

Transcript | How to Write a Standout Job Application in the UK Civil Service

WEBVTT

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00:00:09.000 --> 00:00:31.880

Jenna Kelly: Hello, everyone! Hello, and welcome to today's event. I'm so pleased to have you all here. This session is on how to write a standout application in UK civil service. My name is Jenna Kelly, I am the head of events here at Apolitical, and I am delighted to be moderating today's session. It would also be great to hear from all of you.

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00:00:31.880 --> 00:00:50.670

Jenna Kelly: I'm sure we have lots of wonderful attendees in the room, so if I could please ask you to go ahead and introduce yourselves, please keep me company on screen along with our speakers, let us know who you are, what you do, where you are joining us from today. We would love to see who we have with us.

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00:00:51.310 --> 00:01:14.249

Jenna Kelly: Today, we are going to be exploring what hiring managers are really looking for, including common pitfalls to avoid, and practical ways to showcase your skills and experience. And we'll also be sharing some real examples, some strategies to help you write applications that stand out, and that boost your chances of success in the UK civil service.

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00:01:14.250 --> 00:01:38.199

Jenna Kelly: For those of you who might be joining us at an event for the first time, and I think there are lots of you, a big welcome. Apolitical is the world's largest network for global government, used by over a quarter of a million public servants and policymakers from more than 170 countries, and our mission is to make governments smarter, and we do this by equipping public servants worldwide, just like you, with the knowledge and skills

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00:01:38.200 --> 00:01:40.000

Jenna Kelly: to lead the change.

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00:01:40.140 --> 00:01:58.989

Jenna Kelly: And hopefully we have had some introductions in... we have. We've had lots of introductions. Please keep those coming. It is great to have you here. Zana, thank you for the first, comment. There's always points to the brave first, poster of an introduction, or a hello. Yes, the question that's come in the meeting is being recorded.

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00:01:58.990 --> 00:02:07.810

Jenna Kelly: Hello, we have, someone working at TFL, we've got the DWP, I'm trying to keep up with the introductions.

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00:02:07.840 --> 00:02:26.200

Jenna Kelly: We have got, colleagues from London, from York, from Peterborough, West Midlands, I can see, Leeds, Cardiff, Edinburgh. Okay, they are coming in thick and fast. I'm not going to be able to read them all out, but please do keep saying hello to us and to our speakers, and I'm so pleased to have all of you with us today.

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00:02:26.620 --> 00:02:49.989

Jenna Kelly: We are also thrilled to extend an invitation to join today's speakers and your peers in the Global Public Service in our career development community. This is an open forum where public servants from all around the world can ask questions, share advice and resources, spotlight professional development opportunities, and to learn from each other's career journeys, which I'm sure we'll do a bit of today.

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00:02:50.140 --> 00:03:05.490

Jenna Kelly: The link is in the Resources tab at the bottom of your Zoom screen, but if you can't find that for any reason, my colleague is also going to post the link in the chat, and I would love to see your voices in there as well today, and after this event is over.

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00:03:06.140 --> 00:03:10.839

Jenna Kelly: I'll get a few technical notes out of the way before we get into today's conversation.

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00:03:10.840 --> 00:03:30.210

Jenna Kelly: This event is being recorded, as a few of you have asked, for on-demand viewing on the apolitical website, so please do not record it yourself. Contact details for privacy concerns are in the apolitical homepage footer, and closed captions are available, and they can be toggled on or off using your Zoom and screen settings.

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00:03:30.820 --> 00:03:31.900

Jenna Kelly: Okay.

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00:03:32.090 --> 00:03:41.440

Jenna Kelly: Before I introduce some very special speakers, we are going to run a few quick polls to get a sense of where you're coming to today's conversation from.

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00:03:41.510 --> 00:03:52.760

Jenna Kelly: Okay, let's look at the first poll. This should pop up on your screen in just a moment, and this question is, in the next 12 months, how likely are you to apply for a new role?

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00:03:52.840 --> 00:04:04.819

Jenna Kelly: The options are very likely, somewhat likely, not sure, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely. And I will go silent for a moment to let you ponder your answer.

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00:04:14.180 --> 00:04:15.490

Jenna Kelly: Okay.

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00:04:15.620 --> 00:04:24.489

Jenna Kelly: Wow, 83% of you responded to that, thank you so much for being so, quick on the Zoom polls. We have 70% of you saying very likely.

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00:04:24.490 --> 00:04:42.459

Jenna Kelly: So that's hopefully an interesting, and useful, insight for our speakers, and 21 somewhat likely. We only have 4 people in the room today, very unlikely to apply for a new role, only 7 somewhat unlikely, so we're... almost all of us are not sure or likely.

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00:04:42.510 --> 00:04:55.809

Jenna Kelly: to apply for new roles. That's really, really helpful, and thank you for responding to that. And we do have a second poll. Similarly, this will pop up on your screen, so just give it one moment. This question is.

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00:04:55.940 --> 00:05:03.219

Jenna Kelly: What might lead you to apply for a new role? What might lead you to apply for a new role?

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00:05:03.520 --> 00:05:11.280

Jenna Kelly: You want to change professions, your organization is restructuring, Your geographical circumstances are changing.

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00:05:11.470 --> 00:05:14.330

Jenna Kelly: You're ready to apply for a more senior role.

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00:05:14.650 --> 00:05:26.570

Jenna Kelly: Your current skills might not be a good fit for your role, or if it's something else, you're always welcome to share your thoughts in the chat. And similarly, I will go quiet while you think and respond.

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00:05:36.050 --> 00:05:37.230

Jenna Kelly: Okay.

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00:05:37.850 --> 00:05:49.889

Jenna Kelly: I see some comments in the chat that you want to pick all of the above. I... maybe we should have set this to a, can submit multiple responses poll. Sorry for reducing you to a single answer.

