

# How to Shine at Interview

## English lesson 4

Learning aim: To speak clearly and confidently, adopting language that is appropriate to purpose and audience.



Speaking step 7 – I speak engagingly by using facts and examples to support my points.



Listening step 8 – I show I am listening by summarising or rephrasing what I have heard.

## Scenario

Vitho, the CEO at Hawk UK, a digital marketing agency, has written a blog for the company's website entitled 'How to Shine at Interview'. This is just one strategy the agency are adopting to help attract future talent. Please read the opening to Vitho's blog.



## Blog extract – How to Shine at Interview

Attracting the best talent for the agency is a key strand of our improvement strategy here at Hawk.

I've been involved in many interviews over the years – either as a candidate, a hiring manager, a senior manager or as a CEO. It's honestly one of the best parts of my job. It's so inspiring and motivating to discover eager, dedicated and curious candidates. These are the people who will help us to soar above our competitors and fuel our continued success.

In this blog, I've put together 10 interview top tips for internal candidates and wannabe employees to help them shine at interview. Enjoy!



## Blog extract – How to Shine at Interview

### 1 – Practise your intro

It's the question that fills many applicants with dread, but it should actually be the easiest to answer. 'Tell us a little bit about yourself.' Be clear, concise, engaging and motivated in your response. State your name, where you're from, what you studied (or are studying) and what excites you professionally, and why. Then smile and get prepared to answer the next question. Remember to remain calm and composed. Regulate your breathing. When we forget, we speak much more quickly.



## Blog extract – How to Shine at Interview

### 2 – Use STAR

We want to find out how candidates react in typical work situations. In all of our interviews, we use situational judgement questions to check candidates' ability to make decisions, solve problems and work with others. A common question we ask is: Can you tell us about a time when you overcame a challenge? The STAR (situation, task, action, result) technique is a great way to structure your response to one of these questions. First, describe the situation and task you're referring to, and then explain the action you took and the result.



## Blog extract – How to Shine at Interview

### 3 – Smile

Where possible, smile. Let us see your passion and enthusiasm for the role. We want people who love their craft, are keen to learn, are curious about the industry and always eager to get stuck in and give things a go. Yes, be professional and courteous, but remember to let us see what makes you tick.



## Scenario continued

Zara, a college student, has been invited to Hawk UK's head office to interview for a digital marketing apprenticeship. After reading Vitho's blog, Zara is keen to get practising for her interview.


Imagine you are in Zara's situation and have been invited to interview. First, consider how you would answer the following common interview questions. (Use the guidance provided in Vitho's blog to help you.)





## Scenario continued

Then, in pairs, take it in turns to ask and answer the questions in an interview role play scenario. The person asking the questions can take on the role of Hamish, a hiring manager at Hawk UK. Aim to answer the questions as confidently and effectively as possible, remembering to be polite and use the right language and tone for this formal situation. Provide each other with feedback and keep revising your responses until you are satisfied with the result.

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself.
  2. Tell us about a time when you overcame a challenge. This can be in relation to either a professional or education-based scenario.
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# Success criteria

- Adopt language that is appropriate to the audience.
- Speak more engagingly by varying the intonation in your voice.
- Use gesture to support key points.
- Smile more to demonstrate your passion.
- Regulate your breathing to help provide a slower, more accessible response.
- Practise the opening line to make sure you deliver it successfully.  
(That will give you more confidence as you approach the rest of the question.)



## Reflection part 1

1 – Why is preparation for interviews important?  
What did you learn about your interviewing skills during the lesson?

## Reflection part 2

2 - Look at the list of speaking skills below. All the following help you to speak engagingly.

- Adopt language that is appropriate to the audience.
- Speak more engagingly by varying the intonation in your voice.
- Use gesture to support key points.
- Smile more to demonstrate your passion.
- Regulate your breathing to help provide a slower, more accessible response.
- Practise the opening line to make sure you deliver it successfully. (That will give you more confidence as you approach the rest of the question.)

Give yourself a score between 1-5 (1 being the ones you are least confident doing and 5 - where you feel most confident) for each of the above.

## Reflection part 3

3 - Select the two skills that you scored weakest in and think of ways that you will improve on these skills in future. What will you do differently and how will you check that you are improving using these speaking skills?