



## Addressing Selection Criteria

### CONTENTS

- Working with selection criteria
- Basic guidelines for addressing selection criteria
- Writing up the selection criteria
- Editing checklist
- A final note
- Further reading
- Buzz words for job applications

### WORKING WITH SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection criteria are the key competencies required for a position; they include the skills, knowledge, experience, values and personal attributes required.

Some common examples of selection criteria include:

- Well-developed communication skills
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Ability to work under pressure
- Administrative and financial experience

### When selection criteria are provided

Commonwealth and state government departments throughout Australia have a system whereby all the details of a position are available for applicants to help them prepare their application. This includes a position description and the skills and knowledge required (often referred to as the Selection Criteria or Knowledge and Skills Required). Non-government and many industry employers also produce formal selection criteria for applicants to address.

There are two types of criterion: essential and desirable. As an applicant you must address each criterion.

### **When selection criteria are not provided**

If the organisation does not have any formal selection criteria for you to address, you must still tailor your application to their needs. You can do this by using some of the key words in the advertisement and attaching a supporting statement which is prepared in the same way as formal selection criteria.

### **When minimal information is provided**

In very rare circumstances you will be provided with little or no information about the knowledge and skills that are required. In this case all you can do is prepare a very strong covering letter setting out your particular claims to the position.

## **BASIC GUIDELINES FOR ADDRESSING SELECTION CRITERIA**

The basic guidelines for addressing selection criteria are as follows:

### **Collect the information**

Ensure you gather all necessary material from the employer:

- get the position description;
- find out the knowledge and skills required;
- ask further questions to clarify issues by contacting personnel (indicated in the advertisement or position description); and
- don't assume any details without checking.

### **Identify each criterion**

Write down each criterion and break it up into distinct, workable parts. For example, if one of the criterion statements reads "must have strong written and oral communication skills, the ability to work well in a team as well as high level negotiation and liaison skills", you need to divide the statement up as follows:

- strong written and oral communication skills;

- the ability to work well in a team;
- high level negotiation skills; and
- high level liaison skills.

### **Brainstorm your examples**

You must address each part of all of the criteria listed, giving fairly equal attention to each. For each part, brainstorm as many examples as possible of your background in this area. Don't be too selective at this stage about what to include.

### **Revise and refine**

When you have completed the brainstorm for each criterion, go back and select the examples that you think best address each one. You'll find you'll do a bit of 'cutting and pasting' before you end up with the most appropriate and powerful examples under each heading. Make sure that you use a variety of experiences throughout your statement. Be careful not to use your involvement in a particular activity (no matter how significant) as the only evidence for every criterion.

## **WRITING UP THE SELECTION CRITERIA**

When addressing selection criteria, it is useful to apply the STAR model. Placing examples of how you have demonstrated your skills into the STAR model is critical for developing an effective statement.

The STAR acronym stands for:

- **S**ituation (briefly describe the context)
- **T**ask (what were your responsibilities or initiatives?)
- **A**ction (what did you do?)
- **R**esult (what were the outcomes?)

For each criterion:

- write the name of each criterion exactly as it is worded in the application package;

- start with a positive claim;
- give a specific example;
- describe how you acted; and
- describe the result.

For example:

**Excellent verbal communication skills**

I have highly-developed verbal communication skills, which have been enhanced through a number of experiences. [POSITIVE CLAIM]  
 In my role as Vice-President of the Seacliff Tennis Club during 2005 [SITUATION], I was asked to speak to the local Rotary club in support of an application for sponsorship [TASK]. I gave a 20-minute presentation outlining the Club's aims, and responded to questions from Rotary members [ACTION].  
 The tennis club's application was successful and we received a \$5000 sponsorship from Rotary [RESULT].

**Other tips to keep in mind when addressing selection criteria**

- Dot point form and/or concise sentences make your application easier to read.
- Use examples to back up every statement you make (use examples that can be visualised).
- Don't just feed their words back to them – make every sentence count by focusing on what you have to offer.
- For a listing of words you can use in your statements, see the list of buzz words at the end of this fact sheet.
- Each criterion should be approximately half a page.
- When each criterion is given a weighting of importance you should dedicate a proportionate amount of detail to each part.
- When a statement asks for qualifications or some other information that is finite, the length can be shorter.

