

Interviewer: Great. Can you tell me about the kind of work that you do?

Interviewee: I am a payroll clerk.

Interviewer: Yeah? Do you also drive Uber or Lyft? Is that right?

Interviewee: Yes, exactly. [inaudible 00:02:08]

Interviewer: Okay. No, that's okay. I was like, "Neat." Do you drive with Uber or Lyft or both?

Interviewee: Uber.

Interviewer: Uber? Okay. Are these your two jobs, and you have a main job and then uber is on the side?

Interviewee: Yeah. It's a part time... It's what I do on the weekends and stuff just for the area that I live. There is a lot of rideshare apps that people take advantage of in my city, so it's worth the money.

Interviewer: Great. How did you... I'm mostly going to ask about the Uber stuff.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: How did you find the gig?

Interviewee: I was referred to by a friend.

Interviewer: Yeah. Did they work for Uber too?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: When did you start working there?

Interviewee: Oh, man.

Interviewer: It can be like, "I've worked there for a couple of years." It doesn't have to be super specific.

Interviewee: Couple months.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: For a couple months. I would say, about six months.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. What was the application process like?

Interviewee: I think, basically, they asked me about my driving record. Excuse me. Asked me about my driving record and my vehicle and made sure that everything was a standard there. Went over the customer experience, making sure that everything is professional on that and that there is a catered to the customer, so that easy and I'm trying to get work.

Interviewer: Okay. And did you do all-

Interviewee: And convenience for the customer?

Interviewer: Oh yeah. Did you do all of this through like a computer or over the phone or how did you do it?

Interviewee: I started on the computer.

Interviewer: And then when they accept you, did you have, did you download an app?

Interviewee: Yeah, exactly.

Interviewer: And was that, is there like a contract or something that appears when you download the app and open it and register?

Interviewee: To be honest, it was long enough ago that I don't remember that, but, I'm pretty sure.

Interviewer: Something like that most, yeah. Do you have, if something goes wrong, do you have a manager or something that you can talk to?

Interviewee: I do have a number.

Interviewer: But, it's not like the same person every time.

Interviewee: As far as I'm aware, no. But it could be.

Interviewer: Have you called it before?

Interviewee: No, I haven't had the need to. No.

Interviewer: Okay. It's mostly, it's a number but you don't know what's on the other side yet.

Interviewee: Basically.

Interviewer: Do you feel like there were skills you needed to develop to do your job? The Uber one specifically.

Interviewee: Reading people is an important attribute to some people like to talk and chit chat and some people really like to [inaudible 00:05:29].

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: I find they enjoy it if you have a free bottle of water or something in the car or something that's unopened that they can just grab or have access to makes it a little bit easier for them or convenient, people tend to leave better reviews that way.

Interviewer: Oh, okay. So yeah. That's interesting. No one's told me that yet and I think that's really smart.

Interviewee: Oh yeah. Heck yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: Is there any kind of data that you have to record for Uber?

Interviewee: My usual things related to the cars to make sure that everything's good to go there. I'm probably one of those like people that are super weird about it because my dad has always been a spreadsheet person.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: And so like I always put probably an exorbitant amount of information into my own personal spreadsheet just so that way I can track to see what part of the [city 1 area] I'm in versus how many rides I get asked for versus...

So you probably don't have any idea what I'm talking about here. I live in [state 1], I live in the [city 1 area]. And so there's just, it's a metropolitan area around [city 1], but if you go further away, you can go into either the [area 2] or you can go further south into the [area 3] for the County that you're in. But I've found if you see closer to [city 1], you're more likely to get rides for there. And if you go even as far as south like [city 2], your amount of requests for rides drops drastically, and so just trying to stay in the areas that cater to the city is something more that I've been trying to watch and try to watch gas versus miles versus trip reviews versus, I don't want to say destinations cause it's not recording destination, but I'm trying to find out like what are commonly destined area.

Like I was in an airport and or things like that and watching what kind of people leave reviews and things that are necessary for people that are at the airport versus downtown going to be dropped off at a bar or whatnot. I like to watch that information so I can track to see where best to put myself to put my time.

Interviewer: Wow. You have a good strategy. This is really cool.

Interviewee: I blame my dad.

Interviewer: Did you start out with the strategy?

