

Female Voice: You are now listening to the IELTS podcast. Learn from tutors and ex-examiners who are masters of IELTS preparation. Your host Ben Worthington.

Ben: We're going to look at recent cue cards from April and these have been seen on the exams. So, let's jump straight into it. Before we go into each cue card, I'm going to explain a few phrases that you can use and these are phrases, expressions or even constructions that will help you to get through part 2 and part 3.

So, the first cue card is, "Describe your grand parent's job." You should say what it was, how long he or she had this job, how he or she got the job and whether you would like to have this job. So, what could be some useful phrases here?

The first ones that came to mind were, "Well, to be honest..." That's just a simple introduction. Well, to be honest gives you a few seconds to prepare your answer. In my case, what I said was I don't have much to go on here and this is absolutely true. I don't have much to go on here means that I can't really speak about this topic that much.

The reason in my case was I didn't really see that much of my grandparents, just one of them. So, that's why I don't have that much to go on here. When I do the presentation, the two-minute talk, you'll hear that. It's useful if-- it's better than saying, "I can't say anything about this..." Just say, "I don't have much to go on here."

The next phrase, "If I remember correctly..." Now, this is very useful because you're setting up a small anecdote and also it's almost like a collocation. "If I remember correctly, there were ten of us." "If I remember correctly, he was born in Taiwan." It's quite universal.

The next one: "She got the job through a friend of hers." "...through a friend of hers." "She got the job through a friend of hers." This is a slightly higher level and it's more specific to this actual topic. "My brother got his job through a friend of his." This is actually answering one of the bullet points which was how he or she got the job.

The next one, the next phrase to listen out for is, "repetitive tasks" and "really my forte." "...really my forte." If something is your forte, it means you're good at it. We can use it in the

reverse as well if we say, "Mathematics isn't really my forte." Also, this is-- I use this when I'm talking when I'm giving a small anecdote and then I use a small phrase just to signal to the examiner that I've finished and that small phrase there is, "...and that's my small talk about..."

Let's go into the topic. Let's go into the talk. "Well, to be honest, I don't have much to go on here because I've never met my granddads and my dad's mum was retired and we didn't see her a lot. So, I only have my grandma to talk about.

If I remember correctly, she was a typist at a school for disabled children, I think. She typed up letters that were to go out to parents and people connected with the school. I think she transformed hundreds of letters into typed ones because when she was working, they didn't have computers.

I believe she got the job through a friend of hers. I think they were talking about it at the market and her friend suggested she should go for the new opening at Hollybank School. It was that or either she saw an advertisement in the newspaper and applied.

I definitely would not like to have this job because it requires a lot of patience and accuracy. Patience isn't really my forte, to be honest. Also, back then I think if you made a mistake it took a lot of time, typex and effort to correct it without it being visible. This would severely test my patience. I really think it would be one of the worst jobs I could ever be given. That's my small talk about my grandma's job.

Now, maybe I went slightly off topic, but I did kind of say at the beginning I don't really have that much to go on here because I only knew in-depth or I only knew deeply one of my grandparents out of the four. So, that's why I kind of stretched it a little bit and started talking like the job wouldn't be good for me and so on and so forth.

So, I should have a look-- and also there is a good little construction there. So, when I was talking about the job opening, I said, "It was that..." that she had it through a friend, "It was that or either she saw an advertisement in the newspaper and applied." That last bit was just

completely made up, but I knew I wanted to put in a slightly more sophisticated, just slightly more advanced structure and I knew that I had to extend my talk a little bit.

Now, let's move on to the next question. These are the follow-up questions. "What kinds of jobs are easy to get in a foreign country?" Here are some useful phrases and devices that I will use in my answer. The first one: usually a reasonable demand. So, if there's a demand for something. There's a high demand for doctors in London, for example.

The next one: for example. This is very useful and it's also very useful for your writing because when you're giving examples you're building your case, you're proving your points and you're making it probably more interesting with those details.

