

## IELTS Speaking topic – Job and career #3

This is a model answer for IELTS Speaking Part 2 and 3. In addition to the model answer there are highlighted words and phrases. **Teal** is for vocabulary relating to this topic, **yellow** is for generally useful words and phrases.

## IELTS Speaking Part 2

Talk about an occupation someone you know has that is well-paid

You should say:

- who the person is and how you know them
- what they do
- if you think they enjoy it

and say if you think they deserve getting paid well.

### Model answer

I work at an accounting company. What we do is we get paperwork **delegated** to us by smaller businesses who can't afford having a full-time accounting department because of their smaller **scale of operation**. A guy used to work with me there but one day he got too **fed up with** the **tedium** of pen-pushing **day in day out** so he quit and **took up** plumbing. He slowly expanded his operation, **working his way up** from individual orders from his friends and relatives and through the sheer power of **word of mouth** scaled up his small business into a ten-man company.

I am still in touch with the guy and we meet now and again. Whenever we do he can't stop telling me how much better it is to work with your hands and apply practical skills as well as to see immediate results of your effort. The guy clearly loves what he does and I couldn't be happier for him. Oh, and he's **making a killing** too. I'd **wager** he **takes home** at least twice the amount I do and he also doesn't have to **put up with** all the bureaucracy that comes with my job. Anyway, judging by how quickly he managed to expand his business the money is well-deserved. I am really happy for him and also a bit jealous, to be frank.

## IELTS Speaking Part 3

### Working with others

What are some of the benefits of working in a team rather than independently?

Working with other professionals **opens up** a wide array of options and opportunities. One **perk** of teamwork is that you can delegate responsibilities based on talents, preferences and skillsets. What I means to say is that tasks within the team can be redistributed to people who would be best for each. Some are better at crunching numbers, others seem to enjoy **client outreach** and so on. Secondly, when you work with others you naturally feel the good kind of pressure not to **let anyone down** and it pushes you to do your best. This positively affects productivity.

Of course, in order for team to work one needs a good leader. If there is no manager usually a natural leader emerges from among the **rank and file** employees **to take this role upon themselves**. As long as they do this for productivity sake rather than out of **vanity** it all should be well. However, in order not to disrupt company hierarchy an appointed leader makes more sense and having one avoids further confusion among employees.

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### What methods do organizations use to improve teamwork among their employees?

An efficient team is every company's dream come true so they are usually prepared to go great lengths to get that. One thing that companies might **opt for** is team-work courses and workshops, where employees are taught the newest methods of working together, go through team-building exercises and shown successful examples from other companies and industries. Another way to make people cooperate is less natural, but can be equally effective - financial **incentives**. Setting goals that can only be reached through collective effort and then promising a **lucrative** bonus for reaching the goal is a tried and proved method to bring professionals together **to pool their resources** for the task at hand. Finally, it is not uncommon to see usage of shared office spaces to **foster** collective approach to problem-solving.

### How should employers handle conflicts that arise when working with others in a team setting?

Mediating a conflict is a tough task for any manager. They say that **to err** is human, and is true indeed. Even the best of employees can sometime have a mental **lapse** leading to misunderstanding that could build up over time and potentially lead to angry outbursts. To prevent such cases of escalation employers have a number of tools at their disposal. One favoured by most is regularly held events paid for by the company. These can be karaoke bars, pubs or restaurants, even trips to the countryside. The purpose of such events is to bring employees closer to one another. Consequently, this ensures better understanding which could potentially **nip emerging conflicts in the bud**.

## Self-employment

### What are the advantages and disadvantages of being self-employed?

I can name the few, **albeit** serious, disadvantages of working for yourself. The biggest one is uncertainty and inconsistency of **revenue**, especially at the very beginning. As opposed to a day job most people have, **fending for yourself** can be tough, more so at the very beginning when you haven't quite **figured out** all the **quirks** of the thing you do and the client base hasn't grown big enough. The other **distinct** disadvantage is that it requires a great deal of willpower and discipline and very few people have it, hence the relatively low amount engaged in self-employment.

The advantages, however, are quite numerous and easy to understand. Working for yourself there is no **wage ceiling**, you can potentially be making much more money than you normally would at a regular job. You also have the luxury of flexible time-table most of the time, you can plan your day to your liking and this in itself is worth a lot in today's world of **fluster** and needless **haste**. Finally, self-employment can scale and grow and eventually become a business, even a company of your own - a real dream for many people.

### How can a self-employed person ensure a steady income stream?

The main thing to keep in mind is that laziness and **procrastination** are two **surefire** ways to **go broke** in no time when you work for yourself. If something needs to be done - do it, and if it is urgent then do it right now. A **motto** like this is what you keep in mind at all times. Secondly, you might want to look into **diversifying** your income sources. When you just start the long and hard road of self-employment, money can be hard to get. You **strive** to get more important things at this stage - trust and respect of people you work with. So one shouldn't feel bad working part time wherever else to make sure they can keep the self-employment occupation **afloat**.

### What qualities are necessary to become successful when working self-employed?

The biggest factor is your self-discipline. Since there is nobody overseeing how productive you are, nobody forcing you to work harder - basically, no **external stimuli** that most of us are so used to. This leads to **slacking** - nothing out of the ordinary, mind you, a common human **propensity** - something that comes at a price if you are working on your

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own and for yourself. Another quality is ability to understand the big picture. You don't have to be **a visionary**, but rather realise that small failures are necessary stepping stones on the way to greatness. Therefore having a **foresight** is a must, otherwise it's easy to feel discouragement after a series of misfortunes.

