**Completing the application – how to include values in your examples**

**Star Technique guidance**

Star technique is a step-by-step tried and tested method used when applicants have been asked to provide examples of how they meet a job description or specification. Using this method allows employers to evaluate your examples in a structured and methodical way.

**Situation** - Describe the situation and explain what happened

**Task** - Outline the task you had to complete and describe your responsibilities

**Action** - Explain the steps that you took or the decisions you made

**Result** - Explain the outcomes of your actions

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| **WHAT DOES A GOOD RESPONSE LOOK LIKE?**Description: Description: MM900172629[1] A good example will not only meet the criteria outlined in the person specification, but will link to the SCTS core values and key behaviours. **You don’t need to explicitly state how the example meets the values and it is very likely that if you provide a good STAR example, then this will meet one or more of our values.**

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| **Respect** | Be courteous – cooperate, treat everyone with dignity and value diversity |
| Be open and fair – encourage good performance, give and receive constructive feedback, challenge and change inappropriate behaviour |
| Work as one team – lead and manage well; trust; empower and inspire each other |
| **Service** | Deliver a professional service – get the basics right, recognise individual needs and manage information responsibly |
| Learn in all we do – build our skills and knowledge; respond to feedback and reflect on learning and experience to improve our service |
| Set an example – always do our best, share and explain what we do and show how it relates to our priorities, policies and values |
| **Excellence** | Innovate – think creatively to find solutions, evaluate ideas and deliver continuous improvement |
| Collaborate – work with our customers and partners to share experience and lead change to improve the justice system |
| Be accountable – explain our plans and performance, understand the risk we face and make clear decisions that deliver improvement, sustainability and efficiency  |

More information on our values and key behaviours, including positive indicators, can be found [here](http://myscs/library/temp/V%26B.pdf). The following provide examples of criteria outlined in the skills, knowledge and experience section of our person specifications, and what a good and poor response might look like, as well as how this could link to our values and behaviours. |
| **Example 1**Skill:* Excellent interpersonal skills

**Poor response:**I am a great communicator and get on well with anyone that I work with. My interpersonal skills are well developed and I use these both within and out with work. **Good response:**I used to work part time as a member of waiting staff. On a particularly busy weekend, we were short staffed and an angry customer complained about the extended wait for their food. I utilised effective communication to help resolve the issue. I first listened attentively to the customer and clarified the reason for his complaint to ensure I fully understood. I apologised and explained the reasons for the delay, and that it was not usual to have to wait this long but that I would see what I could do. I then spoke to the kitchen staff to find out how long it would be before his order was going to be ready and asked for the order to be moved to a priority: By explaining the situation to them, they were willing to prioritise it (something which they would not usually do). I also asked for an estimate as to when it would be ready. I then apologised again to the customer and gave him the estimated waiting time for his order.**This is a good response as it has a specific example structured around the STAR technique. It links to our value on respect as it:*** **Demonstrates courtesy**
* **Shows an example of appreciating others and their needs**
* **Demonstrates working as one team**

**It also links to our value of service as it:*** **Demonstrates delivering a professional service.**
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| **Example 2**Experience:* Experience of reviewing practices and procedures to streamline processes and ensure the quality of service delivery is maintained

**Poor response:** One of my key skills is improving processes and I believe the key to this is exploiting information technology. Process improvement is fundamental to ensuring savings are made for the organisation both in terms of time and increased efficiency. I have utilised this skill throughout my career and I believe my track record clearly demonstrates that I can add real value to your organisation. **Good response:**An example of this is when I worked at Seinfeld Consultancy, where I realised our manual process for recording queries on a tally sheet was time intensive, difficult to process and challenging to analyse. I undertook some analysis of the current process and calculated that the department spent on average 7 hours per week recording, processing and analysing query data. This meant that around 52 days per year was being spent on this task at a cost of £4,500. I evaluated a number of query management systems and how effective they would be. I then produced a system specification to enable a procurement exercise to be completed. The result was that I introduced a new electronic query management system to the organisation at a cost of £6,000. The new system reduced the time spent recording, processing and analysing query data by 5 hours per week, saving £3,000 of resource in the first year. Some of my colleagues were doubtful this change would be helpful. After highlighting the need for change and the system benefits, they were convinced this new approach was necessary. In addition, the new system enabled other managers to easily analyse query trends. This identified a key performance indicator in relation to customer response times, which was used to monitor service delivery.**This is a good response as it has a specific example structured around the STAR technique. It links to our value on excellence as it:*** **Shows example of thinking creatively to find solutions**
* **Identified an opportunity to make improvements**
* **Delivered continuous improvement**

**It also links to our value of service as it:*** **Demonstrates learn in all we do by reflecting on experience to improve service**
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| **Example 3:** Experience:* Experience of managing time and a varied workload

