



ESL Podcast 44 – Hiring for a Job

GLOSSARY

administrative assistant – someone who helps a manager or boss with basic paperwork and important tasks

* Mr. Peplinski had so much work to do that he needed to hire an administrative assistant to help him get organized and to keep up with his correspondence.

to give notice – to tell an employer that one is quitting one's job

* Masako got a better job at another company, so she gave notice to her current employer to let them know that she would be leaving in a two weeks.

want ad – an advertising stating that a business wants to hire a new employee

* The want ad said that the company needed a new salesperson who could start work immediately.

classifieds – the section of a newspaper that lists job openings, things people want, and things people are offering to sell

* Greg searched through the classifieds to find out if anyone was selling a car for a cheap price.

to narrow down – to reduce the number of choices or options; to eliminate a number of possibilities

* Jacinda had difficulty choosing her favorite book, but she managed to narrow it down to two novels.

resume – a document of one's education, skills, and past jobs

* Mitch carried a copy of his resume to the interview so that the interviewer could see all of the skills Mitch had that qualified him for the job.

promising – likely to have a good result; likely to be a good situation

* The team had won its first five games, so the results for the rest of the season looked promising.

personable – friendly; nice and easy to talk to

* Lila had many friends because she was so personable to everyone she meets.

confidence – trust in one's own abilities and qualities to accomplish something; belief in one's ability to do something well

* Amando did not understand the instructions for the task, so he did not have much confidence in his ability to complete the task correctly.



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perseverance – ability to continuing working through problems and difficulties, not giving up

* Even though the company had to deal with many money and supply problems that year, the workers had enough perseverance to work through the problems and keep the company going.

drawback – disadvantage; a quality that makes an option less appealing

* The video game seemed like a good gift to buy my nephews, but the drawback was its high price.

chatty – talkative; likely to talk for a long time about unimportant or casual topics

* Karlene was quiet around people she did not know, but she was very chatty with her friends and could talk for hours.

capacity – in a specific role or position

* Teodoro had worked for the company for years in a sales capacity, but he knew very little about how the product was made.

rough around the edges – without good manners; seeming rude or difficult to talk with

* Roger was a little rough around the edges, but he was actually very nice if you get to know him.

earnest – sincere; serious about one's intentions

* At first, Iona did not believe that her brother was actually sorry for upsetting her, but he was so earnest when he apologized that she realized he meant it.

corporate environment – an office setting; a place where professionals or business people work

* Cesar had never worked in an office before, so he was not used to a corporate environment.

bright – intelligent; smart; clever

* Gabriella is a very bright child who is always eager to learn.



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CULTURE NOTE

Hiring a Job Hunter

Until recently, companies often paid a headhunter to find high-level employees. “Headhunters” are recruiters who find workers with the right skills for a particular job. These headhunters may also help “negotiate” (try to reach an agreement on) a “compensation package” — including salary, benefits, vacation time, “stock options” (a chance to buy stock in the company one works for), and more — so that a company can get this person to fill its job opening.

In recent years, “the tables have turned” (changed completely). Because of the high “unemployment rate” (percentage of people without jobs), people who are looking for jobs are paying job hunters to find them a position. According to a 2011 *Time* magazine article, in the U.S., 42% of “unemployed” (without a job) workers have been without a job for at least 27 weeks.

Several new job-hunting websites allow “job-seekers” (people looking for jobs) to sign up and offer a cash “bounty” (reward) for a “referral” (sending someone to a person or a place to get what he or she wants or needs) that results in getting a job. The amount of the bounty can “range from” (be between) a few hundred dollars to thousands of dollars.

Another new kind of website tries to connect people who know about a job opening with people who are looking for jobs. If a job-seeker finds a job through the website, the person with the “job lead” (information or clue about a job) collects a fee and so does the website service.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 44 - Hiring for a Job.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 44. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

In this episode, we're going to discuss choosing whom to hire for a job. Let's get started.

[start of story]

Last week, my administrative assistant gave notice that he was quitting in two weeks. It couldn't have come at a worse time. It was a very busy time of year, but there was nothing I could do. Right away, we put a want ad in the classifieds and received several applications for the job. I called in four of them for interviews, and I had narrowed it down to two candidates.

The first was Claudia Trujillo. From her résumé, I knew that she had had four years of experience working at a telecommunications company. She looked promising, and when she arrived for the interview, she was dressed professionally and seemed personable. When I asked her about her experience, she answered my questions with confidence. She sounded like a hard worker and showed a lot of perseverance. The only drawbacks were that she was a little chatty and she also seemed a little disorganized.