Also, I want you to listen out to-- I want you to listen for the conditional. Now, I squeezed this in just to get some points. I don't recommend you do the same unless you're really, really competent with it, but I think it pays off if you can pay attention to what you're saying and use a more advanced construction if you feel it's appropriate.

Next one is slightly more informal. "It's of some sort." This just means related. "There are cleaners of some sort." It just means that there are some specific cleaners there and they do some specific job that I don't exactly know.

Then near the end, I say, "To summarize..." That just shows the examiner I've finished talking about this. So, we avoid the uncomfortable silence. So, let's jump into it. The question: what kinds of jobs are easy to get in a foreign country?

"If you're a native English speaker, there is usually a reasonable demand for English tutoring. Also, I think if you are good in your profession, it's quite easy to get a job in a foreign country. For example, if an expert is world class in their field, I guess most universities would gladly welcome them. Some of the most common jobs include being an au pair or a cleaner of some sort."

Now, here's my little story. "Last year, I went to Poland and I found that a lot of the Uber drivers and food delivery drivers were foreign. I guess they didn't need to speak the language to

do those jobs. The technology does most of the communication for them. So, to summarize, I'd say language jobs, domestic jobs, and perhaps jobs where there's little conversation or interaction needed."

So, another useful construction there: there's little conversation or interaction needed. So, I'm pretty certain I've answered everything there that the examiner asked me and I used two conditionals. "If you are a native English speaker, there's usually reasonable demand."

The other conditional, "For example, if an expert is wealth class in their field, I guess most universities would gladly welcome there," and a small anecdote or story and that enabled me to talk about Uber drivers and speaking a language and just an anecdote there related--strongly related to the question.

Let's move on. "Is it hard to find an interesting job in your country?" Here is the vocabulary that I used in this answer: strong job market, I guess. I guess is really good. I must tell you why this-- I guess is another way of saying I think. So, we've probably used I think already, so if you say, "I guess that there's a strong job market in Slovakia..." "I guess that there's a strong job market in Scotland..."

Then the rest is basically topic specific vocabulary. So, we talk about job signs, enticing job descriptions; that just means very interesting. Decent job, that's just another way of saying a good job. "In fact" as well. That's a very useful phrase because we can just state and mention additional points there. Then soul destroying. Soul destroying. What does that mean? Well, that means that it's killing you to do the job, not literally, but it just means it's a very difficult job to do.

Let's jump into it. "Well, in my country, England, there is a relatively strong job market and I guess a diverse economy. So, I think yes, it would be easy to find an interesting job. In fact, last week I was looking at the job sites and found a few enticing job descriptions."

Now the story. "However, a few years ago, I lived in Spain and when I graduated, I really struggled to find any decent job for the qualifications I had. In fact, I took a really boring job working in a logistics company. That job was soul destroying. It was so repetitive. I was so

happy when the contract ended. So, I think it depends on the economy of the country with regards to finding an interesting job.”

So, that was another summary there that I did right at the end. “So, I think it depends on the economy of the country with regards to finding an interesting job.” I just wanted to signal to the examiner, “Hey, I've finished. I can't really talk about this anymore and if you stay quiet, examiner, I'm just going to babble, babble, babble, babble,” right, which obviously, we don't want to do. So, I'm going to signal to the examiner I've finished there and we can play the game of silence until you ask me another question.

Next one: “Why do some people keep changing their jobs?” Let's jump into it. Vocabulary here: job loyalty, pay, opportunities, working conditions, perks, opportunities again, interesting projects, job hopper-- that's a good one. “Notice,” if you give your notice, then it means that you're resigning, that you're leaving the job. Usually, you give two weeks' notice, a month's notice. It depends.

“Although” is also good to use because it's a fairly advanced construction and we can sort of like show two viewpoints. “Career prospects,” that's another good piece of topic-specific vocabulary and we can use that-- it just basically says the future of your job. So, let's get into it. The answer: I think job loyalty-- let's just go back to the question just in case, “Why do some people keep changing their jobs?”

