



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.

INTRODUCTION

Ben: IELTS writing: **Band 6.5 or band 7.** In this tutorial, we will look at an IELTS essay that's around 6.5, 7 probably 6.5 I'd say and we'll look at what factors are causing this essay to lose points.

We are going to look at each of the four criteria. We are going to break it down sentence by sentence and together we're going to say okay, this sentence is really good. It's a very useful collocation or this sentence is a complete train crash and the student needs to prepare more. I probably won't be so aggressive, but what we're going to do anyway is just break it down and look at each component of the paragraph.



TASK 2 QUESTION

Here is the question: **Some people believe that employees should stay in the same job for the rest of their lives. Others think that they should switch jobs at least once during their career. To what extent do you agree or disagree?** So, quite a straight forward typical IELTS writing task 2 question. As you probably know by now, the best way to attack these questions is to cut them up then after we split the question up, think of ideas for each part and then assign those ideas to each part and basically from those ideas build your paragraph.

We go into this-- it's quite a straight forward process, but we go into this in much more detail in the online course and it's a very easy to follow formula. Anyway, let's look at this. So, we've done that process already and we've assigned our ideas to the paragraph. Now, we've constructed the paragraph, now we're breaking it down and we're looking at it.

So, remember the question: Some people believe that employees should stay in the same job for the rest of their lives. Others think they should switch jobs at least once during their career. So, basically, it's saying should employees stick around with the same employer or should they job hop and switch jobs frequently?



By the way, this is another useful valuable skill to have for IELTS; the way that you can simplify the question and just basically make it a lot more succinct. This way, it's much easier to digest and to get what the examiner wants from you. So, you simplify it. Right. Let's have a look.

So, we start off with the introduction. It's quite a long introduction in this case and the student says: Recently, the majority of individuals has become more aware... Right then. So, first of all, the student missed the article. The student wrote: Recently, majority of individuals... but we need 'the majority'. Recently, the majority of individuals has become more aware of what university program they have to pursue in order to launch a great career that will lead them to acquire a high salary in the future that will achieve this life.

Right. ...achieve the life that they have been dreaming for. Right, so that's a very long sentence. Long sentences aren't bad, but they do have to be grammatically accurate. The longer the sentence is, the greater the risk of committing a grammatical mistake. So, this is why I say long sentences are good, but use them only when you are certain your grammar is perfect. The best way to write your paragraph is to use a mixture of short sentences, medium sentences, and long sentences.

Anyway, the first part of this sentence is wrong with regards to cohesion and coherence because we start off with recently and then we follow by the majority of individuals. Why are we talking about recently? What does that have to do with the question? Why are we talking about the majority of individuals?



Really, it's not so necessary and a more appropriate way would be to say: These days, most young people... It's just one suggestion or we could even take it a step further by upgrading the word people to job candidates or employees, which is more topic-specific. Now, the next issue or the actual good points about this sentence is the use of collocations. The first one, pursue a course of study and the second one, launch a career.

So, I'll just go back to the sentence and we say: Recently, the majority of individuals have become more aware of what university program they have to pursue... that's the collocation pursue a course of study, in order to launch a great career or in order to launch a career. That's really good then the final part where he says to dream of something. Here, we've got the phrase that they have been dreaming for. So, good lexical resource there. These components would have helped the student considerably. Unfortunately though, there were a few grammatical errors.

Moving on to the next sentence: However, staying in one company or running just one business it must be changeable in this century to make people life more interesting and stimulating. Now, you've probably heard these grammatical mistakes. So, we need to omit the pronoun in the first one. We're saying: ...or running just one business, it must be changeable... We need to reorganize the sentence there. We don't need the 'it' because we've got a subject already.

The next one obviously, it should not be to make people life more interesting. Clearly, it should be to make people's lives more interesting, not to make people life more interesting. So, be



careful. **These are all small errors especially with grammar that you can pick up yourself, I think, with a review, a self-review of your essay before you submit it for correction.**

This is a very valuable habit to get into because if you can catch your mistakes, if you know the mistakes that you are making and you can catch them and correct them, then with regards to getting feedback the essay corrector can now focus on other issues and offer help to improve your work rather than just correct it.

