

Transcript | Career Moves: How to Interview Excellently

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Ilana Munckton: Hello, and welcome to this Masterclass event from our Career Moves series. Today, we're going to be talking about how to interview excellently, and my name is Alana, I'm the Vice President of Community Engagement here at Apolitical, and today is all about perfecting your interview skills. You'll hear from advanced, experienced civil servants on how to best prepare and not over-prepare, as well as what to do when you are asked a question you didn't anticipate. For those of you who may be joining us for this

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00:00:37.940 --> 00:01:02.779

Ilana Munckton: very first time, a big welcome. AP Political is the world's largest online network for government, used by more than half a million public servants and policymakers from across 170 countries. And Apolitical is a strategic partner to governments, helping them prepare their workforces for the future. And we achieve this by upscaling through short online courses in peer communities, as well as by building innovative learning tools designed for and with

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00:01:02.780 --> 00:01:11.990

Ilana Munckton: governments. It would be great to hear from all of you, so do post in the chat where in the world you're joining us from, and what organizations you work for.

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00:01:12.620 --> 00:01:37.590

Ilana Munckton: Now, while you're doing that, I'm just going to get a few bits of housekeeping out of the way before we get into today's session. So, first of all, I'll mention that this event is recorded for on-demand viewing on the apolitical website. We ask that you please don't record it yourself. And contact details for any privacy concerns are in the apolitical homepage footer, and closed captions are also available in your own language and can be toggled

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Ilana Munckton: on or off, in your screen. And shortly, my colleague will also post the instructions in the chat for you as well.

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00:01:45.050 --> 00:02:10.019

Ilana Munckton: And secondly, before we get started, I would also love to introduce you to our career development community on apolitical. It's a space to ask the questions we don't always get the time for at work or at these events, such as what qualities you look for in a line manager, what skills you think are going to be most important for civil servants in 5 years, and if you've ever wondered about any of those topics or more.

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00:02:10.020 --> 00:02:34.769

Ilana Munckton: you are definitely not alone. And the community is a great place to connect and learn from your peers in the public sector. And my colleague will, again, also post a link to the community in the chat. While we're doing that, I can see loads of you introducing yourself. Hello, it's so wonderful to see you all. Lots of folks joining us from the UK and the Civil Service. Hello, from Birmingham.

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00:02:34.770 --> 00:02:50.179

Ilana Munckton: from Manchester, others in London, where I'm joining you from today. Blackpool, Sheffield, wow, we've got the country covered. Someone joining us from Toronto in Canada, Manitoba.

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00:02:50.310 --> 00:03:09.269

Ilana Munckton: Lots more, from around the world. Someone from Albania, great to see you. Amazing. Hello. more than I can keep up with. Someone from Scotland, I am in London today, but usually based up in, sunny Edinburgh, so good to see you.

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00:03:09.270 --> 00:03:12.069

Ilana Munckton: Amazing, keep that coming, that's so great.

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00:03:12.070 --> 00:03:35.440

Ilana Munckton: Before we introduce our speakers, we're gonna run a few quick polls, just to get a sense of where you're thinking about, from today's discussion. And my first poll, you should see that coming up on the screen shortly, is what stage are you at right now in your interview preparation? So you can see the options there on your screen, maybe you have an interview scheduled.

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00:03:35.440 --> 00:03:50.729

Ilana Munckton: perhaps you're applying and need interview skills soon. Maybe you're thinking a little bit ahead, you're exploring roles and planning, or something else, and if you are comfortable, feel free to share in the chat. We'd love to hear, from all of you.

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00:03:51.280 --> 00:04:03.130

Ilana Munckton: Just wait a moment, we've got lots of votes coming in. I can see, a little bit of a clear trend, which is exciting. So, wow, hundreds of you already sharing your thoughts, which is fantastic.

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00:04:03.510 --> 00:04:07.850

Ilana Munckton: A few more. So far, there is definitely a clear winner.

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00:04:08.140 --> 00:04:19.839

Ilana Munckton: Okay, yeah, someone in the chat saying, having had interviews, needs help to better prepare and not panic ahead of them, please. Hopefully, we'll give you some real good skills today to go into your next interview with.

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00:04:19.839 --> 00:04:44.759

Ilana Munckton: Okay, I will, share the results of the poll. so wow, a whopping nearly 50% of you, are exploring roles and planning ahead, and another 37% of you applying and need interview skills soon. Fantastic. Okay, well, I am sure that you will leave today with something. Someone's got an interview tomorrow. Fantastic. Perfectly timed.

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00:04:44.760 --> 00:04:48.430

Ilana Munckton: Okay, so,

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00:04:48.880 --> 00:05:13.450

Ilana Munckton: Moving on, I'm gonna, share another interview... another poll question, a little bit more of a general question, that just gives us a helpful insight into how public servants are working. And that question, again, should come up on your screen shortly. And if you're able, let us know. How long does it typically take to pull together comparative national and international evidence for a new piece of work?

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00:05:13.660 --> 00:05:27.170

Ilana Munckton: Again, you should see, a few answers. If this is something you're doing, let us know. Less than a few hours, half a day to a full day, maybe takes you two to five days, 1 to 2 weeks, or even longer, more than two weeks.

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00:05:27.170 --> 00:05:33.699

Ilana Munckton: And again, I'll give you all a moment, to, to weigh in and let us know.

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00:05:33.700 --> 00:05:42.630

Ilana Munckton: Again, I can see lots of you voting already, which is fantastic, and lots of support in the chat as well for each other, which is wonderful to see.

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00:05:46.200 --> 00:05:59.580

Ilana Munckton: Can I repeat the question? How long does it typically take to pull together comparative national and international evidence for a new piece of work? And again, this might be something, that you, are doing in your role. If not.

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00:05:59.620 --> 00:06:17.490

Ilana Munckton: Not a, not a problem. Okay, I'm gonna, reveal the results here. Okay, so, the, answer is, 40% of you saying, that you take 2 to 5 days when you're doing this type of work.

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00:06:17.490 --> 00:06:42.099

Ilana Munckton: And again, if that's not something you're working, you're still in the right place. We're here to talk mainly about interview skills in the public service, so we'll get back into that discussion now. Okay. Thank you so much for taking part, in those polls, and I think we've learned quite a lot, already. I'm going to start by introducing our speakers. We are so fortunate to have two brilliant guests

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00:06:42.100 --> 00:06:52.690

Ilana Munckton: today, Tembi Watt and Lucy Ellis joining us. Tembi, who's just joined us, is Head of L&D Capability and Skills within the Government Skills Division of the Cabinet Office.

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Ilana Munckton: She has experience in business partnering capability and talent, employee relations, and diversity and inclusion, and she's a true strategic thinker who thrives in complex and sensitive political environments.

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00:07:03.860 --> 00:07:23.920

Ilana Munckton: And Lucy Ellis is a senior speechwriter at the Privy Council office in Canada. She began her career in digital communications and has led high-performing teams. She has over a decade of public sector experience, spanning digital communications, strategic communications, speechwriting, and corporate communications. And we are so blessed to have both of you with us today.

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00:07:24.770 --> 00:07:49.749

Ilana Munckton: Before we launch into today's case studies, I thought we'd start with a little fun icebreaker, just to get us warmed up. So, Tembi and Lucy, we're going to be asking, what is one small preparation habit that changes the whole interview experience? And I'll give you both a moment to think about that, and to everyone else who's joining us in the chat, I pose the same question to you all, and I'd love for you to share your thoughts in the chat.

