

September 2008

Tapescript – Ilona

I'm a business student. I'm in my third year of studies. I study in a private university. The language of instruction is English so I'm a little bit worried that when I go out to working life in Lithuania I will know all the English terms and not enough Lithuanian ones. So, anyway, so far I've been studying only general business subjects: marketing, a little bit of human resources and business communication. I haven't had a lot of business experience yet but... Well, business is one of the 'big things' in Lithuania right now. It is one of the most popular subjects to study. It may be because it is so wide and open and basically you can finish business and do a lot of interesting and varied things later in your life. And also, I wanted to get into that particular university and it was either English language or business to choose from. I thought that business would be more practical. A good command of English in Lithuania starts at about my age which is 22. A lot of older people who have completed their education while Lithuania was still in Soviet Union do not know English well because they were not exposed to it in school. Younger people like me in their 20s, early 30s, already have a good base of English. You can start from the first grade so that would be six or seven years old. What we do is you could start English, or German, for example – German's another popular language – you could start learning it from either the first or the fourth grade either when you start school or when you finish primary school, go into secondary school. And then at around 11 you start learning your second foreign language and that depends, it may be Russian, French, German.

I do not have such a goal. What I want is to work and live in Lithuania and be able to communicate and do business with companies from abroad. That is where I need and want to use my English, to create a sort of a link, a bridge, between Lithuania and other countries. I had a lot of ideas but when you go along with your studies you see more and more things and I am thoroughly confused by now.



Well, I saw a poster in my university which said ‘win a business experience’. I read it and it offered a lot of fun things and I thought why not. Luckily, I’ve, I have completed a marketing course just that year and I could write a marketing plan which was required and I simply did it and that’s it. I decided to try. I didn’t expect anything but I thought it would be a good practice for me to write an application and all the texts you need for that.

Well of course positive. Actually I was very afraid to come and live three weeks in a country where everyone drives the wrong side of the road but so far I’m getting used to it and all the things become more comfortable. The first week was tough because a lot of things that you do automatically in your own country you can’t do here. Going shopping is a challenge and the workplace environment is new to me but by the second week now it’s getting more comfortable. I’m more comfortable with talking to people and socializing.

I see that here working hours are very flexible and an employee can choose when to come to work, when to leave, when to take a lunch break provided that he/she works a certain number of hours. And there are even ‘work from home’ options which fascinates me. In Lithuania you would come to the office when your employer wants you to come and leave when he/she wants you to come (leave) and that’s mostly fixed when you sign a contract and that’s what you do.

Well, I used to work as a receptionist so I have a little bit of experience. Most of the people go out somewhere to eat because one of the reasons is that companies are not very good at providing space for having lunch, for heating or keeping your things so you’re sort of forced to go out. Another big thing with us is big office buildings and shopping centres. A lot of companies would have their offices in shopping centres and these tend to have very centralized facilities.

I would like to do something creative. My biggest asset is creativity and thinking up of ideas, solutions to problems and I do hope to work in that kind of place that would require me to do so. I don’t see myself doing routine tasks every day and I would really hope for working in an international company somewhere out there.