



COVER LETTERS AND CVS

How do I address Selection Criteria?

What are selection criteria?

When advertising for a role, there are always a set of factors or “Selection Criteria” against which candidate assessments will be made. Selection criteria can range from anything from industry experience, hard and soft skills, personal attributes and qualifications to task based knowledge and expertise needed to perform effectively in the role.

I match the selection criteria, but how do I address them in my cover letter/CV?

➤ Understand what is actually being asked of you...

It is easy to make assumptions based on what you *think* is being asked of you, but taking the time to read questions carefully will ensure you stand out from other applicants. For example, do you craft a different response depending on whether you are asked to ‘demonstrate ability’ or ‘demonstrate knowledge’? Put yourself in the shoes of the reader. What do you think they want to see?

➤ Address all parts of each selection criteria...

Remember essay writing for English exams? There were questions with several parts to the question, and unless you addressed the entire question you didn’t get full marks. Well, guess what? Cover letters and CVs are essentially essays about you! And the selection criteria make up the paragraphs to include in your essay. For example, one of the selection criteria for a role might be:

-You must have a professional and proactive approach to customers with the ability to work to deadlines.

This selection criterion actually requires you to address three qualities and skills, underlined above. Think how you will demonstrate each of the components, illustrating the point with specific and relevant examples.



➤ **Match your experience to the requirements...**

Spend time brainstorming! How many times have you thought you couldn't do a task, only to find most of the skills were transferable? Think of experiences from your past in ALL capacities where you may have demonstrated the skills or attributes required. Did you demonstrate project managing skills at university? Report writing? Time management and organisation? Write down as many appropriate (and recent!!) examples as you can, and then focus on what you think the reader wants to see! What do you think they would find the most impressive to help you stand out?

➤ **Illustrate and substantiate your answers...**

Back to your essay writing days, you will remember that all paragraphs followed a certain structure: "Statement, Example, Explanation" being the most common. When addressing selection criteria, it is critical to ensure you follow a similar method!

State and outline the nature of your experience and extent of your responsibilities/skills/knowledge.

Provide an **Example** to prove your competence and achievements, including any quantifiable measures such as cost reductions, KPI achievements, process improvements or productivity increases.

Follow the example with an **Explanation** of how this addresses the selection criteria. Many candidates forget the important last piece. Again, put yourself in the shoes of the reader. They may be going through a hundred CVs all of whom may have similar qualifications and experience to you. How do you stand out? Highlight how **YOUR** experience is best suited for the role based on the selection criteria.

➤ **Always, always , always proofread your responses...**

This point cannot be emphasised enough. Employers do not have time to infer anything or 'read between the lines'. Your responses need to be concise, direct, relevant and easy to read.

-Review your cover letter and CV for any inaccuracies in grammar and spelling.

-Zoom out to 50% and take another look at your document. How does the layout look? Is it too wordy? Is it uneven?

-Have you used positive language and strong action words? Making use of these will assist you in standing out in a crowd.

For more information regarding CV writing and interview techniques please contact one of our friendly, dedicated consultants today or check our website for the date of our next free workshop!