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00:07:49.750 --> 00:08:01.530

Ilana Munckton: chat, so you can see that question, in the chat. Okay. Tembi, over to you. What is one small preparation habit that changes the whole interview experience?

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00:08:02.450 --> 00:08:12.590

Thembi Watt: So for me, I get nervous, and so what I tend to do before an interview is I just call a friend and just have a little chinwag, just to get my nerves out.

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00:08:13.220 --> 00:08:16.040

Thembi Watt: Simple, but it's very effective, to be quite honest.

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00:08:16.480 --> 00:08:21.830

Ilana Munckton: I love that, the power of community and support. Wonderful. And Lucy, over to you.

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00:08:22.590 --> 00:08:38.909

Lucy Ellis: So, the past couple of interviews that I've done, I've done, like, vibe checks on the organization before going into the interview. So, I go through my network, I find someone who works in that organization, and I just set up a little chat with them before the interview to get a little bit of a lay of the land.

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00:08:40.679 --> 00:08:55.409

Ilana Munckton: Very smart, I love that. Two very different answers, two very powerful answers, thank you so much. Okay, so we are going to get into it now. And without further ado, I'm going to hand over to Tembi for the next 15 minutes.

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00:08:56.430 --> 00:09:01.650

Thembi Watt: Okay, great, thank you very much, and good afternoon, everybody, and thanks for bearing with me with my,

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00:09:01.820 --> 00:09:05.180

Thembi Watt: Technical matters, but we're here now anyway.

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00:09:05.180 --> 00:09:27.569

Thembi Watt: So, what I want you to do is just spend the next 10 minutes with you, just talking to you about my own personal experience when it comes to interviews, and what I've learned, the feedback, and also providing you some helpful tips as well, and also from a perspective of someone, with neurodiverse, traits as well, how it is that I prefer for interviews.

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00:09:27.570 --> 00:09:37.180

Thembi Watt: So, what can I say? I've been in this career of the HR and L&D world for the last 18 years, and I can't tell you how many interviews it is that I have been on.

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Thembi Watt: But I can tell you that I have received some positive feedback, where it's like, you gave some really clear examples on that question, to some feedback, where we just didn't know if you wanted the job or not. And I was like, oh, okay, I wasn't aware that I was coming across like that.

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00:09:54.340 --> 00:10:07.850

Thembi Watt: So, for me, I just wanted to spend the next 10 minutes just going through... if I talk about my timeline, so when I started, applying for jobs about 18 years ago, fresh out of university, I did not have a clue about how to prepare for interviews.

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00:10:07.850 --> 00:10:12.290

Thembi Watt: And I remember my first interview, because I'd built a bit of rapport with some of the panelists.

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00:10:12.290 --> 00:10:29.100

Thembi Watt: I went in very casual. And when I mean casual, I went in walking like, yeah, you alright? Because I've got a Mancunian accent. I went in, my body posture was just like this on the chair. I was like, yeah, just having a friendly chat, because someone said to me.

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00:10:29.150 --> 00:10:50.380

Thembi Watt: just go in relaxed, don't take it too seriously. And I took that very literal, and, I guess that's probably the whole neurodiverse part of me, where I literally took it literally and went in very, relaxed for that interview. Safe to say I didn't get it. I got good feedback, which was, be a bit more professional when you come into the interview.

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00:10:50.380 --> 00:10:55.699

Thembi Watt: And yeah, you're really engaging, but you just didn't answer any of the questions. So that was my first

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00:10:55.700 --> 00:11:04.309

Thembi Watt: experience. Now, did that deter me? No. I decided to, continue on putting myself forward for interviews, because what I realized was.

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00:11:04.310 --> 00:11:20.909

Thembi Watt: it was a new world for me, so I just started just applying for jobs that I wasn't necessarily interested in, because I wanted to get that practice. And like I said, this was 18 years ago, so it was before we were really aware about how do we support people with dyslexia, how do we support people who

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00:11:21.170 --> 00:11:39.180

Thembi Watt: they take things a lot more literally. How do you learn how to read the room? So I just started putting myself purposely in interviews. And just through that preparation, that really helped me significantly. Now, there were some interviews that I went through when it was particularly junior roles, and we'd moved

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00:11:39.500 --> 00:11:54.259

Thembi Watt: into using competency-based interviews. And so that was a change from what had previously happened, and with the competency-based interviews, this is where the STAR technique was introduced. So I'm training people how to use the STAR technique, but also using the STAR technique myself.

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00:11:54.260 --> 00:12:02.750

Thembi Watt: And you get those questions about, tell me about a time. And I'm thinking, great, I'm going to tell them about a time. Again, being very literal.

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00:12:02.750 --> 00:12:11.239

Thembi Watt: And I told them everything. Every detail, to the point of the panelists had to stop me to say, okay, that's enough.

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00:12:11.340 --> 00:12:36.169

Thembi Watt: what I learned, again, was the interview is only for 45 minutes. If the panelists have got 5 questions to go through, that doesn't mean that you have got 20 minutes to answer each question. Again, read the room. So, it was, again, for me, I went over, I was waffling. I didn't need to fill in the space, I just needed to answer the interview within 5... very succinctly and very clearly, but within

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00:12:36.170 --> 00:12:37.999

Thembi Watt: 5 to 6 minutes.

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00:12:38.000 --> 00:12:39.070

Thembi Watt: space.

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Thembi Watt: So, over the time, I've just developed, some useful interview tips that I've just been privy to. One of the key things also, as I've progressed throughout my career, was presentations.

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Thembi Watt: 10-minute presentation, you're thinking, great, I've got so much to tell people within 10 minutes.

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00:12:58.630 --> 00:13:16.309

Thembi Watt: You have so much to tell people within 10 minutes, but you don't need to use those 10 minutes. And if I'm using a slide as well, I love how nowadays you've got Canva, you've got some... you can make your slides very jazzy and very engaging, but then it distracts the panelists from actually what it is that you're saying.

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00:13:16.310 --> 00:13:27.010

Thembi Watt: And so that was feedback that I did receive, like, yeah, the slides were great, but you've sort of distracted the panel with everything that's going on around, and the panel weren't necessarily

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00:13:27.010 --> 00:13:39.159

Thembi Watt: taking in what you were saying, so it kind of... it overshadowed what it is that I was doing. So, when it comes to presentations, it's the simple fact of keep it simple. You don't need to throw everything in there.

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00:13:39.520 --> 00:13:42.679

Thembi Watt: Another thing that I did really...

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Thembi Watt: really take on board was... there was a recent interview that I had, and so I must say, I have recently been promoted, and so I'm now the Joint Head of Universal Skills and Learning. Thank you. And so that interview was an internal interview.

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00:14:00.390 --> 00:14:08.779

Thembi Watt: I get terribly nervous with internal interviews. I don't know what it is, but sitting across the room with your peers or people that know you.

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00:14:08.780 --> 00:14:20.819

Thembi Watt: it can be very daunting, and so I know that I'm already anxious when it comes to interviews, so in preparation for this internal interview, I had previous feedback when I did an internal interview where

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00:14:20.820 --> 00:14:24.630

Thembi Watt: I just assumed, you know me, of course you know the detail.

