



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Health**

**North Metropolitan Health Service, Learning & Development Workforce**

# Writing Resumes and Job Applications

## Learning Resource

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**DOCUMENT TITLE: Writing Resumes and Job Applications**

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# The Application

## Do you really want this position?

Select the position -not the salary, after all you spend 2080 hours a year at work - you need to like it for your own peace of mind. It is essential to first find out as much as you can about the position you are interested in **before** you spend time preparing a written application.

## Introduction

Preparation is of the key to success. Unless you get to first base – i.e. the interview stage, you cannot get the position.

However, you may well ask, “*What about interview panels that know me, such as when I am applying for a position within my own organisation?*”? When applying for internal positions you must write the application as if you are not known. Do not assume anything. You need to “sell yourself”, as there may be many other applicants so ensure that you stand out.

There is even less excuse than usual for not having done your homework. Therefore make sure that you do your research when writing your application and be fully prepared at the interview stage.

There are a number of resources available to assist you with preparation. Colleagues, others within your current organisation – such as your Personnel or Human Resources officers may be able to help.

Assistance is also available on the Internet. A few of the many that are available are [www.seek.com](http://www.seek.com); [www.careerone.com](http://www.careerone.com); [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com); [www.mycareer.com](http://www.mycareer.com); [www.employment.com](http://www.employment.com);

Another useful resource is a locally written book called ‘Write a Winning Job Application’ by Lloyd White which has information on all aspects of preparing a job application and preparation for an interview. It is available for purchase through the WA State library shop in Northbridge, some newsagents, or for borrowing through your local library or the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital library.

## Finding and applying for jobs in the WA Public Health Sector.

You need to do an Internet search of the website [www.jobs.wa.gov.au](http://www.jobs.wa.gov.au). If you saw the job in a newspaper, enter the position number that you have seen in the job advertisement into the website. When the job appears at the top of the screen, put the cursor across the job title, do a right mouse click and this will access the information specific to the job including the job description, job duties, performance criteria and general information. At the end of this document, you can find links to information from Health Corporate Network (HCN) which outlines what you need to do next.

Preferably all documentation is sent to HCN online.

It is vital that you have the application submitted before the advertised closing time or it will not be accepted by HCN. E.g. If the job closes at 4pm then your submission will not be accepted after that time.

Remember, in a position application you are making a **presentation of your employment potential**.

Supporting documentation may or may not be necessary. Including these documents will be dependent upon the requirements of the organisation.

Take documents to the interview if asked. Usually in Government jobs this is not necessary.

## **Steps to take when applying for a position**

### **Government positions**

- Find and read as much information as you can about the agency e.g. Annual reports, corporate plan and any business brochures they have produced.
- Application packages are available on the Internet i.e. Duty Statement/Job Description Form, Selection Criteria and Application form. Read the Duty Statement together with the Selection Criteria to understand exactly what the requirements of the position are.
- If you are still unsure about the position, make a list of questions and call the person referred in the advertisement to make enquiries. If you cannot see why a particular Selection Criteria is listed, ask how it is expected to be used.
- Ensure your Curriculum Vitae (whole of career information) is up to date and write a Resume (specific to this job) to reflect your suitability for the advertised position.
- Begin preparation of Selection Criteria. (see page 17 ) While it's not a requirement under the Public Sector Standards, a number of agencies ask for Selection Criteria to be written separately. If you choose not to do this, include your responses in the covering letter, and highlight (or bold) when referring to them so they stand out. Refer to your Resume to focus your responses.
- Decide on Employment Referees and approach them about verifying your suitability for the position. Never nominate a referee without contacting them first and obtaining their permission. They may be on leave or overseas when you need a reference. It is recommended that you show them the Selection Criteria and Job Description Form and seek their feedback and advice on your Resume and responses to Selection Criteria. Your current supervisor or other significant work colleagues may help with feedback.
- Write an introductory letter to be included with your application. (see pp. 33-6)
- Add a footer with your name and number for the position to show on each page of the application.
- Complete the Application Form. See Health Corporate Network (HCN) requirements for Health WA jobs.

- For applications not being submitted on the Intranet, ensure the application is prepared on A4 plain white paper with page numbers and not bound or stapled. Paper clip is okay. Assemble your documentation as follows: Application Form, Introductory letter, Statements addressing Selection Criteria, Resume and any other documents requested by the agency. Written references are not usually submitted.
- Submit hardcopy or electronically **before** the advertised closing time. Late applications are not accepted. Keep a copy of all material submitted.

## Private sector positions

- Many positions are not advertised. You need to look for opportunities to gain employment at the type of organisations that could offer employment.
- Find and read as much information as you can about the agency e.g. Annual reports, corporate plan, Web site and any business brochures they have produced.
- If you know little about the advertised position, analyse the advertisement for hidden Selection Criteria and Duties. Bigger organisations may have application packages available with Selection Criteria and Duty Statements.
- Contact the person named in the advertisement for enquiries. Think about the competencies the employer is looking for. Questions to ask include any that will influence your decision to go ahead with the application. e.g. Hours of work, location, conditions and any important information about technical/skill requirements that are unclear from the advertisement. Will it satisfy your lifestyle needs?
- Ensure your Curriculum Vitae details are up to date and write a targeted Resume to reflect your suitability for the advertised position.
- If you are not asked to address specific Selection Criteria separately, write an Introductory Letter (see pp. 33-7) applying for the position, explaining why you would like to work at that business/organisation and what you could offer the prospective employer.
- It may be appropriate to include personal information about hobbies or interests e.g. volunteering in community organisations if the employer has a community focus.
- Decide on referees and approach them about verifying your suitability for the position. Never nominate a referee without contacting them first and obtaining their permission. Seek their feedback and advice on your resume and response to the advertisement. Your current supervisor or other significant work colleagues may help with feedback. You may be asked to submit references with your application or give details of referees.
- Ensure the application is prepared on A4 plain white paper. Presentation should reflect the image you are trying to project. i.e. You may choose to present it in a cover folder. Assemble your documentation as follows Introductory letter, Statements addressing Selection Criteria, Resume and any other documents requested by the organisation.

- Submit hardcopy or electronically **before** the advertised closing time. Keep a copy of all material submitted. A late application gives the wrong impression of your time management skills!!
  - Private Sector interviews are usually one to one so be cautious, as the person you speak to with enquiries may be the owner of the business **and** doing the interviewing.
- Reference: White, (1998) pp 1-2.

## Summary of the selection process in the Government Sector

- Public Sector Standards apply to ensure fairness and equity in the process (e.g. ensure application of principles of EEO, Antidiscrimination Act).
- Selection procedures include:
  - Advertising (jobs.wa.gov.au). This is the call for applications;
  - Appointment of a Selection panel (At least 2 people preferably 3, e.g. Manager, people who know the position well and people trained in Recruitment and Selection);
  - Assessment of applications by panel (Each member prepares a Matrix during which a numerical score is applied to each applicant's Selection Criteria responses);
  - Panel meets to short list for interview and using the Matrices to compare individual panel members selections, decide which applicants are to be invited to attend interview;
  - At Interview, applicants are ranked and a preferred applicant is chosen;
  - Referee checks are conducted (verbal or written) after the interview;
  - Panel makes a recommendation to appoint; and
  - Successful and unsuccessful candidates are notified of result. One panel member is nominated to offer feedback offered and an applicant can ask to see what their referees have said about them.

Some government agencies use external recruitment companies to do this process.

Many government sector jobs are now being advertised as pool positions. This means that successful applicants are placed in a pool of applicants which has a defined life span. When work becomes available those in the pool are offered work. If an application is for a pool position, go to the interview prepared to nominate your availability. Better still, ring and find out what the available hours are before you send in an application. Prospective employees who are placed in a pool can be offered work at any time during the life of the pool- usually up to 12 months.