The second candidate was Alex Mayhew. Alex had more experience than Claudia, but in different capacities, and only had one year of experience as an administrative assistant. When I met Alex, he seemed a little rough around the edges. He was earnest and eager but didn't have the air of someone who had worked in a corporate environment. Still, he seemed bright and easy to get along with. He did strike me as being a little shy, but I think that was because he was nervous.

So, those are my two options. Now, which one should I hire? I need to give it some more thought.

[end of story]



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Lucy begins her story by talking about hiring, or filling a job position that is open in her company. She started by saying that her “administrative assistant gave notice that he was quitting in two weeks.” An “administrative assistant” is someone who works for a boss or, really, works for anyone in a company who has the job of taking care of or administering something, whether it's running a department or running a project or just simply running a large operation.

An “assistant” is always someone who helps someone else. The word “administrative” refers to taking care of something, running something, managing something. In the old days, we used to call this person a “secretary.” But nowadays, “secretary” doesn't sound very important, and so now we call these people “administrative assistants.” It's sort of like a teacher is called a “teacher” if they're in a high school or grade school, but when they go to the university, they're called a “professor.” It sounds more important, doesn't it? Sometimes administrative assistants do more than just type letters and make copies and, nowadays, send emails. “Administrative assistants” sometimes do other things.

There's also another job category called a “personal assistant.” A “personal assistant” is different than an administrative assistant in that a personal assistant usually helps someone take care of their personal matters. People who have a lot of money – people who are rich – often don't have a lot of time, and so they hire a personal assistant to go and buy their groceries and pay their bills and get their cars fixed and so forth. An “administrative assistant” is always someone related to a specific job within a company, for example. Lucy's administrative assistant “gave notice.” “To give notice” (notice) means to tell your company that you are going to leave, that you are quitting.

In this case, Lucy's administrative assistant gave notice that he was quitting in two weeks. Two weeks is a common time that people give here in the United States, if they're going to quit a job. In fact, some jobs require that you give them a “two-week notice,” meaning you give them at least two weeks' advanced notice that you are going to quit. So, if you're going to quit on the 14th of the month, you have to tell them by the 1st of the month that you are going to quit. Of course, I'm not sure what they would do if you didn't give them two weeks notice. It's more of a courtesy thing – that is, it's more of a nice thing to do, a professional thing to do.

Lucy said that this decision of her administrative assistant to quit “couldn't have come at a worse time.” This expression, “couldn't have come at a worse (worse) time,” is used when something very bad has happened to us and there are other bad things that will happen because of it, or they happen at the same time. If you drive in your car and it begins to rain, that might be considered something bad



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happening. Then five minutes later if you run out of gas, that, of course, would be worse. That would be something that would be in addition to the bad thing that already happened. So, if something bad is already happening and then something else that is bad happens, we might use this expression, “It couldn’t have come at a worse time.”

Lucy says she put a “want ad in the classifieds.” A “want (want) ad (ad)” is an advertisement or notice that you used to put in the newspaper – now, you would put it on the Internet – that is used to find someone for a job. If your company needs someone for a certain job, they need to hire someone. They might put a want ad in the newspaper or on the Internet.

The “classifieds” is a general term we use for advertising or notices that appear typically in the back of a newspaper. The “classified ads” are small little advertisements, often for people who are selling their cars or selling furniture. One section of the classified ads is called the “want ads,” and these are ads for jobs. There are also personal ads in a classified ads section. These are ads for people who, I guess, are looking for friendship or love – at least, that’s one of the things you would put in a personal ad. It could be for other things as well. Nowadays people just put things on their Facebook page, I guess.

Lucy said that she called in four candidates to interview. “To call in” is a phrasal verb meaning to contact or email or call someone and ask them if they would come to the office in order to be interviewed. “To interview” someone means to sit down and ask them questions – in this case, about their experience – so that you can decide whether you want to give them a job or not. Lucy says she “narrowed it down” to two candidates. A “candidate” here means someone who is applying for a job, someone who wants a certain job. They don’t have the job yet; they want the job. You are still deciding.

Lucy “narrowed it down to two candidates.” “To narrow something down” is a phrasal verb meaning to reduce the number of possibilities. If you have ten people applying for the job – who want the job – you may “narrow it down” to a group of two or three people. You’re getting rid of some people and focusing on just a small group. The first person Lucy talked to was Claudia Trujillo. Lucy says, “From her résumé, I knew that she had had four years of experience working at a telecommunications company.”