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00:05:50.080 --> 00:05:51.610

Jenna Kelly: Okay.

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00:05:51.760 --> 00:06:00.369

Jenna Kelly: The answers are in, and by quite a while, the leading response is that you are ready to apply for a more senior role.

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00:06:00.370 --> 00:06:15.499

Jenna Kelly: We've got over two-thirds of you giving that as the reason for, leading to applying for a new role, and I think fairly even across a desire to change profession, restructuring, and current skills not being a good fit.

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00:06:15.500 --> 00:06:21.390

Jenna Kelly: Plus, a lot of, very good answers in the chat, so thank you for engaging in that way.

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00:06:21.910 --> 00:06:22.760

Jenna Kelly: Okay.

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00:06:23.050 --> 00:06:35.530

Jenna Kelly: Thank you for that, Paul, as well. I do have a final one, bear with me. This one is, which skill do you think is most critical for career progression in today's civil service?

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00:06:36.010 --> 00:06:43.590

Jenna Kelly: Strategic thinking and foresight, change management, digital data and AI confidence, commercial acumen.

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00:06:43.620 --> 00:06:58.960

Jenna Kelly: Effective communication, leadership and people skills, collaboration and silo busting, or user-centered design thinking. A lot of options there, and if you can think about it as a most critical, not suggesting that any of these are not critical or important, of course.

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00:07:13.880 --> 00:07:14.970

Jenna Kelly: Okay.

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00:07:15.540 --> 00:07:19.340

Jenna Kelly: And the answers are almost all in.

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00:07:20.840 --> 00:07:40.080

Jenna Kelly: A little bit more spread out on this one. I think for the most part, we are seeing leadership and people skills as the most critical for career progression, which is interesting and may align with that previous desire, that people were sharing about wanting to apply for a more senior role.

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00:07:40.590 --> 00:07:56.689

Jenna Kelly: We are seeing, about a fifth of you saying strategic thinking and foresight. Similarly, just under a fifth effective communication. Okay, that's really helpful. Thank you for responding to those polls and bearing with me. And for now, I'm going to introduce our speakers.

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00:07:56.780 --> 00:08:07.519

Jenna Kelly: We are so fortunate to have 3 absolutely brilliant guests here today. We have Kylie White, we have Ruth Frost, and Harry Pinder joining us.

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00:08:07.520 --> 00:08:24.110

Jenna Kelly: Kylie is Head of Talent, Leadership, and Management Development at the Department for Business and Trade, and since joining the Civil Service in 2014, she has worked across HR, talent, and culture, following earlier experience in private sector recruitment.

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00:08:24.460 --> 00:08:39.180

Jenna Kelly: Ruth is an outreach and innovation manager at Company's House, where she builds on experience as a senior recruitment manager. Ruth also brings a background in education, having previously worked as a teacher in a busy South Wales high school.

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00:08:39.520 --> 00:08:54.360

Jenna Kelly: And Harry is a special project lead at Croydon Council, and has previously held roles in policy and strategy in the Home Office and the Cabinet Office. And Harry is co-founder of the Unofficial Guides CIC, alongside Nathan White.

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00:08:54.360 --> 00:09:10.969

Jenna Kelly: The eagle-eyed among you may note that Nathan was originally due to join us today and had to step away due to some competing priorities, something which I think all of us may be able to relate to, but we are so pleased to have Harry step in and share his wisdom with us and his time, so thank you so much, Harry.

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00:09:11.380 --> 00:09:19.100

Jenna Kelly: You can read the speakers' full bios by visiting the Resources tab at the bottom of your Zoom screen again, and heading to the Speakers section.

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00:09:20.160 --> 00:09:28.600

Jenna Kelly: Before we launch into today's presentations, I thought we could start with a quick icebreaker, just to get us warmed up. So, Kylie, Ruth, Harry, the question is...

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00:09:28.880 --> 00:09:33.399

Jenna Kelly: If your career journey so far were a mode of transport.

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00:09:33.400 --> 00:09:52.140

Jenna Kelly: What would it be, and why? And to everyone in the room, I'm going to ask you to share your responses to this question as well. We will post that in the chat and ask you to

respond. I'm going to come to Kylie first. So, Kylie, what is your mode of transport that denotes your career journey?

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00:09:52.730 --> 00:10:06.029

Kylie White: So the reason I went for this is it's... it's top of my mind, because I just got back from my honeymoon, and I did a cruise, around Norway, so mine would be a cruise ship, I think. And I think that's because

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00:10:06.250 --> 00:10:21.200

Kylie White: I've sort of gone from role to role, each one kind of getting me to the next destination, and who knows where I'm going to end up? So, I think, unlike a cruise, where I know where I'm going to finish, this one's still out in open waters.

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00:10:22.330 --> 00:10:30.359

Jenna Kelly: I love that. You had a lot of emoji love for that as well, Kylie. Ruth, I'm going to come to you next. What is your mode of transport?

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00:10:30.810 --> 00:10:41.820

Ruth Frost: It's a really cheesy answer, so apologies, everybody. So I thought about this one. I think I kind of compare it to a train, in terms of I've had a couple of kinds of times when maybe

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00:10:41.950 --> 00:10:56.890

Ruth Frost: like, I've kind of gone off on, like, little side tracks, I've kind of got off, I've had a little bit of a think about things, I've had a couple of career breaks to have some children. I am not on some kind of high-speed train going, I don't know, somewhere, like.

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00:10:56.890 --> 00:11:15.980

Ruth Frost: I don't know, like, TGV in France or anything like that, but absolutely, I kind of feel as though there's a number of tracks, my career's kind of gone on different ways, but ultimately, I think it is all about being able to have kind of lots and multiple decisions, multiple destinations. It's not necessarily a one-size-fits-all sort of thing.

