

# #1. THE INTERVIEW



**Instructions:** Read the story. Try to understand the **bolded words** from context. Words in *italics* have been taught in previous lessons, go back and review if needed.



Once upon a time in the vibrant city of Berlin, there lived a young adventurer named Felix. Felix had always dreamt of studying abroad in the United States, and in his third year of University, he decides to embark on that journey. Of course, before he can board the plane, he needs to secure his visa.

When the day of his visa interview arrives, Felix **wakes up** nervous. For the most part, he feels prepared; he's studied the most commonly asked questions by consular officials, and he even **brushed up on** his business English, so that he **comes across as** polite and respectful.

Felix gets to the consulate 20 minutes early and is **taken aback** by how crowded it is. As he waits for his turn, he can't help but notice the odd mix of people around him; there's a teenager snoring with his mouth open, an overdressed elderly woman holding a large stack of documents, and a father yelling at his kids. Apparently the father is so **fed up** by his kids' behavior, that he's now making a scene.

Felix wonders where they're headed and why, but his thoughts are interrupted when his number is called. It's his turn.



As Felix walks toward the office, it **dawns on** him just how important this interview is. He really doesn't want to **screw it up**, so he takes a deep breath and greets the officer with a smile.

To his surprise, the officer smiles back and asks him to take a seat. With no delay, the officer asks questions about his travel plans, financial stability, and the purpose of the trip. Felix answers confidently, emphasizing that he has plenty of funds **to get by**.

The officer looks at him earnestly, but Felix doesn't **clam up** under pressure. He's heard that it's a red flag when visa applicants mention any work-related activities, especially when applying for a student visa. So, instead, he talks about his studies, and mentions all of the places he wants to visit and people he's excited to meet. As it turns out, Felix doesn't even need to speak in English!

Soon enough, the interview is over: His visa has been approved. The stories to come will be unforgettable!



In the U.S., some non-immigrant visas include tourism and business (B visas), study (F or M visa), work (H, L, E, or O visa), temporary skilled workers (H visa), exchange visitors (J visa), and more.



## VOCABULARY



Read through the definitions of the key phrasal verbs, then write your own original sentences.

1. **To wake up\***: To stop sleeping and become conscious or alert.
  - I usually *wake up* early in the morning to have a healthy breakfast.
  - The loud noise from the construction site *woke me up*.

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2. **To brush up on**: To review or refresh knowledge/ skills in a particular subject or activity.
  - Before the exam, she decided to *brush up on* her math skills by practicing some problems.
  - He plans to *brush up on* his Spanish before his trip to Spain.

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3. **To come across as**: To give a particular impression or appear in a certain way to others.
  - With her confident demeanor, she *comes across as* a natural leader.
  - He tries to be friendly, but sometimes his sarcasm makes him *come across as* rude.

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4. **To be taken aback**: To be surprised, shocked, or caught off guard by something unexpected.
  - When she announced her decision to quit, her colleagues were *taken aback*. They had no idea it was coming!
  - He was *taken aback* by the unexpected kindness shown by a stranger.

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5. **To be fed up**: To be extremely annoyed, frustrated, or tired of a situation or someone's behavior.
  - She's *fed up* with her job and is looking for a new opportunity.
  - After waiting for hours, he was *fed up* with the delayed flight.

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**\*PHRASAL VERB CAN BE SEPARATED \*\*MULTIPLE MEANINGS**



6. **To dawn on:** To realize or understand something suddenly or gradually.

- As she read the letter, the truth about the situation began to *dawn on* her.
  - It didn't immediately *dawn on* him that he had misplaced his keys.
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7. **To screw up\*:** To make a mistake, blunder, or mess up a situation.

- I *screwed up* the important presentation by forgetting my notes.
  - She accidentally *screwed* the order *up* and had to apologize to the customers.
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8. **To get by (on):** To manage to survive or cope with a situation, often with limited resources.

- Despite the financial challenges, they managed *to get by* with the support of family and friends.
  - With a part-time job, she could *get by* and pay her bills while studying.
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9. **To clam up:** To become silent, refuse to speak, or become uncommunicative, especially when feeling shy, nervous, or defensive.

- Whenever the topic of her personal life comes up, she tends to *clam up* and avoid the discussion.
  - The shy student *clammed up* when asked to speak in front of the class.
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10. **To turn out\*\*:** To result in a particular way; to be revealed or discovered after an event or situation.

- The party *turned out* to be a great success with many guests enjoying the celebrations.
  - Despite initial doubts, the project *turned out* to be more successful than expected.
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