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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 Speaking: a brief overview of part 2 and how to get a band 9 score for this section. In this tutorial, **not only will you find out what to expect in part 2 you'll also find out how to get a band 9 and you'll be able to listen to a model band 9 answer.** Before we start, let's have a listen to this model answer.



MODEL ANSWER

Model answer: *I would like to talk about an experience I had when I was at university. When I was a student, I had a part-time job at a local florist shop. The customers who came into the shop would often ask me for advice. At first, I was quite hesitant about making suggestions. I'm not exactly sure why. Partly, I guess, because I was only 19, but also because I didn't feel very sure of myself. I was certainly no expert.*

However, I quickly came to realize that most of my customers really didn't have a clue about flowers. Soon, I was giving tips about everything from which types of flowers to choose at different times of year, so daffodils and tulips in the spring, to how to put different color schemes together. I was even making recommendations about which flowers or arrangements might be more suitable for different recipients or occasions.



On top of that, I started explaining how to look after cut flowers once you've bought them. I was shocked to find that most of the people didn't know that they should cut the stems at an angle to make the flowers last longer, for example, or add a couple of teaspoons of sugar to the water. I thought everyone knew that.

Once I got the hang of it, I loved giving advice to the customers. They were very appreciative and they used to come back into the shop to tell me how much their mother or girlfriend or husband or boyfriend had liked the flowers and to thank me for my help. I hadn't expected a job in a flower shop to be so rewarding.

Ben: I wanted you to listen to that first. I just wanted you to understand and now, what we'll do is we're going to break it down. So first, let's have a look at the topic card. Well, the examiner before you even choose your topic card, will say something like I am going to give you a topic and I'd like you to talk about it for 1-2 minutes.



Before you talk, you'll have one minute to think about what you're going to say. You can make some notes if you wish. Do you understand? Here is some paper and a pencil for making notes and here's your topic. Please don't write anything on the booklet I'd like you to describe, okay?

PART 2 CUE CARD

[Here is an example of the part 2 task:](#) Describe a time when you gave advice to others.

You should say:

who you gave the advice to

what the advice was

why you gave this advice

and explain how you felt about the advice.



Well, how do you get a band 9? Well, the example that you just heard was band 9, as I said, and we're going to give-- let's break it down, all right? Why would it get a band 9? Let's just listen one more time.

Model answer: *I would like to talk about an experience I had when I was at university. When I was a student, I had a part-time job at a local florist shop. The customers who came into the shop would often ask me for advice. At first, I was quite hesitant about making suggestions. I'm not exactly sure why. Partly, I guess, because I was only 19, but also because I didn't feel very sure of myself. I was certainly no expert.*

However, I quickly came to realize that most of my customers really didn't have a clue about flowers. Soon, I was giving tips about everything from which types of flowers to choose at different times of year, so daffodils and tulips in the spring or to how to put different color schemes together. I was even making recommendations about which flowers or arrangements might be more suitable for different recipients or occasions.



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Ben: Well, why would this get a band 9? Let's have a look. Let's give the candidate some feedback based on the assessment criteria. So, the **candidate here she spoke fluently and coherently**. She developed the topic fully. There was an **excellent range of vocabulary** along with **idiomatic language used naturally and accurately and all of this together with a full range of grammatical structures**. Finally, the speaker was effortless to understand.



LET'S BREAK IT DOWN

So, let's break it down. Now, the student starts with when I was a student, I had a part-time job at a local florist shop, so two grammatical structures there used in just one sentence. The customers who came into the shop... relative clause, as I've mentioned before in previous tutorials.

The customers who came into the shop would often ask me for advice. At first, I was quite hesitant about making suggestions. I'm not exactly sure why. So, we've got that natural expression there: partly, I guess, because I was only 19, but also... conjunction there. ...but also because I didn't feel very sure of myself. I was certainly no expert.

So here, you'll have heard me say or the speaker say would often ask me for advice. So here, we are developing the topic. This is exactly what is on the cue card. Describe a time when you gave



advice to others. You should say who you gave the advice to. So, in that first paragraph, we've got with answering the cue card we are giving advice to the customers. We're developing the topic fully.

