

Job Interviews: Predicting and Clarifying

1. Predicting Strategies

A. With a partner, quickly read through the interview questions in the career handbook. Which words and phrases are repeated often? Write them on a separate piece of paper. These words and phrases are what you can expect, so you can focus on the words that are different when you are interviewed.

B. Review the job advertisement you brought. Circle the most important qualifications and give a copy to your partner. What questions from the career handbook are you most likely to be asked?

2. Clarifying Strategies

If you can, try to repeat what you **did** understand. In English, new information is stressed, so the speaker will stress the information you did **not** say.

Example: (bold= stressed)

Interviewer: Tell me about a time when you surpassed your **job requirements**.

You: I'm sorry. When I did **what** to my job requirements?

Interviewer: When you **surpassed** your job requirements.

Clarification Expressions

Complete Confusion

- I'm sorry. I didn't get that. Do you mind speaking a little more slowly?
- I'm not sure what you mean. Could you say that another way?

Partial Confusion

- X? I'm not sure what that is.
- Do you mean A or B?
- I didn't catch all of that. You asked me to tell you about a time that I...?
- Excuse me. I got the part about X, but I missed the first part/last part/part about Y.
- Do you mean when I was at company X?
- "When I had to deal with someone whose personality...?"

Checking Comprehension

- If I understand you correctly, you'd like me to talk about/give an example of...
- Okay. So you mean that...

Activity

Student 1: Choose questions you think are most appropriate for your partner's job. Hold the career handbook or the page of questions in front of your face. Making **NO** effort to be clear (in fact, you may speak too quickly or softly or mumble) ask your partner one of the sample questions. You may invent questions, but they should follow the pattern of the ones in the book.

Student 2: Use the clarification strategies to make sure you understand the question. Answer it briefly.

Do this twice, and then change roles.