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00:14:24.630 --> 00:14:27.700

Thembi Watt: And I'd missed out on a previous internal job because

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00:14:27.700 --> 00:14:51.970

Thembi Watt: I took that, oh, you know me, and I didn't actually give the panel the information that they needed. So, going into this role, it was a case of, yes, you know me, but I'm going to give you some more detail, and I'm not going... I'm going to assume that you don't know me. We might have worked on this project together, but I need to answer this question, and I need to give you very, demonstrate... demonstrate evidence and be very clear.

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00:14:52.020 --> 00:15:06.360

Thembi Watt: So, there's a difference that I experience between internal interviews with panelists that you do know, and you will experience that, and with, panelists that I don't know. And my tip was always just show up regardless of who is on the panel.

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00:15:06.780 --> 00:15:07.540

Thembi Watt: M...

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00:15:07.870 --> 00:15:24.340

Thembi Watt: So, those were just some of my experiences. I did ask the panelists for some feedback for my interview, and the feedback was positive. There were some ways in which I could improve. One of them said that I was really engaging, and that my tone and my mannerisms

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00:15:24.340 --> 00:15:35.030

Thembi Watt: and really came across clearly. I was an absolute swan. I was nervous. I don't know how I appeared to be clear and engaging, because I was like, oh no, I was absolutely screaming on the inside.

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00:15:35.030 --> 00:15:37.220

Thembi Watt: But Lucy's gonna talk about this.

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Thembi Watt: For me, when it came to interview preparation, I didn't just prepare for that day. Interview preparation happens throughout the time that you're in your role. I'm not just preparing, like, when I'm doing a job, I'm not just doing the job, I'm also preparing for my examples. And so, what I do have, I've got a folder on that side, but I do have a folder of jobs that I've applied for, jobs that have looked interesting.

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00:16:00.650 --> 00:16:06.739

Thembi Watt: And for those of you that said that you're preparing for jobs, it's a really... it's a good little...

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00:16:06.740 --> 00:16:21.709

Thembi Watt: thing to do, because you don't know what's out there, and the landscape is constantly changing, and so it... the onus is on you to keep up to date with the skill set, but also look at what you're currently doing, and how that lends itself to your future job role.

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00:16:21.830 --> 00:16:27.439

Thembi Watt: A thing for me is about how do you tell your story, and Lisa will go into this in more detail.

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00:16:27.440 --> 00:16:50.380

Thembi Watt: But the more you reflect on what it is that you're currently doing, the more it becomes... your, it becomes brain muscle. You're now able to then start reading off examples without necessarily thinking about it. So for me, the interview preparation wasn't... didn't start from when I got the interview. It started long before then. I'm always reflecting on what went well, what didn't go well.

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00:16:50.580 --> 00:16:58.620

Thembi Watt: Within the Civil Service, in the Cabinet Office, we have annual performance reviews, and so also when we do our, objectives.

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Thembi Watt: On a monthly basis, I'm going through my objectives with my line manager, but I'm also looking at the behaviours against my objectives. Now, you might think, oh, it's just a performance thing. No, actually, this is preparation for your next job. This is you preparing for your interview. So if you're on a monthly basis, you're able to sit down with your line manager and talk about what your current behaviours are, and how that's lending itself to you delivering.

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00:17:22.390 --> 00:17:41.969

Thembi Watt: you're carving out an example already for your interview, and you're also getting into the habit of talking about what you're currently doing. So, that is one of the tips that I would say to you. Now, when you do see a job description, for those that are currently going through it, and also for the person that's got an interview, I'm sure you would have already done this.

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00:17:42.000 --> 00:17:58.540

Thembi Watt: In the civil service, we articulate what behaviours are that we're looking for, and the behaviours are in the public domain. You can Google those behaviors and find out even more about it. But also, when we advertise who the line manager, the recruiting manager is.

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00:17:58.770 --> 00:18:14.709

Thembi Watt: I always pick up the phone, or drop them an email, and say, can I just have a quick 10-15 minutes with you? Why, for me, it's... I'm really keen to familiarise myself with the panelists, and familiarise myself with the line manager, but also ask more questions

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00:18:14.710 --> 00:18:29.970

Thembi Watt: about the role. And this is where you sort of pick up the soft skills that aren't necessarily articulated clearly in a job description. And this is your opportunity to talk a bit more with the line manager to say, oh, so what kind of

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00:18:30.000 --> 00:18:46.919

Thembi Watt: what are you expecting to be delivering the next 6 to 12 months? What does that look like? You're fishing, you are being curious, and that's something that I'd really advise you to take on board. So, looking at the behaviours, but also, and some job descriptions, we do say what strengths we're looking at as well.

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00:18:47.290 --> 00:18:56.850

Thembi Watt: And there are descriptions on strengths as well. Now, with strength-based questions, they are just immediate. It could just be a question like, do you like data?

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00:18:57.060 --> 00:19:02.129

Thembi Watt: Yes, I like data, and the reason why I like data is data helps me.

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00:19:02.310 --> 00:19:22.270

Thembi Watt: provide an evidence-based decision. So, it's... it's not to say yes or no, it's then explore expanding a bit further, or do you like data? No, I don't particularly like data, but what I have done is I've worked with a colleague who's really strong at data analysis, and I've been building up myself to understand a bit more about how data helps me.

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00:19:22.870 --> 00:19:36.819

Thembi Watt: There's no yes or no answer, but what you're doing is you're demonstrating your understanding of data and why it is... even if you don't like it, as an individual, you're finding ways in which you're going to develop yourself, to understanding data more.

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00:19:36.970 --> 00:19:47.579

Thembi Watt: Now, I'm just mindful of time, but one of the things, and that I think is really great now, is when... nowadays, I say nowadays, but,

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00:19:47.840 --> 00:20:12.559

Thembi Watt: you actually get the interview questions, which I'm thinking, wow, that's really great. And you get the interview... some... some jobs, you get the interview questions ahead of your interview. And again, that really supports with preparation, because you're now able to prepare ahead for your interviews, whereas back in my days, we didn't... I didn't get that, so I was probably doing, like, a lot of traditional methods, and just overly, loading myself with loads of different examples.

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00:20:12.730 --> 00:20:25.020

Thembi Watt: But with the preparation, you can use AI, but please do use prompts wisely, because we're seeing quite a lot of AI applications that don't necessarily

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00:20:25.020 --> 00:20:42.670

Thembi Watt: tell... don't actually put you forward in a... in a great light. But even if you receive the questions in advance, if I was to look at you in the screen and start saying, hi, my name is Tembe, and I like to do this, and I like to do that, can you already tell that it's so inauthentic?

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00:20:42.670 --> 00:20:49.699

Thembi Watt: So, use your scripts. I don't use a script, because I find it very distracting. What I tend to do is write 10 bullet points down.

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00:20:49.700 --> 00:21:01.080

Thembi Watt: And just put it aside. Some people do have a script aside them, but I would really advise you don't read the script verbatim. I think just take a gist out of that script, or

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00:21:01.080 --> 00:21:16.940

Thembi Watt: just be comfortable, because you're telling them about you. You've already passed, like... I'm gonna call it, you've already passed the test, your application is strong. You're just putting and bringing to life your application, and you're talking about what it is that you've done.

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00:21:17.300 --> 00:21:31.719

Thembi Watt: I think one of the things that we do look for when we are interviewing that I'm mindful of is clarity, and just being clear when you're giving your examples is... can go a long way.

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00:21:31.880 --> 00:21:47.950

Thembi Watt: And you need to be clear and evidence your examples as well. So, providing, I don't know, substantial evidence or partial evidence, it's really just whatever's in your application, use that and expand upon that even more further.

