

Recruitment top tips

We aim to make our recruitment process as simple as possible to all candidates giving you all the information you need, to apply and prepare for interview and assessment. Read on for our top tips.

Application form

- Taking the time to complete it fully is your way of getting an interview. It is important to include all relevant information for example, make sure you include your employment history and relevant training.
- You should save your application form answers separately, for example on a word document, as you will not be able to save your application from Smart Survey once it is complete.
- Do not rely on the person reading the application to work out what you mean or rely on them to assume what you have done in the past.
- You need to spell out what you want to say as if you were telling someone who does not know anything about your skills, knowledge, or experience.
- Where there is a free form part of the application form to complete, make it easy for the panel/recruiting manager to read by using headings and bullet points. Match these to the behaviours expected under each competency and value in the person specification.
- Applications written in full text makes it more difficult for those shortlisting to find the necessary evidence for each competency and value.
- If you make your application easy to read, by referencing and allowing for some 'white space' it will be more appealing for those shortlisting all the applications.

Interview

- Prepare for questions that you are likely to be asked at interview and your responses. For example, what strengths and experience will you bring to the role?
- The main interview questions will be driven by the person specification for the job.
- Competency questions focus on your past behaviour in different job-related situations to allow us to predict your future performance. Think of relevant examples or situations you have been in before, for several of the Key Performance Outcomes found in the person specification for the role and be able to tell your stories!
- Make sure you have an enough variety of examples to display all your skills, knowledge, and experience.
- Try to notice interview cues to ensure your interview is focused and stays on track, for example, if all the panel stop writing it may be a clue that you have said enough, and they are ready to move onto the next question.

Additional Assessments

If you are also required to do an assessment in addition to your interview, you will be told in advance in your interview invite. Some of the various types of assessment are described below.

Presentation

- If you have to do a presentation you will be told this in advance. Be prepared, make sure it is well structured and your message is clear.
- We will ask you to send us your presentation in advance, so the panel members have a copy.
- Rehearse your presentation to manage time as you may be responsible for the timekeeping.
- Prepare for any follow-up questions that the assessors/panel members may ask.

Written exercise

- When you start a written exercise, read the instructions, and highlight what you need to do and the most essential points. Be clear in your mind before you start and think about a structure, if it is free

form or where there is a pre-determined structure, consider how you would approach it.

- During your written exercise, tackle the most important and complex issues first. Be sure that any conclusions you reach and recommendations you make are clear.
- Always be aware of the time. You need to give yourself time to complete the exercise and allow for time at the end to review your work and make sure nothing is missing.
- Remember to save as you go so you do not lose your work.

In-tray exercise

- First read carefully through the background information and follow the written instructions carefully. Always read all the items before you start any because later tasks may influence your decisions.
- Prioritise the tasks in terms of importance and urgency.
- Identify key issues, what action to take, how, by who and when, and give your reasons. Tasks are often interrelated, so your response to one may affect another.
- Focus on key points not the details. Do not be distracted by information that is not relevant.
- Usually, there is no right or wrong answer, but you must show an understanding of the issues and offer reasons for your decisions.
- Work quickly and accurately and keep a note of the finish time.

Role-play exercise

- Your ability to work under pressure and to perform on the spot is a key competency that is assessed during the role-play exercise. Just remember to breathe, listen, take your time, and think thoroughly before answering.
- The more in character you are, the more naturally and professionally you will act.
- Depending on the role, certain competencies will be more important and are highly sought after in candidates.
- Make sure you keep an appropriate pace throughout the exercise. You should not put yourself in a position where you need to rush or slow down. Keep an eye on the time and pace yourself appropriately.

If you have any other questions, please contact recruitment@sssc.uk.com.