1 SPEAKING

a 💬 Work in groups. Read the alternatives to traditional job interviews below. Order the ideas from 1 (the best) to 5 (the worst).

1 Go for a walk and have a conversation
2 Ask people to paint a mural
3 Look at people's social media activity
4 Ask applicants to bring people they want to work with
5 Collect information about people's daily activity at work (e.g. breaks, personal phone calls)

b 💬 Discuss your order with other groups. Is your order similar or different?

2 VOCABULARY: Words connected to work and employment

a Match the words (1–6) to the definitions (a–f). Compare with a partner.

1 ☐ candidate
2 ☐ commercial
3 ☐ corporation
4 ☐ opportunity
5 ☐ promotion
6 ☐ vacant

a related to buying and selling things
b the chance to get a job
c when someone is given a more important job
d a large company or group of companies controlled as a single organisation
e a job that is available to do
f a person who is competing to get a job

b 💬 Think of three other words you know connected to work and employment. Test your partner.

3 READING

a Read the magazine article on page 37 quickly. Does it change your opinion about your ideas in exercise 1a?

> ### BETTER READING: PRONOUNS
> Understanding what pronouns in a text refer to can help you navigate a text. They help link ideas, and make the text cohesive.
>
> 1 Find the highlighted pronouns *they* in the text. Match them to the following:
>   A a company or companies
>   B a team
>   C two or more people
>   D a person, but the gender is unclear or unspecified
> 2 Find other examples of *they* in text. Match them to categories A–D.

b Read the article again and answer the questions.

1 Why does CEO Hedley Aylott ask people to paint murals?
2 Why did CEO Hew Leith do a 'walk and talk' interview for the first time?
3 Why did CEO Hew Leith's last interview last longer than he expected?
4 What can people's social media activity tell companies?
5 Why does Stripe recruit teams and not individuals?
6 What information do some companies collect about employees' daily activity?

4 SPEAKING

a 💬 Ask and answer the questions in groups.

1 Who should decide if someone gets the job?
   • a team
   • the boss of the team
   • all company staff
   • the boss of a company

2 Should a company use social media to decide if someone is right for a job? Why / Why not?
3 Should a company be able to use employee data (e.g. number of breaks or phone calls) to decide if someone is right for a promotion? Why / Why not?

Paint a Picture, Get a Job!

In todays' competitive jobs market, some companies are looking for new ways to find the right person for the job. It's no longer enough to be able to nervously answer the same old questions – you might not even be in the office! Here are five alternatives to the traditional job interview.

1 Paint a picture.

Imagine a job interview where they[1] expect you to become Picasso for the day. Impossible, right? Well, that's exactly what happens at online retail specialist Summit. Here the candidate paints a mural in their interview, and then the existing staff decide if they get the job, not just the boss. CEO Hedley Aylott says they have done it like this for around five years now.

'I was looking for a group exercise that was fun and creative and brought together both candidates and staff,' he says. The team has to try to sell something to an audience – made up of Summit staff. But the focus is on the visual – they[2] can only use paint and they can't talk. Once the mural is complete, the staff give feedback and decide whether the candidate gets the job. 'I believe staff should help to choose who joins the company,' Aylott says, 'and who their future boss should be.' This personal approach to employing for a corporation helps with team building.

2 Walk and talk.

When there's a position vacant at creative agency 10x, a typical interview doesn't happen in an office. CEO Hew Leith goes for a walk with the candidate. Like many great ideas, it started by accident. Leith had an interview with someone at a coffee shop, but the place was too busy – so they went for a walk. Leith says the experience reminded him of something that management legend Steve Jobs once said. According to him, a walk was the best way to have a serious conversation.

Sometimes though, the walk just takes over. Leith's last interview was meant to be a 30-minute informal chat, 'but it went so well we ended up walking for an hour and a half.' They walked seven miles. Whether or not the candidate got the job, they[3] at least managed to get some good exercise.

3 Use social media activity.

Before interviews begin, some companies use people's web and social media activity. Online photos and comments say a lot about them. Research suggests it can help decide people's IQ and personality with around 50% accuracy.

This is not a new idea. Facebook has used the information people post since it started. However, with job recruitment, it raises legal and moral questions. Some companies in the USA now ask employees for usernames and passwords to their social media accounts. This level of interest by potential employers has led to changes in the law to protect employees.

4 Don't employ a person; employ a team.

Finding the right person for the job is difficult. But finding a team of people who will work well together is even harder. A mobile payments company, Stripe, thinks they have found the answer. They haven't recruited one person at a time for a job for a while now; instead they recruit a team.

They call it BYOT or Bring Your Own Team. They ask people to apply for jobs in groups of two to five. According to Stripe co-founder, Patrick Collison, this makes perfect sense as the goal of most employers is to construct teams, yet the traditional method is to look for individuals, which makes less commercial sense.

5 Follow people's daily activity.

Some organisations decide that interviewing existing employees for a promotion is pointless. Instead, they'll follow your daily activity. Large call centres have done this for years. They have collected data on their employees by tracking the number of calls and breaks employees took, and the customer ratings for each call. Unfortunately, when the opportunity for a new job comes along, people do not always tell the truth. Everyone says they[4] are punctual and they work hard. But if a company has the data, then they have the real truth. And it is all completely legal.

So, next time you go for a job interview, be ready. You might need to take a paintbrush, some of your friends, or even show them your Facebook page!