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00:21:48.060 --> 00:21:49.630

Thembi Watt: How am I doing for time?

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00:21:52.480 --> 00:21:56.869

Ilana Munckton: You are doing well. We've probably got, a couple more minutes.

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00:21:57.270 --> 00:22:02.710

Thembi Watt: Okay, well, I'm going to pause there, because I think I've given a good snapshot, and I'm going to hand over to Lucy.

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00:22:03.280 --> 00:22:27.010

Ilana Munckton: Perfect, thank you so much, Tembi. That was really great. Lucy, I will hand over to you in just a second. I do want to just take a moment to encourage everyone to get their questions submitted in time for the Q&A. We should have lots of time, towards the end for Q&A, so you can do that by going over to the Q&A section at the bottom of your screen and adding them there. Okay, perfect.

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Ilana Munckton: Lucy, over to you.

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Lucy Ellis: Wonderful, thank you so much. Thank you, Temvi. What you said earlier about, like, younger you's, interview mistakes resonates so deeply with me, because my very first interview, I did no preparation, I did not research the organization, and the first thing that they asked me was.

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00:22:48.640 --> 00:22:51.450

Lucy Ellis: So what do you know about the Canadian Joint Operations Command?

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Lucy Ellis: I was like.

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00:22:54.180 --> 00:23:09.890

Lucy Ellis: It's military operations. So that was... that was a key learning experience. To, Anthony, Peace, Ahmed, good luck on your interviews this week. To my BC person in here, thanks for waking up early to be with us. We love to see it.

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Lucy Ellis: What I want to focus on today, is storytelling. So, I want to talk about, what makes a good story.

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Lucy Ellis: And I want to talk about how to find your stories and expand on some of what Tembi was saying, and then I want to talk about confidence.

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00:23:27.980 --> 00:23:31.489

Lucy Ellis: So first, what makes a good story?

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00:23:31.990 --> 00:23:45.450

Lucy Ellis: And for me, the STAR method for interviews has just never really kind of connected with me. I find it, like, a little bit difficult to sort of fit myself into that. I find it easier to think about it through a storytelling approach.

110

00:23:45.790 --> 00:23:48.120

Lucy Ellis: So, elements of a good story.

111

00:23:48.240 --> 00:23:50.799

Lucy Ellis: One, you have structure.

112

00:23:50.970 --> 00:24:05.009

Lucy Ellis: Good stories have a beginning, a middle, and an end. They start with a brief explanation to understand, sort of, the context, they go into the action, what happened, and they conclude with a resolution.

113

00:24:05.280 --> 00:24:22.379

Lucy Ellis: So when you're structuring your interview responses, think about the flow and arc of your story. Try to avoid jumping back and forth in time, try to make it really crystal clear to your panel of, sort of, the linear process of these actions.

114

00:24:22.520 --> 00:24:30.609

Lucy Ellis: And try and use, sort of, verbal signposts, so if you're going to be talking about something different, make sure that you're clearly articulating that.

115

00:24:31.090 --> 00:24:32.050

Lucy Ellis: Second.

116

00:24:32.150 --> 00:24:33.930

Lucy Ellis: Good stories have a hook.

117

00:24:34.050 --> 00:24:53.380

Lucy Ellis: they have something that is interesting, or unique, or surprising, about, sort of, the moment in time. So not every example is going to have something as sort of, like, intense as this, but, I became the, manager, acting manager, of National Defense's speechwriting team.

118

00:24:53.380 --> 00:25:03.350

Lucy Ellis: Two weeks after the retired chief of the defense staff was accused of sexual misconduct, and then two weeks later, the serving Chief of the defense staff was accused of sexual misconduct.

119

00:25:03.550 --> 00:25:13.900

Lucy Ellis: So then I had to lead a team writing speeches for all of these parliamentary events in the midst of this national crisis in leadership in the military.

120

00:25:14.290 --> 00:25:22.449

Lucy Ellis: And that's something that's gonna stand out in somebody's memory. That's something that, when they're thinking about candidates after, they're gonna remember that.

121

00:25:22.760 --> 00:25:26.709

Lucy Ellis: I also had my life ruined by a potato crisis. That's a different story.

122

00:25:27.460 --> 00:25:28.280

Lucy Ellis: 3.

123

00:25:28.420 --> 00:25:31.569

Lucy Ellis: Good stories have narrative stakes.

124

00:25:31.870 --> 00:25:36.350

Lucy Ellis: Good stories answer the question of why does this matter?

125

00:25:36.520 --> 00:25:51.230

Lucy Ellis: So this goes back to the context. You have to provide enough detail in the beginning of your interview response so that your interview panel understands, like, the implications of what you're about to tell them.

126

00:25:51.470 --> 00:26:06.800

Lucy Ellis: What were the risks involved? Who were the different stakeholders? What was the level of sensitivity of the issue? How did it connect to national or organizational priorities? Why is what you are about to describe something that they should care about?

127

00:26:06.900 --> 00:26:16.050

Lucy Ellis: Have a narrative stake. Have a little bit of mystery, intrigue, suspense. Have something that is going to make them care about what you're about to say.

128

00:26:17.400 --> 00:26:25.619

Lucy Ellis: Four, good stories have a hero, and that's you. You have to center yourself in your stories when you're in an interview.

129

00:26:25.720 --> 00:26:37.940

Lucy Ellis: And sometimes, like, we don't want to brag, we don't want to come off as, like, boastful or arrogant, but we trick ourselves and we fall into the trap of over-humility.

130

00:26:38.110 --> 00:26:46.729

Lucy Ellis: And we talk about what our team did. We talk about, you know, sort of contributions, we talk about us, we.

131

00:26:46.990 --> 00:26:48.619

Lucy Ellis: And we don't talk about I.

132

00:26:48.760 --> 00:26:58.249

Lucy Ellis: We don't say specifically how we contributed, what specific actions we took in order to advance objectives.

133

00:26:58.380 --> 00:27:10.139

Lucy Ellis: So, remember when you were telling your story in an interview, you have to be the hero of your story. You have to clearly articulate what it was that you personally did, and why that mattered.

134

00:27:10.680 --> 00:27:14.100

Lucy Ellis: And finally, good stories have a clear resolution.

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00:27:14.460 --> 00:27:23.120

Lucy Ellis: So when you come to the end of your story, you want to be able to demonstrate what was the impact or outcome of your actions.

136

00:27:23.440 --> 00:27:26.030

Lucy Ellis: What did you achieve? What...

137

00:27:26.260 --> 00:27:43.570

Lucy Ellis: crisis did you avert? What risk did you mitigate? What process did you change? What was able to happen as a result of your actions? You want to conclude your story in a place that demonstrates the sort of tangible outcomes, the results of your actions.

138

00:27:44.440 --> 00:28:04.070

Lucy Ellis: So all of this follows STAR. It follows situation, task, action, result, but for me, when I think about it through the lens of just telling a really good story, it comes more naturally to me. Because I love telling stories. Because many of us love telling stories. It's how we naturally communicate with each other.

139

00:28:04.510 --> 00:28:07.380

Lucy Ellis: So, how do you find your stories?

140

00:28:08.170 --> 00:28:13.220

Lucy Ellis: Think about, like, when you're sitting with your coworkers, and you're...

