

How to apply for positions at the City of Ballarat

If you see a position advertised that is of interest to you, here are some tips to help you through the application process:

Download the Information Pack

The Information Pack contains all the relevant information about the position, including the Position Description (PD). The PD will provide you with information about the duties involved, and the knowledge and skills required to fulfil the position. By reading the PD you, as an applicant, can assess whether you have what is needed to perform the job. The Information Pack will also provide you with instructions about how to apply for the position. After reading through the Information Pack, if you are still unsure if the position is for you, ask to seek further clarification regarding requirements and expectations from the Manager responsible for the position.

Key Selection Criteria

The Key Selection Criteria is a list of the skills, abilities, experience, qualifications in addition to personal attributes that the Selection Committee deem necessary to perform the job. They are to a large degree taken from the PD. The Key Selection Criteria allows the selection panel to make a fair assessment of your ability to meet the requirements of the position, and is the basis for short-listing applicants for an interview.

How to address the Key Selection Criteria

- Individually address each criterion under separate headings.
- Analyse each selection criterion according to the type and level required. Ensure you address each part of criteria.
- Start by writing down each criteria on a separate piece of paper and brainstorming as many ideas and concrete examples of how you can meet the criterion. You can draw examples from your academic experiences, employment, committee participation, voluntary work, hobbies, etc.
- When developing your response, use the STAR* method to assist you with the structure of your response.
- Where possible substantiate your examples with indicators of how well you did them.
- Where applicable, include what your specific involvement was in the task or project, rather than referring to what the team/group of people achieved.
- Have someone else read through your entire application. Ask them to check for clarity of expression, correct grammar and spelling, and to ensure you have adequately responded to each criterion.
- In your response to the selection criterion do not refer to your resume. If something is relevant in your resume write it into your key selection criteria response.
- There is no word limit when addressing each criterion, however it is recommended that you be as concise as possible, and try not to exceed one A4 page per criterion.
- Use plain English

When preparing your application:

Do

- Do read the PD thoroughly.
- Note the key requirements in the advertisement.
- Note the closing date for applications.
- If you are unsure about anything in the Information Pack, contact the Manager responsible for the position and ask for additional information.
- List the Key Selection Criteria for the vacant position on your application and detail how your skills, abilities, experience and qualifications meet these criteria. Remember to provide relevant examples.
- Ensure you provide a telephone contact number in your application.
- Where possible, provide an email address in your application.
- Provide references or the names of professional referees when requested.

Don't

- Don't assume that the Selection Panel knows anything/everything about you. A fair and objective choice about who to interview can only be made on the information you supply in the application.
- Don't submit a generic application (one that you consider is suitable for any vacant position). Match your skills, abilities etc., with that required of the position and detail that information in your application.
- Don't assume that because you're known to the Selection Panel that you will automatically be chosen for an interview.
- Don't be deterred if you don't obtain an interview. Consider why you may not have been chosen and then if necessary, ask a member of the Selection Panel. The information provided from them will be open, honest and constructive, which will enhance your chances when making applications for future positions.

Your application

When submitting your application, please provide:

- A covering letter
- A statement outlining your experience against the key selection criteria
- A current Resume
- Names and contact numbers for at least two professional referees
- Completed Application Cover Sheet

The City of Ballarat is pleased to accept all applications for positions and does not favour hand written applications over typed applications or vice versa. However, all applications should be neat and legible for ease of reading.

You can email, hand deliver or post your application to the Human Resources Office at the City of Ballarat. Please make a note of the closing date for the position that you would like to apply for and ensure that we have received your complete application by 5pm on that day.

Interviews

The selection panel will use your written application to assess whether to invite you to attend an interview. If you are fortunate enough to be selected for an interview, here are some tips to assist you through the process:

- Dress appropriately for the interview. The type of dress depends on the type of job that you are applying for, however it is safer to be a bit over dressed, than too casual.
- Don't be late!
- Try to stay calm and relaxed throughout the interview.
- Re-read the PD and your application before attending the interview.
- The interview questions will be based on the Key Selection Criteria, so prepare some potential answers to potential questions before attending the interview.
- Where applicable, provide a STAR* response to the interview question.
- Introduce yourself to each member of the panel with a firm handshake.
- Allow the interviewer to finish talking before answering the question. If you do not understand the question, ask the interviewer to repeat or rephrase the question. Consider your response before starting to answer the question.
- Demonstrate your interest and enthusiasm in the position.
- Research the organisation prior to attending the interview. You may be asked to talk about your understanding of the position and the organisation.
- Thank the panel for inviting you to attend the interview.

STAR Responses

When addressing the Key Selection Criteria, either as part of your application or during an interview, the best way to demonstrate that you meet the criteria is by providing a STAR Response. STAR stands for:

Situation or

Task

Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe a **specific** event or situation, not a generalised description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the selection panel to understand.

Action

Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on you. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what **you** did, not the efforts of the team. Don't describe what you might do, describe what you actually did.

Results

What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn?

After the process

If you are unsuccessful in obtaining the position or an interview, don't be disheartened. Sometimes it is just a case of another applicant being better suited to the position. Feel free to ask the Selection Panel for constructive feedback about your written application and/or interview.

For any further information, please contact **Human Resources** on **5320 5699** or **humanresources@ballarat.vic.gov.au**.