UNIT 9 CHOOSING A CAREER – READING

Read the following passage and mark the letter A, B, C or D to indicate the correct answer to each of the questions.

Although I left university with a good degree, I suddenly found that it was actually quite hard to find a job. After being unemployed for a few months, I realized I had to take the first thing that came along or I'd be in serious financial difficulties. And so, for six very long months, I became a market research telephone interviewer.

I knew it wasn't the best company in the world when they told me that I'd have to undergo three days of training before starting work, and that I wouldn't get paid for any of it. Still, I knew that the hourly rate when I actually did start full time would be a lot better than unemployment benefit, and I could work up to twelve hours a day, seven days a week if I wanted. So, I thought of the money I'd earn and put up with three days of unpaid training. Whatever those three days taught me - and I can't really remember anything about them today - I wasn't prepared for the way I would be treated by the supervisors.

It was worse than being at school. There were about twenty interviewers like myself, each sitting in a small, dark booth with an ancient computer and a dirty telephone. The booths were around the walls of the fifth floor of a concrete office block, and the supervisors sat in the middle of the room, listening in to all of our telephone interviews. We weren't allowed to talk to each other, and if we took more than about two seconds from ending one phone call and starting another, they would shout at us to hurry up and get on with our jobs. We even had to ask for permission to go to the toilet. I was amazed how slowly the day went. Our first break of the day came at eleven o'clock, two hours after we started. I'll always remember that feeling of despair when I would look at my watch thinking, 'It's must be nearly time for the break', only to find that it was quarter to ten and that there was another hour and a quarter to go. My next thought was always, 'I can't believe I'm going to be here until nine o'clock tonight.'

The most frightening aspect of the job was that I was actually quite good at it. 'Oh, no!' I thought. 'Maybe I'm destined to be a market researcher for the rest of my life.' My boss certainly seemed to think so. One day - during a break, of course - she ordered me into her office. 'Simon,' she said, 'I'm promoting you. From tomorrow, you're off telecoms and onto credit card complaints. I'm sure you can handle it. There's no extra pay, but it is a very responsible position.'

Three weeks later, I quit. It was one of the best decisions I've ever made.

1. Why did the writer become a market research telephone interviewer?

A. He had completely run out of money.

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B. He had the right university degree for the job.

C. It was the first job he was offered.

D. He knew it was only for six months.

2. The writer had doubts about the company when ____.

A. they only offered him three days of training

B. they told him he wouldn't receive payment for his training

C. they told him he had to be trained first

D. he was told what the hourly rate would be

3. His workplace could be best described as ____.

A. large and noisy

B. silent and dirty

C. untidy and crowded

D. old-fashioned and uncomfortable

4. How did he feel when he realized it wasn't time for the break yet?

A. He felt that he would have to go home early.

B. He felt that he wouldn't survive to the end of the day.

C. He felt that the end of the day seemed so long away.

D. He felt that he must have made a mistake.

5. What was unusual about Simon's promotion?

A. It showed how good he was at his job.

B. It meant he would be phoning different people.

C. It involved greater responsibility.

D. There was no increase in salary.

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