Also, with regards to the IELTS exam, obviously if you are self-correcting your work in the final five minutes of the exam you can easily, **easily boost your score by at least 10% if you just catch those mistakes** and **there's a tutorial about this in the [online course](#)**. It's a really easy way basically to boost your score and it could make the difference between a 6.5 and a 7.

Next, we've got some punctuation errors here because the student doesn't use capitalization. We start with yet a small number of people... He says yet a small numbers of people... So, that's obviously, a mistake. ...believes that working at the same job from the beginning to the end of their life it's better than working in a different spot with different skills from while to while.

So, we've got quite a challenging sentence there and you can probably hear I'm struggling to read it. Obviously, there's quite a few errors there. The first one, we've got-- we've already got the subject, so we don't need ...until the end of their life. It's better... We already know the subject here.



Also, there's a lot of singular plural inconsistency. Yet a small numbers of people believes... Third-person singular there as well. These are quite basic grammar mistakes and what we do on the course is once we send back the correction to the student, we say make a list of these errors and then the next time you write your essay, remember to check for these mistakes that you've made, okay? This way you get into the habit of catching those mistakes.

You can do this at home. So, you write an essay, you self-check it or you [get some feedback](#) for it and you write down the list of mistakes that you've made. Then the next time you write your essay you check your essay for those mistakes. **It's getting on this positive cycle, getting this feedback cycle of improving your work.**

LEXICAL RESOURCE AND COLLOCATION

So, now regarding to [lexical resource](#), the student has used from while to while, which is incorrect. Obviously, we needed from time to time. Such a shame as well because the student got the right structure, just the wrong words for the [collocation](#), which is a shame really.

Now, the next sentence is: In contrast, other folks thinks it's crucial to make alterations and changes in your life positions. Now, there's quite a few errors here. So, in contrast... this is good



actually because it's good for cohesion and coherence because now we're linking ideas together. We're linking what we said before to what we're saying now. So, it's in contrast, yes?

But then we've got other folks... Howdy partner. It's a little bit informal; other folks and then there's the grammar mistakes. If we really want to use it, we'd probably say other folk think it is crucial... Even then, there is a-- where is it? The inconsistency of the subject as well because at the beginning we're saying other folk then we say think it is crucial. That was the other error. We're using third-person singular, but we put folks in plural. So, that's wrong.

The point I want to make about this sentence and this goes back to-- it's not stylish. It's just consistency of subject. We start off with talking about other folks and then by the end of the sentence we switch the subject and he says and changes in your life positions. We don't want to talk about your life positions if we started the sentence with folks. Keep the subject consistent and it helps with the reader. It helps the reader-- it helps the writing flow and it helps the reader to read it more effectively and easily.

FINAL POINT

Final point: However, in this essay, I'll analyze both sides of the argument before presenting my opinion. Right. It's not too bad regarding task response. However, this sentence, it could have



been improved. The good thing is kind of we have paraphrased the question a little bit, but to make it really stand out or to make it better, what we can do is link it back to the question and we say: However, in this essay I'll analyze both sides of the argument using examples from America and the World Bank to demonstrate points and prove examples. Now, this helps us with that coherence and cohesion score because the examiner knows what is coming ahead in the next paragraphs. This helps a lot.

Next one. So, we're going to go on to the second body-- well, the first body paragraph. We've finished the introduction and it starts like this: Firstly, some people thinks... Now, **punctuation, capitalization, and subject-verb agreement**; quite a double triple hit there of losing points, unfortunately for this student. I probably don't have to go into the rules broken there. It's quite clear.

Let's carry on. I'm just going to correct it. Some people think that it is good for employees to continue working for their current employer without their life extension. What do we mean by life extension? So, this is a big issue with lexical resource about their life extension. It's really tricky to say there, but we have, which is good, we are organizing our ideas into appropriate paragraphs.

