



ESL Podcast 21 – Getting an Interview

GLOSSARY

to land – to catch; to get something one has actively tried to get

* After meeting and working with the client for several months, Mr. Dolan landed the important business deal.

interview – meeting with someone, usually face-to-face, as part of applying for a job; a meeting with an employer to try to get a job

* At the interview, remember to act professionally and confidently.

part-time – a job that one has for only part of the typical work day, usually less than 40 hours each week

* While Roseanne was in college, she had a part-time job that allowed her to work 15 hours a week.

full-time – a job that one has that uses the entire work week, usually 40 hours or more each week

* When Alphonso got his first full-time office job, he had to adjust to working eight hours a day, five days a week.

back and forth – moving from one choice to another choice; frequent change of opinion or position

* Peggy went back and forth between choosing to go swimming at the beach or to go mountain climbing this weekend.

to double major – to have two academic concentrations; to focus on studying two different subjects for one's academic degree

* Quincy double majored in chemistry and history because he liked both topics too much to focus on only one.

political science – the study of government and the people and organizations that control government

* Melissa wanted to work for the government, so she studied political science in college.

marketing – the study of promoting and selling products to customers

* Todd planned to start his own business, so he took a few classes in marketing while he was at college.



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soul searching – serious or intense thought, usually about the things that one values or finds the most important

* Alvina was unhappy with her current job, so she did some soul searching to figure out what she wanted in her next job.

priority – something valued more than anything else; an action or idea that is more important than other actions or ideas

* Danny had a large amount of work to do, but the report due in two hours was his first priority.

to cast a wide net – to try many different options to increase the chances of being successful; to prepare for many different possible actions or future situations

* When Bernadette was searching for a job, she cast a wide net and contacted nearly every company that was in the process of hiring new workers.

job hunting – the act of searching for a job or work; the act of searching for employment

* After graduating college, most students begin the process of job hunting by going on interviews.

sector – section or portion; a single part of something with multiple parts

* Last month, companies in the private sector hired more people than the government.

to shoot a little lower – to develop more realistic goals; to adopt goals that are easier to achieve

* When Thaddeus realized how difficult it was to write a bestselling book, he decided to shoot a little lower and simply try to get a book published.

non-profit – an organization or company focused on helping others or a cause, and not on earning money

* Pam did not earn much money working at the non-profit, but she liked working there because she believed in what the organization did.

job offer – an invitation for employment; an offer of a job

* Harry was excited when the company he wanted to work for called him and made him a job offer.

picky – choosy; selective; waiting for the best option instead of choosing just any option

* Juana is picky about what she eats and will not eat anything that is unhealthy.



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CULTURE NOTE

A Screen Here, A Screen There, A Screen Everywhere

The *New York Times* in 2009 reported on a study of how much time American adults spend looking at different types of screens each day. A “screen,” in this case, is anything that has an electronic display or that shows information. These screens include televisions, computers, cell phones, media players, and more. The study found that adults spend about 8.5 hours each day looking at some kind of screen.

Television remains the most-watched “media” (source of information, such as newspapers and Internet websites), with the “average” (typical) adult watching about five hours of TV each day. This does not include watching “recorded” (not live; not being broadcasted right now) programs or movies.

Here are some other “findings” (results):

- People between the ages of 18-24 do the most texting, an average of 30 minutes a day.
- People between the ages of 25-34 spend the most time watching DVD and VCR videos.
- People between the ages of 35-44 spend the most time on the Internet, about 75 minutes a day.
- People between the ages of 45-54 spend the most time in front of screens, about 1 hour more than other adults.
- People tend to “underestimate” (believing that something is less than it really is) how much time they watch TV by about 25%, probably due to the “social stigma” (disapproval from other people) of watching a lot of television.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 21 – Getting an Interview.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 21. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

This episode is a story about getting a job interview. Let's get started.

[start of story]

I've finally landed my first interview. Well, actually, that's not really true. I have been on many interviews for part-time jobs. This was my first interview for a full-time job.

In less than two months, I will graduate from Arizona University. After a lot of back and forth trying to decide on a major, I finally decided to double major. I would study both political science and marketing.

These are not majors that usually go together. In fact, most people thought I was crazy. But, after a lot of soul searching, I decided to combine my two main interests: 1. politics and 2. getting a job! Those are my two priorities. I thought that if I got degrees in these two fields, I could cast a wide net when going job hunting. And, that's what I'm trying to do now.

Since I don't know if I want to work in the public or private sector, I've applied for jobs in both. In the public sector, I could work for the government. Maybe one day, I could even be a speech writer for the president! Okay, maybe I should shoot a little lower.

In the private sector, I could work for private organizations such as museums or schools. Some of those are non-profit. I could also work for a company. Everybody tells me that that's where you can make a lot of money. I haven't decided yet. I'm planning to apply for a lot of jobs and will see what happens. What I want now is just to get some job offers. Then, I can start to be picky.

[end of story]

On this episode, I'm talking about trying to get a job interview and use some vocabulary we might associate with job interviews and students getting their first



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job. I begin by saying that, “I finally landed my first interview.” “To land (land) an interview” would mean to get an interview, to be able to participate in an interview. You could also say, “I’ve landed a job,” that means I got a job – to acquire, to obtain – is another way of saying “to land.”

