

Essay on The Interview

Mat leaned back against the sofa he shared with two other persons. He could see other sofas seated with young people of about his age. Without exception, each person held either a large envelope or a paper file in his or her hand. Everyone was nervous and expectant though each tried to look nonchalant and relaxed.

The room that Mat and the others were sitting in was air-conditioned. A pretty young girl sat in front of a telephone switchboard and was busy handling calls. The room was tastefully furnished and decorated. Mat thought: so this is the place I might get to work in; not bad, not bad at all. He checked the contents of his envelope certificates, reference letters, identity card, resume, etc. Yes, everything seemed to be in order. This was the first interview he was going to attend after applying for various jobs advertised in the newspapers. He wondered how he would face up to the interviewers when his turn came. Being a recent school-leaver, he had absolutely no experience in being interviewed. He had consulted some older working friends about the correct way to present oneself at an interview, but they gave him Contradicting advice that left him no wiser.

The door marked "Conference Room" opened and a young girl, presumably one of the secretaries, stepped out. Everybody turned their eyes on her. She held a piece of paper in her hand and from it, she called out a name. Mat held his breath, heart pounding. Maybe this was his turn.

An unfamiliar name broke the tense silence and the young man next to him stood up, adjusted his tie and followed the girl into the room. Mat and the rest settled back on their seats.

Ten minutes later, the young man emerged. Another name was called.

Still, it was not Mat's turn.

After an hour of waiting and watching others getting into the room, Mat was feeling edgy. When would his turn come? He fidgeted about, fiddling his tie and rolling up the corners of his envelope.

He must have started to day-dream because when he heard his name being called, the young girl was standing right in front of him.

"Ahmad Nordin, are you Ahmad Nordin?" She asked Mat, raising her voice.

*Er, Yes, Yes!" Mat muttered.
It's your turn now, come.*

Ahmad jumped up and followed her into the conference room.

Inside the room, three men with ties were seated together behind a large long table. They looked as though they meant business. In front of them was a chair on which Mat was indicated to sit. Mat managed to say "good morning" and "thank you" before he sat down.

"Ahmad Nordin?" boomed the man in the middle. "You wish to be a sales representative?"

Yes," Mat replied. "I want to give it a try." "What experience do you have?" "None, Sir. But I am a fast learner." "Maybe, maybe" the same man commented.

After this opening exchanges, Mat felt himself answering their questions confidently and spontaneously. He did not feel uneasy at all. In fact, he was beginning to enjoy the interview. Soon he was

talking cheerfully as though he had known these men for years. Then suddenly the man in the middle gestured to him to stop.

“Okay, Encik Ahmad, that’s all. We shall inform you as to whether we want you or not. You may go now and thank you.”

Mat stood up, wishing that he could stay longer. There were other things he wanted to say. Nevertheless, he had to leave. So he uttered “thank you and shuffled out of the room.

When he stepped into the busy street outside, the sun was shining brightly. He squinted his eyes to get used to the glare. The day was hot but the sky was a beautiful blue. Mat felt happy and relieved. He had just attended an interview which he reckoned to have done quite well. He had just cleared a fearful hurdle and he came out unscathed. With a smile on his face, he half-walked and half-skipped down the road.