So, this is really good for task response and the organization started with it is good for the employees to continue working for their current employer... So, we know that this paragraph



now is about this topic and obviously it's on task response as well, so it's good to state your opinion at the beginning. This is basically the thesis statement.

IMPROVEMENT

Now, the improvement, I mean this is slightly off-topic, but if you're going for a 7 or above, it's definitely valuable. In that sentence, we said some people think that it's good for the employees. Now, if you're getting your essay corrected by our service, we would usually suggest you improve your language here by substituting out the basic words like good.

There's other words like good, bad, big, small, that can all have better high-scoring alternatives and it's not even complicated. You don't even have to learn the rule. It's just switching out the adjectives. I find it quite straight forward and it's a quick fix for boosting scores.

Let's move on to the next sentence. Nevertheless, being in a stable career for a long period will boost the employer skill and qualifications that will lead to a convenient life. Now, there's quite a lot of errors here. First of all, the student did use nevertheless, which is good, but they used it incorrectly. This is going to hamper-- it's going to be of detrimental consequences. It's going to jeopardize your cohesion and coherence score.



The student used nevertheless, but then proceeded to build on the additional argument when really we should have used maybe a contrasting argument after nevertheless. He's not done that. He's just carried on with the same argument and just stuck enough of the lesson there. So, that's incorrect and as I said, it's not going to be helpful for cohesion and coherence.

Also-- let's go on. Being in a stable career for a long period will boost the employer's skills... I think the student probably meant employee's skills [unintelligible 00:17:27.02] and qualifications that will lead to a convenient life. Now, one glaring and silent phrase there. What we did is we made a massive sweeping generalization and that is definitely not a good idea especially if you're going for 7 or above. We can't make these sweeping generalizations.

...and qualifications that will lead to a convenient life. There's a massive generalization. We go into this in more detail in the online course because it's at the end of the course. It's for the advanced students or the advanced chapters, but sweeping generalizations like that are wholly inaccurate. For the high-level band scores, we can't be making glaring generalizations like that. It's quite straightforward to solve actually.

Anyway, let's move on to the next sentence. A prime example of that will be a study by the Harvard University that indicates 50% of the American professionals... Okay, I'll just stop there. So, it's a good way to introduce an example. A prime example of this... I would have said instead of that and we would have used this because it's a point we recently mentioned, not



one that's far away. If it's far away and perhaps earlier on in the paragraph, we could have said that, but it's immediately afterwards, so we can use this.

TASK RESPONSE

Now, excellent regarding [task response](#) will be the use of a study and examples to show your point. This is exactly what the examiner wants for task response and your study or your research that you cite is going to help you. It's going to be the evidence and the examples that the examiner wants and what the question required from you and will help you get that score.

So, here we've got a recent-- sorry. A prime example of that would be a recent study by harvard university... So, here, we'd usually just say by Harvard University and capitalize both the 'h' and the 'u' that indicates 50% of the American professionals who have been working in the same job for over 20 years have superior salary package and great senior positions.

So, it is really quite a good example. It's probably made up, but that is fine. We don't have to worry about that, but there are quite a few grammatical mistakes here, which would have cost the student points. For example, it should be 50% of American professionals, no article, who have been working in the same job for over 20 years have superior salary packages. We don't need the article to talk about the professionals.



Also, where is it? We don't need the article because we're talking about something in general and also we've talked about 50% of American professionals. So, the packages has to be consistent, have superior salary packages. Keep it consistent all the way through. So, unfortunately, that would be a negative impact on the score.

Then the other point would be, which is good actually regarding grammatical range and accuracy is the accurate use of the relative clause together with the present perfect continuous. So, what we did here was we put 50% of American professionals who have been working in the same job. So, that was very accurate and that's fantastic. Good use there. Good points. If you imagine one of those bandit machines that just goes ching ching ching ching.