“Well, actually,” I say, “that’s not really true.” “It’s not my first interview.” I say that “I’ve been on” – I have gone to – “many interviews for part-time jobs.” A “part-time job” is something you do less than 40 hours a week or less than what you would normally work in a typical work week. The other kind of job would be a “full-time” job. That would be a job where you work, at least in the United States, about 40 hours a week. In the story, then, this is my first interview for a full-time job. “In less than two months,” meaning less than two months from today, “I will graduate” – I will complete my studies – “I will graduate from Arizona University.”

“After a lot of back and forth trying to decide on a major, I finally decided to double major.” “Back and forth” means going from one possibility, or one option, or one choice, to another. I can’t decide. Should I have the chicken or the beef? I go back and forth. Finally, I decide to get fish. Well, here in the story, I’m going back and forth, trying to decide on, trying to make a decision about, a “major.” Your “major” (major) is your specialization in college. A “double major” is when you have two specializations in college. For example, I was a double major in college. I majored in history and I also majored in Spanish. In this story, I say that, “I double majored in political science and marketing.” Notice when we use “major,” as a verb, we use the preposition “in.” “I majored in political science and marketing.” “Political science” is the study of government, of the people, and the organizations that have an influence on government. “Marketing” is promoting and selling products and services to consumers, to people.

“These are not majors that usually go together,” I say. “To go together” means they are a match. They work together well. But these majors normally don’t go together. You don’t find them in the same person, if you will. “In fact,” I say, “most people thought I was crazy.” They thought I was, well, basically, stupid. A lot of people think I’m stupid. That’s probably true.

Well, anyway I say that “After a lot of soul searching, I decided to combine my two main interests.” “Soul (soul) searching” would be thinking about a problem deeply, thinking about it for a long time, trying to decide what you really, really want, concerning some situation. “I decided to combine” – to put together – “my two main” – or my two principal interests – “politics and getting a job.” “Those,” I say, “are my two priorities.” Your “priority” is something that you think is very important, more important than other things. You could say “Make this a priority.”



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That would mean make this something that you are going to do before anything else or before these other things that you might have planned.

I then say, “I thought that if I got degrees in these two fields, I could cast a wide net when going job hunting.” My idea was that if I got degrees, that is, a bachelors degree, in these two fields, in these two areas of study, in this case, political science and marketing, “I could cast a wide net.” That expression “to cast (cast) a wide net (net)” comes originally, I suppose, from fishing. Sometimes, in order to catch fish, fishermen will throw a large net, which is a piece of material with holes in it that you put into the water, and when you take it out of the water, you are able to get fish out of the water. The holes allow the water to escape but not the fish. “To cast a wide net” then, is what we would call a “metaphor.” The idea is that you are going to do a lot of different things in order, hopefully, to find one thing that works. So, I'm going to cast a wide net. I'm going to apply to many different kinds of jobs hoping that one of them will be successful.”

Job hunting” is just another word for looking for, or searching for a job. I say that “Since I don't know if I want to work in the public or private sector, I've applied for jobs in both.” The word “sector” (sector) refers to a portion or a section of something. Here it refers to a part of the economy. We can think of economic activity as being divided into the public sector, which is the government, and the private sector, which is everyone but the government. “I'm not sure which sector I want to work in. So I've applied for jobs in both.”

“In the public sector,” I say, “I could work for the government. Maybe one day I could even be a speech writer for the president.” A “speech writer” is someone who writes speeches which are talks, basically, that a president might give or some official might give to a group of people. “Okay,” I say, “maybe I should shoot a little lower.” Becoming a speechwriter for the president would be very difficult. So, it's probably a good idea that I shoot a little lower. “To shoot (shoot) a little lower” means to have goals that are not so difficult to achieve, to have easier goals or easier objectives – things that don't require that you climb to a very high level.

“In the private sector,” I say, “I could work for private organizations, such as museums or schools.” “Some of those,” I say, “are non-profit.” “Non (non) – profit (profit)” refers to organizations that don't try to make money, that try to help other people. A charity, for example, that gives food to the poor would be a “nonprofit,” usually.

I say that “I could also work for a company. Everybody tells me that that's where you can make a lot of money.” I haven't decided yet. I say that “I'm planning to



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apply for a lot of jobs and will see what happens. What I want now is just to get some job offers.” A “job offer” is when a company or organization says, “Yes. We'd like to give you a job.” We will give you this much money and this is what you will be doing. That's a “job offer.” I say “First, I'm trying to get some job offers, then I can start being picky.” “To be picky” (picky) means to be very selective. We might also use the word “choosy.” Someone who is waiting for the very best option, who won't accept anything less than what he wants, is sometimes described as being “picky.” We also can describe young children who don't like to eat certain kinds of food as being “picky.” “Picky” comes from the verb “to pick,” which means to select or to choose.

Now to listen to the story this time at a normal speed.

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[end of story]



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One of her jobs here at the Center for Educational Development is writing scripts. I speak of course, of our wonderful script writer, Dr. Lucy Tse.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us again right here on ESL Podcast.

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