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00:11:17.050 --> 00:11:22.170

Jenna Kelly: I love that. Thank you, Ruth. And Harry, your mode of transport, what would it be?

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00:11:22.990 --> 00:11:46.489

Harry Phinda: Thank you, and thank you for preparing us, earlier. So, I would say mine is a London night bus, specifically, partly because sometimes, you know, opportunities don't show up when you expect, and so London night buses sometimes don't show up, but sometimes two or three happen all at the same time, and so all these opportunities come, and then I have a choice. So, sometimes there's an opportunity, sometimes they are.

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00:11:46.490 --> 00:12:09.679

Harry Phinda: And occasionally, there is a detour that you don't sort of see coming, and so I've had detours in my career where I've worked in consulting, or sort of done roles which I previously didn't think I could probably do. But ultimately, I actually end up getting where I actually absolutely need to be, particularly on a late night out, so that's probably what I'd say a London... a night to London bus.

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00:12:10.370 --> 00:12:34.050

Jenna Kelly: I love that, and for anyone that is based here, you will maybe immediately have responded to Harry's answer, so thank you for that. We have some absolutely wonderful responses in the chat. Just a note for everyone, a few of you are sending some of your chat comments to just the hosts and panelists, which means that I can see them, but all of your fellow event attendees may not be able to.

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00:12:34.050 --> 00:12:59.039

Jenna Kelly: You can amend that by clicking on the blue drop-down in the Zoom chat and selecting everyone, away from hosts and panelists, and if you're having any issues with that, just let me know. But I think the first response was a bike with one pedal. So I won't read the other hundreds that are coming through, but, I hope that that person has a chance to learn some lessons today that helps their, helps their bike find their second pedal. Maybe that's a terrible analogy.

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00:12:59.040 --> 00:13:14.969

Jenna Kelly: That is enough from me. I'm going to get us straight into the presentations now. Some great answers from our speakers already. Ruth, you are up first, so without further ado, I'm going to... I'm going to hand over to you, and I can't wait to hear what you have to share.

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00:13:15.980 --> 00:13:17.610

Ruth Frost: Thanks so much, Jenna.

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00:13:18.330 --> 00:13:22.130

Ruth Frost: Right, I'm just waiting for my slides to come up.

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00:13:23.530 --> 00:13:41.660

Ruth Frost: Amazing, thank you. Okay, so thank you so much, folks. It's really, really lovely and an absolute pleasure to be with you today. I wanted to start off by actually looking at the very start of the application process, because if you can start strong, you're on a really good footing, you know what you're doing.

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00:13:41.660 --> 00:13:46.499

Ruth Frost: And that's, I think, where you can make your really first positive steps.

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00:13:46.560 --> 00:13:50.560

Ruth Frost: Okay, so if we can go on to slide 2, please.

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00:13:50.690 --> 00:14:07.889

Ruth Frost: So, my first really practical hint and tip for you, it sounds so obvious, but it is use the advert to your advantage, okay? Now, I'm talking to people who are in the civil service here in that public sector, so you are not going to be surprised when I say to you.

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00:14:07.890 --> 00:14:12.890

Ruth Frost: Adverts are not always short and sweet. They are long. They have got information in them.

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00:14:12.910 --> 00:14:32.549

Ruth Frost: But that's there for you. Use that. It is really, really incredibly valuable, okay? So get yourself started, first of all. We're assuming you've already read the advert through. You know it says something you're interested in. You know it's one you want to apply for. So where do you start by getting, kind of, the best out of the advert?

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00:14:32.550 --> 00:14:51.219

Ruth Frost: Start with the basics, all right? What's expected of you when... in terms of applying? Is it a CV-based application? Has it got any pre-tests? Is this something you need to schedule in in terms of your time to make sure you do a pre-test before you can even start the application? You don't want to believe in that till the last minute.

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00:14:51.750 --> 00:15:05.379

Ruth Frost: Are you required to put an employment history in? Is it looking for a personal statement? Adverts are going to be different. They're going to be asking for different things. Make sure you know what's required of you. You don't want to have put aside, kind of.

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00:15:05.380 --> 00:15:16.019

Ruth Frost: a couple of hours the day before it's due in to realize you had to do a pre-test that you haven't prepped for, okay? So absolutely understand your basics from the advert to start with.

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00:15:16.260 --> 00:15:24.909

Ruth Frost: Secondly, actually annotate that advert. So if you've got a printer, get the advert printed off. If not, and you're using the digital device.

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00:15:24.910 --> 00:15:39.060

Ruth Frost: Get an annotation tool. Be able to really, and it sounds daft, to kind of pull that advert apart. You want it to work for you, and because our adverts are long, you need to know the parts you are focusing on, okay?

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00:15:39.090 --> 00:15:47.149

Ruth Frost: So, take your highlighter to it, take your annotation tool to it. What do you need to be looking at? What is critical, okay?

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00:15:47.280 --> 00:15:50.119

Ruth Frost: And to an extent, it might not be what you expect.

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00:15:50.160 --> 00:16:09.739

Ruth Frost: You know, you don't need to, at this stage, worry about things like the salary or the job description. We're assuming you've read those. We assume... assuming you know what those say. You need to be focusing on what do you need to include in the application. What does that need to look like? And predominantly, for you, that is what's going to be assessed.

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00:16:09.740 --> 00:16:16.160

Ruth Frost: Okay? So find that section within the advert, and really, really focus in on it.

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00:16:16.340 --> 00:16:31.270

Ruth Frost: Are we assessing the behaviors if it's a civil service advert? Are we assessing the person specification? Are we assessing technical skills? Are we assessing experience? Whatever it is, the advert's going to tell you what that is. And you need to know that, okay?

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00:16:31.370 --> 00:16:46.890

Ruth Frost: Because one of us going to be assessed is what the hiring manager is going to have to one side of them when they are reading your application. Therefore, it's what you need to have to the side of you when you are writing your application.

