

Mental Nutrition®

Thinking flexibly. Speaking confidently.

Selection Criteria Review Service and Interview Coaching

With Dr Ann Villiers, *Mental Nutritionist®*



**Building strong roots to
buttress your career**

Purpose of these services

My aim is to give you guidance and support so you gain immediate benefit and can apply the ideas and strategies independently in the future.

Who are these services for?

These services are for people who:

- Are applying for jobs where selection criteria are used from entry level, including graduate programs, through middle to senior management (salary level approx. \$125,000/EL2 equivalent)
- Are new to jobs where selection criteria are used and are unfamiliar with how to prepare responses.
- Are unfamiliar with capability frameworks and how they are used in job applications.
- Are unfamiliar with government job application processes and want to maximise their chances of being short listed.
- Are struggling to write an Expression of Interest.
- Are already in the public service and have had missed out on being short listed.
- Are already in the public service and want to position themselves for a promotion.
- Are familiar with preparing for government jobs and want to check that they have prepared a strong case.
- Feel their resume does not market what they offer.
- Have been short listed for a government job and want to prepare for the interview.
- Have missed out on jobs because of poor interview performance.
- Are unfamiliar with government interviews and want to know how to prepare.

Who these services are unlikely to benefit

- People interested in Senior Executive Service jobs. I can refer you to appropriate people to assist with these roles.
- People who want someone to write responses for them or work with them to prepare responses. I can refer you to appropriate people who provide these services.
- People who are not prepared to invest in their professional development. If you want help but do not wish to spend more than \$150.00 then these services are not for you. Keep in mind, these services are an investment. The fee will be easily recouped if you gain a different result from the past with your applications. You can check with your accountant about tax deductability.

What clients say about these services

Examples of comments people have made about their experience of these services:

'You really helped me start focusing on my strengths instead of my weaknesses, and you got me thinking in line with the ILS.'

'A quick note to let you know that after much preparation and planning, I was successful in winning the EL2 position - what a wonderful outcome! I am now in the job and it is full steam ahead - I am thoroughly enjoying every moment. Once again I thank you for your coaching services and assisting me to achieve this major milestone in my career.'

'I'm very grateful for your time and professional guidance in this process, which gave me a sound approach to preparing for my interview. The feedback from the recruitment panel was incredibly positive as a result. It's been a positive development experience for me, learning from you, in a relatively short period of time and I would be keen to call on your services again in the future.'

How do these services work?

Selection Criteria Review Service

- You email your draft application, resume and job description.
- I read and analyse the job description and if needed conduct further research to understand the job context.
- I read your application and resume based on the job context.
- I identify ways to improve and strengthen your material. This may include:
 - Better linking to the job context
 - Changing the language to reflect the level of seniority
 - Editing to meet word limits
 - Proof reading to reduce grammatical and spelling errors.
 - Identifying gaps in examples.
 - Identifying overlooked capability behaviours.
 - Building a results focus.

- Suggestions are inserted into your documents and/or summarised in a return email.
- This review, on average, takes between 1 and 2 hours, but could be less. It depends on the number of criteria, how complicated they are, and the quality of the statement.
- On receipt of my suggestions you can ring or email to obtain clarification of anything that is unclear in the suggestions.
- There is no guarantee that your application will be short listed. Factors outside your control will determine the result, such as the focus of selection panel members and how many apply for the job.
- You will then exercise judgement as to which suggestions you adopt or adapt, based on your knowledge of the job context and what you feel comfortable with.
- If, at the outset, I consider your application to be as strong as it can be, I will let you know and refund your money.

Interview coaching

- You email me the job description, your application and resume, and your specific goals for the coaching session. It may also be appropriate to send information about feedback received from, and questions asked, at previous interviews. This gives me the context of the job, knowledge of where you are coming from, and a basis for preparation.
- I read this material and if necessary conduct research in order to understand the job context.
- I may ask you further questions about the job context.
- We will establish a time and method (phone or in person) for the coaching session. Phone coaching works well. I give you the Canberra-based number to ring. In person coaching applies to people who are Canberra based. The session can be during business hours or week day evenings. In person coaching can take place at your work place, your home or a public location (e.g. library). (A premium fee applies to weekend or short notice requests.)
- Usually one hour is sufficient time. You may choose a longer session if you wish.
- I send to you suggestions for what to cover in the coaching session. There is no guarantee that any of the questions explored will be asked. The coaching is designed to place you in the appropriate mental and verbal space to respond effectively using appropriate language and evidence.
- You will then prepare for the coaching session based on what I send.
- The coaching session can include discussion, role play, general exploration of responses. I will likely ask lots of questions and provide ideas on how to prepare and present your case. The session will be informal, (unless you want it to be more formal), conversational, and supportive.