### Job and career vocabulary

**Delegate (v)** - to transfer work or responsibilities to somebody else, usually more experienced or less busy

**Scale of operation** - used to describe how big a company, business or other undertaking is. *At this scale of operation we should look into hiring additional staff*

**Fed up with** - tired and unhappy of something unpleasant because it happens often

**Day in day out** - something that happens regularly and for a long period of time. *He was working on his car day in day out to make sure it is ready for the next racing season*

**Work your way up** - to go up the career ladder, to get promoted to a certain position. *Over the five years time with the company he worked his way up to chief sales manager*

**Make a killing** - to make a lot of money doing something. *Ted makes a killing from his Youtube videos, who would have thought that could be possible!*

**Take home** - (about money) the amount of money that you make after taxes.

**Perk (n)** - perks of some job or activity are the nice extra things you get, benefits. *Two perks of working here are free food and hefty discounts for employees*

**Client outreach** - getting in touch with new or current clients to build good relationships with them. *Staff responsible for client outreach should have good people skills*

**Rank and file** - lower-ranked employees, the opposite of managerial staff

**Incentive (n)** - a practice to encourage somebody do something, such as money or other benefits. *Without additional incentives you are unlikely to make them work overtime*

**Revenue (n)** - the money that a business makes. It is different from profit in that profit is net money that you get after all the expenses are deducted

**Fend for yourself** - do something without help from the outside

**Wage ceiling** - maximum amount of money an employee can earn. This artificial limitation is usually imposed by upper management

**Go broke** - to run out of money, can be used both for a person and a business. *Most businesses go broke within the first three years of operation*

**Diversify (n)** - to introduce variety of something. In economics, diversifying means having money in different spheres to reduce risks

**Strive (v)** - to do your best to achieve something (strive to do something or strive for something)

**Keep/stay afloat** - to prevent something from stopping or ending, usually in terms of finance. *To keep her business afloat, Michele had to take out a second mortgage*

**External stimuli** - something that pushes or motivates you to do something from the outside, e. g. a person or a thing. As opposed to internal motivation, like your own aims or desires

**Slack (v)** - not to put effort into doing something. *Kids at school tends to slack with their studies because they often see no benefits of good education*

**Visionary (n)** - a person with a vision - a clear or innovative idea of something. Often used as a business term to describe a person that introduces some groundbreaking practices

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### General vocabulary

**Tedium (n)** - a task or a job that makes you feel bored or frustrated. *The tedium of writing business reports that nobody is going to read*

**Take up** - if you take up something e. g. a hobby, you become engaged in it. *Matt took up fishing two years ago and since then have been spending summers at his cabin by the lake*

**Word of mouth** - information passed from one person to another through recommendation. *Word of mouth can be an effective tool in kickstarting small businesses*

**Wager (v)** - to bet, to be willing to put money on some statement because you are convinced that it is true. *I'd wager that Tom will win this race no matter what*

**Put up with something** - to have to tolerate or accept something that you do not like or not happy about. *I'm sorry my mother had to put up with my awful behaviour all these year*

**Open up** - (here) to create some opportunity. *Getting an engineering diploma opened up many career paths for him*

**Let somebody down** - to fail or to upset somebody, especially when they relied on you

**Take something upon yourself** - to volunteer for some role, job or task. *My mother took it upon herself to teach me math because I was really struggling with it at school*

**Vanity (n)** - false sense of self-importance

**Opt for** - to make a choice of something. *We opted for a holiday abroad even though it was considerably more expensive than a comparable resort in our own country*

**Lucrative (adj)** - financially interesting or attractive. *The lucrative offer of working abroad is something I simply couldn't resist*

**Pool something (v)** - when people pool something, they combine something they have in order to use it more effectively. *Car pooling is a great way to save on commute times and reduce traffic congestion*

**Foster (v)** - to promote and encourage growth or development of something

**Err (v)** - to make a mistake. *To err is human, to forgive is divine*

**Albeit** - even though, although

**Figure out** - to understand something, how something works. *I had nobody to teach me use the computer so I had to figure everything out on my own*

**Quirk (n)** - peculiarity or trait of something. *This phone has its quirks like you can't unlock it with your fingerprint because the sensor is broken*

**Distinct (adj)** - specific and easy to see. *The difference between two groups of people was quite distinct. It wouldn't be difficult to tell them apart*

**Fluster (n)** - unnecessary agitation, confusion or nervousness. *She was about to be late for a very important meeting so she was all in fluster because of it*

**Haste (n)** - similar to fluster, however haste does not always mean confusion. *Haste makes waste*

**Procrastination** - behaviour characterised by tendency to postpone or put everything off for later without any reason

**Surefire (adj)** - likely to succeed, certain. *One surefire method of getting fit is to join your local gym, ideally with a private coach*

**Motto (n)** - a phrase that you try to stick and that characterises something that you do. *My motto is "never give up, no matter how bad things might seem"*

**Propensity (n)** - tendency to do something or act in a particular manner. *Kids of this age have unreasonable propensity to shoplifting*

**Foresight (n)** - being able to know or predict what is likely to happen in the future. *Great foresight made him the perfect entrepreneur*