



Focus: Interview language, giving and receiving instructions, describing processes, asking and answering HR-related questions

Human Resources (HR): Interviews & Training



The English Hub

Welcome & Objectives

In HR roles, it's important to speak clearly and respectfully when asking interview questions, giving instructions, and explaining processes. This lesson will help you develop polite and effective communication for interviews and onboarding training.

Today, you will:

- Learn vocabulary and structure for HR interviews and internal training
- Practise question and answer formats
- Use modal verbs for giving advice or setting expectations
- Understand how to describe steps clearly using sequence words

Vocabulary: HR Interview & Training Language

Review the following phrases with your tutor:

Term/Expression	Example Use
onboarding	“Our onboarding programme lasts 2 weeks.”
probation period	“You’ll be in a 3-month probation period.”
soft skills	“We value communication and teamwork.”
performance review	“A performance review is done annually.”
career progression	“There are clear progression paths here.”

Discuss: Which of these situations have you experienced in your work life.

Grammar: Forming Polite Interview Questions

Explanation:

It is useful to use indirect or polite forms to make interview questions sound respectful and formal.

Structure:

- “Can you tell me about...?”
- “Would you mind explaining...?”
- “How would you describe...?”

Direct: “What’s your greatest weakness?”

Polite: “Could you share a challenge you've worked to overcome?”

Task: Rephrase the 3 direct questions below into polite ones:

1. “Why did you leave your last job?”
2. “What salary do you expect?”
3. “Do you have the skills we need?”



Listening: Interview Responses

Your tutor will read 2 short sample interview answers:

Task: Identify:

- Which is clearer?
- Which includes real experience?
- One way to improve the less effective answer

Then, give one answer to:

- “Can you tell me about a time you solved a problem?”

Activity: Interview Answer Clarity

Your tutor will read out two short answers to the same question:

Question: “Can you tell me about a time you solved a problem?”

Answer A: "Last quarter, a supplier missed a shipment that would have delayed our client's launch. I contacted alternative suppliers within the day, negotiated a faster delivery, and kept the client updated throughout. As a result, the launch happened on time, and the client renewed their contract."

Answer B: "I'm good at solving problems. If something comes up, I just try to fix it quickly. I think I've handled challenges well in the past."

Task: Identify:

- Which answer is clearer?
- Which answer includes real experience?
- One way to improve the less effective answer.

Final Task: Then, give your own short, clear answer to:

Question: “Can you tell me about a time you solved a problem?”

You should include the following:

- Describe the **problem**
- Explain the **action** they took
- Share the **result**



Activity: HR Scenario: The Late Candidate

Scenario: Imagine you have arranged an interview with a candidate today. However, the candidate arrives 20 minutes late.

Task: Pretend your tutor is the candidate and roleplay as HR.
Politely asks:

- Why they were late
- If they are still available
- If they need to reschedule

Focus: polite tone, clear question structure

Grammar: Modal Verbs for Advice in Training

Explanation: Use **should**, **need to**, **have to**, **might** when advising or explaining expectations.

Examples:

- “You should complete the form by Friday.”
- “New hires need to attend orientation.”
- “You might want to read the handbook.”

Task: Complete the sentences using a modal verb

Fill in each blank with **should**, **need to**, **have to**, or **might**:

- You _____ attend the safety briefing before starting work on site.
- All team members _____ submit their timesheets by Monday morning.
- You _____ find it useful to review the project plan before the meeting.
- Staff _____ always wear their ID badges in the building.

Then, Write **two workplace training instructions** using one of the modal verbs above.



Vocabulary: Training Contexts

Review the following phrases with your tutor:

Phrase	Example Sentence
hands-on training	"You'll get hands-on training in week 2."
e-learning module	"There's an e-learning module on safety."
buddy system	"You'll have a buddy for your first month."
induction	"The induction covers company policies."
skills gap	"We offer training to close the skills gap."

Discuss: Which type of training is used in your workplace?

Reading: Training Email

Read out the short internal email below:

"Hi all,
Our next onboarding session begins Monday at 10am. Please ensure all new hires complete the compliance training before then. If anyone needs access to the e-learning module, let HR know.
Thanks!"

