



Practice Interview Event

9 - 12 May 2022

50 Million Voices aims to create a world where everyone who stutters can enjoy a fulfilling working life and where more organisations benefit from the talents and skills of people who stutter.

However, interviews are particularly stressful for people who stutter due to the expectation of needing to communicate fluently in time-pressured situations, where so much can hang on the outcome. This is compounded by most interviewers having little experience of candidates who stutter or of getting the best from them.

After the success of our pilot Practice Interview event held in October 2020, this was our 4th consecutive event with each event being more diverse and covering a bigger geographical reach.

Who took part?

The event involved 105 people from 13 countries, namely Canada, Germany, Israel, Ireland, England, Wales, USA, France, Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, India and Oman. This includes people who stutter, allies and the organising team.

Some noteworthy points:

- ✓ A total of 72 interviews happened over a span of 3 days.
- ✓ There were 41 interviewees who stutter and 60 interviewers (24 who stutter and 36 allies who do not stutter)
- ✓ Typically, among adults who stutter, only 20% are females compared to 80% males. Among our interviewees who stutter, 39% were females and 61% males
- ✓ 6 major employers from a variety of sectors supported the event namely TSB, Reach, Compass in association with Levy Restaurants, EY, Schlumberger and Sage.
- ✓ A core team from the UK, Ghana and India organised the event and included an interviewee and an interviewer. Please see note 1 for the names of the team members.

What happened?

- ✓ There were 72 one-to-one interviews, including confidential individual feedback for interviewees and interviewers.
- ✓ Interviewees also received feedback on their CVs / Resumés from their interviewers.
- ✓ To help prepare for their interviews and to maximise quality, all participants attended a mandatory 90-minute educational briefing on stuttering in the workplace.
- ✓ An interviewer and Interviewee workshop (60 minutes) took place involving a panel team discussion. The panel comprised a previous interviewee, a previous interviewer who stutters and a previous interviewer who does not stutter - an ally. The idea was to discuss the interview experience of our former participants and to answer any questions related to know-how and other practicalities of the practice interviews from the current participants. Please see note 2 for the names of panellists.
- ✓ All interviewees then received either 1, 2 or 3 individual interviews to help improve their interview skills. Interviewers each gave 1, 2 or 3 interviews to help broaden their interview skills.
- ✓ Keen to maximise their learning and development, most participants attended a closing 60-minute group feedback session where they shared experiences and ideas.
- ✓ Unfortunately, there were 12 participants who either cancelled or did not show up (7 interviewers and 5 interviewees). Thankfully, due to the generosity of other participants, we were able to reallocate interviews on this occasion.

Did the participants find it valuable?

- ✓ 99% rated the value of the event as 'valuable' (53% extremely, 31% very and 15% valuable).
- ✓ 98% would 'recommend' the Practice Interview event to people who stutter and potential allies (90% definitely, 7% probably and 1% possibly recommend).
- ✓ Several highly encouraging comments from interviewees and interviewers are included in the two appendices to this report.

Conclusions

- ✓ The event provided a high-quality interview and learning experience which benefitted approximately 112 interviewees, interviewers and organising members involved.
- ✓ 65 people who stutter benefitted directly as interviewees or interviewers.

- ✓ 36 allies benefitted directly as interviewers.

We are very grateful to all the interviewers and interviewees for their time, skill and generosity in making this experience happen.

We are also grateful for the excellent support from TSB, Reach, Compass in association with Levy Restaurants, EY, Schlumberger and Sage.

Invitation

If you are interested in participating in future Practice Interview events, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact us at info@50millionvoices.org or visit our website at www.50millionvoices.org

50 Million Voices Trustees - June 2022

Notes

1. The 50 Million Voices Practice Interview core team from the UK (4), Ghana (1) and India (1): Elias Apreko, Carmen Savvas, Helen Carpenter, Shilpa Sagwal, Sam Simpson and Iain Wilkie.
2. The interviewee and interviewer workshop's facilitator was Hanan Hurwitz (Israel). The panellists were Helen Craddock (Strategic Support Director, Levy Restaurants - UK) as a previous interviewer who does not stutter, Chris Gemmell (Corporate Development Director, Sage - UK) as a previous interviewer who stutters and Chinmay Ravindran (Canada) as a previous interviewee who stutters.
3. 50 Million Voices is a community of leaders who stutter from 12 countries and 6 continents. We work with allies and employers to transform the world of work for the 50 million adults globally who stutter.
4. We are registered by the Charity Commission for England and Wales. Charity number: 1189541. Our trustees are: Iain Wilkie (chair), Helen Carpenter and Chris Gemmell.
5. To help enable our practice interview events to continue, please donate through here <https://www.50millionvoices.org/donate/>
6. For further information, please visit <https://www.50millionvoices.org>, or connect with us through Twitter: @50MillionVoices and LinkedIn: 50 MillionVoices.

Appendix 1 – Interviewee Feedback

I had never been comfortable listening to a stuttering voice though I stutter. For the first time in my life, I was comfortable listening to people stuttering – Person who stutters, Ghana



Interviewees

I am eager to listen to other stuttering voice in future. Furthermore, I wish to be a interviewer in the future events- Person who stutters, Germany

I actually ended up having two interviews (an opportunity to have a second interview opened up and I took it). While I was apprehensive and dreading applying for new jobs, I felt really encouraged by the end, and I am already applying for several positions. I really can't thank you enough for the program – Person who stutters, UK

I find listening to be one of the most important aspect of communication. I, owing to my stutter, have become a patient listener to not only to stuttering voices, but to non stuttering voices as well- Person who stutters, India

I like how my interviewers have time to talk with me a severe stammer – Person who stutters, Ghana

I had great conversations with the interviewers and learned a lot of what interviews look for from interviewers perspective- Person who stutters, USA

Before the practice interview, I had this notion that pausing before speaking was interpreted as "unpreparedness" but my interviewer actually encouraged more of it and that made me confident to speak- Person who stutters, Ghana

Appendix 2 – Interviewer Feedback



What struck me is the sentence "it takes 2 to stutter", I don't stutter so interviewing someone who does stutter brought a new angle to my role in the interview and what I need to be doing as an interviewer to ensure the person has the necessary space and tools to perform the interview. It also forced me to practice listening skills- Ally, France

For me the event was hugely educational and really effective at helping me understand some of the challenges and inequities that people who stutter face. I have come away from this event with lots to reflect on and feeling that I definitely want to be an ally to the stuttering community going forward. Overall, a really powerful 3 days!- Ally, UK

I think we should get more exec's who stammer to talk about their experience as Iain did - I told his story to my 14 year old who stammers and he visibly lit up- Ally, UK

Thought the whole event was organised really well, with plenty of briefings and support, but also the flexibility for interviewers to run in their own way- Interviewer who stutters, India

My eldest son also has a stammer and I have worried for him going forward in life. But thanks to 50 Million Voices I now have a fresh perspective on it and will take this forward with me and for my son. I found during our practice interview that I was listening to what my interviewee had to say rather than whether or not they stammered- Interviewer who stutters, UK

