

BEC Higher Exam University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations

To download sample papers go to <http://www.cambridgeesol.org/resources/learner/index.html>

Speaking 16 min.	Contents:	This part of the exam tests	Suggested exam technique:	Definition
Part 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interviewer asks you general questions about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ where you are from ○ your job or your studies ○ why you are studying English, etc. • One general question to each candidate about some aspect of business. <p>This part of the test lasts about three minutes.</p>	your ability to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talk about yourself • perform functions such as agreeing and disagreeing. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make sure, before you go to the Speaking Test, that you can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe what your job or your studies consist of • talk about your ambitions/hopes for the future • say what you like/dislike about your job/studies. 2. When you go into the interview, speak clearly so you can be heard. 3. Don't answer the questions with one or two words – answer with one or two sentences. 4. When you answer a question, give a reason for your answer or an example. <p>Some extra advice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to the interviewer and also, when appropriate, to the other candidate. • Try to speak naturally and confidently. • Smile and look directly at the person you are speaking to. • If you don't understand a question, ask the interviewer to repeat it. • If you notice you've made a mistake, correct yourself. 	<p>Examples, reasons and extra information</p> <p>Giving examples: If you are asked <i>What do you most enjoy about your job?</i>, you can say <i>I most enjoy the teamwork. We have a very good working atmosphere in my company. For example, when I've got a work problem, I can always ask my team leader for help and she's usually ready to give it.</i></p> <p>Giving reasons: If you are asked <i>Is this a good area to work in?</i>, you can answer <i>Yes, it's quite good because there is plenty of industry and communications are excellent.</i></p> <p>Extra information: If you are asked <i>Where do you come from?</i>, you can answer <i>I come from Fribourg or you can give extra information, such as I come from Fribourg. It's a town in the western part of Switzerland, not far from Berne.</i></p>

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Part 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are given a page with three questions printed on it. Each question begins What is important when ...? • Some ideas are printed below each question to help you. • You are asked to choose one of the three questions. • You have one minute to prepare your answer. • You must speak for one minute to answer the question. • Your partner must listen and ask you a question when you have finished. 	<p>your ability to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • speak for a longer period of time, as you might have to do when giving a presentation or speaking at a business meeting • communicate a series of ideas clearly • structure your speech and connect your ideas. 	<p>A You have one minute to prepare. Use it to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. choose the question you think is easiest and you have the most to say about 2. think how you can expand the two prompts below the question by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being more specific and explaining the idea in the prompt • giving reasons • giving examples 3. make brief notes while you are thinking 4. note down key business vocabulary you want to use 5. add another point to the list. <p>B If you can, use your own experience to answer the question. If you haven't worked in business yet, don't worry; give your ideas just the same.</p> <p>C When speaking:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. refer to your notes, but look at the interviewer and your partner 2. introduce your talk by saying what question you have chosen 3. sequence your talk by saying firstly, secondly, finally, etc. 4. signpost your talk with phrases like this is because, for example and as a result of this 5. watch the time and try to finish your talk with a brief concluding sentence at the end of the minute. <p>D When listening to your partner:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. think of a question you would like to ask about the talk 2. think about what you agree and disagree with in the talk. 	<p>Interview nerves</p> <p>It is natural to feel a little nervous about this part of the interview. Overcome them by telling yourself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you have something interesting and important to say • the people in the room want you to do well • they would be equally nervous if they had to give a talk in your language! <p>Above all, keep speaking. If you dry up, take a breath and start again. Don't worry if you repeat something you have already said.</p>

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Speaking	Contents:	This part of the exam tests	Suggested exam technique:	Definition
Part 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are given a card with a topic to discuss in pairs. • You have 30 seconds to read the card. • You must discuss the topic for 3 minutes and reach a decision. • Afterwards, the interviewer will ask both of you questions about the same topic. 	your ability to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • express opinions • agree, disagree, compare and contrast ideas and to reach a decision • find out your partner's opinions and react to them – in other words, your ability to collaborate in a work-type discussion. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You are given 30 seconds to read the card before you start discussing. Use the time to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • study the situation (underline the key words while you are doing this) • make sure you know what you must discuss. 2. Start by making a suggestion, and then asking your partner what he/she thinks. 3. When your partner suggests an idea, say if you agree or disagree and give a reason. Give a suggestion of your own. 4. Make sure that you reach a decision on both points in the three minutes. If you think you have spent too long on the first point, take control of the discussion by saying <i>What about the second point? What do you think about ...?</i> 	Taking turns to speak In this part of the Speaking Test, it's important not to monopolize the conversation. When you have said something, ask your partner what he/she thinks. Say things like: <i>Do you agree? What do you think?</i> If your partner is speaking too much, interrupt politely by saying <i>Yes, but...</i> (if you disagree) or <i>Yes, and</i> (if you agree).