## Curriculum Vitae or Resume?

- A Curriculum Vitae (CV) is a document in which you keep listed **all** information related to yourself that could help you in preparing a job application. Included are your full work history, your school and / or trade training, work experience, achievements, projects, and qualifications such as First Aid Certificate, Driver's Licence, Competency Certificates, family information, hobbies.
- A Resume is a shortened targeted version of the CV that is tailored to the specific job in question. This document does not count for much when applying for a government job; however private enterprise still relies heavily on the Resume. It is therefore worthwhile putting the time and effort into preparation using a modern style that is an effective marketing tool to promote yourself in the best possible light. Help to do this is available from commercial enterprises.

There are several types of Resume:

- Inventory** (no specific job but a general area of work and career objectives, provides statements of competencies)\
- Chronological** (career progression, dates responsibilities, achievements-entire focus on work history)
- Functional** (suits graduate with knowledge but little work experience)
- Targeted** (you know exactly what you are applying for and target it specifically for this position)

Most Resumes are combinations of these.

- Your first task is to ensure the information in your CV is up to date;
- List (with some description) your work experience, most recent first; and
- Reflect what you have accomplished in previous roles.

Include anything else about yourself that could be useful in preparing a job application. Keep it on a computer, up to date, so it is easy to edit it down to a Resume.

Some tips for preparing a resume

- Prepare a Resume for the job in question using 'cut and paste' from your CV under selected headings.
- Keep the layout and design as simple as possible, stick to basic word processing.
- Write in plain English, avoid acronyms or jargon.
- 

**A sample Curriculum Vitae is shown on the following page**





## Curriculum Vitae Of.....

**Name:**

**Home address:**

**Telephone number:** (work) (home)

**Fax number:** (work) (home)

**Date of birth:** (Optional)

### Education record (most recent first, going back in time)

Current Studies -Year of enrolment  
- Highlight results of relevant subjects  
Particularly recent studies, subject units, work experience area

Tertiary - Date of commencement - Date of completion - Institution  
- Award  
- Major in, thesis subject, project completed, work experience

Secondary -Final year only (If recent - include awards, positions held)

### Qualifications

Include degrees, diplomas, certificates, national statements of attainment for qualifications  
When awarded and institution

### Professional Development / Continuing Education (taken & given)

Date of course Name and nature of course  
Own time, employer sponsored?

Provider

Skills acquired How applied in workplace?

Date you taught Title and duration of education session  
Type of audience Peers, students, external to your employer

### Employment record (Commence with current or most recent employment)

**Date Job title & organisation (in bold)**

- Responsibilities of each position & authority
- Number of people supervised
- Achievements(major projects)
- Developed ...
- Tested ...

**Date            Job title first & organisation second (in bold)**

- Responsibilities of each position & authority
- Budgetary control
- Achievements(major projects) -
- Completed
- Managed, organised
- Participated in xyz project

**1997            Clinical Nurse Manager   SCGH (note different job title, same org)**

- Responsibilities of position & authority
- Achievements(major projects) -
- Managed ...
- Participated in xyz project

**1996            Clinical Nurse, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital**

- Responsibilities of position & authority
- Achievements(major projects) -
- Organised ...

**Professional contribution****Membership** (If applicable) - include dates and title of your position

- Professional Organisations
  - 2015 Member ANF WA
  - 2015 Member Staff development nurses group (WA)
- Committees
  - 2013 Chair of Respiratory Nursing student research Team
    - Responsibilities of position & authority
    - Achievements (major projects) -
  - 2014 Member Teamwork Towards 2020 quality improvement team

**Research (Current & Published)**

Current	Topic & Other people involved
Previous	Topic, funding, published, utilised by

**Conference papers (presented)**

Date of conference	Name and location (country/state)
	Nature of conference, convention
	Title of your paper (presented / invited)

## Community involvement (especially relevant to jobs)

- Special skills acquired (e.g. budgets)
- Committees, memberships
- Projects involved in
- Achievements of these projects
- Hobbies (special skills e.g. graphic art )

## Significant achievements e.g.

- Duke of Edinburgh Award Gold Medallion 1980
- Represented WA in State u17 Woman's coxless 4 rowing at Australian Championships 1997
- Recipient Florence Nightingale Scholarship 1983 to complete tertiary studies

## Competencies

- Update regularly to reflect professional development or skill acquired on the job e.g. IV cannulation, Clinical Coding, Bookkeeping
- Facilitation skills for small group training
- Languages spoken

## Equipment familiar with

e.g.            Use of High Speed Polisher  
                  Types of Telephone Systems  
                  Types of Computer Hardware/Software  
                  Facilitation skills for small group training  
                  I.V. therapy  
                  MRI machine

## Referees

Relationship to you (e.g. previous supervisor/ key client)  
Names, job title, contact numbers (fax, e-mail, phone)

## Resume Preparation

No employer is interested in what you want until interest is created in what you can offer!!  
Remember, your Resume is a **60-second commercial** to convince others of your abilities to solve their problems. It is a 'snapshot' of you so the first impact is all-important.

Decide what would be relevant for the position you are seeking and edit. The Selection Criteria and Duty Statement can be used as a guide to get it down to **3 or 4** pages and match the requirements of the job. Your Resume must be structured to reinforce your response to the Selection Criteria. The reader will be thinking, "Should I grant this person an interview?"

The Equal Opportunity Act prevents employers from using personal information as a consideration when employing personnel so it is best to leave all personal data out. e.g. age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, political beliefs, union membership, marital status, and whether or not you have an impairment (unless the impairment will affect your ability to do the position).

## **Format**

The general appearance of your application and the following items should be considered:

- Typed on A4 paper, with lots of white space (if being submitted in hard copy);
- Organised in a logical sequence;
- Uncluttered, easy to read layout;
- Consistency with format, punctuation, capitalisation, underlining and margins;
- Ensure correct grammar, spelling and punctuation; and
- Good quality photocopying.

There are no hard and fast rules to follow. However the content is important. The question that you must ask yourself is, does it “grab” and hold the reader’s attention and does it make him/her want to contact you to find out more? In general, resumes for the private sector need more detail indicating what you can do for the organisation.

Select headings and information that you think might give you an advantage. The Resume can be presented in any format that is logical and clear. It may include additional headings such as career objectives and summary of skills.

Education records should normally go back to the last year of secondary education. Your recent and relevant studies should have the most explanatory information.

Employment records can report all employment but detail need only be included for positions held in the previous 10 or so years. Prior to that, simply list or summarise the position title or type of work e.g. various part time employment in hospitality industry.

Work history is provided to demonstrate persistence and skill variety, so it should be stated as dates employed, position title (in bold) and a series of one line statements of achievement, rather than simply duties (which you may not have completed). By extracting such lists of achievements in the Resume, you are identifying critical incidents to be used later, when addressing the Selection Criteria or at interview, which will demonstrate your ability to meet skill, knowledge or experience criteria.



## Activity 1: Prepare a Resume

### Develop ideas of what you could include using the headings provided.

The following format can be used to help you focus your ideas on what you could include in a Resume. Imagine you are writing about your current position when asked for work details, competencies and achievements.

- **Name**
- **Address**
- **Phone, fax, e-mail**
- **Current Position (title and org)**
  
- **Career summary**
  
  
- **Career Objective**
  
  
  
- **Your main competencies (skills, knowledge, experience, attributes)**
  
  
  
- **Relevant Work History for each position**      *especially your current position*
  - Date
  - Position
  - Level
  - Organisation

Main Achievements (major projects) in this **current** job

Describe significant outcomes or successes in that position. Use phrases or words that appear in the job advertisement. It shows you can do the job you are applying for.

