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## Back to Basics:

### Better Selection Criteria; What Where When Why & How

In your written application you need to address the criteria to demonstrate specifically how your knowledge, skills and experience make you not only eligible, but the superior applicant for the job.

They key to writing successful statements against selection criteria is providing convincing **evidence**.

Claims should be direct. Sweeping statements that are not corroborated should be avoided. Anyone can create a list of duties they perform, but the best applicants will focus on how they have delivered outcomes to their organisation.

Try using the what, where, when, why and how questions following to show your next panel exactly what you can deliver and why you are the best person for the job.

### What

- What task did you perform?
- What abilities were required?
- What was the outcome?
- What was the feedback?

### Where

- Where did you do this?  
That is, what was the company and your position? (this will frame your response and keep the panel from having to flip through your resume).

### When

- When did you do it?  
Give an indication of time frame, keeping in mind that your examples should be in the last two to three years.

### Why

- Why did you do it?
- Why did you do it this way?  
For example, were you following instructions, a policy, did previous experience tell you the best way to do it?
- Why was the task / activity important to you, your supervisor or the company?  
This will give the panel a measure of the importance and impact of your action.

### How

- How did you do it?
- How did you know how to do it?



## Would you like professional help with your selection criteria?

Perhaps someone to review your application, or even help write it? We have access to a great team of experts who can help you with just this.

Contact us at the below email address and we will get a professional to give you a call to talk about how they can help, or give you a quote. (Don't forget to include a contact phone number!)

[admin@publicservicejobs.com.au](mailto:admin@publicservicejobs.com.au)

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## Looking for a Government Job?

Don't forget to check out the [public service jobs website](#) for links to government gazettes and vacancies across local, state and commonwealth government departments.

[www.publicservicejobs.com.au](http://www.publicservicejobs.com.au)

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## Feature Article

### Managing Your Career: Creating Success (Part 1)

*We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit. Aristotle*

Do you feel like you've gone as far as you can in your current role? With your current employer? Are you struggling to know what step to take next or knowing how to get your next promotion? Do you feel a glass ceiling looming up ahead?

The bad news is, things will probably not change unless something specific happens to change it. The good news is, you can make that change happen!

To get ahead and reach your career goals (see more about setting and reaching career goals in the [April 2008 newsletter](#)) you need to take charge, proactively manage each step of your career and create your own success. Most people don't find success just handed to them, so you need to go after it yourself.

If you are ready to get serious about your career and moving forward, here are some steps to take to help you get there.

### **Pull your weight.**

People will notice what you do and how you do it, even if they don't tell you. The one thing that will stop you moving forward is not pulling your weight in your current job. While you may think you can cut corners or not put in 100% effort without others noticing, most of the time they do. In short, work hard, meet your deadlines and produce quality work.

### **Be ethical.**

Bring integrity into your workplace and be honest in all you do. If you cut corners just to save yourself the effort, you are cheating. If you come in late and take extra long breaks, you are stealing. If you don't do what you say you will, you are lying. Honesty and reliability will be noticed by those around you and those who have the power to impact your career, for better or worse.

### **Commit to 'raising the bar'.**

How can you go above and beyond what you currently do? What little bit extra can you add to what you do? Come up with your own ideas, run them past your manager, volunteer for projects, help out others and do things that are outside your job description if you think it will make a positive contribution. While we judge ourselves by what we can do (and what we think we can do), others judge us by what we have done. Once others start seeing what you are capable of you will be trusted with bigger and better things that will put you on the path to success.



## Work on your knowledge and skills.

To improve your knowledge and skills consider training courses, self research, learning from others, getting a mentor, joining a professional organisation or going to a seminar or conference. If you are serious about moving forward in your career your knowledge and skills should be continually developing.

## Identify competencies that are rewarded and develop these.

What values does the organisation value, promote and reward? What kinds of people are promoted? What key competencies do the leaders in your organisation possess? Are they risk takers? Are they conservative decision makers? Do they have a consultative or authoritative leadership style? Are they excellent communicators? Are they analytical thinkers?