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00:16:47.170 --> 00:17:05.320

Ruth Frost: easy to treat it as a tick list, okay? I know it sounds really obvious, but in terms of once you've got that list of what has been assessed next to you, when you are writing your application, tick off every last bit as you include it, alright? It's really important

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00:17:05.660 --> 00:17:25.329

Ruth Frost: signpost exactly what you are including. If you can, even use the wording from the advert. You do not want a hiring manager to miss evidence that you're providing. Make it really clear. Put yourself in the shoes of that hiring manager. They are probably reading tens, if not sometimes hundreds of applications.

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00:17:25.480 --> 00:17:36.230

Ruth Frost: Yours needs to stand out, and it will do so if it is straightforward, if it is easy to read, and if it clearly shows the evidence they are looking for, okay?

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00:17:36.750 --> 00:17:48.550

Ruth Frost: Some people say to me, what if I can't cover everything? I can see they're asking for these, I can probably do 70-80%. Is it still worth me applying? It absolutely is.

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00:17:48.610 --> 00:18:02.329

Ruth Frost: Still put your application in, but think about whether you can cover off that evidence from outside of work. Maybe you do some volunteering, maybe you do something in your home, in your personal life. Maybe you've done something in a previous role.

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00:18:02.330 --> 00:18:12.299

Ruth Frost: put that evidence in, okay? Try and show evidence for all of the elements that are being assessed. It's really important.

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00:18:12.430 --> 00:18:19.479

Ruth Frost: Okay, so you've used the advert, it's got you started, it's kept you on track as you're pulling together your application.

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00:18:19.660 --> 00:18:24.320

Ruth Frost: Can we go to the next slide, if that's all right? Thank you. All right. So...

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00:18:24.580 --> 00:18:31.460

Ruth Frost: Make sure that when you are writing your application, you are giving us really solid evidence.

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00:18:31.620 --> 00:18:40.420

Ruth Frost: And again, I know it's a bit cheesy, but that's why I've used the little concrete mixer icon, okay? We want really concrete examples, okay?

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00:18:40.760 --> 00:18:45.410

Ruth Frost: So, let's say one of the things we're assessing is communication skills.

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00:18:46.080 --> 00:19:02.229

Ruth Frost: Sometimes we get applications that say things like, I'm a great communicator, I've communicated in lots of different contexts, I've communicated comfortably with staff who are junior and staff who work at a senior level, etc, etc. That's all great! That's brilliant, well done.

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00:19:02.320 --> 00:19:20.940

Ruth Frost: But unless you give us any evidence, we cannot give you credit for that, and that is such a shame for you, okay? You want to get credit for the things you've done, and you will only get that if you give us solid evidence. So by all means, start your example with, I have great communication skills.

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00:19:21.260 --> 00:19:39.939

Ruth Frost: But that's when those kind of sweeping statements need to stop, and you need to go into solid evidence. So I have great communication skills, and I've shown these by. That word, by, can be really important. Or, I have great communication skills. An example of a time that I displayed these was...

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00:19:40.140 --> 00:19:49.449

Ruth Frost: And you're getting into that concrete stuff that we can go, yeah, I can see they've done that, I can see great evidence of that, therefore I can give them credit.

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00:19:49.560 --> 00:19:50.469

Ruth Frost: for it.

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00:19:50.950 --> 00:19:58.770

Ruth Frost: Now, a lot of you I know, are civil servants, and so you've probably heard this before, but just in case you haven't, this next point is so valuable.

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00:19:58.920 --> 00:20:17.590

Ruth Frost: STAR can be a really good way of giving that solid evidence. So STAR stands for Situation, Task, Action, Result. If you haven't got a pen and paper to write it down, Google it, it will absolutely be there for you, alright? It's a really good way of setting out your evidence, okay?

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00:20:18.000 --> 00:20:18.890

Ruth Frost: Now.

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00:20:19.050 --> 00:20:32.759

Ruth Frost: Think of the S and the T, the situation and the task, as being quite light-touch. They set the C, but don't use lots of C words on them. You want to add your detail on the A and the R, the actions and the results. Focus the actions on you.

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00:20:32.760 --> 00:20:46.859

Ruth Frost: Okay, we don't need to hear about your colleagues, your team leader, your manager. We want to know about you. Make it eye-focused. Okay, so I did this, I did that. All right? Go into the detail of the things you've done.

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00:20:46.900 --> 00:21:04.749

Ruth Frost: But don't forget about the results. We have so many people who give us these great examples, and then because they don't tell us the outcome, we're left thinking, well, was it a success? Wasn't it? What happened? Try and also pack that result, if you can, with a number, a statistic, some data.

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00:21:04.750 --> 00:21:12.300

Ruth Frost: even some customer management feedback. Something that shows that not only did you see it was a success.

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00:21:12.330 --> 00:21:15.090

Ruth Frost: But others did too, and you can back that with evidence.

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00:21:15.280 --> 00:21:31.819

Ruth Frost: Now, what does the E stand for? The E is a really nice addition to STAR. You might not necessarily use it all the time, but if you could add it in from time to time, it can be really beneficial. It stands for evaluation, okay? Or, probably a better way of thinking about it is, even better if.

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00:21:31.820 --> 00:21:39.850

Ruth Frost: Okay? Because sometimes what we see people do is they set out their star example, and they've had a really positive result. They've done something really good.

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00:21:40.100 --> 00:21:48.250

Ruth Frost: And then, in the evaluation part, they tear themselves to pieces, and they're saying, oh, I shouldn't have done this, and this didn't go well. Don't do that.

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00:21:48.330 --> 00:22:06.239

Ruth Frost: Even better if, what could you have done better? It shows continuous improvement, it shows you're a reflexive practitioner, it shows that you are not afraid to be thinking about how you are moving this forward, but always focus on how you could improve it, not anything that was bad, okay?