- Completed ...
- Developed ...
- Managed, organised ...
- Member of abc committee ...
- Participated in xyz project ...
- Tested ...

Responsibilities of **current** position & authority (take words from list which follows)

- Relevant Roles and Responsibilities
- Number of people supervised
- Budgetary control

- **Training and Professional Development**

Year	Course	Provider	Duration

- **Current studies**

- **Qualifications**

- **Significant achievements**

- **Personal Attributes**

- **Membership of Professional / Non Professional Organisations**

Achievements as a member  
Projects participated in

- **Referees** (present, previous supervisors, managers, key clients who know your work)

- **Attachments**

Photocopies of qualifications, references, certificates (not Government positions)

Reference: White (2008) p. 120-124

## Identify your personal attributes

<p><b>A</b>            adaptable            ambitious            amiable            analytical            articulate            assertive</p> <p><b>B</b>            being:            -approachable            -a manager            -team leader            -open minded            -open            -honest            -cheerful            build rapport            budget management</p> <p><b>C</b>            calm            capable            clear headed            client focussed            compassionate            competent            conceptual skills            confident            conscientious            consistent            cooperative            coping with?            creative thinking            critical thinking            cultural awareness            customer focused</p> <p><b>D</b>            dedicated            deft            democratic            determined            direct            discreet            drive</p> <p><b>E</b>            effective            engaging with people            emotional control            empathy            energetic            enthusiastic            excited            expressive</p>	<p><b>F</b>            fair            firm            flexible            fluent            focused            follow through            foster            funny</p> <p><b>G</b>            generate            giver            good relationships            good listening skills</p> <p><b>I</b>            influence            inform            initiative            initiate            innovate            interpret            intervene            independent            ingenious            innovative            intelligent            investigate</p> <p><b>K</b>            knowing            knowledgeable</p> <p><b>L</b>            leadership            legally correct            liaison            listening skills locate            logical            loyal</p> <p><b>M</b>            maintain            make provision for            make decisions            manage            manipulate            maximise benefits            mediate            meeting skills            mentoring            monitor outcomes            morale boosting            motivational skills</p>	<p><b>N - O</b>            negotiate            negotiation skills            networking skills            neutralise            objectives            open minded            organised</p> <p><b>P</b>            passionate            patient            people oriented            perseverance            persistent            persuasive            polite            productive            practical            precise            proficient in..            program development            project management            provide advice</p> <p><b>Q- R</b>            quantify            quick learner            rapport building            reasonable            reliable            report writing            resourceful            responsible            risk taker</p> <p><b>S</b>            self motivated            self starter            sensitive            sets goals            shrewd            skilful            stress management            strong            summarise            supervise</p> <p><b>T</b>            team cohesion            tenacious            thorough            time management</p> <p><b>V - W</b>            versatile            wise</p>
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## Referees

In terms of referees, these should be reviewed for each new application to:

- Determine their suitability - and willingness to speak for you;
- Let the referees know about the application (a copy of the full application should be provided to each referee). This is particularly important. If prospective employers contact your referee and they did not know that you were applying for a particular position, or even worse, had not spoken with you for some time, it could create a poor impression in the mind of the caller; and
- Confirm the referee's contact numbers (phone, fax number, e-mail) - even if overseas, they will probably be contacted.



Referees should be drawn from among current supervisors and previous employers and others you work for (e.g. the C.N.S. on your ward). A minimum of two referees is the usual requirement.

Referees can make or break you. Therefore, they must be current. For example, it is inappropriate to include a previous employer dating back 10 years from the United Kingdom.

The critical question they must answer is “would you re-hire this person?”

Today many organisations contact the referee and ask for a written report.

These reports often require a statement or example for each of the Selection Criteria - from the Referee's point of view - about how well you performed or to what level of expertise or responsibility.

## Supporting Documentation

Supporting documentation should only be supplied if requested. This is not usually required at interviews for Government positions. If you have a written reference(s) that you think are particularly appropriate, you could include these. However you should take to an interview:

- Transcripts of academic records;
- Samples of work;
- Written references;
- Certificates of Citizenship (where applicable);
- Police Clearance; and
- Working with Children check.

Photocopies may be attached to your application if relevant to the position.

Position advertisements must be read very carefully to ensure compliance with requests for additional information.



# Selection Criteria

## How Are Selection Criteria Used?

For every position in the Government Sector and some in the Private Sector, the position description will outline duties, which are then analysed to develop Selection Criteria in terms of; required knowledge, experience, demonstrated ability (skills), attributes and values. These will be tested at all stages of the recruitment process, from the letter of application, the Resume', the statement addressing the Selection Criteria, and the interview questions. **All relate back to the same criteria.** Unfortunately, very few applications from outside the Government Sector bother to address this and, as a consequence, they are not short listed for interview for positions within the Service. In addition, even when the Selection Criteria have been addressed, it is often done inadequately.

In brief:

- Selection Criteria are competencies for a position and commonly include skills, knowledge, experience, values and personal attributes;
- They provide a snapshot of you in different work situations;
- Essential criteria are absolutely necessary for the performance of a job;
- Desirable criteria greatly assist in doing the job (not optional);
- You are more competitive if you meet both Essential and Desirable criteria; and
- They are the most important part of your application.

**Selection Criteria** are stated as:

- **Essential** which are necessary to perform the position. To get to an interview in WA Health, you must meet all the essential criteria.
- **Desirable** which assist the person to do the job. These may include specific skills e.g. computer software that is specifically used by that agency. Due to EEO this type of skill cannot be included as essential as that could exclude applicants from applying who would otherwise be able to do the job with some training in that specific software.

The recruiters will approach the recruitment process in a systematic manner, often using a simple matrix (grid), to assess the pile of applications, the interview and any 'test' against the same position-related criteria. In the Government Sector, you are required to meet all the Essential Criteria to proceed to interview. Try to meet all criterion, as competition is high in most jobs. However, it is not automatic that you will gain an interview just because you meet all the criteria. In the Government Sector, questions used by the interview panel will be based on Selection Criteria.

## What Do Selection Criteria Really Mean?

A very comprehensive place to find out more information about how to write selection criteria is contained in the previously mentioned publication by Lloyd White called "Write a Winning Job Application"

Following are some brief examples and what the recruitment panel are looking for related to some areas that are often included in selection criteria.

### **Analysis & Research**

- Ability to identify market trends, expenditure flow etc.
- Ability to relate and compare data from different sources
- Ability to identify client requirements
- Ability to analyse complex technical problems

### **Change**

- Ability to learn and to change work practices
- Innovation
- Knowledge of organisational culture
- Rational decision making
- Relocating resources
- Shaping and guiding values
- Strategic planning
- Transition techniques

### **Clinical / Technical/Professional Proficiency**

- Level of performance in technical/professional area.
- Knowledge of disease process within specialty area
- Ability to interview patients and families to extract information
- Gathering facts and recognising deviations from the norm

### **Commitment**

- Willingness to make a long term commitment to the organisation

### **Communication Skills (oral and or written)**

- Ability to liaise with people at all levels in an informative and positive manner.
- Ability to communicate information clearly and accurately.
- Ability to clarify requests and communicates information accurately.
- Ability to question efficiently
- Expressing opinions without anger
- Speaking clearly and saying what you think
- Writing documents such as annual reports, drafting letters, minutes, research findings
- Taking messages

### **Communication with indigenous Australians**

- Active listening
- Having an awareness and understanding of indigenous culture
- Establishing a strong rapport
- Understanding and using effective body language
- Managing difficult situations

- Knowing when and how to use interpreters

### **Customer Service Skills**

- Ability to deal with customers in an informative and positive manner
- Ability to meet customer requirements in a friendly, effective and efficient way
- Ability to meet people easily and gain respect, to get along with people and to put them at ease.

