IELTS Speaking topic – Job and career #2

This is a sample response 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 a career opportunity you had
You should say:

- what the opportunity was
- how you felt about it
- if you used the opportunity

and say if you are happy with your decision

Model answer

About a decade ago when I had just started working for a local air company as an accountant, upper management approached me with a rather lucrative offer. They were offering company-paid pilot training for people under 30 who had good command of English. The company would later guarantee employment with good career prospects.

I was very tempted to take the offer, but something clicked in me and I turned it down at the last second. First and foremost, a life of a pilot is very nomadic by nature - you are always on the move, you are everywhere - and nowhere. Secondly, it is a lot of responsibility - piloting a ship with over two hundred people onboard would be too much for me. Finally, I kind of enjoyed my accounting position at the time. Although it wasn't the most glamorous of occupations, it paid well and I knew the trade like no one else.

Looking back at that day I kind of regret not going for it. I wonder how my life would have turned out if I had taken the offer. Would I make a good pilot? It is hard to tell now, as I have been doing finance consultancy for quite some time, maybe this is my real calling after all.

IELTS Speaking Part 3

Work today and tomorrow

What skills should a person have to have more chances of getting a job in the future?
It would be unwise to deny that our world is getting more automated. As we grow more reliant on machines, we will respectively make many jobs obsolete as they can be effectively performed by robots. This is likely to create a whole class of unemployable - people who failed to learn a skill a machine is unable to have. Cashiers, taxi drivers and many others might end up without any prospects of employment. Therefore, something that a human can do and a machine cannot is the skill to have in the future.

What workplace of the future might look like?
I doubt that the workplace that exists now is going to be transformed much. It will probably be a computer with a folder or a stack of documents next to it. If we try really hard to be imaginative we can think of a holographic projector that the user controls by voice or hand gestures. It doesn't sound too practical though. What might change is the definition of the workplace. By that I mean that employees might get relocated to their own flats to cut down on overheads. We have already seen that happening and it will probably happen again, this time staying for good.

Jobs and careers

Is it better to change your job frequently or work at the same place as long as possible?
Gurus of career advice believe that changing your place of employment every five years or so is the best practice. It looks good on your CV as it shows ambition and flexibility on one hand while being able to commit *on the other. It also broadens your professional horizons and gives a better understanding of the industry you work in. But we all do have a mind of our own, and the decision doesn't have to be made out of future employment prospects alone. If you like your job there is no reason not to keep it. Growing professionally and focusing on the matter at hand instead of* flustering about *trying to find the best job possible.*

How can schools help young people choose their careers?
This is an aspect of education that state schools have been largely ignoring recently. Students get all kinds of abstract knowledge, most of which is largely inapplicable *in working life. As a result, 18-year-olds leave schools with no idea of purpose or direction in life. Some* go through the motions *of higher educations, others choose an occupation which doesn't require any special qualifications.*

Schools should introduce a subject of professional orientation, where they would give students understanding of what it's like to work full-time, what kind of positions they can realistically expect to get with and without degree or experience. This would drastically reduce the number of youngsters who feel lost in the modern ruthless job market.

Job and career vocabulary

Upper management - high-ranked employees in charge of making important decisions in the company
Lucrative (adj) - interesting or attractive financially
Trade (n) - a job that requires special training, used figuratively here. Normally it would mean a manual job such as a carpenter or an electrician
Calling (n) - one's real purpose, something that they should really do. '*She has always believed that teaching is her real calling*'
Folder (n) - a thick cardboard or plastic book-like container that is used to store and catalogue documents
Relocate (v) - to move to another city or country, usually because of your work
Cut down on overheads - to try and reduce operational costs such as renting a place of work or office supplies
Commit (v) - to promise to do something, e.g. work at a company for a certain period of time
Go through the motions - to do something mechanically, without enthusiasm or emotional engagement

General vocabulary

Decade (n) - ten years
Good command of English - good knowledge and understanding of the language
Prospects (n) - possibility of something happening in the future
Click (v) - (here) - to suddenly become clear or obvious
Nomadic (adj) - characterised by constant movement, not staying at the same place for long
Glamorous (adj) - attractive, exciting and desirable
I wonder how ... - more of a grammar note rather than vocab. It's a good idea to introduce a conditional clause in your answer.
This particular one is Third Conditional which shows unreal results of an unreal action.
Grow reliant on smth - to become more and more dependent on something
Obsolete (adj) - outdated, not modern
For good - forever
Fluster about - to move frantically, in a state of confusion, without accomplishing much. '*When the doorbell rang she started flustering about the flat trying to get dressed*'
Inapplicable (adj) - useless or impossible to be used