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00:22:06.520 --> 00:22:13.270

Ruth Frost: Hey, you've got your solid evidence, you've absolutely mined your advert for all the important things you need.

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00:22:13.760 --> 00:22:23.019

Ruth Frost: What we want to move on to now is something that is really talked about and relevant in the recruitment world at the moment, all right? So, can I have my next slide?

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00:22:23.170 --> 00:22:24.270

Ruth Frost: And this is AI.

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00:22:24.270 --> 00:22:27.389

Jenna Kelly: Quick one-minute time check, I know you're on the final part with.

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00:22:27.390 --> 00:22:33.650

Ruth Frost: That's fine. Thanks, Jenna. So, we have a lot of people asking, should I be using AI or not?

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00:22:33.740 --> 00:22:44.810

Ruth Frost: In applications, okay? Is it a friend? Is it a foe? First of all, have a look on the advert. The advert will always have some guidance about whether AI is allowed or not.

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00:22:44.830 --> 00:22:54.349

Ruth Frost: Read it, follow it. Often it's a link, okay? Don't bypass it, go into it, read it. Whatever it says, you need to be following it.

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00:22:54.350 --> 00:23:11.369

Ruth Frost: From our perspective, what we would be saying is, AI is a great tool, okay? If you are sat looking at a blank screen, AI is a great way to get you started, provide you with an outline, okay? If you are struggling to get down to the word count, let's say you've written 1,000 words, it's an 800-word word word count.

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00:23:11.470 --> 00:23:26.819

Ruth Frost: AI can be a great way of editing it down, okay? It can be really good if you're prepping for an interview, and you think, I just need some interview question suggestions. Put the job description in, it can provide those for you. Great way of practicing.

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00:23:27.380 --> 00:23:41.849

Ruth Frost: But AI isn't you, okay? If we wanted to employ AI, if we wanted AI to write the application, we wouldn't have advertised the job in the first place, okay? We want to hear from you. If you use AI to write your application.

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00:23:41.870 --> 00:23:51.030

Ruth Frost: you risk losing credibility, you risk your application being withdrawn, hiring managers will spot it, okay? So, use it as a tool.

118

00:23:51.030 --> 00:24:02.509

Ruth Frost: Following the guidance that's provided, but ultimately, it's you that's amazing. It's you that's got experience and skills, and it's you we want to hear from, therefore it's you we want to write the application.

119

00:24:03.730 --> 00:24:04.500

Ruth Frost: That's me?

120

00:24:04.500 --> 00:24:19.989

Jenna Kelly: Thank you so much, Ruth. That was really great and stirred lots of engagement in the chat, so thank you so much for sharing your presentation. I'm gonna jump straight to Kylie for your presentation, and then we'll come to Harry and then Q&A. So, Kylie, the floor is yours.

121

00:24:24.200 --> 00:24:27.070

Jenna Kelly: I'll give you a moment to get your slides up.

122

00:24:28.980 --> 00:24:33.779

Jenna Kelly: They're on screen, I can just see the... all of the tabs, but, they are on screen.

123

00:24:35.400 --> 00:24:40.100

Kylie White: Right, it's not letting me change the present mode,

124

00:24:40.480 --> 00:24:47.699

Kylie White: But hopefully, people can get the gist of it. Everything's just... I'm on two screens, everything's just gone over to the other screen, so...

125

00:24:47.700 --> 00:24:48.929

Jenna Kelly: I can see the slide just...

126

00:24:48.930 --> 00:24:50.909

Kylie White: Thank you very much as well.

127

00:24:50.910 --> 00:24:51.540

Jenna Kelly: today.

128

00:24:51.540 --> 00:25:09.469

Kylie White: But hopefully you can, you can get the gist of it. So, yeah, thanks, Reef. So, I thought I'd talk around, some other things that you can be doing when you're thinking about applying for a role. And the first area is really thinking about the organization, and the role that you're applying for.

129

00:25:09.470 --> 00:25:20.360

Kylie White: And I guess remembering that we all spend so much time at work, and it is difficult sometimes, isn't it, to be, applying for new jobs, and, but really thinking about

130

00:25:20.540 --> 00:25:42.129

Kylie White: what is it that I want from a new role, and importantly, the organization that I'm working in. And just understanding that kind of culture and values is so important, because the worst thing that can happen is you kind of land in a role, and it's not quite what you were expecting. So I think just really taking that time from the outset before you apply, to be thinking about those things.

131

00:25:42.130 --> 00:25:58.539

Kylie White: One top tip that not a lot of people do, and I've had so many people ask me, oh, do you think it's okay to speak to the hiring manager before? Absolutely, yes. So, if the hiring manager is offering you a chance to speak to them, or someone in the team in advance.

132

00:25:58.540 --> 00:26:14.230

Kylie White: Take them up on that opportunity, because it's just a really great way to get an insight into the culture of the organization, the team. The hiring manager's usually going to be your line manager as well, so it's a good way to get a kind of temperature check on them as an individual.

133

00:26:14.230 --> 00:26:24.209

Kylie White: And it's also a really great way to get more insight, into the role than what can appear on a job application, sort of, form in the job description.

134

00:26:24.210 --> 00:26:42.230

Kylie White: So you can really get from the hiring manager what are the real key things that they're looking for in an individual, where would I be spending most of my time, and it really

brings to life that job description. So definitely, if there is an opportunity to speak to the hiring manager, take that opportunity up.

135

00:26:42.230 --> 00:27:07.129

Kylie White: And then just also think about other ways that you can find out about that organization. So I've been in the civil service about 11 years now, and I've made my way through a few different departments. I've got a few connections, so I'd always speak to someone in advance and just try and find out a bit about the department, what's going on, what's interesting, and so if you've got any connections, or going on the Civil Service Careers site is always a great way to sort of look at the other materials.