- During the coaching session you will receive suggestions about:
How to manage nervousness.
Shifting language to reflect complexity, strategic thinking, a results focus, seniority.
How to promote yourself effectively.
How to engage with the panel.
How to structure responses so you sound coherent and succinct.
- To gain maximum value from the coaching session you need to capture these suggestions by taking notes or audio recording the session.
- Based on the suggestions you receive you will then further prepare for your interview by practicing and refining your responses post-session.

Time frame

Selection Criteria Review Service

Working back from the application deadline, you will need to check my availability, then allow enough time to send the material to me and make any changes. I can usually turn it around in 24 hours or less once the service is secured (see section on fees) and I receive the documents.

Interview coaching

If you have a scheduled interview you need to check my availability, then allow enough time for preparation before the coaching session and revision after the session.

What are the fees for these services?

Selection Criteria Review Service

- An hourly fee applies to this service. The rate depends on the level/salary of the job and whether you are funding the service yourself or receiving corporate support. Individuals receive a discounted rate.
- To secure my service a one hour fee is paid in advance, preferably by EFT.
- As I am usually asked to turn the application around quickly, I similarly ask that any balance is paid within 3 days of receipt of my report preferably by EFT. Alternatively I refund any difference.
- I work to complete the review as quickly as possible.
- The fee covers my preparation, research, and expertise.

Interview coaching

- An hourly fee applies to this service. The rate depends on the level/salary of the job, whether the coaching is by phone or in person, and whether you are funding the service yourself or receiving corporate support. Individuals receive a discounted rate.
- To secure my service a one hour fee is paid in advance, preferably by EFT.
- A premium rate applies to weekend and short notice requests.
- The fee covers my preparation, research, expertise, and any travel expenses.

Guarantees and confidentiality

There is no guarantee that as a result of using these services your application will be short listed, questions covered will be asked at interview or you will be offered a job. The services are designed to strengthen how you present your case so that it matches as closely as possible the job context.

All material provided and discussed remains confidential. No information is passed on to another party.

If you feel you have not gained ideas for improving your application or interview performance, please raise your concerns.

What are these services based on?

These services are based on more than a decade of demystifying selection criteria, coaching individuals across Commonwealth, state and territory jobs, and delivering training programs on job applications, staff selection skills, interpersonal skills, including confident communicating and, influencing skills.

Dr Ann Villiers is a Professional Member of the Career Development Association of Australia (CDAA) and Certified Professional of the Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI). She is bound by the Codes of Ethics of CDAA as well as of the National Speakers Association of Australia (NSAA) of which she is a Certified Speaking Professional (the only one in Canberra).

Qualifications: PhD (communication), BA (Hons), Dip Ed, Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, Graduate Certificate in Career Development (completing in 2011). Graduate of Professor Martin Seligman's Positive Psychology program. NLP Practitioner.

Sense-making specialist, applying the *Mental Nutrition*® framework to build flexible thinking, confident speaking and quality interpersonal connections. (More information is available at www.mentálnutrition.com)

Author of *How to Write and Talk to Selection Criteria* (5th edn.), *101 Interview Questions*, and numerous articles on www.selectioncriteria.com.au and in the press.

Dedicated web site (www.selectioncriteria.com.au) offering free resources on staff selection, career management and applying for government jobs. Occasional writer for 'Public Sector Informant', *The Canberra Times*.

ACT Division President of the Career Development Association of Australia 2010-2011. Moderator for the *AIM Your Career* series, offered by the Australian Institute of Management 2008 - 2011. Presenter at professional forums and conferences on career management issues.

Extensive one-on-one career coaching experience, assisting hundreds of applicants and potential applicants to strengthen their applications and interview performance. Coaching is based on a whole-person approach, a social construction perspective*, applying sense-making tools and mind and language practices to think flexibly and speak and write confidently.

More than a decade of executive level management experience in the APS working with teams of less than ten to more than 50 people, managing amalgamations, restructures, downsizing, recruitment and outsourcing processes.

Comprehensive knowledge of the APS framework, Integrated Leadership System and capability frameworks, and recruitment and selection policies and practices and their application to selection processes.

* Refers to a focus on the role language plays in constructing social reality.

For further information

If you wish to obtain specific information about how these services relate to your needs, please use the Contact Us section on www.selectioncriteria.com.au and provide these details:

- The level or salary of the job you are applying for.
- Who is paying for the service – you or your organisation.
- The deadline you are working to.
- What service you need.

This material is valid as at September 2011 and may be subject to change.