### **Decision Making**

- Ability to make decisions, judgements, take action, commit to a course of action

### **EEO**

- No discrimination of ground of gender, age, race, religion, physical disability, family responsibility
- Commitment to the principles of EEO
- Utilising the skills of all staff
- Eliminating harassment and discrimination

### **Filing**

- Experience in establishing and/or maintaining a filing system
- Ability to accurately maintain records
- Ability to accurately operate and maintain a filing system

### **Impact**

- Creating a good impression, gaining attention and respect, showing confidence

### **Independence**

- Ability to work without direct supervision

### **Initiative**

- Taking action to achieve goals beyond what is necessarily called for

### **Interpersonal Skills**

- Ability to relate effectively to clients and all levels of staff on matters, including those of a sensitive and confidential nature
- Ability to clarify requests and communicates information with sensitivity and an awareness of cross-cultural issues

### **Keyboard Skills**

- Ability to operate a keyboard accurately
- Accurate keyboard skills and expertise with word-processing

### **Leadership**

- Ability to lead/inspire and motivate staff

- Ability to provide direction and support to a team
- Ability to set a long term direction for the team and the commitment of staff

### **Legislation**

- Ability to interpret and apply legislation

### **Managing People**

- Ability to gain respect and build trust in a work team
- Ability to coordinate the management of a workgroup
- Ability to manage and develop a work team

### **Planning and Organising Skills**

- Ability to work under pressure
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Punctuality
- Ability to complete a variety of activities to meet a range of deadlines with minimal supervision
- Ability to plan personal workload to meet a deadline
- Ability to plan and schedule work to meet a range of deadlines
- Ability to prioritise, monitor and coordinate personal workload to meet varying deadlines without direct supervision

### **Policy Formulation Skills**

- Ability to develop policy statements which meet company and legal requirements

### **Policy and Procedures**

- Ability to understand and apply policy and procedures
- Ability to interpret and apply policy and procedures

### **Presentation Skills**

- Effective presentation of ideas or tasks to an individual or to a group

### **Problem Solving**

- Identifying issues, securing relevant information, identifying relationships, choosing options to resolve issues
- Developing practical and innovative solutions to complex problems

### **Report Writing**

- Clear, succinct English, logical structure and simple graphics

### **Research Skills**

- Gathering information, identify trends, statistical analysis, preparing funding /grant proposals

## **Safe Work Practices**

- Proven ability to use safe work practices and safety equipment

## **Self Management**

- Working within formal procedures and ethical guidelines
- Organisational skill, managing changing priorities, flexibility

## **Strategic Management Skills**

- Ability to contribute to the corporate performance of the organisation
- Ability to set and meet longer term goals

## **Stress**

- Stability of performance under pressure
- Ability to work under pressure

## **Supervisory Skills**

- Utilising staff effectively
- Allocating tasks and other responsibilities to appropriate staff

## **Teamwork**

- Ability to contribute to, and work as part of a multi-disciplinary team
- Ability to relate to others and keep everyone informed

## **Technical/Professional Knowledge**

- Level of understanding and ability to use technical/professional information

## **Time management**

- Flexible
- Knows how to set priorities
- Delegation if needed
- Plan workload and manages stress while managing a busy workload
- Scheduling
- Deals with interruptions
- Is personally organised, meets deadlines, is punctual, keeps appointments

## **Trade Qualifications/Experience**

- Relevant experience/trade background including use of tools

## **Written Communication**

- Ability to produce both standard and less complex correspondence

- Ability to write clear and accurate responses to inquiries or requests
- Ability to clearly and accurately express an idea in writing

Source HR Share - response by HR R&S officers

## Types of Selection Criteria

Topic area	What they're looking for
<i>Skills</i>	(also written as ability or capacity) technical, performance.
<i>Technical</i>	drivers licence, keyboard, equipment you may list skills and give details – speed, type of software you know
<i>Performance</i>	how you act in various tasks e.g. communication
<i>Knowledge</i>	what you know
<i>Experience</i>	where and when have you done this in the past?
<i>Values</i>	'A commitment to..' 'A focus on..' 'Dedication to..'
<i>Personal attributes</i>	qualities you bring to the job because of your unique personal characteristics e.g. ability to manage change, flexibility

## Interpreting Selection Criteria

### Questions to think about:

1. What is the criterion really asking?
2. Does this criteria relate to:

Knowledge	e.g. knowledge of the Equal Opportunity Act;
Skills	e.g. technical - drivers licence, computing skills; performance- interpersonal skills, negotiation, problem solving;
Experience	e.g. facts and details of when a skill was used in the past;
Values	e.g. 'commitment to' or 'focus on'; and
Attributes	e.g. qualities such as personality, flexibility, creativity, ability to work under pressure or with minimal supervision.

3. Are examples from the past required, or is this a hypothetical question (future)?  
Give relevant example.
4. Is supporting documentation required? (Yes or no)
5. Does this criteria require you to do some research on the organisation?



## Activity 2: Interpreting Selection Criteria

1. Using a job application that is similar the position you intend to apply for or for the actual job, do the following activity with 3 coloured highlight pens. Read each **Selection Criteria** and colour it according to what is being asked.

Colour 1 = *skills, ability, capacity or commitment*

Colour 2 = *knowledge, understanding, familiarity, awareness*

Colour 3 = *experience*

2. Now read the **Duty Statement or Job Duties** and analyse – which duties relate to which criteria?

- Use your 3 colours to highlight which is which. i.e. any duty relating to skill, ability etc. colour 1 and so on.

You have now creatively made a start in guiding yourself in how to organise your responses to each selection criteria so you maximise your opportunity to show you can do each duty related to the job.

You need to link your responses to the selection criteria in such a way so you can show how you can do each of the job duties. Weave a story of examples and past experience. If you don't have much experience, show how what you do know is transferable into the job you are applying for.

## How to target responses for Skills, Knowledge and Experience

### Skills Model

Using skills models helps you include all key points

- STAR

<i>Situation</i>	Your involvement or your role
<i>Task</i>	The exact task you were required to do
<i>Action</i>	What did you do and how did you do it?
<i>Result</i>	What was the result/ how was it achieved?

- SAO

<i>Situation</i>	What was your involvement or your role?
<i>Action</i>	What did you do and how did you do it?
<i>Outcome</i>	The outcome of you approach, the result

- CAR

<i>Circumstances</i>	What was your involvement or your role?
<i>Action</i>	What did you do? What happened next?
<i>Result</i>	What was the result/ how was it received?

Pick examples that show illustrate you can do the duties.

1. Start with a positive claim that you have the required skill;
2. State briefly 2 or 3 different situations where you have used this skill;
3. Give an example. Set the scene, Keep it short;
4. Describe in detail how you applied the skills;
5. Say what the result was (Must have been successful); and
6. Link your response to the new job (see duty statement).

Don't separate it into sections or use the headings STAR etc.

### **Knowledge Model**

- Start with a positive claim;
- Explain how you gained this knowledge and how you keep it up to date;
- State briefly how your knowledge relates to the duties of the new position (carefully read duty statement);
- Avoid essay approach;
- Give examples of how you have applied that knowledge; and
- Finish with a confident statement that you will be able to apply this knowledge in the new job. (White 2008)

### **Experience Model**

- Give factual information similar to in your resume. Include details of where you worked and when;
- Describe what your duties were in regard to the specific skill they want experience in;
- Describe any notable responsibilities or achievements you had in that position;
- Give some specific examples on what you did (match past to new);
- Describe past jobs where you used that skill if relevant; and
- Finish with an assurance that your past experience has equipped you fully to manage these new duties. (White 2008)

### **Practical tips for all models**

- Use the duty statement as your guide, see how they intend you to use a skill;
- Write about half to two thirds of a page for all responses (up to 1 page for a senior job);
- Check to see if there is a page or word limit;



- Respond in order of selection criteria, number them;
- Be specific with examples – general claims mean nothing. The action you took must be specific, concluded and successful (this gets you the higher rating);
- Set the scene (3 lines max), describe the action (6-12 lines);
- Initial draft bullet points to get sequence right, may leave in for actions or turn it into a paragraph;
- ‘I’ must be your favourite word e.g. ‘I do’ rather than ‘I am required to’;
- Never say ‘See above’ or ‘See my resume’. They won’t; and
- Never use the same example twice. (White 2008)

## Addressing Selection Criteria

Examples of how to address the Selection Criteria are contained in pp. 30-2 of this document. Reference: White (2008) pp 3-102.