SECOND BODY PARAGRAPH

Let's move on. Second body paragraph: Secondly, on the contrary, other folks believe that altering your job consider as a life-changing to extend the numerous opportunities to acquire loads of new skills,... Right. Now, I hope you heard those grammatical mistakes. Let's have a look what was good about this sentence.

Well, secondly, on the contrary... So, this is good. We've started the second paragraph by looking at the other side of the argument. So, this will help the student with task response.



Now, the next part is rather incoherent and also perhaps a little bit informal because we have other folks believe... Remember this is an [IELTS academic exam](#). It's not a farm, so we won't be using folks.

So, we say other folks believe that altering your job is considered, it should be, a life-changing event and can entail numerous opportunities to acquire numerous new skills or vast opportunities of new skills or vast opportunities to gain new skills, anything but loads of new skills. Loads of sounds very informal, but the biggest issue as you could hear I had to correct that sentence because it was all incoherent and the student needs to really work on mastery of the longer sentences.

Anyway, the sentence continues: ...new skills, new friends, and new different job locations which will lead you to travel around the country or the world. So, I'm not a big fan of using personal pronouns in the body paragraphs-- well, in any part of the essay because it seems a little bit informal. So, I would have changed this to say which will lead, which would is probably more accurate, which would possibly lead the candidate/ the employee/ the worker to travel around the country or the world. Right. So, be careful there if you are using those personal pronouns.

Next point: To illustrate... Now, this is an appropriate way to introduce an example, so that's good. This will help the student with cohesion and coherence. To illustrate, recent World Bank studies showed that... So, it's altogether-- sorry. Altogether, that's a good way to introduce your



points. To illustrate, recent World Bank studies showed that 44% of the workers who have been switching their position have a significant health according to yearly medical surveys.

Now, what the student did well is they supported the argument with examples, which, like we said before, is what the examiner wants. That's why they stated it on your question. Then, unfortunately, we kind of-- I would say this is kind of off-topic as well because we're talking about switching positions boost your health, which isn't really what we said at the beginning.

At the beginning of the sentence, we said you can have new skills, new friends, different job locations, but the example now says switching jobs boosts your health. So, it's slightly incoherent there, but anyway, the way it's expressed would also negatively affect lexical resource because it's not-- it doesn't sound natural. We said who have been switching their position have a significant health what? Have a significant health according to the yearly medical surveys. Have a significant health advantage would have probably rescued that sentence.

THIRD BODY PARAGRAPH

Now, coming to an end of this body paragraph: Furthermore, which was spelled incorrectly, which is such a shame because spelling in my mind is just something that you cannot be losing



points for because it's so easy to improve. With all the technology, every Google doc, every Word processor has spell check in it.

Anyway, furthermore, companies prefer the independent employer who has the courage to obtain skills which they need from his own experience by communicating and involving in a major operation to meeting who are in a high position to gain the knowledge and the experience that they had. It's all very incoherent.

Not only are there grammatical challenges in there, which-- basically, you can really see how important grammar is here because if the examiner can't read the writing there's no-- it's really difficult for them to understand what you're saying. They can't give you points for task response or cohesion or coherence. Everything is lost with poor grammar. This is why it's fundamental you're getting feedback on your work.

Let's move on: Furthermore-- yes, we're going to move on from this sentence because the other point that I want to make is one, there's another sweeping generalization, red flag. Second, there's a massive long sentence with lots of grammatical mistakes making it difficult to understand and the final point is that we're switching from the subject and suddenly the employee that we were talking about becomes a male. So, let's see.

To obtain skills from which they need from his own experience. Can you see? In this instance, what I teach in the course is that we switch the his and her and him and her to they or we avoid



it altogether and we just say something like employee, candidate, student, pupil and just make it kind of like unisex or gender-- without a gender.