**EDITING CHECKLIST**

Before submitting your application you should check your selection criteria against the following checklist:

- responses sound professional and active
- information is logical and consistent
- checked for grammatical errors
- verb tenses are accurate and consistent
- sentences are concise
- avoid abbreviations or unexplained acronyms
- avoid weakening qualifiers
- put most important information first

**A FINAL NOTE**

Once you have addressed the selection criteria you will be well prepared for the next stage of the job search process – the interview. This is because selection criteria usually form the basis of interview questions.

At interviews candidates are usually asked questions that are directly related to the selection criteria. This allows you to prepare responses that are an extension of what you have written in your Statement Addressing Selection Criteria.

**FURTHER READING**

*Write a Winning Job Application: A Guide to Responding to Selection Criteria*, L. White, 2008

[www.seek.com.au](http://www.seek.com.au) (click on 'Career Resources').

## Buzz words for job applications

The following vocabulary is a useful reference list of 'active' language:

### A

accelerated  
accomplished  
accounted for  
achieved  
acquired  
acted  
adapted  
addressed  
administered  
adopted  
advanced  
advised  
aided  
allocated  
allowed  
analysed  
applied  
appointed  
appraised  
approved  
arranged  
assembled  
assessed  
assigned  
assisted  
assured  
attained  
attuned to  
audited  
authored  
automated  
avoided  
awarded

### B

balanced  
began  
believed  
broadened  
brought  
in/about  
budgeted

### C

calculated  
catalogued  
characterised  
clarified  
collaborated  
competent with  
compiled  
concentrated  
conceptualised  
conducted  
configured  
consolidated  
constructed

### C

consulted  
contacted  
contained  
contemplated  
continued  
contracted  
contributed  
coordinated  
critiqued  
curtailed

### D

delegated  
demonstrated  
designed  
despatched  
determined  
developed  
devised  
diagnosed  
differentiated  
directed  
disseminated  
distinguished  
diversified  
diverted  
documented

### E

edited  
eliminated  
employed  
empowered  
enabled  
enacted  
encouraged  
engaged  
engineered  
enhanced  
enlisted  
enrolled  
ensured  
equated  
established  
evaluated  
examined  
executed  
exhibited  
expedited  
experienced  
experimented  
extracted

### F

facilitated  
familiarised  
fashioned

### F

financed  
fine-tuned  
focused  
forecast  
formulated  
founded

### G

gained  
generated  
grouped  
guided

### H

handled  
harmonised  
headed  
held  
hosted

### I

identified  
illustrated  
implemented  
indexed  
influenced  
initiated  
instigated  
integrated  
interpreted  
introduced  
investigated  
issued

### J K L

joined  
judged  
kept  
launched  
lectured  
led  
liaised  
lowered

### M

made  
maintained  
managed  
manipulated  
manufactured  
mapped  
marketed  
master-minded  
measured  
mediated  
mentored

### M

modelled  
moderated  
modified  
monitored  
motivated

### N

named  
navigated  
negotiated  
networked  
nominated  
noted

### O

obtained  
opened  
operated  
organised  
originated  
overcame  
overhauled  
oversaw

### P

packaged  
participated  
perfected  
performed  
permitted  
persuaded  
pioneered  
planned  
presided over  
processed  
produced  
programmed  
projected  
promoted  
proposed  
provided  
publicised  
published  
purchased

### Q

qualified  
quantified

### R

ratified  
recognised  
reconciled  
recruited  
rectified

### R

referred  
reformed  
regulated  
rehabilitated  
reorganised  
represented  
researched  
restructured  
retrieved  
reversed  
revised  
revitalised

### S

scheduled  
screened  
selected  
served as  
settled  
simplified  
solved  
specified  
streamlined  
strengthened  
structured  
succeeded  
suggested  
summarised  
supervised  
surpassed  
surveyed  
systemised

### T

tabulated  
taken part  
theorised  
trained  
transcribed  
translated  
trimmed  
turned around

### U V W

undertook  
unified  
upgraded  
used  
utilised  
validated  
verified  
versed  
viable  
voted  
widened  
won  
wrote