

**Note:** If reading is hard for you, you can talk to us instead. Call 6262 5400



## Tip Sheet:

### Responding to selection criteria

#### What are selection criteria?

Selection criteria are the key elements of a job that an employer uses to decide if you are a good fit or not.

You will sometimes see them very clearly noted as selection criteria, but sometimes you need to read between the lines of an advertisement to figure out what they are looking for. The people assessing your application will score it against this list of requirements.

If they are clearly defined, you will often see them listed as either Most important and Less important, Must have and Nice to have, or more commonly Essential and Desirable.

Just because something is 'Less important', 'Nice to have' or 'Desirable', does not mean you shouldn't try to address it. In a competitive market it is often these elements which are the difference between a successful applicant and someone who misses out on the job.

#### How should I address the criteria?

1. A great way to start is to make sure you have a clear list of criteria. If they haven't provided one, you might consider asking them for one. Alternatively, the clues are often in the advertisement. Make sure you read it thoroughly and have a complete list.
2. Then you can start to make some dot points about examples where you have demonstrated being able to address each item. Try to steer clear of vague statements like "I am good at..." or "I believe I can..." - what you need to do is provide clear evidence through examples.

If you can't think of a work example, you might be able to give an example from your involvement in a club, charity, or community activity.

3. Once you have selected your final dot-points which demonstrate the criteria best, and have arranged them in priority order, you can start to write out your answers in full using the STAR model below.

## Using the STAR model to structure your answers

Start each criterion with a statement about how you are going to evidence it.

You can then write your answer following the STAR model:

<b>S = Situation</b>	Provide a brief outline of the situation you were in
<b>T = Task</b>	Outline what you needed to do to solve the problem
<b>A = Action</b>	Describe what you actually did
<b>R = Result</b>	Explain what happened as a result of your actions

## An example of a STAR response

An example of how to answer a selection criterion around 'sound verbal and written communication skills' might be:

My customer service work at ABC Sports Stores meant that I was able to develop and apply my communication skills to the highest level. **(Opening statement)**

My job entailed dealing directly with customers, suppliers and staff in person and over the phone. **(Situation)**

Dealing with a customer request to order particular items involved talking to the supplier over the phone, entering the order details and the customer's information into the database, ordering the goods, and re-contacting the customer when the item arrived. **(Task and Action)**

In addition, I concisely documented this information in our filing system for the benefit of other staff. Using clear verbal and written communication I ensured a good relationship with our suppliers was maintained and provided efficient and effective customer service. **(Action)**

As a result, my manager commended my communication skills at my first performance review, and I was promoted to the role of Team Leader. **(Result)**

## What about formatting and structure?

Your cover letter, resume, and selection criteria should all match. That is, they should all use the same font and font size, and look like they are part of a 'package'.

Here are some guidelines to help with putting the document together:

<b>Visual appeal:</b>	<b>Clarity:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your selection criteria should be typed up in black and white, in a simple font</li><li>• Font size should be size 11 or 12 point</li><li>• Use lots of white space around the sections so it doesn't look cramped in</li><li>• Applications are not a place to be creative and artistic, unless the role or the job advertisement asks for that specifically</li><li>• Never include pictures, clip art, or decorative fonts</li><li>• You should always type your selection criteria responses and print them out on clean paper</li><li>• Once you have printed your responses, keep them protected in a folder with your cover letter and resume</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your answers must make sense to the employer</li><li>• Don't use too many long sentences. Dot points can be fine</li><li>• Be specific. Don't be too general or vague with any of your statements</li><li>• Around 250 words per criterion is usually a good guide (about half a typed A4 page)</li></ul>
<b>Accuracy:</b>	<b>Spelling and grammar</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Everything in your application must be true</li><li>• Use real life, accurate and relevant examples</li><li>• Don't exaggerate your skills or experience. Remember - if you get the job you must be able to do it or you won't have it for long</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You must proofread your application</li><li>• Use spell check on your computer, but don't rely on just that - you must read it</li><li>• If you know you aren't very good at spelling or writing, that's the time to ask someone else for help. You can ask someone you trust, you can contact us at Workskills, or sometimes your local library has volunteers who are happy to help with this sort of thing</li></ul>

## A checklist:

You can use this checklist a few times to review your document. Once you can check everything off, you should feel confident to submit your application following the directions given by the employer.

- Do I really understand what the employer is asking me?
- Are my answers clear and easy to understand?
- Did I get to the point quickly, instead of waffling or using too many words?
- Have I used strong action/doing words?
- Have I shown an outcome for each of my examples?
- Is everything true and accurate? Would my referees agree with what I have said?
- Have I covered every part of each criterion?
- Has someone else proofread my application?
- Does my application meet the style guidelines in this document?

## What if I need help?

Our team at Workskills is here to help and this is just a small sample of what we can do to support you gaining employment.

In order to access our full range of support you will need to be assigned to us through Centrelink, so when you're asked to choose a jobactive provider, think of the Tasmanian company helping Tasmanians – Workskills.

If you are looking to access our service or just need some direction, contact our team at Workskills on **6262 5400** or emailing [Employment@workskills.org.au](mailto:Employment@workskills.org.au)