141

00:28:13.250 --> 00:28:29.069

Lucy Ellis: you're chatting, and whether you're telling your, like, horror stories of those really stressful moments in your career, or you're telling the things that you're really proud of, or you're, like, sitting around the dinner table with your family, like, what are the stories that keep coming back to you

142

00:28:29.070 --> 00:28:38.679

Lucy Ellis: Because either you feel really proud of them, or it was just, like, a wild period in time, and you kind of can't believe that you made it through, but you did make it through.

143

00:28:38.860 --> 00:28:55.409

Lucy Ellis: And a lot of the time, those are the kinds of stories that are going to come naturally to you, and those are the stories that you're going to be able to tell in a really engaging and compelling way that's going to feel authentic and organic and interesting to the panel.

144

00:28:55.410 --> 00:29:03.869

Lucy Ellis: Because it's you, and because you can tell it in, like, a kind of, like, jazzy, sprucey way, that can still be professional, but that isn't just

145

00:29:03.910 --> 00:29:16.289

Lucy Ellis: you know, sort of reading off of, like, a monotonous kind of script of, like, well, first I accomplished this, and then I did this, and then I did this. You want to have a little bit of, like, ebb and flow in the way that you're telling it.

146

00:29:16.400 --> 00:29:26.050

Lucy Ellis: So, Tempe gave really great advice, and I want to reiterate that. So, one, keep, like, a running list of things that you feel proud of in your work.

147

00:29:26.450 --> 00:29:46.030

Lucy Ellis: And every time that, like, you get, like, a kudos email, or somebody says, like, hey, great job on that, or that was really important, file that away for yourself, both to reference before your interview to, like, give you that little spark of confidence and pep, but also so that if you're searching for those examples.

148

00:29:46.290 --> 00:29:48.880

Lucy Ellis: You can look back and see the things that you've accomplished.

149

00:29:49.340 --> 00:29:52.860

Lucy Ellis: And two, think about those moments that keep coming back to you.

150

00:29:53.250 --> 00:30:10.110

Lucy Ellis: And when you're preparing for your interview, like Tembi said, you're going to be looking at the job poster, because the hiring panel has to evaluate you against every single criteria on that poster. Like, in order for you to get that job, you have to meet every single one of you.

151

00:30:10.390 --> 00:30:20.760

Lucy Ellis: So they've already evaluated you on most of your experiences in, like, the screening questions. Maybe you've gone through an exam, they've evaluated other competencies.

152

00:30:21.110 --> 00:30:37.820

Lucy Ellis: But it'll be a lot of those behavioral competencies, like critical thinking, judgment, collaboration, teamwork, initiative, integrity, those kinds of things are much harder to evaluate in a written exam.

153

00:30:37.890 --> 00:30:42.239

Lucy Ellis: So that's what they're going to be trying to get at in the interview questions.

154

00:30:42.880 --> 00:30:54.859

Lucy Ellis: And you shouldn't sit there and think, okay, I need a story about a time that I showed moral... moral courage. I need a story about a time that I was a good team member. I need a story about a time that I showed analytical thinking.

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00:30:55.260 --> 00:30:59.990

Lucy Ellis: Instead, think about the really strong examples that you already have.

156

00:31:00.400 --> 00:31:07.760

Lucy Ellis: And how you could tell that story in such a way that it highlights the particular characteristic that they're looking for.

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00:31:08.040 --> 00:31:15.749

Lucy Ellis: So if I think back to the time that I was acting manager, in a moment where the institution was going through a leadership crisis.

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00:31:16.420 --> 00:31:26.779

Lucy Ellis: I could use that example, and I could highlight how I was a collaborative team member and engaged with my, like, policy and legal counterparts.

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00:31:27.350 --> 00:31:31.050

Lucy Ellis: I could use that example and talk about how I manage stress.

160

00:31:31.470 --> 00:31:35.719

Lucy Ellis: I could use that example and talk about how I demonstrate integrity and leadership.

161

00:31:35.880 --> 00:31:51.439

Lucy Ellis: I could use that example for so many different things, and all that I would have to do is adjust how I tell the story to highlight particular components. But it's still the same story. So focus on those, like.

162

00:31:51.520 --> 00:32:05.619

Lucy Ellis: kind of big ones that you're able to tell with ease and authenticity, because it's yours, and just think about how you can kind of modify it, so that it meets whatever kind of question is coming your way.

163

00:32:06.140 --> 00:32:14.179

Lucy Ellis: And I saw in the chat a couple people talking about, the difficulty of those, like, hypothetical questions, right?

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00:32:14.480 --> 00:32:32.679

Lucy Ellis: So a lot of the time, with a hypothetical question, they're analyzing, like, your thought process and your judgment. So with those, you want to be sort of going through, like, walk them through the steps that you would take in order to demonstrate, sort of, your thought process of how you would

165

00:32:32.680 --> 00:32:48.210

Lucy Ellis: encounter that situation. And again, you can practice, kind of, for these by, when you're telling your stories, walking yourself through the thought process of, like, what you were doing in that moment of time in order to achieve your objectives.

166

00:32:48.820 --> 00:32:57.310

Lucy Ellis: So, a couple final thoughts about confidence, before we get into it. I'm really excited to, see all of your questions.

167

00:32:58.790 --> 00:33:14.099

Lucy Ellis: you have to believe in your own story. And sometimes you're gonna walk into a room, and there's gonna be 5 people sitting there, and it's gonna be really intimidating. And they're gonna ask you, have you ever written speeches before? And you've only written 3 in your life.

168

00:33:14.470 --> 00:33:25.450

Lucy Ellis: personal experience. But you know what? Speeches... three speeches is still a plural of speeches, and in that moment of time, it was like, I have written

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00:33:25.630 --> 00:33:44.550

Lucy Ellis: hundreds of articles and social media posts and web content, and yes, I have written 3 speeches, and I also wrote a novel when I was a kid, and I've written short stories, and I am absolutely confident that I can write anything that they ask me to. So yes, absolutely, I have written speeches, and I know that I am capable of taking on this job.

170

00:33:44.790 --> 00:33:58.930

Lucy Ellis: And you have to believe in your skills. And that final interview with the Chief of the defense staff was, like, a one-on-one with the head of the military sitting across the table as he's, like, literally staring me dead into my soul.

171

00:33:58.930 --> 00:34:04.959

Lucy Ellis: And asking if I'm capable of doing that job, and you have to be able to have the confidence to say, like.

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00:34:04.960 --> 00:34:05.730

Lucy Ellis: Yes.

173

00:34:05.740 --> 00:34:09.820

Lucy Ellis: I am. And even if on the inside you are freaking out.

174

00:34:09.900 --> 00:34:28.610

Lucy Ellis: project that confidence, and believe in yourself, believe in the skills that you have gained, believe in the experiences you have, draw on the experiences that you have from, like, all different parts of your life, and sort of pull that together, to gain that confidence in that moment in time, and put yourself forward. So...

175

00:34:28.690 --> 00:34:32.139

Lucy Ellis: Thank you so much, and looking forward to getting more into it.

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00:34:36.510 --> 00:34:45.229

Ilana Munckton: Amazing. Okay, thanks so much for both of those brilliant presentations and thoughts. We are now in for a very special treat.

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00:34:45.230 --> 00:34:58.690

Ilana Munckton: To bring these concepts to life, Temvi and Lucy, are excited to role model what a great interview question might actually look like. So over to both of you, to show us how it's done.

178

00:35:00.230 --> 00:35:03.909

Thembi Watt: Great, thank you. Okay, hi Lucy, how are you?

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00:35:03.910 --> 00:35:06.190

Lucy Ellis: I'm doing very well. Thank you, Tammy. How are you?