VOCABULARY

Let's have a look at the [range of vocabulary](#). So, you will have heard me mention before florist shop. I didn't say a flower shop; florist shop. It has its own specific name. **Some [topic-specific vocabulary](#): daffodils, tulips, color schemes.** All of this is **very unique to this topic; very specific**. Also, we've got some very natural sounding expressions: most of my customers really didn't have a clue. Just a little anecdote there. Soon, I was giving tips about everything from which types of flowers to choose at different times of year or how to put different color



schemes together. Putting color schemes together; that's quite high-level vocabulary there, quite high-level grammatical-- no, vocabulary. Sorry.

I was even... So, to emphasize, we don't say I was making recommendations. No. I was even making recommendations about which flowers or arrangements might be more suitable for different recipients or occasions. Now, this goes back to what I've said multiple times before. If you want to be scoring high we have to upgrade the language we use and in this case, we could say might be more suitable for different people.

People is very generic. It's a catch-all phrase. If we're talking about florists and giving flowers as gifts for celebrations, we can say recipients. Also, occasions as well. I've just been diving into the topic and getting more specific, more details.

IDIOMATIC EXPRESSION

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On top of that... That's quite a [good idiomatic expression](#). It's quite, not generic but it's quite universal and it's a more natural way of saying in addition. In addition is what we say in our writing, for example, or furthermore. On top of that sounds very natural; a good idiomatic expression used accurately and eloquently.

On top of that, I started to explain how to look after cut flowers. Once again, we've got that very unique vocabulary. ...cut flowers once you've bought them. So, a good grammatical structure there; once you've bought them.

Next sentence: I was shocked... a little anecdote there and we've got some good vocabulary. It's a higher-level vocabulary. I was shocked to find that most people didn't know that they should cut the stems at an angle. Very topic-specific vocabulary.



Stems are like the green sticks with the flower on top. It's like the actual main, not the main part but it's like the main branch of-- we can't say branch. It's the main piece of the flower. Without that, you just have the head of the flower.

So, you should cut the stems at an angle to make the flowers last longer. So, this student obviously researched how to talk about their job in English because these kinds of phrases are very unique. Like how many times have you used to cut at an angle? So, it takes some extensive research and this is-- should be part of your preparation; to learn about certain topics at length so you're able to describe them accurately and maybe relate anecdotes and share these details for your part 2 or your part 3.

So, yes. You should cut the stems at an angle to make the flowers last longer, for example, or add a couple of teaspoons... A couple of teaspoons there that's another native English expression. A couple of buckets, a couple of friends, a couple of teaspoons, in this case, and it's used accurately and it's used appropriately so it sounds natural.



... a couple of teaspoons of sugar to the water. I thought everyone knew that. Just a personal anecdote there just building on top of it. Once I got the hang of it, another idiomatic expression, I loved giving advice. So, going back to what we were talking about developing the topic fully. So, in that previous paragraph we're talking about what the advice was and then the final part and explain how you felt about the advice.

Notice as well it's not I like giving advice. It was I loved giving advice and much more emphatic. I loved giving advice to the customers. They were very appreciative and they used to come back into the shop to tell me how much their mother or girlfriend or husband or boyfriend had liked the flowers.

So, lists. If you can get the opportunity just to rattle off a list-- rattle off is probably not the best term, but if you get the opportunity to produce a list and keep going with it, why not? Don't make it ridiculously long, but adding lists is a good way to boost your vocabulary score and as I've said before, we've got a module about this in the writing course.



Where were we now? Yes, I also-- note that the speaker says they were very appreciative. They don't say they were very happy. No. They were very appreciative. It's much more descriptive. It's much more accurate if we can use phrases like that. So, they were very appreciative and used to... nice incorporation of the past tense. They used to... used to come back into the shop to tell me how much their mother or girlfriend or husband or boyfriend had liked the flowers and to thank me for my help.

Final sentence: I hadn't expected a job in a flower shop to be so rewarding. A nice little touch to it at the end there and also we're using the present perfect; I had not or I hadn't expected and we've used it accurately. I'm not going to go into the present perfect now. I've done it in previous tutorials, but you can see it's effortless and it doesn't even bring that much attention to it. It just rolls off and so this helps the student with a full range of grammatical structures and also because the pronunciation was quite high-level, it's effortless to understand.



FINAL TIPS FOR PART 2

Now, just some final tips for part 2. When you look at the topic don't panic. Sometimes you're going to get a topic and you think wow! This is a piece of cake. Other times you're going to be thinking OMG, oh my word! In this case, I think **the best preparation is just to breathe and also just bear in mind that you're not getting tested on your honesty.** This is a language exam. Communication is the key.

