

IELTS Speaking topic - Job and career

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

Describe a profession one of your relatives has
You should say:

- what their profession is
- the duties they have
- how long they have had it

and say why you think they have chosen this profession

Model answer

I'm going to talk about my **late** grandfather. He was into cars his entire life and **aspired to make a living** around them. He **started off** as a mechanic at a shop where he worked during his time in college. After graduating he was lucky to **make an acquaintance with** a local race team manager and **was taken on as a substitute** driver. Eventually he **worked his way up to** chief engineer of the team.

His duties involved making sure that mechanically their cars were in top shape. This meant both **routine maintenance** and any modifications or upgrades that had to be made to keep the car **competitive**. He would even test-drive the cars himself to better understand **the direction the team had to move in**.

My grandfather had been doing this for more than fifty years until he eventually **passed away** at the age of 79 last year. I guess the reason he kept doing the same thing was he believed it to be his **calling**. I really envy him, I'd say not many people find their true **vocation**.

IELTS Speaking Part 3

Life and work

Should a person do what they like for a living?

At first it might sound as **a no-brainer** - definitely do what you love and make money with it, what could possibly go wrong? As a popular **adage** goes - do something you love and you won't have to work a day in your life. However, this idea can be **deceptive**. Take taxi drivers as an example - do they enjoy the **monotony** of **night shifts**, the chaotic inner-city traffic, the multitude of clients **day in, day out**? They probably chose their **occupation** because they were **keen on** cars and driving, but many of them surely **resent** it now. So my point is no, one should probably **stay away from the idea** of **turning their passion into profession**.

Some countries suggest having four- or even three-day working week. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this proposal?

This idea seems pretty good - and people are going to love it, but for different reasons. Some will **appreciate** the extra free time that they get to spend with their close ones. Other will **relish the fact** that they **workload** is going to get lighter. However, ultimately it will **encourage** both employers and employees to **cut down on** so-called "**time-theft**" - spending their time at work in a **suboptimal** way. It should be understood that only by using the reduced

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number of **working hours** in a more efficient way can a company maintain same productivity and **stay afloat**. This implies making some of the employees **redundant**, namely those unable to adjust to **higher standards**.

Is it a good idea to work more while you are young and more energetic? Why?

This is a choice all of us either have already made or will have to make in the future. **It is no secret** that while you are **in your prime** you should take advantage of the resources available to you - your enthusiasm, energy and ability to learn quickly. All of this is more **immediately available** in your younger years. On the other hand, some might say that it is much better to enjoy your life rather than spend it **climbing up the career ladder**. Personally I'd say that it is wiser to **make the best use of** your opportunities and create a strong **work portfolio** while you're young. At the end of the day, working hard doesn't have to mean no fun or free time to do what you love!

Jobs of the future

What professions are going to be needed in the future? What about professions that will no longer be necessary?

It's hard to tell what exactly the future might be like as we live in a world of **ever-increasing pace**. However it's fun to make predictions so I would assume that one of the most needed industries in the future is likely to be IT. Even today such **skilled workers** like programmers and web-designers are **in constant demand** and are consistently earning much more on average. As our lives get even more dependent on computer technology we will see the demand for such specialists to increase further.

Speaking of professions that are likely to be **redundant** we again should be thinking of computer-controlled things that could successfully replace human operators. For instance any job involved driving is one of such areas. Driving a taxi, delivering food or goods, public transit - even planes - those are the things a machine can control. Even today we can see self-driving cars for sale, and while they can't provide fully autonomous driving experience it is undoubtedly only a matter of time before they **perfect** the technology.

How has the way we work changed recently? What other changes might we expect?

One of the greatest working environment changes that we have witnessed recently is the idea of working from home. The pandemic forced many companies to keep their staff working from their own places. Meetings and conferences could be held without ever leaving your house - who could have thought this was possible just a few years ago? Now it's a reality we live in and while some people might not like it, this practice showed the employers way of **cutting down expenses** as they no longer have to have staff on premises. Therefore, we might witness further **distancing from** the conventional model of working in an **office cubicle** and towards working remotely. Large businesses constantly seek ways to optimise **running costs** and not having to pay rent on **office spaces** must be a very **lucrative** idea.

