How to Write and Talk to Selection Criteria

Improving your chances of winning a job

Dr Ann Villiers, Mental Nutritionist®

Sixth Edition
Contents

Preface 8

PART 1: CAREER MANAGEMENT FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Chapter 1: A public sector career 13
Outlines 21st century public sector skills, the range of roles, career paths and routes into the public sector and how to judge what level to pitch for.

Chapter 2: Job seeker as career manager and sense maker 18
Explains the importance of managing a career, adopting an employability mindset and building sense making skills.

Chapter 3: Know what you offer 25
Illustrates five tools to support your career and reduce the stress of job applications.

Chapter 4: Fifty ideas for managing your career 37
Shows how to be a career activist and take an active role in managing your career. Explains the role of social media in career management.

PART 2: HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS 48

Chapter 5: Understanding merit-based selection processes 49
Outlines key stages in public sector staff selection processes and the types of application processes in use.

Chapter 6: How to read an online job advertisement 59
Explains 20 details to notice in an online job advertisement.

Chapter 7: Making sense of capability frameworks 63
Explains what capability frameworks are and how to read them. Lists state, territory, and profession-specific capability frameworks. Offers definitions of 61 terms used in capability frameworks and sets of questions to identify response material for core capabilities.

Chapter 8: Interpreting the job context 84
Suggests eight questions to ask in order to fully understand the job. Offers five ways to further research a job, including questions to ask contact officers.
### PART 3: THE APPLICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Writing to selection criteria</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>How to write concise, precise responses</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Crafting an expression of interest or statement of suitability</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Responding to challenging criteria</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Values-based management</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Preparing your résumé</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Helping your referees</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>A case study: Lee Koudbee climbs high</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explains and illustrates a three-step process for writing strong, evidence-based responses to selection criteria.

Explains the importance of sentence propositions, vocabulary and syntax choices, and offers 13 ways to minimise word usage.

Offers five steps to writing these documents, and an illustrated, three-part structure.

Offers ideas on tackling criteria about strategic thinking, policy, leadership, management, and conflict.

Outlines what is meant by values and ethics criteria, and criteria about diversity, equal employment opportunity, participative work practices, workplace health and safety, and customer service. Explores ethical issues, engaging with risk, and social media behaviours.

Identifies 10 mistakes in résumés and how to avoid them. Shows what to include in a résumé and how to write a results-based work history.

Explains what makes a useful referee report and offers 10 tips for managing referees.

Illustrates the suggestions in Part 3 for writing responses to job-specific and capability-based selection criteria, and an expression of interest/suitability statement.

### PART 4: THE INTERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>How to prepare for a public sector interview</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lists 10 ways to undersell yourself at interview. Provides key steps that form an effective interview strategy.
Chapter 18: What to expect 246

Challenges faulty thinking about job interviews, outlines what could happen at a job interview and offers suggestions for making a positive impression. Tips are provided on telephone, video and Skype interviews.

Chapter 19: Interview language practices 255

Explains the importance of linguistic style. Offers 11 language practices to use during a job interview.

Chapter 20: Thirteen ideas for managing nerves 259

Explains 13 ideas for mental preparation prior to a job interview.

Chapter 21: The art of self-promotion 266

Shows how to prepare for seven commonly used self-promotion opportunities. Explains the importance of showing your value to the panel.

Chapter 22: Types of interview questions 281

Explains the types of questions used by interviewers and shows how to prepare responses.

Chapter 23: Challenging questions 289

Outlines ideas on preparing for questions about weaknesses, mistakes, ethics and values, difficult people, leadership, strategic thinking. Offers options for responding to questions about experience you do not have.

Chapter 24: Case study: How to anticipate interview questions 298

Explains how to anticipate possible interview questions.

Chapter 25: After the interview 302

Explains the need to keep records and obtain feedback and how this information feeds into further career management.

Further reading 308

Index 309

Notes 310
List of tables

Table 1 Your portfolio stocktake .................................................. 26
Table 2 120 informal roles ............................................................ 27
Table 3 Criterion-based log of a problem-solving incident ............. 31
Table 4 Situation-based log of a problem-solving incident .......... 32
Table 5 Key stages in filling an advertised job ............................... 49
Table 6 Comparison of capabilities across the APS ..................... 65
Table 7 550 action verbs ............................................................... 110

List of diagrams

Diagram 1 The career management cycle ...................................... 18
Diagram 2 Relationships map ....................................................... 34
Diagram 3 Relationships map for an executive assistant ............... 35
Diagram 4 Relationships map for a senior manager ....................... 35
Diagram 5 Three-step approach to writing to selection criteria ....... 94
Diagram 6 Vocabulary and syntax choices .................................. 119
Diagram 7 Features versus value .................................................. 268