

## Addressing Key Selection Criteria Video Training

Welcome to this online training presented by Swinburne Skills and Jobs centre and my name is Fiona Fowler. In this session, you will learn the purpose of key selection criteria and how to respond to each one as part of the application process. You may also be interested in other training sessions in this series relating to Resumes, Cover Letters and Interview skills. Details as to where they can be found are shown at the end of this session.

### Objectives

In today's session you will learn about the purpose of key selection criteria, what they are, why and how companies use them as part of the selection process. Using examples, we will demonstrate how to address the key selection criteria for each job role.

You'll have the opportunity to prepare responses to key selection criteria for a job for which you are interested.

There are opportunities within the video for you to stop and complete your own details and make notes at any time.

At the end of the session we will also let you know where you can go for further support to help answer any of your questions.

### What you will need during this session

To get the most out of this session, you will need the following:

A copy of your completed Resume and make sure that you have it open on your computer as we go along.

If you have found a job that you'd like to apply for, that includes selection criteria then having the Job Ad or Position Description open as we go along would also be good.

You might like to stop and take notes so a pen and paper will be very handy.

### Purpose of key selection criteria (ksc)

The purpose of key selection criteria is to assist potential employers to match candidates with job requirements in a consistent and fair manner.

Before organisations advertise a job, they need to decide which criteria are essential and these are shown on a position description which you can usually access as part of the application process.

By law, employers must assess all job applicants fairly and consistently, so that applicants are selected on merit.

Using a set of criteria assists the recruiter or potential employer to make the most accurate match between the requirements of the job, such as qualifications, skills, attributes, and the experience of the job applicants. No matter how well qualified or suited you are to a position, if you do not address the key selection criteria when required, then your application may not make it through to the interview stage.

## Examples of Key Selection Criteria

Key Selection Criteria are things that the employer has decided are necessary to be able to do the job and may include:

**Skills** – e.g. Excel, Zoom, Zero Accounting software, Maintenance. For example, the ability to do carpentry and use power tools

**Attributes** – e.g. organised, problem solver

**Knowledge** – OH&S laws, Accounting regulations

**Qualifications** - Diploma in Community Services, Cert IV Bookkeeping

**Other:** I could be a range of things that the employer deems necessary for the role and may include a Driver's license, owning your own van that you can use in the role etc.

## Let's look at responding to an example

Let's now look at an example using the case of a job seeker whose name is Ruby. We will introduce Ruby, the work and experience that she has, the type of work that she is looking for and then learn how to address the key selection criteria for the specific job role that she has found.

### This is Ruby

This is Ruby who completed her Diploma of Business Administration in 2014 and has been working for over five years in an Administration role for the not-for-profit health care provider, La Trobe Community Health. While she was studying, she also worked for two years for Woolworths as a Customer Complaints Officer.

Ruby enjoys working in the not for profit sector and would like to find a new challenging role.

### Finding the job – Business Administrator

Ruby has found a role in Business Administration working for the organisation, Dementia Australia. The job Ad clearly shows the selection criteria that Ruby will need to address.

This role would be a great match for her skills and interests as Ruby has family experience with her Grandfather experiencing dementia, so she feels that she has a good understanding of the challenges facing those living with dementia and their family. Ruby is very keen to apply for this role and wants to learn how best to respond to the selection criteria. So let's look at the next step

### Step One – Identify the criteria to address

Carefully read the job ad or position description to identify the criteria.

It is a good idea to save or print the job details so that you can refer to them later

In Ruby's example the job has five criteria:

At least four years working in an office, preferably in the not for profit or health sectors

- Experience in administration the qualities of being organised and can multitask
- Experience with reception or front of house
- Demonstrated Computer literacy especially MS office suite

- Experienced working with diverse cultures and languages
- Qualification in Business Administration or substantial relevant employment
- Industry specific experience.

plus, Educational qualifications and previous Industry experience

## Step Two –Addressing the Criteria

Next you need to think about how you will demonstrate that you can meet the criteria. It is important to include specific examples or situations where you have demonstrated the behaviour, knowledge, skills, and personal qualities asked for in the key selection criteria. We are going to look at how you can write a summary statement for each criteria. Also to let you know that by taking time and coming up with examples that demonstrate that you can meet the selection criteria can help you when it comes to an interview. You will now have specific examples that help you answer questions about your ability to do the job.

So let's look at a typical approach to responding to key selection criteria. We will be using the STAR model

S –is for Situation – this is where you describe the situation or context where you used the skills or qualities and gained the experience

T – is for Task – describe the aim of the task, what was your role?

A- is for Action – describe what action you took, how did you do it?

R – is for Result – describe the outcome of the action you took, what did you achieve, and importantly can you link it to the job that you are applying for?