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00:35:06.520 --> 00:35:15.919

Thembi Watt: I'm great, thank you. Well, thanks for joining us for today's interview. The first question I want to ask you is around communicating and influencing. So...

181

00:35:16.080 --> 00:35:23.190

Thembi Watt: Can you tell us about a time you managed competing priorities under pressure whilst maintaining relationships?

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00:35:24.310 --> 00:35:38.720

Lucy Ellis: So, when I was a senior communications advisor at Canada's Department of Agriculture, my main file was African spine fever, which is a very deadly and contagious virus that would

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00:35:39.460 --> 00:35:44.849

Lucy Ellis: very likely decimate Canada's pork industry if it ever arrived in the country. Thankfully, it has not.

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00:35:45.080 --> 00:36:02.310

Lucy Ellis: And the planning and preparation for African swine fever brought together 7 different federal departments, provinces, territories, producers, processors, national veterinary organizations, and animal welfare groups.

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00:36:02.450 --> 00:36:20.539

Lucy Ellis: And I had to coordinate with all of these stakeholders to ensure that our communications planning was airtight, so that in the event of an outbreak, our sequencing of communications would be aligned, and our messaging would be timely, accurate, and cohesive.

186

00:36:21.180 --> 00:36:37.770

Lucy Ellis: So at the same time that I was advancing, this long-term priority, there was also a potato crisis that happened in Canada. A potato war was found on Prince Edward Island, and it caused a, trade disruption with the United States.

187

00:36:38.030 --> 00:36:57.039

Lucy Ellis: So, this was hugely harmful for PEI's economy, and it was a priority for the Minister of Agriculture. So, I was responsible for all of the, the news releases, statements, ministerial speaking points, stakeholder engagement letters, and a wide variety of comms products.

188

00:36:57.470 --> 00:37:01.959

Lucy Ellis: And I had to make sure that while I was dealing with the urgency of the crisis.

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00:37:01.960 --> 00:37:21.179

Lucy Ellis: I could not let the long-term planning of African swine fever slip. So, while I was waiting on approvals for my potato comms products, I was, making sure that I was still, meeting with stakeholders on the side. When I had a moment, I would do check-ins on teams.

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00:37:21.180 --> 00:37:34.369

Lucy Ellis: I would carve out time in my calendar to make sure that I could still do bilateral meetings. If I did have to miss a meeting, I had really strong relationships with my policy counterparts, and I would make up the time with them later.

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00:37:34.370 --> 00:37:45.779

Lucy Ellis: I stayed in constant communication, with all of these different, stakeholders and groups, policy programs, communication counterparts, and other organizations.

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00:37:45.840 --> 00:38:02.609

Lucy Ellis: To keep both things running on track, to ensure that our crisis communications was timely, accurate, and met the needs of the Minister, and to make sure that our long-term planning, continued ahead, so we had a really comprehensive strategy in the event of an outbreak.

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00:38:04.190 --> 00:38:06.710

Thembi Watt: Thank you. What would you do differently?

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00:38:08.290 --> 00:38:25.410

Lucy Ellis: I would have asked for help sooner, because managing, both of those files at the same time, ended up being very difficult. There were some days that I was working from 7am until 11pm at night.

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00:38:25.440 --> 00:38:36.570

Lucy Ellis: And, looking back on it, I wish that I had, asked for help from my team members sooner on in the crisis, so that I could have better preserved a little bit of balance for myself.

196

00:38:38.020 --> 00:38:39.790

Thembi Watt: Great. Thank you very much, Lucy.

197

00:38:39.900 --> 00:39:03.049

Thembi Watt: Okay, so we're going to come out of character now, and that was a really great, example of Lucy bringing together a multiple number of different skills. Lucy was very clear in... from the situation in which Lucy was handling, and very clearly articulated what the task was in terms of planning. Lucy was very clear in terms of stating that she had to work with multiple different stakeholders. Notice that she didn't...

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00:39:03.050 --> 00:39:17.630

Thembi Watt: name each individual stakeholder, like, one by one, but was very clear that these stakeholders came from different organizations and working in different diverse backgrounds. Now, something that Lucy pulled out, which I think a lot of people would over...

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00:39:17.630 --> 00:39:42.559

Thembi Watt: would not necessarily explain was Lucy demonstrated that she used different modes of communication, whether that was informal or formal. Lucy talked about how she would chase up with people. You might think, oh, that's nothing, but no, actually, Lucy took some proactive steps to ensure that she was regularly communicating with senior staff. Additionally to that, Lucy stated to the panel that this was a priority

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00:39:42.560 --> 00:39:53.490

Thembi Watt: piece of work, so it also aligns clearly with the strategy, and it shows that it's a very high-profile work, so it shows that Lucy's able to work under pressure, and work in different,

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00:39:53.620 --> 00:39:57.339

Thembi Watt: with different key stakeholders. That reflection question

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00:39:57.360 --> 00:40:17.380

Thembi Watt: really well answered, because actually, would you do that again like that? No, and you've learned from that, and that means when you do come and work in this role, which is going to be similar, you're going to apply a different way in terms of addressing and working with multiple different stakeholders. Lucy covered so many different behaviors in that one example in such a short time span.

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00:40:17.380 --> 00:40:21.240

Thembi Watt: And that was really an excellent answer. Thank you, Lucy.

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00:40:21.500 --> 00:40:22.500

Lucy Ellis: Oh, thank you.

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00:40:24.590 --> 00:40:49.539

Ilana Munckton: That was so great. Remember, you can keep sharing any questions you have for today's speakers. We do have a lot of questions from you already, both pre-submitted and in the Q&A. So, before we dive into all of those questions, I want to let you know we have created a really great follow-on resource all about today's topic, which I hope you all find useful. It's an article on frequently

206

00:40:49.540 --> 00:41:01.749

Ilana Munckton: asked questions in civil service interviews, and if you'd like a link to that article, you can go to the Career Development Community after the event and leave a comment on the post that I have pinned to the top of the page.

207

00:41:01.750 --> 00:41:08.630

Ilana Munckton: And my colleague will put that in the chat as well. And we will send you a resource by email, just after the event.

208

00:41:08.800 --> 00:41:33.770

Ilana Munckton: But if everyone is ready, we're gonna go on to the Q&A. And I am going to start... we have so many questions to choose from here. I am going to start, with one of those pre-submitted questions. Lucy, you spoke a lot about confidence in telling your story. Someone asked, how do you handle, unexpected questions, with the same level of confidence?

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00:41:33.770 --> 00:41:42.419

Ilana Munckton: So maybe you've prepared, or you've gotten some questions in advance, you get that unexpected question, how do you portray the same amount of confidence when you're telling your story?

210

00:41:42.940 --> 00:42:02.389

Lucy Ellis: Yeah, so, I have a very expressive face, in case that wasn't already obvious. And one thing that, I have sort of worked really hard at during interviews is, to try and maintain, like, a slightly more neutral face.

211

00:42:02.390 --> 00:42:12.999

Lucy Ellis: Because there have been moments when I have been caught off guard by something, and it is immediately written all over here. So,

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00:42:13.070 --> 00:42:27.270

Lucy Ellis: So, sort of, one is sort of be cognizant of, yourself and your own expressiveness and your own kind of facial expressions, so that it doesn't read as you are being caught off guard.

