



ECPE-Speaking Sample Test Commentary

About the Test

The ECPE Speaking test measures test takers at the C2 level of English on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The test takes about 25-35 minutes and is comprised of five different stages designed to give test takers the opportunity to interact with each other and with two examiners in order to accomplish a task.

- Stage 1: Introduction and warm-up
- Stage 2: Allow test takers to learn about the decision they will make and get familiar with the options
- Stage 3: Come to an agreement on one single option
- Stage 4A: Plan a presentation
- Stage 4B: Make a formal, persuasive presentation that the option they have chosen is the best one
- Stage 5: Defend the decision by answering some questions

How to Practice

To practice for the ECPE Speaking test, use the additional prompts provided. The sample test cards below give an example of how these prompts appear. You'll need the Test Taker Card for the person practicing the test and the Examiner Card for the person helping you practice.

To evaluate your performance, please refer to the Scoring Criteria and Sample Test Commentary below. Please refer to the additional speaking prompts provided when listening to the tests.

Sample Test Cards

Test Taker Card

Prompt
A

Test Taker 1

Hiring a Chef

John Green

The following list provides some information about John Green:

- restaurant cook for 12 years
- specializes in Italian cuisine
- managed family restaurant
- trained by popular American chef
- works well with others
- won Chicago's best pizza award
- has violated food sanitation regulations

Lisa Taylor

The following list provides some information about Lisa Taylor:

- 7 years professional experience
- combines several international cooking styles
- specializes in vegetarian menus
- studied cooking in India
- calm under pressure
- writes for cooking magazine
- argues with customers frequently

Speaking Sample
Test Taker Prompt
ECPE

Examiner Card

Prompt A

for Examiner

Hiring a Chef

- The two (three) of you work for a popular restaurant. Your restaurant needs to hire a head chef for its new location.
- You are on the selection committee.
- Four (six) candidates have made it to the final selection process.
- Each of you will be given descriptions of two of the four (six) candidates.
- You will need to describe the two candidates you are given to the other member(s) of the committee so that you both (all) know the four (six) candidates. The goal is for you both (all) to know about the four (six) candidates.

Examiner 2 is the general manager of the restaurant.

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Speaking Sample
Examiner Prompt
ECPE

Sample Performance 1

Test taker 1

- Test taker 1 provides coherent explanations without prompting on all topics. He gives recommendations supported with explanations, such as in Stage 2 when he is describing the language lab (e.g., “if someone is explaining to study abroad or just travel abroad or maybe just a gap year, it’s a really good point”). Overall, he is able to justify his position and elaborate; communication breakdowns are rare.
 - Using a wide variety of basic and complex grammatical structures, test taker 1 explains his opinions in a direct and streamlined way. He also uses a range of vocabulary accurately (e.g., “teachers can easily demonstrate technology,” “the cost is considerably high”).
 - Test taker 1 demonstrates fluent and articulate delivery in his rate of speech with few pauses. He often uses prosodic features to add meaning, such as emphasizing the intonation of certain words when challenging the other test takers on their decision to choose the computer lab rather than the language lab (e.g., “The fact that you guys settled for this, and not the language lab...maybe [test taker 3’s name] you wanna say something about that?”).
- ▶ **This test taker is well prepared to take the ECPE Speaking section.**

Test taker 2

- Test taker 2 usually contributes appropriately to the development of the interaction and seems to be very aware of the listener; she often refers to points her fellow test takers have mentioned (e.g., “What you said about drawbacks, it’s implied here.”). She provides recommendations that are almost always supported with explanations and are appropriate to the context but at times does not provide concrete justification for her position (e.g., “my reasonable ‘me’ agrees with you, but my sentimental ‘me’ loved the idea of the language lab, you know”).
 - Test taker 2 usually uses a variety of basic and complex grammatical structures that are pragmatically appropriate. Errors in grammar do not cause miscommunication. While she usually uses a broad range of vocabulary, accuracy in vocabulary and grammar is occasionally influenced with more challenging speech events (e.g., “I think it’s one of the greatest benefit here, because as we know, we always have uh, tasks, uh, that and uh, developed with groups.”).
 - Test taker 2 is frequently fluent and articulate during the test. Her fluency rarely declines, even during challenging speech events, and requires minimal listener effort.
- ▶ **This test taker is well prepared to take the ECPE Speaking section.**