Once you have a list of the competencies that you need to make it to the top, you can begin setting your own goals. (See more about setting and reaching career goals in the [April 2008 newsletter](#))

## Identify attitudes and behaviours that may be holding you back.

This is probably the most difficult task. It involves being brutally honest with yourself and allowing others to be honest with you. Here are some ways that you can gather information regarding your "opportunities to improve".

- Be willing to take constructive criticism from others and yourself, evaluate it and *action it*.
- Sit down with someone you trust and ask for their advice.
- Use performance appraisals to identify areas for improvement.
- Ask your manager to help you identify skills / competency gaps.
- ALWAYS get feedback from unsuccessful job applications so you can see where you need to improve or develop more skills.

*Part 2 of this article will appear in the October 2008 edition of the Public Service Jobs newsletter.*

## Reader Questions

**Q. I took a portfolio of my achievements and some examples of my work to my last job interview but the panel didn't want to look at it. Are portfolios still a good idea or are they a bit old fashioned now?**

A. Absolutely, yes, you should always take a work portfolio with you to a job interview! Some panels will choose not to look at them at all, some will just glance through them, but other panels will put serious weight on the examples of your work that you provide. If you have a carefully constructed work portfolio it can really add credibility to your interview. The good candidates will refer to a piece of work when answering an interview question and then *show* the selection panel this in their work portfolio. Hard evidence is always better than hearsay!

**Do you have any questions about applying for a government job we can publish in our newsletter? Send them to us at the email address below:**

[admin@publicservicejobs.com.au](mailto:admin@publicservicejobs.com.au)

## What's New @ [www.selection-criteria.com.au](http://www.selection-criteria.com.au)

New in the VIP section of [selection-criteria.com.au](http://www.selection-criteria.com.au) is our interview with a government recruiter. Find out:

- What is the biggest misconception from government job applicants?
- What piece of advice do they most need?
- What is the number one applicant criticism from selection panels?
- And more...

[Click here to go straight to the interview.](#)



## Product Spotlight – 50% Discount Offer

### 401 Interview Questions ↓



**401 Interview Questions** is one of the publications in the series of “quick guides” available from [www.selection-criteria.com.au](http://www.selection-criteria.com.au).

This e-guide lifts the lid on government interview questions by giving you 401 commonly used interview questions in public service interviews. It is the perfect resource for practice interviews and public service interview preparation. Our readers have even said that they find it great to use for writing their selection criteria – the interview questions are great idea starters!

It covers administration, attention to detail, communication, computer skills, customer service, concern for standards, contract management, equity, OHS & organisational values (including APS Values), engineering, finance, flexibility, initiative, interpersonal skills, interpreting guidelines, inventory management, making decisions, management, motivation, organisational skills Including prioritising and meeting deadlines, problem solving, project management, purchasing / procurement, risk management, strategic influencing, supervision, teamwork, tenacity, tolerance for stress, working as an individual ... as well as some of those tricky questions that always appear at the beginning and end of an interview.

We are offering this e-book at 50% off it's normal price – that's just \$7.50! (Normally \$14.95) until the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2008. Please note that this is for credit card purchases only, and the publication is an e-book which means that it is a product that you download. The publication also comes with a 30 day money back guarantee, so why not give it a go!

**To take up the 50% off offer, visit [www.selection-criteria.com.au/newsletterspecial.html](http://www.selection-criteria.com.au/newsletterspecial.html) and enter the discount code “newsletter” (without the quotation marks).**

## What Comes Next?

What to expect in the October newsletter:

- Choosing and preparing examples for your statements against the selection criteria.
- Part 2 of the article Managing Your Career: Creating Success
- Should you email or fax your application?

**Plus heaps more. If you're not yet subscribed, join the team now to get the next newsletter delivered straight to your inbox.**

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