

**THE PRETEND TO WORK COMPANY**

by

Colin Mummery

**Format:** Short film screenplay, 5 pages. **Genre:** Drama.  
**Production requirements:** Three actors and an office.

**Logline:** Hoping to finally land his first career position, a recent college graduate is interviewed for an internship at a company where all the employees only pretend to do work.



colin.mummery@yahoo.com  
+46 70 222 5231

**INT. CORPORATE HQ LOBBY/OPEN PLAN OFFICE - DAY (PRESENT DAY)**

Job candidate **ALEX**, male early-20s, sits on a comfortable leather sofa. Smartly dressed, he appears alert, nervous as he waits to meet his interviewers. Outwardly busy employees walk past him with papers, go in and out of lobby elevators.

Two managers in smart-casual dress, **PATRICK** (male mid-20s) and **ANNABELLE** (female mid-20s) walk towards Alex to introduce themselves. Both carry a document folder.

PATRICK

Alex? I'm Patrick from H.R. And this is Annabelle, also from H.R.

ANNABELLE

Pleased to meet you, Alex.

Alex stands, smiles, shakes their hands enthusiastically.

PATRICK

We booked a meeting room. If you would follow us, we'll go over there.

Alex follows Patrick and Annabelle across a large open plan office floor with lines of bench desks. Seated side-by-side at the benches are employees, mostly in their 20s. Each sits at a screen and keyboard with personal touches like plants, plush-toy mascots. They slide computer mice, press keys.

PATRICK (cont'd)

What do you think of our office?

ALEX

It's really central. Commuting in from the suburbs would be easy.

Alex looks around as he walks with them across the office, tries to guess what the focused employees are doing. The three come to a room in the corner.

**MEETING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Patrick opens the door, all of them sit down around a table. Patrick and Annabelle open their folders, take out pens for note taking.

ANNABELLE

Alex, can we get you something to drink? Coffee? Water?

ALEX

I'm fine thanks. I just want to thank you for this interview opportunity.

(MORE)

ALEX (cont'd)

It was a surprise when you reached out to me on social media.

PATRICK

We came across your qualifications and felt you might be a good fit.

ANNABELLE

And we know how tough the job market is right now.

ALEX

Oh, it's insane. I spent years studying to get my masters degree but it seems to mean nothing without some real world work experience.

PATRICK

It's A.I.

ANNABELLE

It's taking over.

PATRICK

Youth unemployment is off the charts.

ALEX

I have a lot of friends with a masters who've had to do food delivery or be security guards. I know a P.H.D. who does dog grooming.

ANNABELLE

It must be disappointing for families that have sacrificed so much to put their children through college.

ALEX

I dread telling my parents the truth. I've probably applied to over a hundred companies and, to be totally honest, this is my first interview.

ANNABELLE

We know the competition is brutal.

PATRICK

Let's talk about the internship and what qualities we're looking for in the right candidate.

ALEX

Of course. Please ask me anything.

ANNABELLE

What's most important here is the ability to fit in with our culture and apply a serious professional mindset to what we do.

ALEX

I'm sorry but I couldn't tell from your website what you do. All I could see was that there were several divisions involved in things like computer gaming and crypto-currency.

PATRICK

And we saw from your social media you're a keen gamer so we thought you'd be a perfect fit for our gaming division. It's a small team but I'm getting the feeling you'd fit in.

ALEX

Would I be involved in game design?

ANNABELLE

No, you'd just play games.

ALEX

So it's quality control?

PATRICK

No, just playing games.

ALEX

Which games?

ANNABELLE

Any games so long as you look busy on your computer.

PATRICK

Looking busy is the whole point.

ALEX

So I won't do anything productive?

ANNABELLE

You'll be an intern here and you can honestly tell people you have an internship at a tech company.

ALEX

But what would be the point?

PATRICK

The point is you'll be part of something larger, Alex. You'll have a sense of purpose, of belonging. Somewhere to go every morning, somewhere to back come from every evening. Become part of a team.

ALEX

So all those people on the office floor. They're pretending to work?

ANNABELLE

All of them and they're good at it.

PATRICK

It's an art-form to achieve nothing everyday, Alex, and we think you could have a natural gift for it.

ALEX

But how does the company make money?

PATRICK

There's a small very modest fee that we charge you. It covers office costs like computers, electricity, coffee.

ALEX

So you don't pay anyone?

ANNABELLE

We do! If you're a team player and perform well, we could offer you a permanent salaried position.

ALEX

But where does that money come from?

PATRICK

You give us the money then we pay it back to you as salary less a small processing fee.

ALEX

But why would I do that?

ANNABELLE

With a regular salary you can really live like an independent adult, Alex! You can get a bank loan, a credit card, rent an apartment, lease a car, make pension contributions. All the things unemployed people can't do.

PATRICK

And we don't care where you get the money you pay us with. Cash is fine.

ANNABELLE

After a short time you could have valuable corporate experience on your C.V. with a track record of successful employment behind you.

PATRICK

We'll write any references you need, if you move on. So what do you think, Alex? Do you want to join our crew?

ALEX

To be honest, it's depressing and lonely being unemployed, not to mention degrading. All feeling of self-worth has been sucked out of me.

PATRICK

We hear those sentiments a lot.

ALEX

So when can I start pretending to do work here?

ANNABELLE

On-boarding is first thing tomorrow at nine. We'll give you an office key card, show you your desk, introduce you to your new colleagues.

PATRICK

But Alex, there will be an initial trial period of two weeks after which H.R. will assess your performance.

ALEX

But if I'm not really doing any work, what can you assess?

ANNABELLE

We'll assess how well you've been pretending to do something here.

PATRICK

So try hard, Alex! It'll be sad if we have to end your pretend career here.

**THE END**