



*The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*

## It's Your Job

June 2012 – Volume 16, Number 1

### IT'S YOUR JOB

<b>Title</b>	It's Your Job
<b>Publisher</b>	Clarity Language Consultants Ltd
<b>Contact Information</b>	<a href="http://www.ClarityEnglish.com">www.ClarityEnglish.com</a>
<b>Contact information</b>	<a href="mailto:info@clarityenglish.com">info@clarityenglish.com</a>
<b>Type of product</b>	CD or online software for job-seekers.
<b>Dialect versions</b>	International English, North American English, or Indian English
<b>Platform</b>	-Online version: Internet connection, browser  -CD version: Windows XP/Vista/7
<b>Minimum hardware requirement</b>	CD-ROM drive for installation on individual computers; microphones and speakers or headphones
<b>Supplementary software</b>	Adobe Flash Player
<b>Price</b>	-CD version: \$270 for one computer.  -Online version: \$19.99 for one month (Comes as a package with three career English programs).  -For a complete price list, contact: <a href="mailto:sales@clarityenglish.com">sales@clarityenglish.com</a>

## Introduction

Getting a dream job is a demanding process that requires verbal and communicative skills; this is true for both native and non-native speakers of English. *It's Your Job* software is designed to help job-seekers develop the skills required to have a fruitful job-seeking experience. Through *It's Your Job*, the user learns how to write a good résumé and cover letter, and strategies to answer interview questions. This review first provides a general description of the software and then evaluates it in terms of a three-dimensional model

proposed by Green (1988) and the operational, cultural, and critical model (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006, p. 15).

## General Description

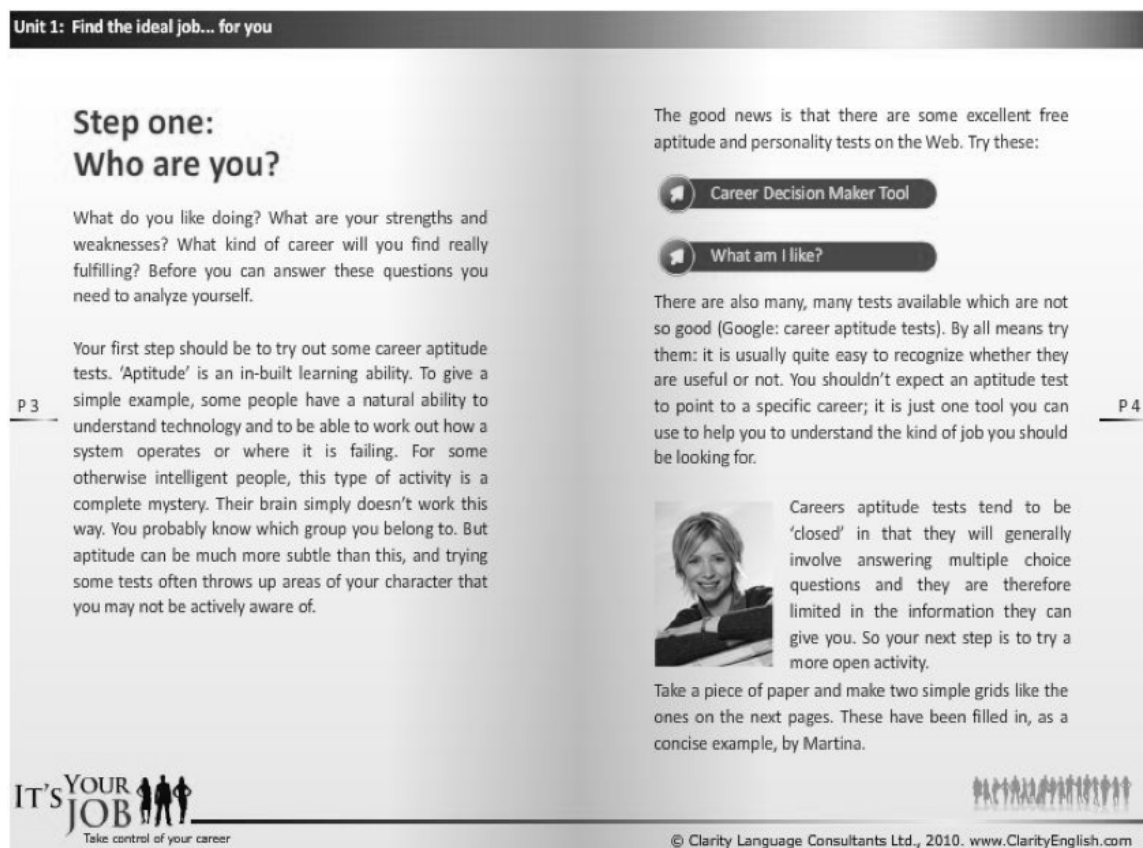
*It's Your Job* consists of ten units that are designed to provide practice for the different aspects of the recruitment process such as finding a suitable career, writing a good résumé and cover letter, and preparing for an interview (see the units under “My Course” in Figure 1). Each section includes the following subsections: (a) Career Library, which contains an eBook about the theme of each unit; (b) Advice Zone, which has video interviews with human resources professionals; (c) Practice Center, which includes different activities for the learners to test their skills; and (d) Story Point, which is an audio message from a job-seeker or recruiter. Figure 1 shows the program sections and subsections.



