



Selection Criteria

Selection Criteria represent the key qualifications, training, abilities, knowledge, personal attributes, skills and experience a person must have in order to do a job effectively.

Selection criteria are used by the public sector and some employees, including universities, to shortlist applicants for interviews. They are typically a summary of the key requirements of a position and are a chance for the applicant to match their skills and experience to the requirements specified by the employer.

They also provide employers with evidence of ways in which applicants have demonstrated what they claim to possess. The selection panel rates applicants against the criteria in order to select the right applicant for the position. It is, therefore, up to you to build a case based on your past experience and behaviour which demonstrate how you have developed these key requirements.

Major types of selection criteria.

- Qualifications – educational and professional.
- Experience – direct involvement in an area.
- Knowledge, understanding – theory, application and implications.
- Skills – provide details of competency and proficiency.
- Abilities – expertise you have developed and your potential to develop skills.

Different skill levels required and wording typically used indicating the level sought for criterion.

- General knowledge/Awareness of - A basic understanding
- Knowledge of - Familiarity gained from experience
- Sound knowledge of - A good working knowledge, specific application
- Thorough knowledge of - A comprehensive grasp of information and application
- Demonstrated ability - Provide specific examples of performing the function
- Ability to rapidly acquire - Prove you have capacity to learn

Examples of selection criteria, aside from qualifications and experience

Selection criteria are written as statements, which need to be addressed. Some examples as follows.

- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to liaise with people at all levels of the organisation.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively in a team environment.
- Excellent organisational skills, including the ability to meet tight deadlines and prioritise work tasks.
- Knowledge and competence in the use of computer based word processing systems.
- Well developed interpersonal skills.
- Self motivated with an ability to display initiative.
- A capacity to deliver quality customer service.
- An understanding of (demonstrated ability to implement, demonstrated commitment to) the department's/ organisation's policies on Equal Employment Opportunity, Workplace Diversity, Occupational Health & Safety.

Tips when addressing selection criteria

- Most important to follow the information provided in the job advertisement/ application package to see what the employer is specifically asking for.
- Research the position and organisation. Gain an understanding of the position (what is involved and what is required) before you apply. If possible contact the contact person in the organisation to clarify requirements and expectations. Talking to the contact officer gives you an opportunity to:
 - Gain useful information to assist in writing your application and prepare for interview (e.g. clarify terminology);
 - Ask about direction/changes in the section/job/ industry;
 - Ask about priorities for the organisation, section, position;
 - Ask about expectations of the person in the role;
 - Give a good impression to this person who will almost certainly be on the interview panel; and
 - Check out the area where you may be interviewed.
- Applicants must successfully address each “**essential**” selection criteria to be considered for a role and interview. It is not necessary for you to have the qualifications, skills and knowledge outlined in “**desirable**” criteria. (*However, your chances of progressing through the selection process will be greater if you meet all the selection criteria.*)
- Individually address each criterion under a separate heading. The heading should be the selection criterion wording.
- Unless specified otherwise, each response should be 1/2 to 3/4 page in length. When a statement asks for qualifications or some other information that is finite, the length can be shorter. When each criterion is given a weighting of importance you should dedicate a proportionate amount of detail to each part. Start your response with a positive claim.
- Dot point form and/or concise sentences make your application easier to read. Check with the contact person to confirm that the use of dot points are suitable.

- Carefully read each selection criterion. Break down each criterion into parts and address each aspect thoroughly. Be mindful of the key expressions and levels required in each criterion (refer to “Different skill levels required and wording typically used indicating the level sought for criterion”).

Example: High level written and verbal communication skills

Address:

1. High level written communication skills
 2. High level verbal communication skills
- Brainstorm all the experiences you have had that could be relevant to the criterion.
 - Use specific examples from a range of experiences to support your statements. Choose which experience you will use to support each criterion. Draw from your academic, employment, social, committee participation, voluntary work, or hobby examples to support your claim to meet the criterion and try not to use the same one too often. Link your example to the role/duties of position that you are applying for.
 - Try to be results/outcomes-oriented in your examples and quantify results where possible. Rather than writing that you have worked in a large team, for example, specify the size of the team (for example, 10 or 5 people). Rather than write you administered a large budget, quantify it in \$ terms. If you have no specific examples to relate to a criterion, think laterally and use some of your transferable skills.
 - In your responses do not refer the reader to information in your resume. Your response needs to be building on the information in your resume and giving a **fuller picture** of your skills, knowledge and experience.
 - Ensure that your application is written clearly, is concise, grammatically correct and free of spelling errors. Have a friend, parent, partner or careers counsellor check your draft. It must exhibit a high standard of written English. Use powerful language, with active verbs. After all, it is an example of your communication skills!
 - Use the STAR(L) formula to compose answers, and where possible, substantiate your examples with indicators of how well you did them. (*This might include results, comments, extended contracts, happy customers*).