CONCLUSION

Moving on to the [conclusion](#); almost finishing now. To recapitulate, working in one place for a long time is not an enormous problem, but for a better entertainment life... Okay, so we can't have an entertainment life because entertainment is a noun. We needed enjoyable or rewarding or entertaining, but for a better and enjoyable life, people should spend their career life... Repetition, not good. Should spend their career here is fine. Should spend their career by filling... there's a spelling mistake, satisfied which will be with tempt and new experience.

Definitely, we need to work on that sentence for grammar and it's also negatively affecting cohesion and coherence. So, the sentence goes on as well from while to while, which is a point we've made before, earlier when it should be from time to time. So, we've got repetition here, which is bad, but then we've got repetition of a point that would lose the candidate points. So, it really is-- it really needs some work here.

And as I said before, the student seems to be quite fond of long sentences which really need to be cut down and looking at the grammatical skills of this student, it needs to be cut down and



play it safe going for shorter to medium sentences which can be easily understood and not negatively going to impact the score of the essay.

Play it safe especially if the exam is coming up in a week or two weeks. Play it safe. If you've got two months to prepare or a month to prepare, experiment with long sentences because they are necessary. They are useful and you can do more with a longer sentence, but experiment when you're getting feedback. That's the best way to do it.

Next, final sentence: However, I personally... okay, capitalization here and punctuation. However, I personally believe that navigating should be from a place to another is suitable for everyone and should everybody to try. And everybody should try, okay? So, reorganizing that sentence. Then there is another spelling mistake which is sad, I think. Different things not only about career life.

So, as you probably heard, there were quite a few errors in there. I think the biggest takeaway from this essay is well, clearly, it's a 6.5. After jumping in further and analyzing it, it's a 6.5; probably a very low 6.5. Just about a 6.5 on a good day. But the key takeaway here is that the grammar is essential.

If you're really looking to improve your essays over the long term, a good foundation, a solid foundation in grammar basics is essential. This is the only way that you can make your sentences clearer, you can make your essay coherent because the examiner can't even read



your work if your grammar is a mess. He can't even determine if you're answering the question if the grammar is a mess. So, this is why it's fundamental to get feedback on your work.

Also get into the habit of proofreading, checking your work before you send it in. As I said before, this way the examiner can-- the essay corrector can focus on giving you tips to improve your work rather than just correcting the work. Now, if you do want to get feedback, you can have a look at <https://www.ieltspodcast.com/essay-correction-service/> or maybe you can find another service online. I don't mind.

Whatever you do, just make sure somebody is looking at your work because if you're not a native speaker then it's difficult to identify the mistakes. You could probably read your own work and a lot of the grammatical mistakes will just be going-- you won't be able to spot them. They will be going missing. They will be visible to you. So, this is why it's really important.

The other thing that I want to mention, when you [sign up for IELTS podcast materials, free materials](#) at ieltspodcast.com leave your email with us. You get a special offer for essay correction as well. So, if you've already decided you're going to get some feedback, then get onto the email list and you'll see a special offer there.

Right then, that's the tutorial finished. I hope you've enjoyed it. If you know anybody who you think is struggling with IELTS then please send them my podcast. Like I said before, if you get the official IELTS podcast app ([Android app](#) / [iOS app](#));, then you can get the transcripts with each



podcast download and also now at ieltspodcast.com the transcripts are available on each of the podcast episodes.

So, my name is Ben Worthington. Thank you very much for joining us and if you've got any questions, just shoot us an email. We'd love to hear from you and we can give you some guidance and help you.

The last thing I want to say is that look, this IELTS journey is tough. You're not going to be able to wake up and put in for the exam two weeks later get the exam. You're going to have to put in some work. Even native English speakers have to put in the work if they want to get a decent score for the **Australia visa or permanent residence in Canada**, whatever. Even native English speakers have to put in the work. So, just bear that in mind. This isn't a walk in the park and as I've said before, consistency, developing a habit, getting into the routine, these are the success factors.

So, my name is Ben Worthington. Hope you're having a great day and I hope your day continues to be fantastic. All the best. Take care.

Female Voice: Thanks for listening to ieltspodcast.com