**Figure 1.** *It's Your Job sections and subsections*

The title of each unit is self-explanatory. If the user, for example, needs assistance with identifying a potential job that meets his/her interests and qualifications, he/she simply clicks on “Find the ideal job for you.” The eBook offers different steps and questions that should be

clear to a job-seeker like: *What am I like? What am I good at? What am I not so good at?* An example of an eBook page is displayed in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Unit 1 eBook page sample

In the Advice Zone of each unit, students watch three video interviews with employers from different fields including advertising, entertainment, IT, education and executive recruitment. The employers give suggestions for writing good résumés, cover letters, and answering difficult job interview questions. They also provide their views about different issues related to the recruitment process. Figure 3 shows an example of these questions from unit 2 “The perfect résumé.”

**Advice Zone**

Watch HR professionals explain what they're looking for in a resume.

**Question 1**  
From an employer's point of view, what is the primary purpose of a resume?

**Question 2**  
How does an employer typically process a pile of resumes?

**Question 3**  
How important is the presentation of a resume?

1

2

3

**Mr Pete Johnston, Global advertising**

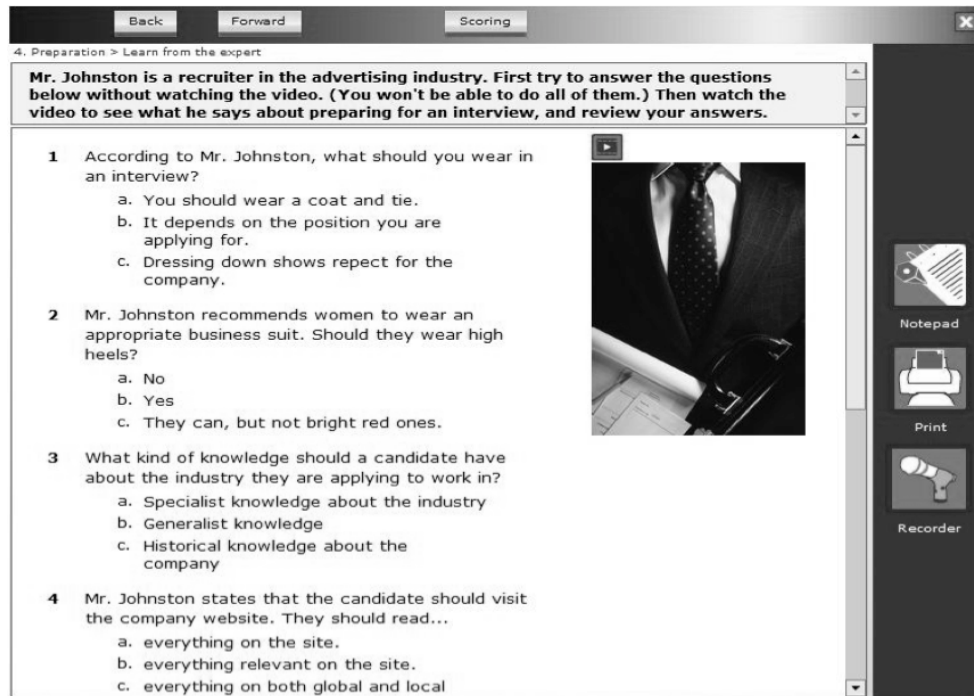
IT'S YOUR JOB



**Mr Pete Johnston**  
Global advertising

**Figure 3.** *Unit 2 Advice Zone*

Furthermore, learners engage in various interactive activities in the Practice Center such as true or false, multiple choice, drag and drop, and fill in the blanks questions. In these activities, students test their knowledge of different topics related to the world of work such as résumé and cover letter writing, interview questions, writing a thank-you email, and taking psychometric tests. Students are also tested on job etiquette such as using appropriate body language as well as being an active participant in group discussions. Additionally, students practice making use of technology when searching for a job. Videos, audios, and pictures are linked to the practice exercises as well as external websites, Word documents, and PDF files to answer related questions. Figures 4 to 6 show examples from the Practice Center from different units. Figure 4 shows an example Practice Center activity in which users answer questions about the content of a video text.



