

Government Applications

A guide to addressing
Key Selection Criteria
for Australian
Government Positions

Key Selection Criteria

- This short presentation is designed to help you respond to Key Selection Criteria—the most critical component of a government application. Your responses are set to be judged by a panel of assessors; each will analyse your answers in terms of your knowledge, skills and experience, and they will evaluate how the information you have supplied has met the position requirements. Be prepared to commit to many hours of intensive thought, as you present your case for what you hope will be a successful application.

Key Points to Note

- Apply for positions that match your qualifications. Conveniently overlooking core education and experience components is a waste of your time – and theirs!
- Allow at least 5 days to collate information, think seriously about question responses and refine the document letter-perfect.
- Substantiate claims with fact. “I have excellent communication skills” is without foundation. Provide examples of skills in context: “My interpersonal skills are best demonstrated by...”
- Don’t presume. Panel assessors are unfamiliar with each candidate’s background. Qualify answers in terms of “In my position as a Team Leader at ABC Corporation, I...” rather than, “in my current role I do this....”
- Proofread every word. Spelling, grammar and punctuation are crucial to being considered a serious candidate.
- Be Results-Focused. An action should yield a result – money saved, money made, productivity raised, errors reduced, duplicated work tasks eliminated. Where possible produce numbers—increased sales by 32% in just 3 months.

A “Skills Based” Example

CRITERIA: Commitment to manage personal workloads and balance competing priorities.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

- Currently participating in the “Work from home pilot” as a Field Officer with the ATO, I find that self management and discipline are critical in grappling with the challenges of large work volumes and strict deadlines. To confront these challenges I have established prioritisation and follow-up systems to plot the course of each case to conclusion.
- I am confident of my ability to demonstrate strengths in finding rapid solutions and pursuing them to a satisfactory and logical conclusion. I review procedures and work practices and adjust them as necessary to complement the demands of each workday. Setting priorities, and allocating resources, keeping track of activities, reviewing progress and refining plans have all been part of my daily work experiences as a Field Officer for the ATO.

A “Knowledge” Example

CRITERIA: Ability to understand Employment Equity and Diversity (EED), Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S)

RESPONSE:

- I am committed to the principles of EED and believe offensive comments or remarks to others have no place in a professional environment. I would confront those who make them towards other staff. EED can be defined as providing a “fair go” for everyone, and a working environment free of harassment and discrimination.
- OHS: Every member of the staff has to be aware of safe environment measures in order to prevent any injury at work. The company places the health, safety, and well-being of employees, contractors and the public ahead of protection of the company’s equipment and services. To promote this further, I volunteered to assume the role as Health Coordinator for ABC Corporation last year. I organised “Healthy Heart” cooking demonstrations for “Healthy Heart Week”, arranged for groups to donate blood regularly at the blood bank, and secured gym membership discounts to help team members achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Attitude Example

CRITERIA: Willingness to work in a team (attitude requirement)

RESPONSE:

- I have supported some members of our unit struggling with operating the computers by conducting lunch-time training sessions that have served to boost our team's productivity and efficiency.
- Meeting frequently with members of my team in both official meetings and brainstorming sessions have developed a strong team commitment. Active participation in the social club facilitates a friendly, respectful team atmosphere and aids ongoing communication and team spirit.
- I actively participate in group discussions, join in on group decision making and accept joint responsibility for errors and successes.

Successful Applications:

- Need time to create and intensive thought.
- Match the criteria with experience examples and show results.
- Get there by the closing date
- Do not boast, or provide open-ended information without qualification.
- Are word and letter perfect.
- Meet all the application requirements. Look for numbers of complete application copies, transcripts of results, full reference details, and position reference numbers.