Let's look at an example of addressing selection criteria by going back to Ruby.

### Example 1: using STAR for Ruby

So to help you better understand the STAR approach, we are going to look at the key selection criteria for the job that Ruby has selected.

Let's look at answering **one** of these and for this example we will demonstrate how Ruby can write a response for key selection criteria number 5.

*Experience and skills in working with people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds*

### Example 1: using STAR for Ruby

Firstly, Ruby needs to highlight key words in the criteria and think about what the employer is looking for. She highlights the words **experiences and skills in working with those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds**. Then she needs to list examples of how she can meet this criterion – describing relevant skills, experience, training, personal qualities, and expertise. She then selects the most appropriate example and then summarises in approx. one paragraph or so how she demonstrates that she meets this key selection criteria. Note some employers will have a word limit on completing selection criteria, so do ensure that you follow all instructions provided.

Let's now look at Ruby's responses using the STAR method:

S- describing the **situation or the context** to help the potential employer understand the background of your example

Ruby worked in the Health sector for more than 5 years which provided her with opportunities to assist people from diverse backgrounds.

Task includes **the what** – the aim of the task. In Ruby's example she describes her role as an Admin assistant and the relevant task – providing advice

## Example 1: using STAR for Ruby

Using the last two elements of the STAR model and relating to Ruby's example

Action – describes the action that you took, what did you do, In Ruby's example, she mentions her own culturally diverse experience and describes how this helps when assisting others by providing information clearly and simply and offers a translator service for those with Non English speaking backgrounds. She has also mentioned that her approach is friendly and empathetic which are important qualities when helping people.

Result – what was the outcome of the action that you took. In Ruby's example she describes the customer satisfaction levels and provides evidence of good customer service by mentioning receiving employee of the month awards.

## Example 1: Putting it all together

So our next step now is to bring it all together. When writing your final response to this criteria, you don't show all the headings, you write it in paragraph format. The response to this criteria reads:

Working in the Health sector for more than five years provided me with many opportunities to assist a range of people, many from non-English speaking backgrounds. As an experienced Administrative Assistant my role was to provide clear advice about the range of Health programs available. As I also originally came from another country, I understand what it feels like to be in a new environment, with a new language and culture. Using a friendly and empathetic approach, I provided assistance clearly, simply, and followed up with handouts translated into their language. Where customer had difficulties understanding English, I used the interpreter service so customers' queries could be fully answered in their own language.

Customers were very satisfied with the care and assistance I provided, with the result that I received the employee of the month award three months in a row.

## Example 2: using STAR for Ruby

Let's look at demonstrating another example but this time addressing another key selection criteria number 2 which is *Experience and skills in working with people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds*

## Example 2: using STAR for Ruby

Remember the first thing that Ruby needs to do, is to identify the key words. Then think of an example where she was able to demonstrate this selection criteria.

Situation - So she describes the situation in order to give background to the example she is demonstrating. She worked at a very busy front office dealing with multiple customers at once.

Task – Ruby then describes the what. What her task was. She says her role was to My role was to prioritise customer queries and find a solution promptly and courteously.

Let's look next at what Action Ruby took to manage these varied tasks.

Task – Ruby then describes the what. What her task was. She says her role was to identify each customer's issue and then find a solution. A typical day involved responding to multiple queries each of which had competing priorities.

Let's look next at what Action Ruby took to manage these varied tasks.

## Example 2: using STAR for Ruby

So the next step is Action - describing the action that you took, what did you do. In Ruby's example she created and implemented a new online priority system which assisted all the office staff when prioritising their tasks.

The result of this new system was a 30% increase in efficiency in turn-around time in resolving customer queries.

If Ruby was using this this example within a job interview, she could identify her learnings often the I have learned how to problem solved effectively and how to prioritise. I can the methods learnt to future tasks

## Example 2: Putting it together

So our next step now is to bring it all together. Remember when writing your final response to this criteria, you don't show all the headings, STAR, you write it in paragraph format.

As an Administrative Officer for La Trobe Health, I worked at a very busy front office and a typical day involved responding to multiple customer queries each of which had competing priorities.

My role was to prioritise customer queries and find a solution promptly and courteously.

I created and implemented a new online priority system which assisted all the office staff when prioritising their tasks.

The result of this new system was a 30% increase in efficiency in turn-around time in resolving customer queries.

So Ruby has clearly shown using the STAR approach that she has experience demonstrating this criteria

## Time for you to complete at least one KSC

We're now going to pause while you start completing an example of at least one key selection criteria from a job ad or position description for a job role in which you are interested in applying.

So now is the time to get these out.

Firstly, highlight /Identify the key selection criteria and underline the key words in these criteria.