**Figure 4.** *Unit 4 Practice Center's activity sample*

Figure 5 shows an example activity that asks users to consider the messages transmitted by body language.



**Figure 5.** *Unit 8 Practice Center's activity sample*

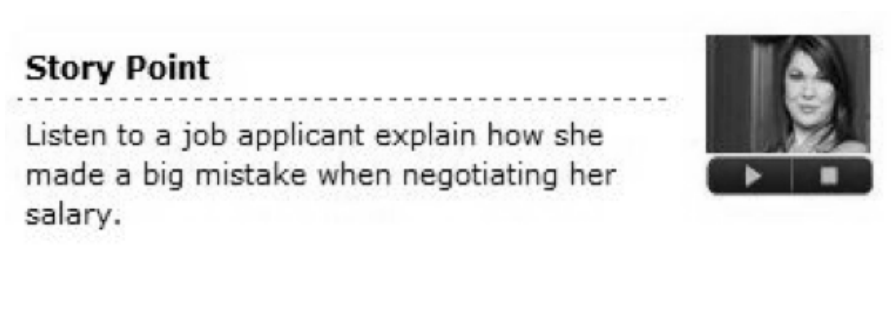
Figure 6 shows an activity that helps users practice web skills related to the job search.



**Figure 6.** Unit 10 Practice Center's activity sample

As can be seen in Figures 4 to 6, students can check their performance by clicking on the "Scoring" icon in the top of the screen. They can navigate back and forth between the activities by clicking on "Back" and "Forward." Additionally, learners can write notes, print, or record responses through using the available resources on the right side of the Practice Center's screen.

In the last section, "Story Point," learners listen to a person describing his/her career path and job-seeking experience, or giving useful tips. Example of Story Point is shown in Figure 7:

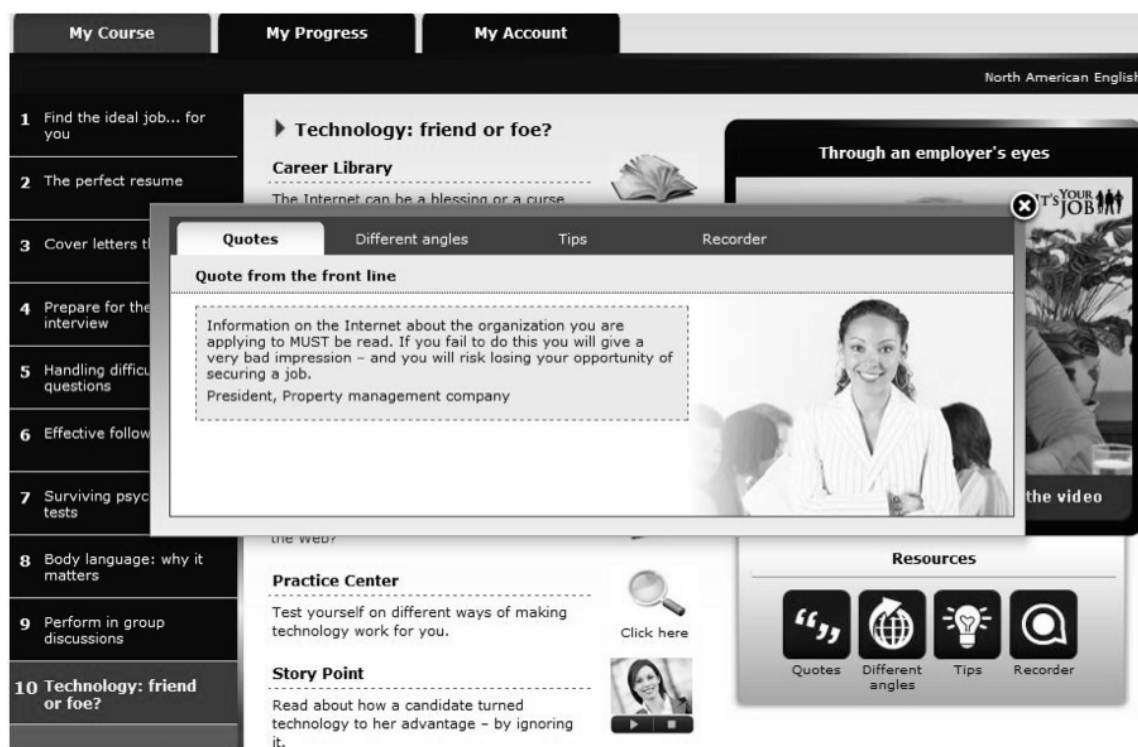


**Figure 7.** Unit 6 Story Point sample

In addition to the four subsections described above, *It's Your Job* includes four more resources related to each unit: (1) Quotes from writers and human resources professionals; (2) Different angles, which are links the user to other useful books and websites; (3) Tips, which provides five tips to the learners related to the topic being studied; and (4) Recorder, which



enables the user to record responses or notes. These resources can be found down on the right side of the main screen as shown in Figure 8.