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00:27:07.130 --> 00:27:12.099

Kylie White: It's about the organization and the different types of jobs that are there, as well as the ones that are of interest to you.

137

00:27:13.000 --> 00:27:32.299

Kylie White: My sort of second top tip is seeking feedback. So you've got to the point where you've written your application, whether that's a CV, whether that's behaviours. Always think about who could I ask to have a look at my examples. Ideally, someone who's not close to your work.

138

00:27:32.300 --> 00:27:55.840

Kylie White: Because they can give a real critical eye, someone who doesn't know you, doesn't know the work that you're doing, doesn't know the environment, and really give you some really good constructive feedback on those star examples. You know, are you giving too much situation, as an example, or have you not given enough, and you're making lots of assumptions that the hiring manager knows what you're talking about? So, definitely always try and get someone to read

139

00:27:55.840 --> 00:28:20.829

Kylie White: your CV, your applications, your personal statements, if possible. Use your network, so if you've got, kind of, a mentor, if you've got colleagues that you're happy to do that with. I always offer to kind of do a bit of a quid pro quo, so I'm happy to look at other people's applications as well, so that's always a way that you can kind of offer a favor in return. Or, you know, if it's quite a lot sometimes.

140

00:28:20.830 --> 00:28:41.760

Kylie White: it might be a personal statement, a number of different behaviour examples, so you could just divvy it up, and if there's one that you're feeling a bit less confident about, ask somebody to look at that one particularly, for you. And you, and potentially, kind of, ask a couple of different people, get a couple of different perspectives, and then consolidate that into kind of one final version.

141

00:28:42.190 --> 00:29:05.250

Kylie White: I kind of mentor a number of people, and I've really seen that when we've worked through applications, just kind of tweaking some of the wording, really focusing on, kind of, impact outcomes, as Ruth was saying, can make a real big difference as to whether you get through that sift or not. So definitely don't be afraid to ask for help and seek feedback, where you can.

142

00:29:05.250 --> 00:29:16.449

Kylie White: And perhaps the AI tools can do the same for you as well, so there's kind of lots of different ways if you don't necessarily want to ask somebody, but in my experience, people are always really happy to help.

143

00:29:16.450 --> 00:29:41.090

Kylie White: And it can make all of that difference to that application. Especially when you think, you know, often, and I've recruited recently, I've had over 100 applications to look at as a hiring manager, so just anything that you can do to make it easy to read, easy to understand, give good context, give good outcomes and impact examples, makes it, easier for the hiring manager to kind of make those decisions.

144

00:29:41.980 --> 00:29:58.540

Kylie White: And then in the third area I was thinking about is, is showcasing your strengths, and motivation for the role. So, a lot of you said that you're particularly interested in, kind of, getting promoted to that next level, so really thinking about, in your examples.

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00:29:58.820 --> 00:30:00.719

Kylie White: what is it that I brought to that?

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00:30:00.880 --> 00:30:11.730

Kylie White: to that piece of work. If I wasn't there, what would the outcome have been? And what is the kind of individual things that I bring to the table when I'm working in teams and leading teams?

147

00:30:11.730 --> 00:30:35.780

Kylie White: If there's going to be management... line management responsibilities, really thinking about how you can bring out your leadership impact. If you don't manage people currently, you're still a leader, you can still lead through others, deliver through others, you can still drive work and kind of be motivated to deliver. It's not all about having to already line manage people, but being able to demonstrate

148

00:30:35.880 --> 00:30:50.820

Kylie White: how you lead through others, especially when you are looking for, kind of, that next level of promotion, is really important. So having a... having thought about that in advance, thinking about, kind of, your unique selling point, one of the things that I bring to the table.

149

00:30:50.820 --> 00:31:02.880

Kylie White: But also, as Ruth was saying, reflecting on where do you need to develop, because not everyone is the finished article, but what you want is somebody who recognises that and is willing to kind of develop in those areas as well.

150

00:31:03.070 --> 00:31:13.829

Kylie White: And then one... one final tip from me, and it's amazing how many people don't take the opportunity to do this, but, you know, if you get the opportunity to do a personal statement.

151

00:31:14.180 --> 00:31:38.550

Kylie White: tell the hiring manager, why do you want the role? So make it clear that you're really interested in the role, and I would always say do this at interview as well, because your hiring manager wants to kind of feel that you're passionate about this role, this specific role, and this organization, and that kind of links back to the why the organization in the first place, and not that you're just applying for hundreds of different roles and using the same sort of examples and the same

152

00:31:38.550 --> 00:31:59.829

Kylie White: personal statements. So definitely kind of thinking about what is the unique thing that you bring, what is the thing about the organization, that you really... why you really want to work for them, and making that clear in your applications, would be my, my top tips for success. And if you do a presentation, see if you can do better than I can.

153

00:32:00.410 --> 00:32:22.839

Jenna Kelly: Thank you so much, Kylie. Thank you for sharing that so succinctly. We've had, again, lots of, lots of comments during your presentation in the chat. If I could ask you... oh yes, you've stopped sharing already, and I'm going to, same as before, I'm going to hand straight to, to Harry. Harry, just while you are getting your slides up, I'm going to ask everyone, if you have a question.

154

00:32:22.890 --> 00:32:43.729

Jenna Kelly: I've seen a few in the chat. There is a Q&A feature on Zoom. That will mean if you submit your question in there instead of in the chat, it will make... give it a higher chance of being seen by us. The chat's pretty busy today, so we want to make sure we can see all the questions. So, be sure to submit your questions in the Q&A feature, and we will endeavour to get round to as many as we can.

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00:32:43.730 --> 00:32:46.100

Jenna Kelly: And Harry, it's over to you.