The following guidelines will help:

- Refer to your Resume to ensure your response expands what you have claimed about your experience etc.;
- Consider each criterion in turn as in the previous activity. Each one should be clearly marked as a heading or in some other appropriate manner, using the language of the advertisement, in the same sequence as listed; and
- Complete 1 or 2 paragraphs to demonstrate you meet each criterion.

### Example

Criteria: <b>Good Interpersonal Skills</b>	
How to structure your response	Examples
Start with a <b>positive</b> statement that you have that competency	I have a well developed knowledge of people and their needs developed through studying a Diploma of Communication and subsequently applying this knowledge in my position as a Ward Clerk at Perth Public Hospital.
Describe the situation briefly ( <b>where</b> ) and <b>what</b> you were trying to achieve	For example, as a receptionist at ward X. I gave and support to a patient by liaising with her family to care for her pet cat following an emergency admission.
Explain your usage of ‘ <b>sub-skills</b> ’ to meet that criterion. List specific steps you followed, skills and knowledge you used, attitudes you displayed	I make it a point to be open, approachable and helpful to patients and their families in difficult situations, and I made sure I fully documented my actions for the next shift. I listened, asked questions

	and clarified before we agreed together on the best solution. I was careful to follow policy 52 regarding pets and to inform my supervisor.
What were the <b>results</b> of your actions	As a result of my assistance, I received a thankyou letter when she was discharged thanking me for my concern.
Make a <b>link</b> to the job you are applying for	While working in a hospital I have frequently encountered such situations and feel that the skills I have learned could be used successfully as a receptionist where I would be dealing with the public and a team of allied health professionals.

For the interview:

- Have ready an example of your ability to meet each criterion, and
- Where applicable link criteria with evidence.

In today's job market it is likely that there will be many applications for positions. Therefore you must make your application easy to scan. When short-listing from 20 applications, recruiting staff will be loath to "search" for the required information.

**Therefore clarity and conciseness are essential when addressing the Selection Criteria.**

	<b>Activity 3: Practice answering Selection Criteria</b>
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**SC: Well developed / Effective verbal and written communication skills**

Do a review of the following before you start writing:

- Types of people I can speak with e.g. Consultants, Community Volunteers;
- Types of verbal communication e.g. negotiation, public speaking, to patients;
- Types of written material I have produced - size/complexity/ variety / how many different ones;
- Types of purposes and recipients I have written for e.g. minutes/ reports to GP's/ training;
- "Well developed" = Level of confidence, variety, complexity; and
- Usually include how to communicate to avoid, reduce and recover from "conflict"

<b>Points to include</b>	<b>Your response</b>
Starting with a <b>positive</b> statement that you have that competency	
Describe the situation briefly ( <b>where</b> ) and <b>what</b> you were trying to achieve	When I worked in  I needed to
Explain your usage of ' <b>sub-skills</b> ' to meet that criterion in correct sequence	So first I Then I

	And because I know about I also did And as I care about ... I was ...
What were the <b>results</b> of your actions	
Make a <b>link</b> to the job you are applying for	

<b>PC: Problem solving ability / Appropriate clinical and problem solving skills</b>	
Before you start writing think about: Method used (steps); Appropriate = different methods for different problems; Variety of different situations you have had to use it in past (e.g. when in charge/not in charge/with different types of people / with equipment /with study); and Most complex/difficult example/Most successful example.	
<b>Points to include</b>	<b>Your response</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starting with a <b>positive</b> statement that you have that competency</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the situation briefly (<b>where</b>)</li> <li>and <b>what</b> you were trying to achieve</li> </ul>	When I worked in I needed to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain your usage of '<b>sub-skills</b>' to meet that criterion</li> </ul>	So first I Then I And because I know about I also did And as I care about ... I was ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the situation briefly (<b>where</b>) and <b>what</b> you were trying to achieve.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What were the <b>results</b> of your actions</li> </ul>	
Make a <b>link</b> to the job you are applying for	

<p><b>PC: Demonstrated ability to meet deadlines and manage a number of different tasks</b></p> <p>Describe: Techniques used;          Prioritising method;          Source of deadlines;          Variety of tasks and customers; and          Negotiation skill</p>	
<b>Points to include</b>	<b>Your response</b>
Starting with a <b>positive</b> statement that you have that competency	
Describe the situation briefly ( <b>where</b> ) and <b>what</b> you were trying to achieve.	When I worked in  I needed to
Explain your usage of ' <b>sub-skills</b> ' to meet that criterion	So first I Then I And because I know about I also did And as I care about ... I was ...
What were the <b>results</b> of your actions	
Make a <b>link</b> to the job you are applying for	
<p><b>PC: Experience in dealing with people in stressful situations</b></p> <p>Think about and write to include:          How many people;          How stressful; and          What type of people?</p>	
<b>Points to include</b>	<b>Your response</b>
Starting with a <b>positive</b> statement that you have that competency	
Describe the situation briefly ( <b>where</b> ) and <b>what</b> you were trying to achieve.	When I worked in  I needed to
Explain your usage of ' <b>sub-skills</b> ' to meet that criterion	So first I Then I And because I know about I also did And as I care about ... I was ...

What were the <b>results</b> of your actions	
Make a <b>link</b> to the job you are applying for	

<b>PC: Demonstrated leadership skills and proven ability to adapt to a changing work environment.</b>	
Explain what you think is leadership; Give example of: How you have led others, (motivated, communicated future goal in positive light); and How you have been a role model during a change (volunteered, been first, been positive)	
<b>Points to include</b>	<b>Your response</b>
Starting with a <b>positive</b> statement that you have that competency	
Describe the situation briefly ( <b>where</b> ) and <b>what</b> you were trying to achieve.	When I worked in  I needed to
Explain your usage of ' <b>sub-skills</b> ' to meet that criterion	So first I Then I  And because I know about I also did
What were the <b>results</b> of your actions	
Make a <b>link</b> to the job you are applying for	

**Desirable Criteria    knowledge – future**

<b>PC: Knowledge of WA Health system</b>	
What you know; How you know it - where from; What the implications are for the future; and Why you are interested in this topic / how it might relate to this position.	
<b>Points to include</b>	<b>Your response</b>
Starting with a <b>positive</b> statement that you	

have that competency	
State Knowledge of law, concepts, models	
IF POSSIBLE Describe the situation briefly ( <b>where</b> ) and <b>what</b> you were trying to achieve	For example when I worked in I needed to
Explain your usage of ' <b>sub-skills</b> ' to meet that criterion	So first I Then I And because I know about I also did And as I am very aware of ... I was able to ...
What were the <b>results</b> of your actions	
Make a <b>link</b> to the job you are applying for	

## Selection Criteria response examples (Basic Level)

### ***Minimum Education Year 10 or equivalent:***

I completed my high school education in 2009 achieving a TEE pass in 5 subjects including English and Mathematics with a school prize in Geography.