So, you could always talk about something that happened to your friend or you could talk about something that you saw in a movie and you could even make the whole thing up, but as I've said before, be careful with this because you could come a cropper that means you could get found out, you could fail badly.



I'm not a massive fan of inventing and lying. It's only a little white lie I know. However, I just think it's easier if you could pull from your own experience or somebody else's experience, but sometimes you do have to just invent it.

Second point: if you've got quite a few ideas then [don't procrastinate](#). Don't try to think which is the best; just choose one of them and develop it. Try and use that structure we've mentioned before so you're kind of like answering the question then just saying why and then you're giving an example and you could use to give further examples or to give further reasons, you can use that lovely expression you just heard a few minutes ago which was on top of that.

Finally, once you've decided about what you are going to talk about, try and **brainstorm some of the [key vocabulary terms](#)**. In our online course, [Speaking Confidence](#), we encourage students to brainstorm and just charge their memory with as much as possible to try and just get it all out onto paper and at the same time get the expressions as they're coming out. So, expressions like on top of that or firstly, secondly, there are two reasons I think it's a good idea;



get it all out and then in your final moments or in the middle of your one-minute organization just put numbers on these ideas and from there you've got a plan to work through.

Also, as you probably will have guessed, remember to check that you are fully responding to part 2; that you haven't misinterpreted the question. The amount of times I've had students misinterpret the question is rather surprising and this is like high-level students as well. They've misinterpreted it and they've started and finished the whole talk about something slightly related, but it wasn't fully related. So, they didn't get points for fully developing the topic.

Now then, the mind map is one idea. Other students might want to just list their ideas or work through the cue card, brainstorming point for each cue card. The key here is to test which method works for you. If you've got a more linear way of thinking then just making a list might be better. If it's more explosive like my personal process is quite explosive; it's just lots of random ideas that I need to organize then perhaps the mind map is more suitable for you, but the key here is to experiment. Find out what works best for you.



Also, **practicing some of the key phrases** like the ending phrase and that's my presentation about some advice that I gave when I was younger and that's my small talk about a holiday that I went on. Just copy-paste phrases that we can adapt and this goes back to the framework that we're developing where we're talking about the two reasons or if my memory serves me well.

These kinds of phrases are probably useful for writing down in the one-minute preparation or you could even [just write down acronyms](#) of those words just to save time and just to remind yourself to say them.

Now, we're coming to the end of the tutorial. Thank you very much for joining us today. I hope you got a ton of value. If we didn't cover everything that you need then please get in contact and give us-- send us an email. Tell us what you ideally wanted. Was it a list of phrases? Was it how to present your ideas in a powerful way? I don't know. Send me an email.



When you sign up to ieltspodcast.com you'll get the opportunity to send us an email whereby you can say look, I'm struggling with this or Ben, I'd like to see a tutorial about copy-paste sentences or whatever. Get in contact. We would love to help you.

Next point: if you know anybody who's struggling with the IELTS exam it's rather selfish that you're not sharing this resource; just joking. If you do know anybody who is struggling though why not send them this link and we can help them too. We can get them on board and we can start helping more and more students. IELTS is not easy and helping other students, helping each other and us helping you is-- it's just part of what we do and this is-- we want to get as many students through the exam as possible.

This reminds me of my new project which is going to be a podcast for those students who've finished with IELTS, passed IELTS, who decided IELTS is not for them but still want to continue learning, improving, and striving. I haven't yet decided on the title of this new project, but don't worry. Once it's launched, you will definitely hear about it.



Final thing: if you're struggling, send us an [email](#). [Sign up to the email list](#). Share this tutorial if you found it useful and yes that's the last thing I wanted to say. **Keep moving. Keep actively learning. Keep actively improving. Keep writing. Keep speaking. Keep doing the practice test. You will get there. You only fail if you give up, so keep on improving.**

That doesn't mean take test after test after test after test. It means getting into the habit of studying, preparing, and basically changing your identity into the person who has passed IELTS and this is a future episode that's coming up. It's like a mindset; the preparation, all that side of it, which I think is vital for improving your [IELTS success](#)-- vital for improving your IELTS success opportunities or options. It's not the right word I'm looking for, but anyway you understand.

So, have a great day. **Keep on working. You will get there.** All the best.

[Music]

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