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00:42:27.270 --> 00:42:46.210

Lucy Ellis: Two is take a breath before you answer. Don't immediately try and jump into it. You can buy yourself a little bit of time with the, like, oh, you know, that's, like, a really interesting question, like, you know, the way that I would think about this is something, like, a little bit of preamble to sort of give your motor a little bit of time to run.

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00:42:46.280 --> 00:42:52.300

Lucy Ellis: And if it isn't something that you have a direct answer for.

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00:42:52.500 --> 00:43:07.219

Lucy Ellis: Like, in your current role, think about, are there any experiences that you've had in, you know, do you volunteer anywhere, or experiences from, like, other pieces of your life that maybe you could draw on to create a response for it?

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00:43:07.220 --> 00:43:22.520

Lucy Ellis: Or, if you truly have no experience whatsoever in the topic, like, it's also okay to say that, and then say, you know, but if I did encounter a situation like this, I would respond to it in X, Y, and Z way, and, like, turn it into a hypothetical.

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00:43:25.360 --> 00:43:49.469

Ilana Munckton: That's really great advice, and I love that kind of start of being aware of your body language, taking that breath, and then kind of really thinking, thinking it through. That's wonderful. I'm gonna now, turn to one of the most popular questions that was, upvoted lots of times in the Q&A, and I'll put this to both of you, you're welcome to kind of weigh in, and I think this is on a lot of folks' minds.

218

00:43:49.470 --> 00:44:00.590

Ilana Munckton: Someone asked, some departments don't give enough feedback post-interview, and I think we talked a lot about how valuable that feedback can be. How can we encourage feedback to improve performance?

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00:44:06.860 --> 00:44:08.970

Thembi Watt: Yeah, so...

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00:44:09.180 --> 00:44:22.019

Thembi Watt: Okay, I was gonna say, I absolutely love feedback, and feedback is a gift. And, I guess when it does come to interviews, like, I really... any panel that I do sit on, I do want to give feedback to candidates that do ask for it.

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00:44:22.200 --> 00:44:33.390

Thembi Watt: Where you're struggling to get feedback, there are 3 panellists on there, and I'm sure one of them would be available to give you that feedback that you are looking for.

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00:44:34.280 --> 00:44:44.369

Thembi Watt: that is pretty much what I tend to have to do, so it might not be the chair, but I've had to drop an email to another panelist and just saying, do you mind if I just grab you for 10-15 minutes?

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00:44:44.370 --> 00:44:54.480

Thembi Watt: And just have a chat. I've recently done it for an interview that I had in January, and they were just like, sure, let's have a quick conversation about that. So don't give up in getting that feedback.

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00:44:54.590 --> 00:44:59.960

Thembi Watt: There will be somebody available to give you that feedback, but it's definitely something that's really strongly recommended there.

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00:45:04.330 --> 00:45:15.660

Ilana Munckton: Fantastic, thank you so much. And some folks in the chat talking about how valuable that kind of interaction with the hiring managers can be, both before and after, which is, fantastic. Okay,

226

00:45:16.890 --> 00:45:19.010

Ilana Munckton: Lucy,

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00:45:19.530 --> 00:45:32.699

Ilana Munckton: Here's another question that came in. Someone said they love the idea of keeping these kind of running lists of achievements, and they often struggle to feel like they are big enough for an interview answer, and was looking for any tips for helping with that.

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00:45:33.660 --> 00:45:35.049

Lucy Ellis: Yeah, so I think...

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00:45:35.200 --> 00:45:46.869

Lucy Ellis: One is don't sell yourself short, and I saw there was another sort of comment in the chat about, like, administrative professionals and how to sort of demonstrate that work, like.

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00:45:47.020 --> 00:46:05.170

Lucy Ellis: you... whatever role you are playing on your team, like, you are contributing to your team's success. You are contributing to the ability of your organization to carry out its mandate. So, the key is sort of being able to link your work

231

00:46:05.250 --> 00:46:09.790

Lucy Ellis: To the bigger picture, to see, like, what is the... the sort of...

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00:46:09.800 --> 00:46:15.510

Lucy Ellis: The overall impact, of what it is that you are doing.

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00:46:15.510 --> 00:46:36.370

Lucy Ellis: And yeah, like, being able to, like Tembi said, thinking about your, you know, when you do your performance reviews, when you're chatting with your manager, like, what are the things that they are recognizing you for? What are the things that they are noticing, and that, you've done really well, and sort of being able to keep those things in mind, and in your back pocket.

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00:46:38.200 --> 00:46:39.980

Thembi Watt: And can I just add to that?

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00:46:39.980 --> 00:46:40.440

Ilana Munckton: most minutes.

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00:46:40.440 --> 00:46:43.180

Thembi Watt: I used to be an executive assistant.

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00:46:43.550 --> 00:47:03.349

Thembi Watt: greatest role, because it actually prepared me for this role. Well, a number of different roles. And I always think about the transferable skills that you have as an executive assistant. The multiple different stakeholders that you're working with is just one thing, but also the organisational skills. That lends itself to project management in ways that you don't necessarily

238

00:47:03.360 --> 00:47:13.369

Thembi Watt: would think it would do so. As well as being an EA, one of the things was quite a lot of written and verbal communication and being able to influence.

239

00:47:13.470 --> 00:47:17.770

Thembi Watt: Particularly senior stakeholders, so managing upwards.

240

00:47:17.790 --> 00:47:35.969

Thembi Watt: Was a task that I found very daunting, but actually it has prepared me significantly when I am working with executives as well in this current role. So I also think about... think about your transferable skills, because in that EA space, I can't remember who put that in that, in the chat.

241

00:47:35.970 --> 00:47:41.510

Thembi Watt: You've got a lot of transferable skills that lends itself to a number of jobs that are currently out there.

242

00:47:44.190 --> 00:48:08.020

Ilana Munckton: Really useful. Okay, there is, Tembi, I'm going to come back to you again. Someone has asked in the Q&A, Tembi, what is one piece of advice you would give to people who conduct the interview? So we've talked a lot about as the interviewer-ee, but there might be lots of folks here who are actually, preparing to conduct their... an interview, maybe for the first time, or maybe it's a skill, that they find challenging. So what...

243

00:48:08.020 --> 00:48:13.440

Ilana Munckton: One piece of advice would you give as someone who's, experienced on the other side of the panel?

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00:48:13.810 --> 00:48:17.809

Thembi Watt: Okay, I would definitely say it's...

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00:48:18.140 --> 00:48:20.970

Thembi Watt: That individual is also interviewing you as well.

246

00:48:21.010 --> 00:48:35.729

Thembi Watt: In a sense that they might not be asking you questions directly, but they're also gauging, is this a place that I want to work? And you're representing the organization, you're also representing the team as well. So this is like a mutual... we're having a conversation.

247

00:48:35.730 --> 00:48:50.679

Thembi Watt: So, I would definitely say, make sure that you're warm as a panelist. Also, prepare yourself... I know you said one tip, but definitely prepare yourself. The same way you're expecting an interviewer to prepare themselves, you as a panelist need to prepare yourself with your questions as well.

248

00:48:50.680 --> 00:48:57.600

Thembi Watt: Those are the two things. Just be warm and engaging, but also preparation lends itself to those, being on the panel.

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00:49:00.590 --> 00:49:04.420

Ilana Munckton: Excellent. I am scrolling through these questions that are coming in.

250

00:49:05.000 --> 00:49:17.120

Ilana Munckton: So fast, it's amazing. Okay. another question here, Lucy, someone has asked, would you advise that your interview story always has a happy ending?

