



ESL Podcast 22 – Making a Good Impression

GLOSSARY

corporation – a company; a group of people who work as one business

* Mr. Reaves is one of many people who can claim ownership of this corporation.

headquarters – the main location of a business; the building that a business or organization is controlled or directed from

* Odelia works at an office in San Francisco, but the company's headquarters is located in Seattle.

satellite office – an smaller office or part of a business that works under the main office or company

* The office that Juan worked at in San Antonio was a satellite office of the company based out of Orlando.

the right fit – the most suitable; the option that fits or suits one best

* Maddie quit her job at the ice cream shop because she did not like dealing with customers and it just was not the right fit for her.

to keep an open mind – to be willing to consider multiple options; to be willing to think about or to try something different new or different

* Even though Tanner did not usually like seafood, he kept an open mind and went to the new seafood restaurant with his wife anyway.

sound advice – good advice; good suggestions about how to think or act

* Jacqueline got sound advice from her father about how to organize her bills and save money.

cocky – arrogant; behaving as though one feels that one is better than other people

* Emile is very smart, but he is also cocky and doesn't work well in a team.

to boast – to brag; to tell others of one's good qualities or accomplishments, making them sound more important and impressive

* After scoring well on her exam, Niesha boasted about the high score to all her classmates.

to make things up – to lie; to say something that is not true

* Burton was upset when he learned that his girlfriend had been making things up and was not being honest about whom she spent her time with.



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meek – appearing shy and weak; too tame or mild in behavior

* Adelia was shy and meek, and she almost never told others her opinion if she thought they might disagree.

co-worker – an employee that one works with at the same level of management or responsibility

* Fred liked his co-workers and they all worked well together.

to walk all over (someone) – to take advantage of someone; to use or mistreat someone who will not stop one from doing so

* When the other students realized that Zandra would not argue with them, they started walking all over her and making her do their homework for them.

team player – someone who is able to work well with other people in completing tasks or reaching a goal

* Scotty works well when he is alone, but he is not a team player and cannot work well with other people.

to grab the limelight – to make oneself the focus of attention; to look for extra attention

* Even though the party was for someone else, Jillian grabbed the limelight and behaved as though the party was for her.



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CULTURE NOTE

What Do You Want To Be When You Grow Up?

A common question we ask young children is, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” meaning “What job or occupation do you want when you are an adult?” Sometimes we use this phrase as a joke when talking among ourselves as adults, to suggest that we are not yet mature or very old.

The most common responses from young boys are often things like “fireman” or “policeman” or perhaps “baseball player.” (We usually say firefighter and police officer nowadays, since it could be a man or a woman.)

A 2008 national survey of American adults asked which professions they thought had “very great prestige.” “Prestige” means that you have a good opinion of it, that it is very desirable. Here were the top answers, with the percentage of people indicating that profession in parentheses:

- Firefighter (57%)
- Scientist (56%)
- Doctor (53%)
- Nurse (52%)
- Teacher (52%)
- Military officer (46%)
- Police officer (43%)
- Clergy (leader of a church, such as a priest, minister) (40%)
- Congressman (a U.S. government representative) (28%)
- Lawyer (24%)
- Athlete (such as a football, soccer, or baseball player) (20%)
- Journalist (18%)
- Actor (16%)
- Business executives (11%)
- Real estate brokers (people who sell houses and buildings) (6%)

As you can see, firefighter and police officer are still “held in high esteem” (people have a good opinion of them), but athletes are not considered so prestigious. It is also interesting to “note” (notice; see) that “business executive” (bosses in a company or business) is among the lowest ranked professions, almost as low as real estate brokers, although there are certainly a lot more businesspeople than there are doctors or firefighters.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 22 – Making a Good Impression.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 22. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

This episode talks about how to act in a job interview. Let's get started.

[start of story]

My interview is today. It is with a large corporation with its headquarters in San Francisco, California. It also has satellite offices across the U.S. and in Europe. I'm not sure if this will be the right fit for me, but I'm keeping an open mind.

I got some sound advice from my aunt. She said I should be confident but not cocky. That means I have to look for opportunities to talk about myself but not make the mistake of boasting or, worse, making things up. I do that sometimes when I get really nervous. My brain stops working and my mouth keeps going.

I need to be respectful but not meek. I want to be professional with everyone – my co-workers and my bosses – but I don't want them to think that I would let my co-workers walk all over me.

I should show them that I'm a team player. Nobody likes a person who tries to grab the limelight all of the time, especially if they're new, like me.

Okay, I think I'm ready. I just have to remember to be confident, calm, respectful, professional, and a team player. No problem, right?

