

Demonstrating you've got what it takes

In every interview you will be asked to talk about your transferable skills and experience and how these meet the requirements for the job.

- 9 a ▶ 4.14 Susana Cilveti is a recent graduate. Listen to an extract from her interview for a sales assistant position and answer the following questions.

- 1 What skills does Susana think are necessary for a sales assistant?
- 2 What was she doing before she moved to England?
- 3 What evidence does she give of her financial experience?
- 4 Susana claims to be a highly effective communicator. Do you think she provides enough evidence to support this claim?

- b ▶ 4.14 Listen again and complete the following sentences so they are true for Susana by underlining the correct words in bold.

- 1 In my last job I was responsible for **implementing new strategies** / selling souvenirs / negotiating deals.
- 2 I am used to **dealing with customers** / managing big budgets / coping with problems.
- 3 I can speak Italian **reasonably well** / a little / fluently.
- 4 This period of employment gave me experience of **managing people** / networking / organising events.
- 5 When I was at university I used to be **editor of the university magazine** / a **member of the student council** / captain of the volleyball team.
- 6 I feel I am a **well-organised person** / highly effective communicator / **reliable and efficient employee**.
- 7 I can work **well under pressure** / well autonomously / best as part of a team.
- 8 I am able to **be firm but fair** / delegate effectively / use my initiative to solve problems.

- c Choose the best ending for each sentence in Exercise 9b so they are true for you. You can invent your own endings.

- d In pairs, take turns to ask and answer the following questions, using your answers in Exercise 9c to help you.

- 1 What languages can you speak?
- 2 How would you describe the way you work?
- 3 What skills did you develop at university / at your last job?

e ▶ 4.15 In her interview at Futerra, Silvia Carnali is asked how her skills and experience match the requirements for the position. Listen to the extract and make a note of the skills she mentions.

f ▶ 4.15 Silvia uses a range of phrases to organise her answer. Complete her answer using the phrases in the box. Listen again and check your answers.

also when ever since finally Firstly Following
For example For my dissertation for three reasons
~~I think I'm suitable for the position at Futerra because~~
Secondly So So to sum up That's really when
When I was at years ago

Well, (1) I think I'm suitable for the position at Futerra because I understand the issues you deal with and am passionate about them. Four (2) _____ I joined Greenpeace and have been an active member (3) _____ . (4) _____ my BA I found out about an exciting project in Kenya and spent six months there educating local people about the need for reforestation. (5) _____ I started getting interested in sustainability and (6) _____ I started learning about different communication strategies. (7) _____ , our team found that simply putting up posters didn't really have much of an impact, but going and talking to respected members of the community and getting them to talk to others was much more effective. (8) _____ university I was the communications officer of the student union and I was responsible for dealing with suppliers and other student organisations. (9) _____ I've got quite a lot of communication experience. I know you're also looking for someone who's good at research. (10) _____ for my MA I'm researching how best to communicate reforestation issues, building on my own practical experiences gained in Kenya. (11) _____ , I think I'm suitable for the position at Futerra (12) _____ . (13) _____ , I've done a lot of communication work. (14) _____ , I'm a good team worker, and (15) _____ , because I have a good understanding of the sustainability issues this agency deals with.

g Underline useful phrases from Silvia's answer which you could use in an interview of your own. For example, I think I'm suitable for the position at ... because I ...

h Put the following stages in the same order as Silvia's answer.

- 1 Talking about your experience, providing background information for an anecdote
- 2 Summarising how the various examples have fully answered the question
- 3 Giving specific details from previous experiences and showing how these experiences relate to the requirements of the job
- 4 Expressing enthusiasm for the job and briefly relating your character to the job
- 5 Giving a second example of experience that relates to the job requirements

i Think of a job that you would like to apply for. Plan your answer to the question, 'How do your skills and experience match the requirements for this position?' using the structure in Exercise 9h.

j Complete the following sentences so they are true for you.

- 1 I think I'm suitable for the position of _____, because _____.
- 2 Following my degree I _____.
- 3 I started getting interested in _____.
- 4 When I was at university I _____.
- 5 So to sum up, I think I'm suitable for the position at _____ for three reasons. Firstly, _____.
Secondly, _____, and finally _____.

k Look at the following table and add two more common interview questions. Think of a job you would like to apply for. Prepare your answers to all the questions using words and phrases from this unit.

Question	Clear	Explicit	Audible	Concise	Truthful	Action language	Body language
Can you tell us something about yourself?							
What do you see as your strengths?							
What do you like doing in your spare time?							
What do you know about our company?							
How do your skills and experience match the requirements for this position?							

l In groups of three role play a job interview using the table in Exercise 9k.

Student A, you are the interviewer. You should ask a selection of questions from the table in Exercise 9k.

Student B, you are the candidate. You should answer the questions honestly, using your notes in Exercise 9k.

Student C, you are the observer. You should make notes on the candidate's answers in the table in Exercise 9k, using ✓ and ✗ symbols.

If possible, record the interview, as this will help you to identify your individual strengths and weaknesses. When you have finished, the observer should give feedback on the candidate's performance. Swap roles and practise again.