Interviewee: A little bit. My friend had mentioned the one who I got introduced to, she does both Uber and Lyft. And so she had made the comment that "I've driven a couple people from the [city 1] down to [city 2], [city 3] area. I decided to really kind of just hang out there but people weren't tipping as much [inaudible 00:09:06] so its not that I won't

drive people all the way down to [city 3] or things like that but as soon as I'm done dropping them off rather than loitering around their, I'll head right back to [city 1]."

Interviewer: So there was a hint that there was some strategy involved from that.

Interviewee: Oh a little bit, yeah.

Interviewer: That's really cool. And so between your two jobs, how do you structure your time?

Interviewee: Well the general job is a eight to five type of gig with an hour lunch. Mostly for Uber it's done on a weekend and evenings. Usually I structure it for a couple of hours in the evening if I'm going to, if I'm in the mood for it or if I have necessity for it, I'll schedule like usually seven to 10 o'clock at night is usually the rough time that I will try and schedule, well, drive.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. And is that, is that because you know that there will be a whole bunch of trips and you'll get tipped well and stuff?

Interviewee: Yeah, that's, yeah. The thing about [state 1] is I like to jokingly say that it's the reputable sidewalk roll up at 10 o'clock

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewee: So typically after 10 o'clock most people are home or in bed, just they pop up the [state 1] culture here, there are people that far out until about midnight some nights, but it's definitely drastically lower. And then you also run other risks of them being drunk and throwing up in your car.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. So how many hours do you try to work for Uber per week?

Interviewee: I try to stick between 10 to 15 hours. It's just a secondary job.

Interviewer: Yeah. Oh, so it's like you have a full time job and a part time job.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. Do you take on this much driving time because you're trying to meet a financial goal?

Interviewee: Oh yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. If you're comfortable sharing with me, how much do you try to earn per week from Uber?

Interviewee: Just a couple of hundred and the money that I usually get from Uber is more so spending money type stuff if that makes sense? I try to save all my paycheck from my other job to make sure that [inaudible 00:12:01] getting out of debt and everything and

then they tried to use the money from driving around to essentially eat and live  
[inaudible 00:12:12]

Interviewer: Yeah. Cool. So I guess from that, does the money that you earn from Uber feel different than the Uber? Sorry. Than the money that you earn from your day job?

Interviewee: I first got introduced to this idea when I worked two full time jobs.

Interviewer: Wow.

Interviewee: Yeah. I'm a crazy person apparently, but when I worked two full time jobs, I worked a call center job in the morning and then I worked in a coffee shop in the evenings and I switched them when they worked in the coffee shop in the morning and they worked in a call center in the evening. And the money that I earned from the tips and stuff from working a coffee place, paid all my food and things like that. And it was some, a lot of it was cashed, it was taxed differently and stuff like that. And so when I get like, you know, cash tips directly on Uber and things like that, that money definitely does feel a little bit different.

Interviewer: Yeah. Cool. Do you end up making the same amount per hour that you drive with Uber or does it vary a lot?

Interviewee: I mean, I make pretty good money being a payroll clerk, but it varies a little bit more so depending on what events and or time of the year it is around Utah.

Interviewer: Oh, interesting. Is it like students and stuff that changes or holidays? What is it about time of year that changes? Is it like students coming in and out or holidays or..

Interviewee: Yeah, holidays. Your phone number registered as [state 2]. I'm not exactly sure what weather is like.

Interviewer: it's pretty, it's pretty crazy.

Interviewee: Yeah. I totally believe that. You try, like the joke is one of those that you get all four seasons in one day sometimes.

Interviewer: Yeah, it's similar for us.

Interviewee: Okay. Okay. Yeah. [state 1] is kind of crazy and usually things don't shut down until there's like three feet of snow on the ground in the winter time. And so I find that people who aren't willing to drive themselves like to order Uber in the winter time, especially on really crappy days because they're just not willing to screw their own car over.

Interviewer: Yeah. But that must be terrible for you. Do you like driving in the snow?

Interviewee: You know, it really, really, really depends. Most of the time since I'm a native born [state 1 resident] I'm pretty good about driving in the snow. Not anywhere near as good as that. But I tend to be even, I'm already a pretty careful driver to an extent, and then like when I'm working for that, I'm even further, more careful.

Interviewer: Yeah. I'm sure. Do they tip better when the weather's bad?

Interviewee: Yeah. A lot of people feel really bad when it's really bad weather and they're like, Oh man, I'm so sorry about that.

Interviewer: So in some ways the bad weather's good. It works out.