Writing up the selection criteria

The Situations, Tasks, Actions and Results (STAR) method is commonly used when addressing selection criteria. This method splits out each selection criterion into four sections:

Situations	or experiences where you have demonstrated your skills & qualities
Tasks	you have undertaken that may relate to the tasks involved in the job you are applying for
Actions	or specific examples that reflect the way in which you act or behave in certain situations
Results	or outcomes of your actions that show their effectiveness and quality
Learning	This step is optional. What did you learn from the process? What would you do differently next time? How could you apply this learning to other tasks?

Example 1: Analytical/ Research Skills

At university, I successfully completed many research projects that required high-level analytical skills. **[POSITIVE CLAIM AND SITUATION]** I also undertook special project work with Professor McLaren that required extensive literature research and analysis of organisational management theories. **[TASK]**

This special project was an opportunity to develop my quantitative research skills by analysing statistical data. I also utilised my qualitative research skills by interviewing proponents of different theories. I completed the research within the specified timeframe and presented the results according to university standards. **[ACTION]**

My contribution was formally recognised by the faculty at a sociological seminar and I was subsequently asked to co-author an academic paper with Professor McLaren that was accepted for publication in Organisational Monthly. **[RESULT]**

Example 2: Problem Solving/ Managing Complaints

Problem solving has been a critical part of my roles over the past year, in my part-time position as Team Leader at Big W. **[SITUATION]** While working in this role, I have successfully dealt with a variety of problems. **[POSITIVE CLAIM]**, While many could be resolved easily, two to three per week were more complex and required a detailed process to resolve.

[TASK]

I had to investigate what had happened from the staff and customer's points of view, clarify the facts, and work out what had gone wrong and why. I then had to propose suitable solutions and negotiate a mutually satisfactory outcome.

[ACTION]

I was often commended by my manager for my sensitive handling and speedy resolution of these problems. Less than one per cent of complaints had to be escalated. In addition, these customers often sought me out when they required assistance when frequenting the store. **[RESULT]**

What Employers Want - Identifying skills and experiences to support your responses

Skill	Experiences
Communication	Writing essays, dissertations, recording results and project reports Contributing articles to publications Making presentations Debating Dealing with public, under pressure, face-to-face Community/ sporting team activities Volunteering activities, Fundraisers Placements, Work experience, Part-time jobs
Interpersonal	Active listening skills targeted at handling problems and taking improvement advice Demonstrated ability to take constructive criticism in a positive manner Encouraging attitude with a strong capability of inspiring others Able to negotiate in a positive manner and handle problem resolution activities proactively Relationship building skills targeted at ensuring teamwork and customer service Ability to motivate employees to make the most of their potential Networking skills aimed at generating business and ensuring loyal clientele
Teamwork	Group projects and roles you have taken in these Team sports/ Student clubs/ Committees Mentoring
Planning and organisation	Completing projects, Organising activities Managing and prioritising your personal workload including studies, part-time work and social life Group projects/ Committees Clerical duties in paid or volunteer work Supporting yourself through university studies Goal setting

Skill	Experiences
Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with a difficult customer Identifying a more efficient way of doing something Analysing data and journal articles for assignments Dealt with people from a variety of backgrounds (cultural, ages, needs) Being flexible: prepared to adapt goals in the light of changing situations
Initiative/ Entrepreneurial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement in \$ making or business ventures Re-organising some part of your job or a project to make them easier/ more efficient Generated new ideas or suggestions at work or university Finding relevant work experience, employment Starting a new club/group or getting sponsors for an event Creating your own website Taking on extra duties at your part-time job
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attending employer events/ Careers events/ making contact with employers and graduates Joining a professional association and attending events Using social media to follow and engage with employers and organisations that interest you Joining committees Securing opportunities as a direct result of your networking Assisting others through networking
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In part-time job, being placed in charge in colleagues/employers absence Successfully persuading a group or senior person to support your idea or point of view During a group project have you taken the initiative, organised your team mates and deadlines were met Taking a position of leadership at school, on a committee, sports team Accepting responsibility for mistakes/wrong decisions
Commercial awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading professional journals, subscribing to special industry publications and websites Meeting industry professionals and learning about current challenges and topics Belonging to professional organisations Taking a commercial interest in where you work (knowledge of the business you work in, the sectors you work with, your employer, your employer's competitors and key business issues)
Emotional intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing your strengths and weaknesses, self reflection Being productive, ability to work with minimal supervision, ability to adapt to change Honouring commitments, maintaining confidentiality, flexibility Ability to manage your own time Willingness to accept responsibility for work allocated to you Career aspirations and commitment to further development Ability to recognise your impact on others

Know the Terminology

Essential – considered to be mandatory
Desirable – considered to be important though not essential



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