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00:32:46.700 --> 00:32:49.249

Harry Phinda: Hello, everyone, just checking you can hear me.

157

00:32:51.360 --> 00:32:53.170

Jenna Kelly: Yes, yep.

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00:32:53.170 --> 00:32:59.520

Harry Phinda: Brilliant. Okay, great. So, so yeah, really great to be here, and thank you, Apolitical, obviously. So, I'm from

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00:32:59.520 --> 00:33:22.769

Harry Phinda: unofficial guides, but I've hired quite a lot of roles, in the civil service before, and, we... I mean, I'm not going to be able to do all of this justice in 7 minutes, and actually, my two previous speakers have covered quite a lot, but we do have 3 free guides that we have on the civil service, and so feel free to reach out to us based on those.

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00:33:22.780 --> 00:33:37.299

Harry Phinda: So, clearly, behavior is a really important part of this, and so, if we think about the stream that we've just had of thinking about, of thinking about the different sort of components of interviews.

161

00:33:37.410 --> 00:33:49.660

Harry Phinda: the way that the civil service recruits is through, behaviors and the success profile framework. And today, I'm just going to focus on behaviors. And so,

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00:33:49.660 --> 00:34:13.729

Harry Phinda: And so, even as I go through, if there's any questions, please do let me know. So each advert lists about 3 to 5, but one is often the lead behavior. So one of the tips and tricks that I always seem to see people miss is actually, they need to focus the majority of their time on the lead behavior, and making sure that's their strongest behavior. So when they're writing their examples, do have a look at what the lead behavior is, because oftentimes.

163

00:34:13.730 --> 00:34:32.550

Harry Phinda: you all have 100 to 150 applications to look through, particularly in the climate that we're in now, and what sort of sifters will look at, they'll sometimes just look at the lead behavior. So make sure you have a look, and then make sure that lead behavior is your best behavior, and also try and make sure that you tailor that to that.

164

00:34:32.679 --> 00:34:43.669

Harry Phinda: And so, clearly, assessors, as well as sifters, they'll map the behavior based on the wording and the grade and scope, not necessarily your job title.

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00:34:43.670 --> 00:34:47.760

Harry Phinda: So again, that's another tip and trick, that make sure all of your

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00:34:47.760 --> 00:35:04.030

Harry Phinda: behaviors that you're writing are appropriate for the specific job, and we give an example here. So, for example, EO and HEO, generally, those rules are, you follow the process and you meet the deadline, right? So, when you're thinking about your example and you're writing it.

167

00:35:04.030 --> 00:35:23.049

Harry Phinda: that's what you should be focusing on, and each behavior, or within the success profiles, they have specific examples for specific, grades, which is why I'm going through it like this, because it's important that when you are writing your example, you're reflecting back on those success profiles and the appropriate grade.

168

00:35:23.050 --> 00:35:34.870

Harry Phinda: And then, so if you're talking about SEO, for example, so then you set the priorities and you mitigate the risks, and then for Grade 7, you shape the strategy and influence ministers, or influence, really,

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00:35:34.870 --> 00:35:46.950

Harry Phinda: important stakeholders. And so that... based on our experience of reviewing literally hundreds of applications, that... that's sort of the way that assessors would have a look at, yeah, the criteria.

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00:35:47.070 --> 00:35:54.869

Harry Phinda: So, in terms of the actual behaviors themselves, one of the really, really... the things that we see quite a lot, and is... is...

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00:35:54.870 --> 00:36:19.829

Harry Phinda: a lack of understanding of what the behavior is actually trying to achieve, so... or what it's trying to tease out. So, as well as, sort of, answers not being structured, a lack of evidence, this is number three that we always get, where there's a real lack of understanding of what the behavior is trying to ask. So, I'll go through these really quickly, but again, you know, it's really trying to

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00:36:19.830 --> 00:36:42.299

Harry Phinda: understand what are they asking for here, because one of the things you will get marked down on is structure, one of the things you will get marked on if there's no examples, but again, if you're not hitting the right, like, sort of real-world signals, as we call them here, that's another thing you'll get knocked down on. So seeing the big picture is about linking your local work to strategic goals, and understanding the sort of local

173

00:36:42.300 --> 00:37:06.730

Harry Phinda: the global or national picture, and how those two fit. So how does your work, or whatever you're doing in your university or in your particular policy role, linking to wider strategic goals? Changing and improving, this is about challenging the status quo, it's about innovating, it's about providing new ideas to learn from difficulties and behaviors. So how, you know, how are we doing that, and does your example demonstrate that?

174

00:37:07.110 --> 00:37:19.119

Harry Phinda: making effective decisions, that's all about, again, how do you use data to be able to explain the rationale for decisions? And again, how do you use that to sort of weigh the risk of what you're doing?

175

00:37:19.120 --> 00:37:31.959

Harry Phinda: Leadership is about setting vision, inspiring, and also really thinking about the different types of people that your particular policy or your particular work will impact on the different types of people.

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00:37:32.010 --> 00:37:34.890

Harry Phinda: Communicating and influencing, again, is another one.

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00:37:34.890 --> 00:37:52.560

Harry Phinda: we always, always seem to get... sort of, there's a bit of confusion as to what this is looking for. So this is about, you know, what is your problem, and how do you tailor the message to different audiences? How do you use different mediums to tailor your audience, or to tailor your communication and where you go?

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00:37:53.330 --> 00:38:12.619

Harry Phinda: And I know I'm rustling through this, but again, just trying to sort of understand what the actual behavior is trying to get will then allow you to know how to use your example. Next is working together. Again, this is another one a lot of people misconstrue. This is about building trust.

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00:38:12.620 --> 00:38:16.890

Harry Phinda: And sharing resources amongst teams and amongst... sorry.

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00:38:17.140 --> 00:38:23.839

Harry Phinda: Amongst teams, and amongst, and amongst other stakeholders, and how you work together towards a common goal.