251

00:49:19.770 --> 00:49:38.570

Lucy Ellis: That's interesting. I think if there isn't a happy ending, then your resolution needs to be, what did you learn from that experience, and what would you do differently in the future? So I have been asked in an interview before about a time, that I...

252

00:49:38.880 --> 00:49:44.610

Lucy Ellis: You know, like, had conflict with somebody. And

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00:49:44.930 --> 00:49:55.899

Lucy Ellis: you know, I shared sort of a difficult experience that I'd had, with, someone who had been supervising me, and sort of...

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00:49:55.900 --> 00:50:13.450

Lucy Ellis: I think the piece that was missing in the response that I gave was how I would have maybe approached that situation differently, if I were going to do it again. So, yeah, just think about, sort of, what did you learn from that? How did you grow from that? What would you change from that?

255

00:50:14.770 --> 00:50:15.380

Ilana Munckton: Yeah.

256

00:50:15.380 --> 00:50:40.189

Ilana Munckton: Great advice, so you almost turn something without a happy ending into something that, has a long-term happy ending, right? Really, really great advice, thank you. Okay, we have a question here that's come in that I'll put to either of you. It has had 11 upvotes, so, folks really want to hear about this one. And someone has asked, should we use the star format, in personal statement questions?

257

00:50:40.290 --> 00:50:46.870

Ilana Munckton: And they kind of mentioned that these are kind of shorter, about 100 words. what do you think?

258

00:50:51.480 --> 00:50:53.360

Thembi Watt: Sorry, Lisa, I'm sure you could say that.

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00:50:53.360 --> 00:50:54.020

Lucy Ellis: Alright.

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00:50:54.020 --> 00:50:59.449

Ilana Munckton: Or either of you, yeah. Timothy, I can see you nodding enthusiastically there. Do you want to go for it?

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00:50:59.830 --> 00:51:04.980

Thembi Watt: Yeah, I would say, yeah, especially, in the...

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00:51:05.310 --> 00:51:20.439

Thembi Watt: with the use of AI, I think using some star in your personal statement will lend itself. It brings out your examples a lot more, thus reading a lot of application forms.

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00:51:20.760 --> 00:51:26.930

Thembi Watt: And I have started to see people using STAR and actually demonstrating, how they actually meet the role.

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00:51:28.620 --> 00:51:31.549

Thembi Watt: But be succinct with it. Sorry.

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00:51:31.680 --> 00:51:43.510

Lucy Ellis: Yeah, that's what I was gonna say, is you have to be a ruthless editor, when you are filling out those, like, online applications. If you have, you know, 100, 150-word hard cap, like.

266

00:51:43.790 --> 00:51:55.980

Lucy Ellis: Be a ruthless editor, and really, like, keep the sort of early part tight, so that you can focus more on your action and your result.

267

00:51:59.950 --> 00:52:12.960

Ilana Munckton: like, okay, I think we probably have time for about one more question. Let's see, I'm gonna go back to our pre-submitted questions, because we've got so many.

268

00:52:15.230 --> 00:52:21.670

Ilana Munckton: This is an interesting one. Someone asked, how do I practice effectively without feeling self-conscious?

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00:52:21.670 --> 00:52:36.160

Ilana Munckton: I know this is something that's on lots of folks' minds. Some people maybe don't like seeing themselves on video or listening to their own voice. What advice do you have? What tips work have worked for each of you on how you practice without feeling self-conscious?

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00:52:39.040 --> 00:52:49.579

Lucy Ellis: I mean, sometimes you have to, like, fake it till you make it. I think also just having, like, a trusted friend who is willing to do a little bit of interview prep for you.

271

00:52:49.580 --> 00:53:10.770

Lucy Ellis: Or, you know, if you still have good relationships with, like, a former manager, that can be super helpful. So, sort of using your network, leveraging the good relationships that you've built so far in your career to see if someone has, you know, like, 20 minutes to have a call with you and do a little bit of prep time. I...

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00:53:11.100 --> 00:53:20.480

Lucy Ellis: Personally, I'm an AI hater, I recognize that it works for some people, I don't like it, but I do see, like, you can use generative AI for, like.

273

00:53:20.520 --> 00:53:40.509

Lucy Ellis: giving your example, you know, speaking it into a generative AI, and then asking it to critique you. Ask it, you know, like, were you clear? Like, did your example have structure? Like, were your, you know, were the outcomes evident? Are there things that you could change? Like, you can use, those generative AI tools to help you strengthen yourself.

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00:53:42.360 --> 00:53:52.609

Thembi Watt: Yeah. For me, it's mindset. Like, I get nervous all the time, but it's just accepting. I just, okay, it's what it is, let's just accept it. I also think...

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00:53:52.690 --> 00:54:12.010

Thembi Watt: again, don't just wait until you have an interview. We are constantly doing our meetings online. People are seeing your presence, how you hold yourself when you are on camera. You can always, after meetings, ask someone for some feedback. Oh, how did I come across in that meeting? Did I answer the question to, what you thought I'd

276

00:54:12.010 --> 00:54:21.770

Thembi Watt: how I should answer it. Was my presence okay? Don't just wait until an interview to get some feedback about how it is that you come across. Always just gather some feedback throughout the process.

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00:54:23.750 --> 00:54:48.679

Ilana Munckton: Those were fantastic, parting comments. We have had some really incredible wisdom from each of you, and I would like to, ask all of you, joining us today to, join me in giving, Temvia and Lucy a virtual round of applause. I can see lots of emoji reactions coming in live. And most importantly, thank you to you, the attendees, as well, for investing in this time and being so engaged in this topic.

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00:54:48.680 --> 00:55:13.650

Ilana Munckton: The team are going to just pull up a quick poll to find out how you felt about today, and that is there just to help us keep improving our content and run better events like these in the future, so we really appreciate your responses. You should see that coming up, and the question is in front of you on a scale of 1 to 10. Rank your agreement with the statement, this event was a valuable use of my time, 1 meaning you completely

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00:55:13.650 --> 00:55:38.360

Ilana Munckton: agree, and 10 meaning you completely agree. So I'll let you all just take a moment to think that through. And before you go, while you are responding to that poll, I just want to share a few more events that you can register at. Join us again soon if you'd like. If you're not available to join live, remember that you can always register in order to get sent the recording to catch up wherever suits you.

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00:55:38.360 --> 00:55:41.619

Ilana Munckton: So we have next Wednesday,

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00:55:41.620 --> 00:56:06.620

Ilana Munckton: how to prioritize when everything feels urgent, where you'll learn how to determine what's actually a priority, so you can focus on the work that matters most. In two weeks' time, we have AI for Project Management, part of our AI Skills Labs series. And related to today's topic, we have our next Career Move session that's coming up in early June, and that's about how to build those relationships that really advance your career. So, building on some of the themes that we

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00:56:06.620 --> 00:56:31.439

Ilana Munckton: heard about today, and you'll see that coming up in the chat just shortly. You can find those events and register, or share with your teams and your colleagues if you'd like to see us again soon. But that is all we have time for today's event. I really hope you found this session useful, and want to say, again, a final huge thank you to our speakers and to everyone who has made today happen, and again to you all for joining us.

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00:56:31.440 --> 00:56:49.669

Ilana Munckton: And taking the time out of your very busy schedules. Keep an eye out, for the email coming your way, which will have all of today's recording and resources. Don't forget to find my post in the community, and I hope to see you at another apolitical event very, very soon. Have a great day. Thank you so much, and goodbye.

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