### ***Good Communication Skills: - verbal***

In my previous position as Receptionist in a Real Estate Company, I was the front desk person for sick and annual leave relief and I developed the ability to be courteous, polite and friendly to the public I had to talk to. I was able to give clear, concise and accurate directions to them. I have an excellent telephone manner gained from 2 years experience as a switchboard operator for Myers.

### ***written***

Whilst employed at a large importers, I prepared detailed product documents with desk top publishing computer software and had two of my research reports approved by the Board of Directors for distribution to all international agents.

### ***Well developed interpersonal skills:***

I have always tried to develop a team approach to work in the past. I spent many years in the Girl Guides as a teenager and was a Team Leader for 2 years. I developed the ability to be an active listener and problem solve as issues developed. I try and treat people as I would like to be treated, and generally have been able to "get on" with my colleagues, even in stressful situations.

When working in a women's refuge I developed extensive negotiation skills to defuse potentially violent incidents with residents and their families. This also required me to liaise with the police in a concise and efficient manner.

***Well developed clerical skills:***

I completed a 12 month certificate in Clerical Studies at Perth TAFE in 2001. All aspects of office management were covered in the course. I have had 5 years total clerical work experience. In my current position I use a PC and Microsoft Windows, Word 10 and Excel 2.0 software packages. I am able to produce good quality letters, memos, and reports.

***Experience in a Medical Records Department:***

As a Ward Clerk I handle Medical Records on a daily basis and I fully understand how they are generated, circulated and stored. I spent a short time as a Relief Clerk in a Medical Records Section, working in the appointment scheduling division.

***Desire to work in a patient related field:***

I enjoy immensely interacting with patients and as a ward clerk this is a very important component of my current position. I always try to keep in mind the fact that the patient may be under stress or be in discomfort and these factors may affect how they behave towards me.

***Awareness of patient confidentiality:***

As I handle Medical Records on a daily basis, I am well aware of the importance of maintaining confidentiality. In fact I often discuss this issue with other staff when I hear patient confidentiality being ignored.

***Basic Keyboard Skills:***

I learnt keyboard skills at TAFE in 2001 and have developed my expertise since that time. I use a computer keyboard every day as I maintain the patient's electronic medical record.

***Good Communication Skills (Written and Verbal)***

In my position as an HSA at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital I have had to communicate on a daily basis with a wide range of patients and staff of varying ages, some from non - English speaking backgrounds.

I am used to writing quotes, keeping records, taking telephone messages etc. The ability to maintain accurate written records was essential in my previous occupation as a self – employed Tradesman.

***Good Interpersonal Skills***

My role as an HSA has equipped me to establish contact with assisting all sorts of people some of whom are distressed, angry or in pain. I am able to work with all types of patients and enjoy this aspect of my work. My volunteer work as coach of the Primary T – Ball team requires great tact and discretion at times as well as the ability to convince both children and their parents to do what is best for the team.

***Personal Hygiene***

I have developed a high standard of personal hygiene. At high school I was the first aid officer for my year and attended a 2-day course, which included basic hygiene standards.

In my position as a Hygiene Orderly at Albany Regional Hospital, a high standard of personal hygiene was very important, as I had to handle hospital linen and rubbish. If my standards were poor I would have been at risk of acquiring an infection.

***Basic Literacy and Competency with Figures:***

During my last 2 years at school I worked in a food caravan at the football every Saturday during the season. I learnt how to do mental arithmetic to add up the costs and how to give correct change without the use of a cash register. Currently I am working in a mailroom at the AMP head office. I must sort and deliver all the internal mail as well as correctly address circulars and read instructions.

***Demonstrated ability to work co – operatively in a team environment:***

I was a member of the Scouts for 10 years, achieving the rank of Team Leader for the last two years. I learnt the importance of team work and developed the ability to problem solve and react to new situations as they arose.

I worked as a Catering Assistant in B Block at Osborne Park Hospital in a small team situation. It was vital to cooperate with my colleagues to ensure that the patient's meals and snacks were delivered on time.

***Demonstrated ability to work with little or no supervision:***

When I worked as Delivery Driver for a soft drink company, I visited the depot twice a day to collect stock and deliver dockets. It was up to my discretion how I planned my day, the routes I took and so on.

***Previous Experience in a Hospital Environment:***

I have a total of 10 years hospital experience including a large public hospital (Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital) where I have been a cleaner for 5 years and small private hospitals (the Davalich Nursing Home and St. Bridget's) where I performed a variety of domestic roles including cooking, cleaning and serving meals.

***Acute nursing experience***

My last 3 positions have been in acute hospitals, in both the metropolitan area and country towns, where I undertook theatre and surgical Nurse Management roles for a total period of 8 years. I was fortunate to assist at a heart lung transplant operation and to provide post-operative surgical care to many demanding private patients. Whilst travelling in United Kingdom, I successfully completed 3 month Staff Development contracts in renal, theatre and cardiac wards where new blood monitoring procedures were being introduced.

***Ability to accept responsibility as part of a flexible team***

In South Africa I was the only qualified nurse in a newly built 'town site' hospital serving 5,000 people, where medical and allied health team members visited weekly or monthly. This required management coordination and the ability to operate alone. I gained confidence in my own decisions after extensive consultation with other professionals through the Remote Health Workers' radio network.



# The Introductory Letter

When you have completed the Selection Criteria (if doing it as a separate document) you should have enough ideas to start on the Introductory Letter:

The Introductory Letter should:

- Detail what position you are applying for and where and when you saw it advertised;
- Include a brief statement on why you would like the position;
- Detail briefly those qualifications and experiences, which particularly suit you for the position i.e. **refer briefly to the Selection Criteria**;
- Mention if any supporting documentation is enclosed;
- Indicate that you have included the names of referees in your Resume;
- Where and when you can be contacted for an interview.
- Finish with a positive statement similar to the following:  
*“I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this position with you at an interview”.*
- Include your name and signature at the end; and
- Be addressed to the correct name and address, if you are not sure then Dear Sir / Madam (but doing your homework gives a good impression).

Addressing the Selection Criteria will form the major part of your Introductory Letter, if not done separately, however this is also the place where you can mention your personality and reasons for wanting the position.

The letter may run into several pages (for a Private Sector position), but one page is better and easier to read if accompanied by Selection Criteria document. As previously noted, that it is **not essential** that Selection Criteria be addressed in the Introductory Letter format for Government Sector positions.

In that case, the introductory letter should not be a re-write of your Resume but should pick out details relevant to the Selection Criteria.

It is important to read advertisements very carefully and make sure that you address all requirements.

**Remember:** This is your chance to make a good ‘first impression’ in a very competitive environment, you need to make the best of this opportunity to ‘sell yourself’ by demonstrating how and why you are the best candidate.

## Application Letters Examples

### EXAMPLE 1

Kim Mason  
27 Hedley Street  
Palmyra WA 6126

11<sup>th</sup> January 2015

Mr Thompson  
The Manager  
XYZ Hospital  
1 John Street  
Nedlands WA 6009

Dear Mr Thompson

I would like to apply for a position on the **Graduate Diploma of Fabulous Nursing** as advertised in the West Australian on Saturday January 10<sup>th</sup> 2015.

I am currently employed at Mater and Co as a clinical nurse. I am *very keen* to obtain full time employment whilst furthering my career as a Specialist XYZ, and feel that this position would provide my little country town an excellent resource for it's large tourist hospital, when I graduate. I do have a sound working knowledge of the specialty area from my background in Tough Stuff and also have high levels of communication and patient liaison skills developed through my experience as a front line nurse in Acute Nursing Area 4.

My practical experience is complemented by 3 other nursing Certificates obtained over the past 3 years in my annual holidays, as I am very keen to *build a career* in this field.

Please find enclosed a Resume detailing my work experience and education for your perusal, I have included the names for two referees who will vouch for my experience and abilities.

