

## The Interview

She had taken an unusually earnest approach to her outfit that day. A simple black suit, soft lavender shirt to add a little feminine allure and comfortable low-heeled court shoes: a professional look with an aura of reserve and control. Amy shuffled slightly, discretely adjusted her skirt and carefully tucked loose black curls that had found their way onto her forehead back into place, taking care not to arouse the attention of the other passengers in the lift.

Amy glanced at her watch and noted that the interview, arranged for 11 o'clock that morning was fast approaching. She was relieved to have been able to get the day off work without too much fuss, for this interview might just be the opportunity of a lifetime. Realising the significance of this particular morning, Amy checked her briefcase one more time – resume, phone, personal organiser, the job description and salary package, notebook and pen. She then double-checked her mental list – remember to keep calm, ask sensible questions and keep the interview flowing.

Communication was certainly Amy's forte. She knew only too well the value of creating and maintaining excellent rapport with clients. Her biggest issue though had always been her manager. *An old witch if ever there was one*, Amy mused to herself as she imagined her escape to a new job. Molly Dyer: she couldn't wait to see the back of her.

With a gentle jolt the lift came to the second floor, and the gradually widening doors started to reveal an elegant frosted glass-enclosed entrance to a stark but stylish reception lounge. Amy marched confidently up to the front desk. "I am here for the 11 o'clock," she briskly announced to a surly receptionist.

"Take a seat," the receptionist snarled, flapping a hand towards a neat two-seater without even bothering to look up from a magazine she was reading.

Within minutes an office door swung open and what was in all probability another contender for the position appeared before her. *No contest there*, Amy thought smugly to herself as she watched the back of the competition glide out through the glass doors and disappear into the lift. Within a few minutes another face appeared at the office door – this time a man.

“Miss er ...” the face enquired from the doorway.

“Lawrence” Amy added as she jumped up and made her way towards the interview room.

“Come on in then, Ray’s the name,” the face replied.

The office was relatively bare but still rather elegant, similar to the reception area. A large desk sat in front of a window enclosed by decorative gold drapes and two comfy-looking armchairs faced each other in the centre of the room. Amy sat down and made herself comfortable.

“Oh, Amy – I hope you don’t mind me calling you Amy as we all use first names here – I seem to have mislaid your resume. But I was very impressed with it when I read it yesterday.”

“No problem.” Amy responded by promptly diving into her briefcase, congratulating herself on her foresight. “I brought a copy with me,” handing it over to Ray with a growing sense of efficiency.

“Good, I will go over it in a bit more detail later. In the meantime, let’s get to know each other better. I suppose you are aware that the main focus of your role with us will be customer service and that is what is important for our business and keeps our reputation strong,” Ray explained.

Amy jumped in, getting straight to the point, “When you have time to look at my resume and you will find a detailed outline summary of my approach to customer service.”

“That’s terrific! Well without looking carefully at your resume again, you seem to have the style we are after – well groomed, articulate, punctual, organised and enthusiastic. And your references were excellent.”

Ray was definitely giving Amy the impression that she may just be the right person for the job. “There may be some travel involved. Many of our clients are in senior management positions in some of the top companies around the country and you will have plenty of time to learn everything from your manager, who will initially be travelling with you. How does that sound?”

“Great”.

Ray sat back in his chair and looked at her kindly. “Then,” he started “we may just have the position for you. It is only a junior one but if you do as well as I think you might, you could quickly work your way up. When could you start?”

“I could start next Monday,” Amy piped up immediately trying to hide a slight shudder of excitement as Ray leaned over and gently shook her hand.

Amy couldn’t believe her luck. Within minutes she was back in the reception area where she pulled out her phone, flicked through to the resignation letter she had ready to go and with one quick click sent it zooming through cyberspace to the head of her old HR Department. *Done*, she thought and smiled to herself.

“Oh, one more thing,” Ray’s now familiar voice from behind. “I forgot to mention earlier.”

Amy turned around and waited.

“Your new manager will be starting on Monday too. I think you know her from your old company. In fact, she was the one who gave you the best recommendation – Molly Dyer.”

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