A “résumé” (résumé) is a list of all of your education, experiences, and the jobs that you have had in the past. It’s what you give some potential employers, someone who might give you a job, to let them know what your experience is. For certain kinds of jobs, such as a job at the university, we don’t use the word



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résumé. We use the words “curriculum vitae.” “Vitae” (vitae) is a Latin word. We will often just use the abbreviation “CV.” A “CV” is simply a professional résumé – a résumé for a more important job or a job at the university.

Lucy says the person she was going to interview, Claudia, worked at “a telecommunications company.” A “telecommunications company” might be, for example, a telephone company – a company that deals with any sort of electronic communications. Lucy said that Claudia “looked promising” because she “dressed professionally and seemed personable.” When we say you “look promising,” we mean that it looks like you're pretty good. It looks like you may be a good person, in this case, for the job.

“To dress professionally” means to dress in a formal way. The way you would dress to an office meeting or a special event, a business event. For a man, that usually means wearing a suit and a tie and pants. For a woman, it might be a business suit or possibly a dress. That would be “dressing professionally.” Wearing a bikini or T-shirts or shorts and tennis shoes – those would not be examples of dressing professionally. Unless you worked at the beach, of course.

Lucy said the candidate was “personable.” “To be personable” (personable) means to be kind, to be polite, to be nice. The candidate that Lucy was interviewing “spoke with confidence.” “To speak with confidence” means to be sure of yourself, to answer knowing that you are giving the correct answer. She said this woman Claudia was “a hard worker.” A “hard worker” is someone who works hard, who works very well, who doesn't sit around and look at their Facebook page or surf the Internet or read their email. It's a person who is actually working – not a person who is sitting around listening to podcasts, for example.

She also described Claudia as someone who “showed a lot of perseverance.” “Perseverance” comes from the verb “to persevere” (persevere), which means to continue doing your work even though there are a lot of difficulties. Someone with perseverance continues on even though it is difficult. The only drawbacks that Lucy found with this candidate were that “she was a little chatty” and “seemed a little disorganized.”

A “drawback” (drawback) is a disadvantage, a negative thing about a person or a situation. The “drawbacks” for Claudia are that “she was a little chatty” and she “seemed a little disorganized.” “To be chatty” (chatty) means to talk too much. “To be disorganized” means to be not organized, to be someone who doesn't have everything neat and clean on their desk, to be someone who doesn't seem



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to know what to do next, who doesn't have a good plan for the future. That might describe a “disorganized” person. That also describes me, I think.

Lucy interviewed another candidate, another person who wanted this job, by the name of Alex. She says Alex had different “capacities.” “Capacities” means abilities, things that you are able to do. He was, however, “a little rough around the edges.” That expression “to be a little rough (rough) around the edges (edges)” means that you don't have a lot of experience. You have a lot of potential. You have a lot of possibilities, but you still don't have a lot of experience. That is to be “rough around the edges.” You need more training, more time on the job, to be what you have the potential to be.

Lucy said Alex was “earnest and eager.” “To be earnest” (earnest) means here, basically, to be honest, to be sincere, to be someone who you can trust. “To be eager” (eager) means to be very motivated, to be willing to do something. Lucy also said that Alex “didn't have the air of someone who had worked in a corporate environment.” “To have the air (air) of” something means to give the impression, to appear. “That person has the air of someone who is very intelligent” means he appears to be; he looks to be someone who is very intelligent.

Well, Alex did not “have the air of someone who had worked in a corporate environment.” A “corporate environment” just means a large company, a large business. The candidate Lucy interviewed was “bright and easy to get along with.” “To be bright” means to be intelligent, to be smart. If you're “easy to get along with,” you're someone who is personable, who's easy to talk to, who doesn't cause a lot of problems.

Lucy then says that Alex “did strike me as being a little shy.” The expression “to strike you” or “to strike me” means to appear to you or to appear to me. “He strikes me as an honest man” means it seems to me that he is an honest man. That's the impression I get from talking to him. Alex strikes Lucy as being someone who is a little shy. If you're “shy” (shy), you're the opposite of “chatty.” You don't like to talk to people. You perhaps are a little afraid to go up to someone and talk to them and try to communicate with them. Lucy said she was going to review her options – her choices – and that she needed to “give it some more thought.” “To give something more thought” means to think about it more, to consider it for a longer period of time.

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

[start of story]



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[end of story]

Thanks to our remarkable scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse, for all of her hard work, and thanks to you for listening.

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

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