My personality is such that I feel comfortable working in this specialty area, and especially in meeting new people (hence the tourist hospital). I have also travelled and worked extensively overseas with the World Nursing Service, so I consider myself highly adaptable and capable of dealing with cross cultural issues.

I look forward to discussing the position with you at an interview and can be contacted at work on (08) 9300 0000 (in confidence), or at home on (08) 9311 1111.

Yours sincerely

Busy travelling career person  
RN, ARN, BRN, CRN, DRN

## **EXAMPLE 2**

12 Vincent Street  
NEDLANDS WA 6009

11<sup>th</sup> January 2015

The Director  
“Confidential Position Application”  
PO Box 444  
SOUTH PERTH WA 6151

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re:                               Position Advertised – Secretary**

I wish to apply for the above position advertised in “The West Australian” on Saturday, 10th January 2015.

I have completed a 12-month secretarial course at Business College and am currently employed at White and Partners as a secretary. I feel that my relevant secretarial qualifications and experience over the past 2 years have given me the necessary skills to fulfil this position. I have an excellent knowledge of MS Word 10 and Excel 5.0 and have used a variety of Desktop Publishing Packages. I have high-level communication skills and a friendly telephone manner through my experience in liaising with clients in distress.

Please find enclosed my curriculum vitae, application form and statements addressing the Selection Criteria giving details of my education and work experience. I look forward to discussing this position with you at an interview. I can be contacted on (08) 9380 4422 (in confidence) during work hours.

Yours faithfully

*EMILY WALKER*

## **Suggestions for ending the letter**

- I would be pleased to discuss with you how I could contribute to your organisation;
- I hope there may be an opportunity for a personal discussion;
- My Resume is enclosed. I would be delighted to meet you to talk about this;
- I attach a note summarising my background and experience. I should, of course, be glad to come and see you. May I call to find out if a meeting would be worthwhile?;
- I live locally and would be pleased to discuss with you, at any time convenient to yourself, the position advertised or any other that will enable me to provide input and benefit your organisation;
- This letter and my Resume provide the basis of my career achievements, but I would be pleased to discuss them at a personal meeting to see if there is the opportunity to work with your company; and
- I would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you how my knowledge and ability could be used in your company.

## **Additional suggestions to consider when preparing an application**

### **Consider your approach:**

Be honest with yourself, lying about achievements or failures can be risky if you are found out;

Strive for integrity and pursue work that is consistent with your inner values and principles;

Be creative, as careers are competitive and you have a unique contribution to make;

Show you are prepared to change if required;

Be thorough, you will not be successful if you skimp the ground work;

Be responsible for your own preparation. Using a resume preparation service may not reflect the language you would usually use; and

Have your application professionally word processed if you cannot produce professional looking work.

### **Leave out:**

Your current salary;

Your salary requirements;

Your reasons for leaving your previous job;

A photograph unless specifically requested;

Abbreviations;

Unfamiliar facts;

Graphics unless you need to show off your skills in this area; and

Humour.

Addresses of previous employers

'Strange' interests

### **Avoid the use of:**

Coloured, grained or woven paper, bindings, photocopying;  
Handwriting;  
Grammatical or spelling errors;  
'Hype' or exaggerated language; and  
Claiming skills that are not reflected in your achievements.

### **Solutions to common problems:**

#### **Too long with one employer:**

Include every job you had with that employer;  
Give an introductory statement about the number of jobs /promotions.

#### **Minimum or inadequate qualifications:**

Leave out the education section completely and use your employment record to emphasise your strengths; and  
Join professional societies or industry associations quickly.

#### **Employment gaps:**

Do not put in months of employment and see if jobs of less than one year can be lost through integration;  
Add a note at the end of the employment section saying what you did and learned during the gap; and  
Include volunteer work /hobbies/travel where you gained useful skills or experience.

#### **Major career change:**

Turn it into a plus and mention how you built on previous knowledge, skills and ability to move into a different career.

#### **Previous job title company specific and 'jargonistic':**

Use the generic title but get permission first;  
Use equivalent job title for the industry you are targeting.

#### **A year travelling around the world:**

State that you have funded and organised your trip;  
Discuss the maturity and knowledge of diverse cultural groups you gained by meeting people of different nationalities; and  
Use your flexibility, adaptability and ability to plan new experiences to your advantage.

## Further points to consider in your job application

Keep your C.V. up-to-date. Sending out dated information is unprofessional. If possible keep your C.V. on computer disc so that it can be readily updated. If you don't have the luxury of a home computer there a number of organisations advertising regularly in daily newspapers, which can professionally prepare your Resume and keep a copy on disc for updating. These updates can be done at very little cost.

Accuracy in you position application is paramount. You should ask at least two people to read your Resume before you use it for position applications. Things to consider include:

- Is it easy to read quickly?
- Is the layout professional, well typed and do key points stand out?
- Could it be shortened without losing valuable information? (If so do it).
- Will it accomplish my objective of getting an interview?

It may be appropriate to emphasise aspects of your **private life** if they relate to the vacancy. For example, the organisation concerned may be seeking someone with computing experience which you may not have from your past positions. However, you may belong to a computer club where you are kept up to date with current trends etc. and this information could be used. Another example might be where you utilise financial management skills in running the local Parents and Friends association and this could be quoted if these particular skills are required. Organisation skills may be illustrated by your experience as coach of the local netball team and flexibility demonstrated by your performing in a music band at a variety of locations.

## Application Form

Most organisations require you to complete an Application Form - so they can collect data from you that you may not wish to include in your own application documents. e.g. criminal record, disabilities, dates of previous employment, nationality.

Remember that industrial legislation exists, specifically to prevent discrimination in application forms, however providing misleading information on application forms can result in instant dismissal when discovered, so be very careful when completing them.

## Criminal Record Screening

Dept of Health WA requires employers to screen the criminal records (from every Australian State) for all new staff. Remember, a prior conviction does not necessarily prevent you from gaining employment, however the new standard means that a WA Police clearance is insufficient, and that successful applicants may have the cost of the nation-wide search deducted from their first salary payment.

## **Working with Children Check**

Depending on the type of work you are applying for, if you are the successful applicant, you may be required to provide this documentation.

## **A final word**

There is no doubt that the best way to feel confident about your application and your interview is to be as well prepared as possible. If you have researched the organisation, formulated and practised answers to possible questions you may be asked, and given due thought to the sort of questions you would like to ask, you are well on the way to being successful. Even if you do not get the position you are seeking, use what happened as a learning exercise and do an “after action report” of things you might like to do better next time.

If you are unsuccessful for a position, seek feedback from the chair of the selection committee. This is common practice and is not seen as being pushy. It can often highlight things you were unaware of or help you strengthen things that caused you not to be selected this time. If you ignore this vital step, you won't learn for the next time.

If you proceed to an interview, it may not be your interview skills that were the problem. It may be that all the other applicants had more experience than you. By asking for feedback, you will not only feel better but be able to improve on your skills in preparing and writing applications as well as the interview itself.

It is appropriate to seek feedback when you receive a letter letting you know you haven't been successful. If you haven't heard anything after 3 weeks then that is also a reasonable amount of time to wait before seeking feedback.

Good luck and we hope this document provides you with some of the skills you need to get the job you want!!

## **References**

White, L. (1998) Write a Winning Job Application. (2<sup>nd</sup>ed.) City Beach: Training and Career Development.

White, L., (2008) Write a Winning Job Application. (4<sup>th</sup>ed.). City Beach: Training and Career Development.

# Appendix 1: Professional Portfolio

Collecting suitable evidence for future Job Applications

This is a starter list illustrating some of the work samples or artefacts, which could be included in a general career portfolio. Look it over for ideas about things you might collect now or wish to start collecting in the future.