Interviewee: Exactly. And that a couple of weeks around Christmas if you can get really lucky, there's some of those like business moguls or whatever you want to call them. Those guys sometimes have tipped like a hundred bucks.

Interviewer: Wow. Wow. Did they just hand you cash? They're like here is that what happens?

Interviewee: Yeah, they're like Merry Christmas. The car went to the airport and I was like, thank you.

Interviewer: That's really cool. I love the image of it. It's really interesting. Yeah. Are there, besides a car and a phone, are there any tools or things that you have to use to do your job?

Interviewee: Well I personally have implemented a cooler that houses bottled waters or bottled lemonade. I typically have a bag of candy as well if people are interested and then I have charging cords for both Android and iPhone. That way if anyone is in need of like a phone charger, then it can be provided to them. Not to keep up obviously but to utilize while they're in my vehicle. And then I also have, well I already had an extensive music collection already. So I basically just adapted it so that way I have, I basically leave it by genre. And then if people choose, they can choose whatever type of music they want. I have like literally everything.

Interviewer: Yeah. You really have thought of everything.

Interviewee: I try, I mean, I figure at the same time I'm in the business of a customer service. I mean I've done for service for many, many, many, many years. So just keeping in those tricks and tips of the trades they've learned, I like to make sure that I [inaudible 00:18:20] experiences produces best results.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah, for sure. Has anything changed with Uber since you started working for them?

Interviewee: A few things. I wouldn't say anything major, but a few things.

Interviewer: Yeah. Is it stuff like in general, the technology or payment stuff, anything like that?

Interviewee: Yeah, I mean that's changed a little bit, but I'd say for the better.

Interviewer: Oh good. I'm glad to hear that. Have you had to test any new software or anything for them?

Interviewee: No, I'm not lucky like that. I'll still don't think I've done it extensively enough to really be considered for that role.

Interviewer: Okay. How does this job compare to other work that you've done before?

Interviewee: I mean, I like every job, it has its ups and downs. Some people are really nice and you can enjoy a great quick conversation. Other people, there's just nothing you can do to make their day better. And it's not necessarily you, Like one customer I had literally, they were on their way into work, they're down and they still managed to get to their car on time or to get to work on time and they were trying to get it all resolved during the day and then literally on their lunch break there, they got fired while I was driving him home. So they literally, they were literally just had their car broke down and they got fired so they were already in a bad mood and there's not much you can do to try and salvage that at that point. But you know, I find a good smile and even listening to them or a smile or just patience goes a long way for a lot of people because they're just, some people are having shit days and they just need something to go right to them.

Interviewer: Wow. That's, yeah, that's really compassionate of you. That's great.

Interviewee: I try.

Interviewer: So do you think of yourself as someone who's self employed when you work for Uber or do you feel like you're one of their employees or kind of like running a small side business?

Interviewee: Yeah, I kind of feel like Uber provides me clients and it's up to me to provide service so that they continue to use Uber, if that makes sense. Like a small side business and maybe it's more like a fortune 500 company, I guess.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. [inaudible 00:21:30] Do you think you'll still be doing this in a couple of years?

Interviewee: Yeah, probably. I mean, I enjoy it. I'm an anthropologist major in college. Anthropology. So I'm one of those weirdos that like to learn a lot of things about a lot of different cultures. And so being in that type of business I tend to meet people from all walks of life.

Interviewer: Very cool. Okay. So now I have a couple of questions about future of work. Do you worry about things like self driving cars?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: No. Could you imagine Uber rolling some of them out into their fleet?

Interviewee: I see it as a possibility. I do think self driving cars have their benefits. I do think that there will always be a need for a human override. At that moment just in case. Cause have you heard any of the studies that they've done? Like there's one self driving car that literally they didn't detect. They registered that there was a one wheel base that had passed by them, but it was a semi so it didn't register that there was a car next to it and so it lane changed and like lane change under the semis.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So you look at stuff like that and does that make you nervous?

Interviewee: That makes me very nervous, but at the same time, I know that technology is going super far and fast and while I do think that eventually one day it'll get to that point, I think there will still be that need to make sure that there is at least something, even if it is someone like a computer watching the vehicle on a live feed to override. I still think there will still be a user interface, a biological entry user interface.

Interviewer: Oh really? Interesting. Cool. Well, we got through all my questions. Thank you so much. I'm going to stop recording now.