Answer: “I think job loyalty has greatly reduced in recent years. I think people change because they can find better pay, opportunities, and better working conditions.” Now here's the story and this is fairly true because I was reading the book. I was reading *The Everything Store*, a book about how Amazon grew into the behemoth it is now.

In one chapter, it mentioned how all the engineers were ditching Amazon and going to Google. It mentioned that they moved for better perks, better opportunities, and more interesting projects. Also, if I remember correctly, Silicon Valley was a major pulling factor too because Amazon is based in rainy Seattle.

Personally, I was a bit of a job hopper too although I was always considerate and gave the employer plenty of notice. In some cases, I even found my own replacement. So, I think people changing their jobs is a lot-- I think people change their jobs a lot because they want to improve their conditions, location of work and most likely their career prospects."

I even put in a story there about the Amazon store, which is *The Everything Store*, which is a book I was reading and also a little anecdote there about myself with regards to changing jobs and there's nothing wrong with that. Also, it got me the vocabulary job hopper. I could use although and there's another phrase that I used when I was talking about *The Everything Store* and it's "if I remember correctly..."

That's a very useful phrase we can use especially for stories, especially for anecdotes and you can squeeze it in anywhere. Of course, not literally anywhere, it has to be within the context. For example, "Personally, I was a bit of a job hopper too, if I remember correctly although I was always considerate..." You see?

Now, then, final one. "What kinds of preparation should people do for a job interview?" So, here we've got "I guess" again. I guess. Like we said before, it's just another way to say I suppose or I think. "Job interview techniques" is a phrase that we can use. Once again, topic specific vocabulary then "candidates", more topic specific vocabulary.

So, let's jump straight into it. "I think confidence is the key to excelling in a job interview. This could be obtained by learning what is expected of you. So, I guess you should do your homework about the company. Go to their blog, search the news and stuff like that."

Anecdote: "I remember when I was looking for work in Manchester. I always used to search online for the CEO's name and try and mention it during the interview. For example, if they asked me if I had any questions, I'd say, yes. Was it David Smith's idea to start selling in Asia or have you always been selling there?"

However, I wasn't always really all that successful in job interviews, if you want the truth. "I think the preparation candidates should do is mainly research about the company first. Then

perhaps review some job interview techniques." Once again, I just brought my answer back to the original question that was asked just to finish off.

Before that, I told a little anecdote of what I did personally and now I can use the past tense and I gave an example and I think that's a very handy technique to do. Also, throughout the question, I was using lots of topic specific vocabulary.

So, if I were you and I was preparing well for the speaking, I would go to ieltspodcast.com find these recent questions and write out your answers for them and then go back and try and improve, try and add an anecdote, try and add a small story. Improve your answer with some topic specific vocabulary.

Try and use some of these phrases that we've been looking at. Phrases like "I guess", "if I remember correctly"-- what were some of the other phrases? "If I recall correctly" I think was one of them. "If I remember correctly", "If I recall correctly" and then the summary technique which we could say, "...and that's my small talk about..." and we can also say, "So, that's what I think about why people are changing jobs more frequently nowadays."

So, that's everything from me today. Thank you very much for listening. I want you to do these three things now. If you're in a rush to pass the IELTS exam or you just want to pass the first time, then have a look at ieltspodcast.com and there're some special offers coming up very soon, which are very attractive especially for students that are struggling with their speaking.

Second, if you know anybody who is struggling with their IELTS exam, then send them a podcast, send them an email and help them out. There are lots of episodes, writing, reading, speaking, listening, and just help your friend out.

Then the final thing, if you want some IELTS materials, a big jumbo e-book go to ieltspodcast.com and you'll see the lovely popup and leave your email there and we'll send you over a lovely big book. So, that's everything from me. Good luck with your exam and have a fantastic day.

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