**Figure 8.** *It's Your Job resources sample*

Finally, students can click on “My Progress” on the top of the screen (see Figure 8) and choose between two options: (1) What have I done? and (2) Compare yourself. The former option shows the students the parts that they have completed, and the latter enables them to see their progress and compare it to that of other users.

## Evaluation of the Software

From a socio-cultural point of view, Green (1988) argues that “literacy should be seen as having three interlocking dimensions of learning and practice: the operational, the cultural and the critical” (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006, p. 15). This pedagogical model integrates language, meaning, and context in any practice of literacy. Accordingly, this section examines to what extent *It's Your Job* achieves the integration of language, meaning, and context in the three dimensions of literacy proposed by Green (1988).

## The Operational Dimension

The focus of the operational dimension is “the language aspect of literacy” (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006, p. 15). It deals with the ability to manage the written language system effectively by utilizing a variety of tools and techniques (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006). *It's Your Job* gives students the opportunity to work on their reading and writing skills through

engaging in different activities. The eBook implemented at the beginning of each unit provides the user with language, meaning, and context (see Figure 2). That is to say, it enables the user to understand and derive different aspects of career English from context. Moreover, each unit has a sufficient number of reading and writing tasks (for examples see Figures 4-6). It can be said that *It's Your Job* provides job seekers with the practice needed at the operational level of literacy to improve their written and spoken language in the area of career English.

## The Cultural Dimension

The cultural dimension sees literacy as a social practice. It focuses on the appropriate coding and decoding of language within this practice. In other words, this dimension requires forming an understanding of the appropriate use of language within different contexts (Lankshear & Knoble, 2006). To a larger extent, *It's Your Job* focuses on the language and behavior required in the world of work. A job-seeking experience is a social practice that requires not only being able to write a good résumé and cover letter, but also, the ability to interact effectively and appropriately within this practice. *It's Your Job* also considers the cultural dimension of literacy. For instance, a whole unit is designated to the appropriate use of body language. In the activity shown in Figure 9, for example, the students learn and practice how body language differs from one country to another, and they have to be aware of what may be considered rude in some cultures.

8. Why body language is important > Body language in other cultures

**Body language varies from country to country. In today's world of international employment, you need to be aware of what may be considered rude in other countries. Use the Internet to research this topic and guess the correct answers.**

Thailand	Italy	Philippines	Middle East
Brazil	Greece	Scandinavia	Malaysia

- It is considered rude to point at something with your forefinger. You should close your fist and point with your thumb.
- Making the OK sign with the thumb and forefinger is highly offensive.
- Getting too close to someone - within one metre - is interpreted as an invasion of space.
- Biting your thumb is an insulting gesture.
- It is considered rude to point at something with your foot or, for example, to stop a rolling coin by stepping on it.
- Holding your hand out, palm upward, with the fingers splayed is considered aggressive and offensive.
- Sitting so that another person can see the sole of

**Etiquette by country**  
**Body language quiz**

Notepad  
Print  
Recorder

**Figure 9.** Unit 8 body language practice exercise



## The Critical Dimension

The critical dimension generates “awareness that all social practices, and thus all literacies, are socially constructed and ‘selective’: they include some representations and classifications – values, purposes, rules, standards, and perspectives – and exclude others” (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006, p. 16). That is, in order to be a productive and effective participant in any practice of literacy, “people must be socialized into it” (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006, p. 16). *It's Your Job* tries to achieve this goal by generating awareness of the values, rules, and standards of the world of employment through watching a series of interviews with employers who speak openly about what they see in a potential employee and what bothers them in a job interview.

## Conclusion

*It's Your Job* is a useful resource for job-seekers. It can be particularly helpful for English as second/foreign learners who are planning to work in an English-speaking country. It has uniform unit layouts that make it easy to navigate. The recruitment process can be seen as a kind of social practice because it involves interaction with other people, e.g. the hiring committee. In addition to developing knowledge about the language needed to write a résumé, cover letter, or to answer interview questions, learners are also engaged in various practice exercises that familiarize them with the appropriate use of language in order to have a successful recruitment experience. *It's Your Job* provides the knowledge of language and culture needed within this area to help job-seekers be active participants. The software can be used as a self-study course or integrated in the curriculum as supplementary material by classroom teachers to help students develop knowledge about career English. It can be also made available for students in institution labs for self-practice.

## References

- Green, B. (1988). Subject-specific literacy and school learning: A focus on writing. *Australian Journal of Education*, 30(2), 156–69.
- Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2006). *New Literacies: changing knowledge and classroom practice*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

## About the Reviewer

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