Questions:

- What is the action required?
- What training style is mentioned?
- How would you respond?



Grammar: Sequence Language

Key point: Use sequencing words to give clear step-by-step training instructions.

Common words: **First, Then, Next, After that, Finally.**

Example: “First, log into the portal. Then, complete your profile. Next, upload your ID. Finally, submit your application.”

Task: The steps below are jumbled. Put them in the correct training sequence, adding the right sequencing words.

1. Send the completed form to HR.
2. Sign the safety checklist.
3. Log in to the training portal.
4. Watch the safety induction video.

Task 2: Think of a simple process at work (e.g. booking a meeting room, onboarding a new client, starting a project). Create a 4–5 step sentence, using sequencing words to explain it clearly.



Pronunciation: Clear Instructions

Repeat the short sentence below, after your tutor; using clear intonation:

“First, complete the safety test. Then, meet your team lead.”

Then, create your own two-part sentence, with clear intonation.



Activity: Job Interview Mini Roleplay

Your tutor will read out 3 job titles:

1. *Project Manager*
2. *Marketing Coordinator*
3. *IT Support Specialist*).

Task: Ask 2 polite interview questions for each job title, then switch roles and answers 2 questions your tutor will ask you:

Focus:

- Clear grammar
- Formal tone
- Use of job-related vocabulary



Grammar: Have to / Don't Have to in Policy

Grammar: We use the terms “have to” **for rules**, and we use “don't have to” **for optional things**.

Examples:

- “You have to complete training before day 3.”
- “You don't have to wear formal clothes on Fridays.”

Task: Create 2 workplace rules from your current job (or dream job) using “have to” and 2 using “don't have to”.



Listening: Feedback After Interview

Your tutor will read out a short feedback summary after an interview:

“Thank you for attending the interview yesterday. Your answers showed strong knowledge of the industry, and we were impressed with your clear communication. One area for improvement is providing more specific examples when discussing your achievements. My advice would be to prepare 2–3 concrete stories you can share in future interviews.”

Task: Identify the following from the feedback:

- Strength mentioned
- Weakness mentioned
- What advice was given
- Then, share one positive phrase and one constructive phrase.

Training Error Handling

Your tutor will read out the following scenario:

Scenario:

A new trainee made a small error while completing a form during onboarding. They feel a bit embarrassed and are worried they might have caused a problem.

Task: Respond to the error as HR, using:

- “It’s okay to...”
- “Next time, you should...”
- “Let’s review the steps together.”

Focus: Polite, supportive language.

Vocabulary: Describing Candidates

Review the following vocabulary with your tutor:

Word	Use In Sentence
adaptable	“She’s very adaptable to change.”
detail-oriented	“He’s extremely detail-oriented.”
proactive	“We’re looking for proactive individuals.”
reliable	“He’s known to be reliable and consistent.”

Task: Match the two candidate descriptions below with the correct vocabulary word:

1. She can quickly adjust her work style when the project changes.
2. He never misses a deadline and always delivers what he promises.

Grammar Review: Mini Quiz

Choose the correct form of grammar for the following sentences:

- “She (have to / has to) complete training.”
- “(Do / Does) she need a login for the system?”
- “You (should / have) review the safety policy.”

Reading: Candidate Profile

Have a go at reading the candidate profile summary, with your tutor:

Amir has five years of experience in project management. He recently led a team to deliver a construction project three weeks ahead of schedule. He's also trained in conflict resolution and has worked with international clients.

Task: Using **polite question forms**, write **two questions** you would ask this candidate if you were interviewing them. Example structures:

- “Could you tell me more about...?”
- “Would you mind explaining how...?”
- “How would you describe your approach to...?”



Final Speaking: HR Issue Scenario

Scenario A new hire didn't complete the required form during onboarding. You are explaining to your manager what happened (tutor pretends to be manager):

Task: When speaking, include:

- **A modal verb** (e.g. *should, must, might, could*)
- **A sequence word** (e.g. *first, then, next, finally*)
- **A suggestion** (e.g. *We could..., It might help if..., I suggest that...*)

