

Listening. Script

Task 1

Interviewer: This evening in our series ‘Careers with a Difference’ our guest is Rachel Reed who works for a small commercial art gallery. Rachel, welcome.

Rachel: Hello.

Interviewer: Rachel, what exactly do you do?

Rachel: Well, there’s two great things about working for a really small company. Firstly, you get to do a bit of everything. The other is that you can practically invent your job title. Mine is marketing manager – although I do a lot of other things too, it does describe the majority of what I do [1].

Interviewer: So, tell us about your day.

Rachel: Well, it all starts with the huge pile of post we get. We often get artists sending in photographs of their work to see if we’d be interested in exhibiting it. I learned very early on how to differentiate between the ‘possibles’ and those which are unsuitable.

Interviewer: But how do you tell?

Rachel: It might be the style, or sometimes the subject matter is just not going to look right in our gallery, but more often than not, it’s just that they’re not of the required standard. [2] The ‘possibles’ I pass on to the gallery manager who makes the final decision.

Interviewer: So you have quite a lot of contact with artists?

Rachel: Yes. Sometimes I spend nearly all day on the phone and about fifty percent of the time it’s artists. I send letters explaining why we can’t show their work – some of them phone up to argue about it – I find those calls very hard to deal with [3]. Artists we do exhibit also phone to find out if we’ve managed to sell anything and, if we have, when the money will be coming through. I don’t mind those so much. Most other calls are from clients. We have a new artist exhibiting here every two to four weeks and before the show takes place, we send out a catalogue to the clients on our database.

Interviewer: Obviously the catalogue’s illustrated?

Rachel: Oh yes, and as soon as the catalogue goes out, we start getting phone calls because people see something they like and want to reserve it. Sometimes they even buy things over the phone. The catalogue also contains a commentary about the artist, which I have to write and research. I try to find out what has influenced them, where they learned to paint, what the subject matter represents [4], that sort of thing, but I try to avoid quoting from positive reviews of their work; it’s not meant to be advertising as such.

Interviewer: So your job is not all administrative?

Rachel: Compared to a typical office, that side of it’s quite minimal, that’s why I can cope without an assistant. There are systems in place to deal with routine jobs. For instance, I don’t have to send out the catalogues – the company which prints them also prints the envelopes and posts them. Another company takes care of the food and drinks when we have the opening of a new exhibition. [5]

Interviewer: And are you involved in other aspects of the business?

Rachel: Yes. The company also offers a consultancy service for large companies that want to display works of art in their offices. I phone round companies, explain what we do and, if they’re interested, make an appointment for the gallery manager to go and see them. [6] It’s interesting, the companies tend to go much more for modern or abstract art than people coming to the gallery.

Interviewer: And the best part of the job for you?

Rachel: The really rewarding thing for me is that you never know how a day is going to

go [7]. Some days it'll be really quiet, other days it's really busy and you don't know what you're going to have to cope with. And there's the added bonus of working with really nice people and of course I have the pleasure of spending my days surrounded by beautiful works of art, so I can't complain.

Interviewer: Thank you Rachel, and now we'll move on to ...

Task 2

Thanks for inviting me tonight. As you know, my main interest is in conservation and I'm lucky enough to work with lots of different organisations looking after animals both in captivity and in the wild.

I'd been fascinated by all kinds of bears for a long time before I started working in this field. But it was the spectacled bear that really attracted me – some people find it appealing because of its size and shape, and it's less well known than other types of bear, but for me I thought it was such a great name! [8] It comes from the patches of yellowish fur around the bear's eyes which grow in a sort of circle shape, like glasses, although these golden markings vary greatly from one bear to another and may not be limited to the eyes – they can extend as far as the bear's cheeks or even chest. [9]

I'd like to explain what we know about this bear, and why I find it so fascinating. It's the only survivor of a type of bear that once ranged across America during the last Ice Age. We thought that it was only found in certain places in Venezuela and Chile, but I was thrilled to read some reports that suggested it might also be living in northern parts of Argentina and eastern Panama. [10]

It's quite difficult to find spectacled bears in the wild because they are quite shy animals, and tend to live in a wide variety of habitats, which can range from dry coastal deserts to high mountain areas above 4,000 meters. They are most commonly found in forests, though. [11] Being such timid animals they tend to come out at night, which is another thing that makes them difficult to see, though, like me, you may be surprised to learn that they don't sleep all through the winter as many other types of bear do. [12]

We're not sure about the actual number of spectacled bears that remain in the wild, but it's been estimated that there are only about 2,400 still around. The bears are endangered not so much because they are hunted by other animals, but what I find really sad is the fact that humans destroy their habitat. [13] Spectacled bears are quite small compared with other bears, and of course they do have other enemies – these mostly include mountain lions and jaguars – but they remain a smaller threat. The bears are primarily vegetarian, and their normal diet is tree bark and berries. [14] On rare occasions though they eat honey, which I thought was just something in children's books. I was interested to find that they are incredibly good climbers, and one thing I found really funny is that they've been known to sit up a tree for days – they make a platform – why? – I couldn't guess [15], but they're waiting for fruit to ripen so they can eat it! It's quite surprising that although they rarely eat meat they have extremely strong jaws and wide, flat

teeth. Very occasionally they do eat meat – something like birds or insects though they like small mice best if they can get them! [16]

We're really trying to make people more aware of the bears, and we've made a television series about one man's efforts to make people understand the dangers facing the animals. He spent a long time in Peru studying them, and has published a very funny diary of his time there. [17] I hope everyone will read it, and support our efforts to help these fascinating creatures!