
 Andy:
 Amina:
 Ali:

C Listen again and tick ✓ or cross ✗ the appropriate box. Make notes to support your ideas.

	Andy	Amina	Ali
Answers the question fully			
Sounds natural			
Sounds too formal			
Sounds too informal			

D With your partner, discuss whether or not you think each candidate has made a good impression. What advice would you give for improvement?

E Your teacher will give you some advice about how to have a successful interview. Read and memorise the advice. Do not try to memorise the exact words, but focus on the ideas.

Talk to your classmates. Ask them what number they had and ask the appropriate question from the list below. Record the answers in note form.

- 1 What should I wear to the interview?
- 2 Should I make direct eye contact with my interviewer(s)?
- 3 Should I shake hands with my interviewer(s)?
- 4 How should I prepare for the interview?
- 5 What sort of questions will I be asked?
- 6 What sort of answers are the interviewers looking for?
- 7 Should I ask questions too?
- 8 Is there anything else I should do?

F Think back to the interview you described to your partner in the warmer activity. Is there anything you would do differently in an interview now?

C+ Listen again and underline/highlight any phrases that seem useful to you and you might use them at your own interview

Example answer 1

Interviewer: So, Andy, let's begin with a general question, shall we?

Andy: Oh, yeah.

Interviewer: Tell me, why are you interested in studying biochemistry at this university?

Andy: Well, um, my dad's a doctor and um, I really wanna get into medical school and, um, the one here has a real good reputation. I'm, uh, really interested in becoming a neuroscientist like him, not just to do the operations but really to do the research. You see, my granddad was in a car accident when I was a kid and after the accident, he, uh, couldn't walk any more, but he carried on living life to the full, even though he was in a lotta pain. Seeing my granddad made me wanna do something to help people like him and, y'know, find a cure for paralysis. So, uh, that's why I wanna be a doctor. I'm really into the research side of it.

Example answer 2

Interviewer: Let's begin with a general question, all right?

Amina: Yes, of course.

Interviewer: Tell me, Amina, why are you interested in studying biochemistry at this university?

Amina: Well, of course one of the main reasons is the excellent reputation of this university's biochemistry course. When I was researching places I wanted to go to, I, uh, was really impressed by all the different research projects going on here. Um, for example ... I discovered that there's a really big research project here about finding a new source of stem cells. I'm really interested in that area because my goal is to become a neurosurgeon and conduct my own research to help find a cure for paralysis. I'm really looking forward to working with such highly research-active lecturers and motivated students.

Example answer 3

Interviewer: Right, Ali, we'll begin with a general question, shall we?

Ali: Sure.

Interviewer: Tell me, why are you interested in studying biochemistry at this university?

Ali: The first and the foremost reason that I want to attend this university is the good reputation of its biochemistry department. When I evaluated this university's biology course, I was impressed with its research. The current research project about a new source of stem cells interests me; it would be very exciting to monitor the progress of this research project from the place where the research centre is located. At this university I hope

to learn about biochemistry and to have a chance to conduct research with highly qualified tutors and other motivated students. In short, I look forward to studying biochemistry here because of the high calibre of its faculty and their research.

VIDEOS

G Watch the following video giving some guidelines about how should a successful applicant perform during an interview compared to the unsuccessful one.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMyD6c9Z3z8>

Which advice can you hear in the video that was not mentioned in exercise E?

H Watch two videos provided by the University of Cambridge about interviews and take notes about:

- what the interviewers are interested in

- what the applicant shouldn't miss if they want to be well-prepared/make a good impression

<http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/applying/interviews>

Optinal video:

"Tell me about yourself" - How to answer this interview question

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-C55ADRB8uc>