**Poor response:**I manage to juggle a varied workload very well in my current role and ensure that everything is completed on time. I understand how important it is to meet deadlines and customer expectations and I have never missed a deadline. **Good response:**In my present role, I am an accounts manager and have an existing case load of clients, but have new clients coming in all of the time. Some of it is routine work, following up to correspondence, and some of my work is matters arising from situations. I cannot really delegate my work as I am the assigned account manager. Several weeks ago, I had five pieces of on-going case load work and two pieces of consultancy work. On one particular day, some urgent status reports were required before the end of the day. The on-going case work has a management required turn-around of 10 days, however I set my own for 5 days to make sure that no routine work stays on my desk for long. This way I never have a backlog. The consultancy work is high priority, with strict deadlines. These are always to be completed 2 weeks before the deadline, and so I complete these ahead of this date by allocating time in my diary to work on these priority projects. When I get urgent work in, such as the status report, it needs to be immediately attended to. I don’t really set priorities for this, and always have other work to do at the same time. Sometimes, I might have several of these at the same time, and need to ask management which is most important. On this particular day, the status report was given my immediate attention from the moment I got the email to complete it. I needed to reschedule all of my contract and regular work. Due to the fact that I give myself tighter deadlines for my routine work, I am always able to keep to deadline, even when I get urgent tasks such as the status report. On that particular day, the report was sent before the deadline, and I was still able to complete all of my routine work on time. **This is a good response as it has a specific example structured around the STAR technique. It links to our value on service as it:*** **Delivered a professional service by providing what was promised and understood stakeholder needs**.

**It also links to our value of excellence as it:*** **Demonstrate being accountable and taking responsibility**
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| **Example 4**Knowledge:* Understand importance of confidentiality

**Poor response:**I deal with a number of confidential documents in my current role as an Executive PA to a Director. I ensure that anything transmitted by email is marked with appropriate protective marking and when printing documents these are password protected. I often need to send hard copy documents between offices and therefore ensure that these are packaged appropriately and that the receiving office knows to expect these.**Good response:**In my role as Executive PA to a Director confidentiality is paramount and this is something I pride myself on. An example of this is when we were dealing with an Employment Tribunal (ET), at which my Director was attending, and I had to liaise closely with our HR department to ensure that she had all the relevant documents for the ET. These were sent primarily by email and some in hard copy. I ensured that the appropriate protective marking was applied for emails and any hard copy documents were locked in a secure cabinet. In terms of my own integrity, I had knowledge of the specific case and the staff member involved but I did not discuss this with anyone or disclose that I knew any of the details.**This is a good example as it has a specific example structured around the STAR technique. It links to our value on service as it:*** **Sets an example by displaying value and behaviors and acted in accordance with policy and procedure.**
* **Demonstrated delivering a professional service by getting the basics right**
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| **Example 5**Experience:* Experience of responding effectively to, and defusing potential conflict

**Poor response:**It is important to ensure that conflict in the workplace is avoided and when issues arise they are not allowed to escalate. As a team leader in my current role I believe I have the skills to manage this and ensure that my team is always happy and motivated to work. Due to my positive approach to supervising there are very few occasions when conflict is an issue in my team. **Good response:**When there are team conflicts or issues, I always do my best to step up as team leader when needed. I think my communication skills make me an effective leader and mediator. For example, when I was working on a team project, two of the team members got embroiled in an argument about the best way to present a set of figures to the Board. There were raised voices and it was clear that they were not going to be able to come to a consensus by themselves. I arranged a meeting the following day when they had had the opportunity to reflect. We discussed the issues and what the potential solutions were, and this resulted in a compromise which both team members were comfortable with. We also discussed appropriate behavior in the workplace and treating each other with respect.**This is a good response as it has a specific example structured around the STAR technique. It links to our value on respect as it:*** **Shows working as one team and leading and managing well**
* **Demonstrates being open and fair and challenging inappropriate behaviour**
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| **Example 6**Knowledge:* Monitors the effectiveness of practices and procedures

**Poor response:**I regularly review policies in my current role and this involves checking a database of policies for review dates; seeking feedback from staff and managers and then agreeing the changes with trade union colleagues. This is very successful and is always completed on time.**Good response:**I work for a small ICT firm and one of the responsibilities in my current role is ensuring that the HR policies and procedures we have in place are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure these are current and fit for purpose. It is necessary for me to be familiar with all our policies and keep a record of when they are due for review. I manage a database of policies to assist with this and when a policy is due for review I manage this process. A recent example of this is our Social Media policy. I sent a questionnaire to all staff to seek feedback on how clear the policy was and additionally I sought feedback from managers who had used this policy to manage a conduct issue, and whether the policy was clear on what steps to take. The policy was introduced three years ago, so I also reviewed how many cases had arisen of a breach of policy since it was implemented and whether this was due to any aspect of the policy requiring refining.Based on this feedback I then worked closely with our trade union colleagues to make changes and agree a revised version of the policy. **This is a good response as it has a specific example structured around the STAR technique. It links to our value on service as it:*** **Demonstrates learn in all we do by reflecting on learning and experience to improve service.**

**It also link to our value of excellence as it:*** **Shows collaboration with customers and taking the time to understand different perspectives.**
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