Test taker 3

- Test taker 3 explains her points concisely and accurately, providing coherent explanations with no reliance on the written material, such as when she is describing her options in Stage 2 (e.g., “Visual aid for learning that has been proved by researches, so that would be an extra way to improve the learning process.”). She contributes to the extended interaction, supporting her recommendations with explanations.
 - Test taker 3 uses a range of vocabulary and complex grammatical structures with ease (e.g., “it also connects easily with multiple devices, so you can transfer the material from your computer to the projector easily,” “we think that the computer lab is more of an urgent need”). She uses a range of grammatical structures that are pragmatically appropriate to the business domain, such as at the beginning of Stage 3 where she puts herself into the role of a mediator in the discussion with the other test takers as one would in a real-life business scenario (“I think we can start by comparing all costs of the three technologies.”).
 - Fluent and articulate delivery are characteristics of test taker 3’s delivery throughout the test. She maintains this fluency even in Stage 4 when presenting extended speech to Examiner 2 (e.g., “the main reason why we chose this one is because it’s very helpful for group projects, so students can engage more with their colleagues and feel more motivated, and it also teaches how to work in groups, which is a very useful quality to have these days”).
- ▶ **This test taker is well prepared to take the ECPE Speaking section.**

Sample Performance 2

Test taker 1

- Test taker 1 elaborates on his ideas without prompting and often presents decisions clearly and appropriately. There are times, however, when he shows some limits in providing convincing explanations, such as in Stage 3 when he discusses the benefits of computer labs (e.g., “About computer labs, they can, they can be useful because...students who work in a group and this...good for the work, for learning.”).
 - A moderate range of vocabulary (e.g., “you have access to,” “discipline”) is often used accurately and appropriately by test taker 1. While basic and some complex grammatical structures are used, they sometimes contain errors (e.g., “About computer labs, they can, they can be useful because...students who work in a group and this...good for the work, for learning.”), though most of the time these errors are self-corrected and do not impact meaning.
 - While test taker 1 is often fluent and maintains a consistent pace throughout the test, some pronunciation problems from his L1 disrupt intelligibility at times (e.g., “career,” “to,” “text,” “access,” “must,” “lost”).
- ▶ **This test taker is on track but should continue to prepare for the ECPE Speaking section.**

Test taker 2

- Test taker 2 is able to adequately explain and elaborate without prompting on concrete and abstract topics. However, she at times relies on the written prompt, such as in Stage 2 when explaining her options (e.g., “now video cameras...students can learn how to make films, it costs 300 per video camera, it can encourage creative thinking, teachers can motivate learners, but some functions of the camera are complex”) and in Stage 4 when presenting to Examiner 2.
 - While some incorrect collocations may lead to vagueness (e.g., “that’s provides a good...a good contact with technology, with a good quality,” “computers are good for many years, so you don’t have to stay by computers to maintain the computer lab”), test taker 2 often uses a variety of complex grammatical structures and a moderate range of vocabulary effectively.
 - Test taker 2 is often fluent and articulate during the test and requires minimal listener effort. However, her fluency declines with more challenging speech events, such as in Stage 3 when giving reasons for her choice (e.g., “I think computer labs good...to initiate, to initiate, um...technology upgrade on school because they are...easily to demonstrate, like, nowadays, uhhh...”).
- ▶ **This test taker is adequately prepared to take the ECPE Speaking section.**

Sample Performance 3

Test taker 1

- Test taker 1 frequently relies on other participants to initiate, develop and maintain discourse. When prompted, she is occasionally able to provide supporting explanations, but her attempts to justify a position can be unclear and repetitive (e.g., “I think that Ken is good, he have experience,” “Uh, we choose Lisa Taylor, she been cooking for seven years, which I think is a good time to take experience,” “I think that she’s really good at cooking.”). She often relies on language already provided or language from the prompt.
 - While test taker 1 attempts to use some complex structures to communicate her points, frequent errors occur (e.g., “the type of food is better because don’t have a lot of,” “I think she write in a magazine, people do what she’s say” “she learn a lot”). A limited range of vocabulary is evident, as test taker 1 often repeats the vocabulary found in the prompt; gaps in vocabulary sometimes disrupt communication (e.g., “yeah, don’t have a lot of... [test taker 2 says “variety”]...yeah.”).
 - The delivery of test taker 1 is often slow and halting, for example, when explaining the options in Stages 2 and 3 of the test. Frequent pausing and reformulations disrupt intelligibility.
- ▶ **This test taker is not prepared and should work on developing their speaking skills before taking the ECPE Speaking section.**