[end of story]

We are going on an interview in this episode, or at least we're getting ready to go on an interview in order to make a good impression. The expression "to make a good impression" means to show the other person how good you are, how attractive you are – in this case, how right you are for this job. "To make a bad impression" is the opposite: to make the person think that you're not a very good person.



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I say that my interview is today with “a large corporation” that has its “headquarters in San Francisco.” A “corporation” is a large company, typically. “Headquarters” (headquarters) is the main location of the business, of a certain business. Some big corporations – some big companies – have offices in many different cities, but there is one place that is the main office. We would call that the “headquarters.” It always has an “s” at the end, even though it is singular.

The headquarters is in San Francisco. This company also has “satellite offices.” The expression “satellite (satellite) office” refers to a small office of a large company – not the headquarters, but other offices in other cities.

“I’m not sure,” I say, “if this will be the right fit for me.” The expression “the right (right) fit (fit)” means the one that is best for me. We might also use the word “suitable” (suitable). Something that is suitable is something that matches your qualifications and your interests. I say that I’m “keeping an open mind.” That’s a popular expression. “To keep an open mind” means you are willing to think about something new or different. You’re not going to just say no to any new idea; you’ll think about new possibilities.

I continued by saying that I “got some sound advice from my aunt.” “Sound” (sound) is intelligent, reasonable, good. “Advice” refers to suggestions that other people have about how you should behave or what you should do. “Sound advice,” then, would be good, reasonable suggestions – in this case, about how to perform on the job interview. My “aunt” (aunt) is the sister of either my father or my mother.

I say that my aunt said that I should be “confident but not cocky.” “To be confident” means to know that you can do something. “To be cocky” (cocky), however, means to be arrogant – to know that you are going to do a good job but to behave as though you are better than other people. “To be cocky” means to think that you are the best or you are better than most other people. It’s not a positive thing. It’s definitely not something that you want people to say about you, usually.

I say that I need to “look for opportunities” – look for or be aware of possibilities – “to talk about myself” during the interview, but I don’t want to “make the mistake of boasting.” “To boast” (boast) means to brag (brag), which means to tell other people about how good you are in order to make yourself more important than everyone else. “Boasting” is something that a cocky person would do.

“To make things up” means to lie, to say something that is not true. I say that I “don’t want to make things up.” However, I also say that “I do that sometimes,”



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meaning I do make things up, or perhaps boast when I get really nervous. “My brain” – my mind – “stops working and my mouth keeps going.” In other words, I’m talking without really thinking carefully about what I’m saying.

I then say that, according to my aunt, I need to be “respectful but not meek.” “To be meek” (meek) means to be shy and weak – not to be very strong. “Meekness” is something that some people try to be in order to be humble, but if you are working in a business, in a corporation, it’s not usually a good thing to be meek. You want to be a little stronger in terms of your character, especially in terms of dealing with other employees, other co-workers.

That’s what I say in the story: I don’t want to be meek, but I do want to be respectful. I want to be nice to other people and to give them the respect they deserve. I say I want to be “professional with everyone – my co-workers and my bosses.” Your “co-workers” are the people who work with you, who are at the same level as you are – not your bosses, not your supervisors.

I say that I don’t want them to think “that I would let my co-workers walk all over me.” The expression “to walk all over someone” means to take advantage of someone, to use someone who will allow you to do whatever you want to do, but not in a good way. “To walk all over someone” is to overpower them in a way, to not allow them to do what they want or say what they want. You don’t want someone to walk all over you in a job. You want to be strong enough to defend yourself, to defend your ideas.

I say that I should “show them” – I should demonstrate to the people who are interviewing me – “that I’m a team player.” “To be a team player” means you work well with other people. You are able to get along with your co-workers.

I then say, “Nobody likes a person who tries to grab the limelight all of the time.” The expression “to grab (grab) the limelight (limelight)” means to be looking for attention, to want to be the focus of everyone’s attention, to want everyone to look at you or pay attention to you. I say nobody likes a person like that, “especially if that person is new” – new to the company, like I would be.

I end by saying that “I think I’m ready. I just have to remember to be confident, calm” – not nervous – “respectful, professional, and a team player.” And then, somewhat jokingly, at the end I say, “No problem, right?” meaning those are actually very difficult things to do all at the same time. If you’ve ever had a very bad job interview, you know how difficult it is sometimes to be confident and calm.



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I had a really bad job interview once or twice when I was interviewing for a position to be a teacher. I got very nervous. I don't even remember what I said, but I didn't get the job. We only hope that the person in the interview in this episode has better luck.

Now let's listen to the story, this time at a normal speed.

[start of story]

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[end of story]

Our scriptwriter never tries to grab the limelight, but we want to give her a little of the limelight right now. Thank you, 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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