Is possible that in the future only part of the population will have to work?

This is **a distinct possibility**. The utopian world described in works of science fiction where only **a fraction of populace** do any meaningful work can become a reality in the future. Just like industrialisation made work much more efficient, **manual labour** will eventually **get superseded by** newer methods of production. This is likely to free up the majority of population, eliminating the need for them to be working full-time. Maybe the concept of 'work' will shape up into an occupation people do to **feel purpose** in their life rather than a necessity to earn a living. After all, spending one's life with no meaningful occupation can **take a toll on** anybody.

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Job and career vocabulary

Aspire (v) - to have something as a goal at to do one's best to reach it

To make a living - to earn money to cover the costs of food, housing and other essentials, e.g. if you make a living by selling cars that is how you make money to afford products and services

To take on - if an employer takes you on, they hire you

Substitute (n) - a substitute is a person who does the job of somebody currently unable to perform it due to illness or other reasons, e.g. a substitute teacher

Work your way up - to progress in your career through lower ranks towards higher ones

Competitive (adj) - as good as others. For instance a competitive salary is a salary that is now lower than at other jobs of the same nature

Move in a direction - to progress in a particular way

Calling (n) - a feeling that you should have this particular career

Vocation (n) - see 'calling'

Monotony (n) - performing the same, usually boring task over and over again

Night shifts - time of work that starts late in the evening and ends early in the morning

Day in, day out - if you do something day in day out, you do it for a very long period of time

Occupation - what you do for a living

To turn passion into profession - a phrase that means doing what you love professionally, e.g. becoming an artist because you love drawing or painting

Workload (n) - the amount of work that you have to do or have already done over a given period of time

To encourage (v) - to approve of doing something or to make doing something easier

Time-theft (n) - the act of wasting time that you are paid for e.g. having small talks with your colleagues instead of performing your duties.

Suboptimal (adj) - not the best it can be

Working hours - the time of the way you are at work, e.g. most people's working hours are 9 am to 5 pm

Stay afloat - if a business stays afloat it manages to keep its profits higher than its expenses

Redundant (adj) - unnecessary. If a person is made redundant, they are let go (fired)

In your prime - a person in their prime is as good looking, smart and strong as they will ever be

Climb up the career ladder - to advance in your professional path

Work portfolio - a selection of works you have done or the amount of work experience that you have

Skilled workers - a professional who has special skills needed to perform a job, e.g. an electrician

In constant demand - if something is in constant demand people need it all the time

To cut down expenses - to reduce the amount of money spent on something

Office cubicle - the working space in an office where you are separated from your colleagues by panels

Running costs - the amount of money spent on keeping the business running

Office spaces - see 'cubicle'

Lucrative (adj) - attractive from the financial point of view

Manual labour - the kind of work done by hands rather than through intellectual effort

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General vocabulary

Late (adj) - (usage: late + name) deceased (dead)

To start off - to begin with something

Make an acquaintance with - to meet someone, to get to know somebody's name

Routine maintenance - regular inspection and replacement of parts to make sure it works properly

Pass away - to die

A no-brainer - a choice that is easy to make because how obvious it is

Adage (n) - a wise saying

Deceptive (adj) - looking like it is something else while it isn't

To resent (v) - to have a strong dislike for something, to hate it bitterly

Stay away from - to avoid something intentionally

Appreciate (v) - to enjoy something and realise how rare and precious it is

Relish (v) - to enjoy and appreciate something greatly

Cut down on - to reduce the amount of something or to stop eating something

It is no secret that - used to say something obvious or known to everyone

Make the best use of - use something in the best way possible

Immediately available - easily or readily accessible either because it is cheap or because of its high quantity

Ever-increasing pace - constantly growing speed

Distancing from - moving away from something, usually used not literally

A distinct possibility - a likely outcome of a situation

A fraction of populace - part of the people living somewhere

Get superseded by - to be replaced by something more modern or more efficient

Feel purpose - to have the feeling of being needed, having an aim for your life

Take a toll on - have a negative effect