Test taker 2

- Test taker 2 provides recommendations that are almost always supported with explanations and are appropriate to the context (e.g., “She studied in India and it’s good because she can use a variety of...”).

of types of food, Indian food, you can mix with other types of food and get something unique that other restaurants don't have.”). He usually presents decisions persuasively and appropriately to the context.

- Test taker 2 uses a variety of basic and complex grammatical structures accurately and usually effectively (e.g., “like mine is criticized for being slow, so if the food...em, it's not very quickly given to the customers they will be angry and they will not come back to the restaurant”). He usually uses a broad range of vocabulary to communicate; errors in vocabulary and grammar do not cause miscommunication.
 - Test taker 2 is often fluent and articulate; his pace is usually consistent. There is, at times, some fluency decline in longer speech events where at times self-correction occurs (e.g., “if she frequently talk with the clients and she argue with them or if she...mmm...she, eh starts yelling or something like, then she won't come”).
- ▶ **This test taker is adequately prepared to take the ECPE Speaking section.**

Test taker 3

- Test taker 3 elaborates without prompting and often contributes appropriately to the development of the interaction. She justifies her positions adequately, providing reasonable solutions (e.g., “yes, but at the same time maybe if we speak with her then she can understand that this is not something she can do [argue with customers]”).
 - Test taker 3 usually uses grammatical structures that are pragmatically appropriate. She usually uses a broad range of vocabulary, including idiomatic expressions, appropriately (e.g., “if the restaurant has any problems, she will deal with it,” “the customer is always right”).
 - Test taker 3's speech requires minimal listener effort: she is frequently fluent and articulate and adapts to the appropriate register required for each stage of the test.
- ▶ **This test taker is adequately prepared to take the ECPE Speaking section.**

Sample Performance 4

Test taker 1

- Test taker 1 provides recommendations that are almost always supported and appropriate to the context, such as when debating the pros of the candidates in Stage 3 (e.g., “On the positive side, um, Mark has experience in French cuisine, which is closer to Belgian cuisine, so I think that's a very positive side.”). There is some reliance on written material as he is explaining his options.
 - At times, test taker 1 places himself into the role that he has been assigned, using pragmatically appropriate expressions (e.g., “we won't be able to know how long she'll stay with us”). He uses a broad range of vocabulary, including collocations and idiomatic expressions, accurately and appropriately (e.g., “will be able to handle it,” “I'll go with Ken Johnson,” “a dead end”).
 - Though test taker 1 is frequently articulate and his speech requires minimal listener effort, fluency slightly declines with more challenging speech events, such as when he is explaining his options in Stage 2 and giving the presentation in Stage 4.
- ▶ **This test taker is well prepared to take the ECPE Speaking section.**

Test taker 2

- Test taker 2 presents his explanations accurately with little to no reliance on written material. He justifies his position, elaborating with extended explanations, providing convincing arguments (e.g., “It is also important to mention that he can be very artistic and he can keep shapes with food, so maybe he can impressed his guests.”). He shows good understanding of the examiner and is able to engage in extended, spontaneous interaction, such as in Stage 1 when he is describing his cultural identity.
 - Test taker 2 usually uses a variety of basic and complex grammatical structures accurately (e.g., “he's very good at cooking seafood which is not that traditional in Belgium, and it will be even more let's say special if, uh, a restaurant is based on seafood than French cuisine”). He usually uses a broad range of vocabulary (e.g., “overcooked,” “easily attract more people to our restaurant”).
 - Test taker 2's turns are characterized by fluent and articulate delivery, including during longer and more challenging speech events, such as when he is fielding Examiner 2's questions in Stage 5.
- ▶ **This test taker is well prepared to take the ECPE Speaking section.**