## Artefacts Pertaining to Formal and Informal Education and Training

- Brochures describing training events, retreats, workshops, clinics, lectures
- Certificate of mastery or completion
- Charts or lists showing hours or time completed in various areas of study
- Evidence of participation in vocational competitions
- Grants, loans, scholarships secured for schooling
- Licenses
- Lists of competencies mastered
- Samples from classes (papers, projects, reports, displays, video or computer samples)
- Samples from personal studies (notes, binders, products)
- Syllabi or course descriptions for classes and workshops
- Standardised or formalised tests
- Teacher evaluations
- Transcripts, report cards

## Artefacts about Skills Using Data

- Communication pieces (memos, reports, or documents, a public service announcement.
- Writing abilities as demonstrated in actual samples of your writing (articles, proposals, scripts, training materials)
- Evidence of public speaking (membership in Toastmasters, photograph of you at podium, speech outline, brochure for your presentation, speaker's badge or brochure, blurb from the conference.)
- Also posters, photos, reviews of actual performances (dance, drama, music, story telling)
- Data (graphs, charts, tables you helped to produce, testing results)
- Display or Performance materials (actual objects, or illustrations, or posters from displays)
- Computer related (data base designed, desktop publishing documents, samples from using the Internet, computer video screen pictures or manuals covers illustrating programs you use)
- Formal and technical documents as in grant or loan applications (include proposal cover sheet or award letter), technical manual



## **Artefacts Pertaining To People Skills**

- People and leadership skills (projects or committees you share, projects you initiated, photos of you with important people, mentoring programs, proposals, documents or strategies related to negotiation)
- Planning Samples (summary of steps, instruments used such as surveys or focus groups)
- Problem solving illustrated with various artefacts. Use figures or pictures showing improvements in products, services, profits, safety, quality, or time. Include forms and other paper products used to solve problems

## **Artefacts Demonstrating General Work Performance**

- Attendance records
- Community service projects
- Descriptive material about the organisation (annual report, brochure, newsletters, articles)
- Position descriptions
- Logs, list or charts showing general effort (phone calls received, extra hours worked, overtime, volume of e-mail, case load, transactions completed,
- Military records, awards, badges
- Employer evaluations or reviews
- Examples of problem solving
- Letters of reference
- Organisation charts showing personnel, procedures, or resources
- Products showing your leadership qualities (mission statements, agendas, networks)
- Records showing how your students, clients, or patients did after receiving your services (evidence showing your impact on the lives and performance of others, such as test scores, performance improvement data, employment and promotion)
- Samples from participation in professional organisations, committees, work teams.
- Surveys showing satisfaction by customers, clients, students, patients, etc.
- Invitations to share your expertise (letters or agreements asking you to train, mentor, or counsel others, invitations to present at conferences or professional gatherings)
- Documentation of experience as a consultant. (thank-you letters, products, proposals)

## **Artefacts about Skills, Things, Tools, Equipment**

- Anything which shows technical skills, equipment, specialised procedures used in your work:
- Paper documents or replicas of actual items including: forms, charts, print outs (such as medical chart, financial statement or budgets, reports, emergency preparedness plan, marketing plan, customer satisfaction plan, inspection or evaluation sheet, financial or budget plans, spreadsheets, charts, official documents)
- Technical directions, manuals, procedure sheets for specialised work, use of equipment, and detailed processes. This could include: sample pages from manuals, illustrations, technical drawings, blueprints or schematics, photos from the workplace, schematics or directions for tools or equipment, operation or procedure sheet
- Photos, video, slide show, or multi-media presentation showing process or equipment.
- Actual item which can be handled in various ways: displayed in person one at a time or part of a display you set up

## Appendix 2: Useful Resources

### Internet sites: Career assistance

www.futurestep.com.au <http://www.futurestep.com.au/>

www.careermosaic.com.au <<http://www.careermosaic.com.au/>>

www.mycareer.com.au <<http://www.mycareer.com.au/>>

www.CareerOne.com.au <<http://www.careerone.com.au/>>

<b>Internet sites: Job information</b>	www.monster.com.au
news.com.au-employment.url	www.seek.com.au
Monster.com.au.url	www.employment.org.au
Morgan & Banks - - Job Search.url	www.resumesonline.com.au
Seek Home Page.url	www.topjobs.com.au
SEEK jobs database and employment advice	www.herenow.com.au
employment.com.au.url	www.answers.com.au/jobs/

### Career development including developing job applications, resumes and preparation for interviews

[adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocecs/CRCmanual-home.html](http://adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocecs/CRCmanual-home.html)

The number of Internet web sites where employers advertise for employees and free agents is escalating. In addition to publicising vacancies, the developers and managers of these sites provide much useful content about managing one's own career. A portfolio careerist in Australia would benefit from accessing the site above.

### Australian Author Paul Stevens has written extensively on Career management, Personal development and how to get the job you want.

#### Books

The Australian Résumé Guide  
Career Development Support for Organisations  
A Passion for Work: Our Lifelong Affair  
Stop Postponing the Rest of Your Life  
Win That Job!  
Your Job Search Organiser

#### Booklets

Career Management: Whose Responsibility  
Career Support Resources Kit  
Designing Career Development Workshops  
Handling Office Politics  
Helping Your Child Choose a Career  
How to Network and Select a Mentor  
Planning For Me! Setting Personal Goals  
Separation and Outplacement: Managing Both Effectively  
Strategies for Dual-Career Couples

## Career Assessment Instruments

Career Action Constraints Card Sort Kit  
Career Quiz Card Sort  
Occupational Work Settings Card Sort Kit  
Résumé Card Sort Kit

## Workbooks

Job Seeking Where You Work  
My Career, My Life, Myself

## Other Books

1001 Ways to Get Promoted  
101 Great Answers to the Toughest Interview  
101 Toughest Interview Questions  
Blue Collar Resumes  
Career Compass  
Career Counselling  
Career Counsellor's Handbook, A  
Career Theory and Practice  
Co-Active Coaching  
Complete Job-Search Handbook, The  
Dodging Downsizing  
Don't Stop the Career Clock  
Don't Stop the Career Clock  
First Hired, Last Fired  
Inner Excellence at Work  
Job Offer!  
Learning from Other Women  
Life By Design  
Love'Em or Lose'Em  
Making Mentoring Happen  
Managing Up  
Mentoring in the Workplace  
Mid-Career Tune-Up  
Millennium Candidate, The  
New Managerial Mentor, The  
No More Blue Mondays  
Something a Bit Different  
Success Abilities!  
Time On, Time Out  
Turbulent Change  
Vocational Interests  
What Color Is Your Parachute? (2000)  
Winning at Work  
Women in Career & Life Transitions  
Working Relationships

David Rye  
Ron Fry  
Daniel Porot  
Stephen Provenzano  
Peggy Simonsen  
Larry Cochran  
Richard Nelson Bolles & Howard Figler  
Swanson & Fouad  
Whitworth, Kimsey-House & Sandahl  
Howard Figler  
Craig Scott Rice  
Helen Harkness  
Helen Harkness  
R. & S. Bramson  
Carol Orsborn  
Maryanne Wegerbauer  
Carolyn Duff  
Kirshner & Brinkman  
Beverly Kaye & Sharon Jordan-Evans  
Kathy Lacey  
M. & D. Dobson  
Michael D Tovey  
W. & R. Salmon  
Kathy Wilson  
Patricia J Fritts  
Robin A Sheerer  
Beverley Gay  
Paula Ancona  
Biggs & Horgan  
Peter Garber  
Mark Savickas & Arnold Spokane  
Richard Nelson Bolles  
Sandler & Gray  
Sandy Anderson  
Bob Wall



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