Then think of examples to demonstrate that you have these skills

You may like to open a separate word document and write the name of the criteria as a heading and then place the response below.

Then using the STAR approach – Situation, Task, Action, Result create a concise story that demonstrates your experience, knowledge or skills that match this criteria.

See you soon.

## In which application document to place selection criteria

Welcome Back and we are now going to look at in which document to include the selection criteria.

When preparing your application documents, resume, cover letter, you may be wondering where you write your responses to the selection criteria.

In the past it was common for key selection criteria to be included in a separate document. Large organisations such as Government Departments (whether they are federal, State or even local councils) often ask for a separate document that addresses each selection criteria. This also applies to teaching and health jobs. The document would have a heading saying, “Key Selection Criteria” and then separate headings for each criterion listed. You then provide your responses underneath each heading.

However, the more recent trend is to address the selection criteria within the cover letter. In this method you will need to summarise your response when addressing each key selection criteria. We will shortly look at an example of how to do this.

You may be wondering which method to use. The employer will specify, usually within the job ad. It is really important to read the instructions with each job Ad as organisations differ in their approaches.

If you are unsure as to the correct approach, you contact the organisation or the recruiter to check their requirements.

Note - Not all jobs include formal key selection criteria but will still have a list of their requirements within the job ad that you will need to address.

There is a very real risk that applicants who don't address the selection criteria or don't submit in the required format may not get to the interview stage. The employer may assume that if you cannot follow their directions, then this reflects on whether you will be able to perform the duties of the role.

## Examples of Job Ads and where to include selection criteria as part of the application process

Let's look at two job ads each requiring the applicant to complete selection criteria.

The first ad for the Ballarat local council asks for the selection criteria to be within a separate document. In this instance, the applicant would need to submit four documents- a resume, covering letter, key selection criteria and an application form.

The second job for a business service administrator asks for the selection criteria to be included within the cover letter. It is also important to note that it clearly states that applications that do not include key selection criteria will not be considered.

We are now going to look at how your response to the selection criteria will vary depending upon which approach a company wants

## Let's look at two different approaches

Let's look at Ruby's example and we will look at how the responses to each key selection criteria will look depending upon whether it needs to be written in a separate document or within the cover letter.

### Example Selection Criteria to be shown in a separate document

This is the example of the Business administration role that Ruby has found, and this is what the key selection criteria would look like if it asked for them to be shown in a separate document. You have been provided with this document as part of your training materials and can have a look at this later or even get it out now.

Have clear headings that clearly show which key selection criteria being discussed. It is best to use the exact words from the job ad

We have included qualifications at the top as they were a requirement of the role,

Then write your response for each selection criteria using the STAR method. You will find that your response will be about a paragraph for each criterion.

### Example Selection Criteria within Cover Letter

This is an example of including key selection criteria within a cover letter. We have included an introductory paragraph which describes what the role is and the reason for applying. We have included the relevant qualifications. We can see that the key selection criteria have actually been summarised. Once again you have been provided with this document. You can either open up this document now or open it later on.

You can see that by summarising and showing each selection criteria point form helps each criteria to stand out. For Ruby's example, you will see that she has kept most of the elements of the STAR response but has been able to provide a condensed version.

The cover letter finishes with a final concluding paragraph and signature at the end. So we can see that this is a very clean way of providing the key selection criteria but we can only use this method if the job asks for it. So do check with the employer if unsure.

## Simple formatting tips

We will now look at some simple formatting tips.

You need to ensure that your response to each criterion is very easy to read and clearly laid out.

Use the same font throughout. Use a classic and easy to read font style such as Calibri, Arial, Verdana, or Helvetica.

- Use the same font size around 11-12 is good.

- Write clear sentences and once you have completed your responses to each selection criteria, check for any grammatical or spelling mistakes. Many employers have been put off by simple typing errors and simply discard your application. Some believe that if you don't check your application carefully, this may be an indication of your attitude towards completing work tasks.

Do ensure that whichever font you select, is the same one as in your resume. As you are usually sending both documents through to the employer, it is important to make sure that they have a consistent look to them by using the same font style and size.

## Summary

In summary, the main points to remember – carefully read through the job ad and position description (where available) and identify the key selection criteria.

Think of examples to demonstrate you have the relevant skills, experience, training, personal qualities, and expertise. Then using the STAR approach – situation, Task, Action and Result describe in about one paragraph an example that demonstrates that you meet the key selection criteria. The length of your response will depend upon whether you need to include the key selection criteria in a separate document or a more condensed version of the key selection criteria within the cover letter.

Check for any spelling and grammatical errors and show your completed documents to another person to get a sense check that they read well.

Remember to always follow company directions regarding the application process to get the best chance of getting to the interview stage.