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00:38:23.840 --> 00:38:37.260

Harry Phinda: Yes, this is... obviously, this is about teamwork within your own team, but also it's about building trust, sharing resources, and again, resolving conflict, or resolving an issue that allows two groups of people to work together for a common goal.

182

00:38:37.570 --> 00:38:58.679

Harry Phinda: So developing self and others, again, this is about creating learning culture. How do you provide mentorship? How do you provide feedback? You know, what instances have you been able to do that, and give clear examples. And also, for this one, it's really important as to how you did that. So not just the what you did, but the how you did it, and why that was the best way to be able to do it.

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00:38:58.680 --> 00:39:04.610

Harry Phinda: Managing a quality service is about, again, how do you monitor something, or monitor an event.

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00:39:04.610 --> 00:39:26.450

Harry Phinda: And again, how do you then improve it based on that monitoring? How do you use some of the data that comes out of that monitoring, and then how do you then attach it to these things? And then delivering at pace. Again, this is not necessarily about delivering something quickly. That's the thing we get all the time. It's, oh, I did this really quickly, or I did this in half the time. No, this is about how do you prioritize, how do you meet

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00:39:26.450 --> 00:39:30.809

Harry Phinda: Tight deadlines, and then how do you then own some of those results?

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00:39:30.810 --> 00:39:54.469

Harry Phinda: So, I know that's a real whistle-stop tour in terms of... in terms of the behaviors, but these are... so, it's understanding the behaviors and then working backwards and going, okay, great, what example is the best one that allows me to be able to show working together? Another top tip I'll say, if you are applying for a HEO role, or an SEO role or a Grade 7 role, I always say write your behaviors based on

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00:39:54.470 --> 00:39:56.719

Harry Phinda: The, the grade above.

188

00:39:56.780 --> 00:40:16.999

Harry Phinda: But if you can, because oftentimes, what you're seeing is the people who are oftentimes going to be sifting through these particular applications, they will oftentimes be the grade above, and they'll be used to being able to see that. So if you can, when you're writing your behaviors, look at the language and the behaviors, and try and match them to that.

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00:40:17.000 --> 00:40:21.909

Harry Phinda: Jenna, please do give me a time signal when you can. Which behavior...

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00:40:21.910 --> 00:40:24.090

Jenna Kelly: You've got two minutes, Harry.

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00:40:24.090 --> 00:40:31.259

Harry Phinda: Amazing. So, again, in the chat, would you, you know, put, which behavior are you most

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00:40:31.260 --> 00:40:50.680

Harry Phinda: or least concerned about when you're actually writing, so just give us an indication of that, and then hopefully we can answer some questions based on that. And so we... so once you've done that, once you've done that, I really loved, what Kylie ran through in terms of the star, the sort of star structure, which is really, really useful.

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00:40:50.680 --> 00:41:06.950

Harry Phinda: And actually, E and R are going to be exactly the same, so reflection or evaluation is going to be there. Again, this is based on our experience. These are the types... so if you've got a target of 250 words, you should spend 10 to 15 words on situation.

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00:41:07.580 --> 00:41:10.249

Harry Phinda: Sort of 25 words on the task.

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00:41:10.420 --> 00:41:14.219

Harry Phinda: 60, you know, 150 words on the action.

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00:41:14.350 --> 00:41:29.840

Harry Phinda: 40 words on the result, and then 25 words on the reflection. That's generally, in terms of weighting, based on our experience, again, of reviewing quite a lot of applications, this is generally where a lot of people, again.

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00:41:29.840 --> 00:41:54.820

Harry Phinda: have certain levels... have a certain level of mishaps where they... where they either focus way too much on the situation and not able to articulate some of their, their action very well. For me, the most important part of this is where, again, what action you took and what

the result was. Again, if you're focusing on that, and then this is based on... so this is based on, okay, I know the behavior I'm going for, I know what the lead behavior

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00:41:54.820 --> 00:41:56.759

Harry Phinda: is, and I also know

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00:41:56.860 --> 00:42:06.959

Harry Phinda: And I also know the grade that I'm going for, and also, based on that, I understand what the behavior is asking me, and then this is how you sort of structure your answer.

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00:42:07.450 --> 00:42:08.560

Harry Phinda: And so...

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00:42:08.560 --> 00:42:31.360

Harry Phinda: again, make sure... these are just last few top tips for us. So, grade fit. So, make sure that the verbs are matching the band. So, it's very what I talked to you about earlier, about the grade fit. So, if you're going for HEO, it is ASSIST. If you're going for, sort of, grade 7, so SEO, grade 7, it is LEAD, and then, you know, on it goes, sort of, to strategize.

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00:42:31.360 --> 00:42:32.670

Harry Phinda: There's... J...

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00:42:32.670 --> 00:42:57.600

Harry Phinda: make sure that there is a sort of genuine challenge. I think sometimes some of the examples that we see might not necessarily be a genuine challenge, and actually, you'd be surprised at what the genuine challenges are, within and within your workplace. And I think working through that with a mentor, working through that with someone, and because oftentimes we get told, oh, I don't really have any challenges in my workplace, and just by the fact that you're actually working in an

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00:42:57.600 --> 00:43:05.739

Harry Phinda: environment with other people means there are plenty of challenges that you've got that might just be normal to you, but actually can be really great examples.

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00:43:05.740 --> 00:43:23.050

Harry Phinda: The last thing I'll probably leave you with is, is tangible metrics. So, what makes a really good example great is when you have tangible metrics. Of course, there are some ones where you won't be able to do it, but some of them, you know, the ones that are really great is when you talk about this

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00:43:23.050 --> 00:43:26.670

Harry Phinda: Percentage saved, this amount, this time cut.

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00:43:26.670 --> 00:43:34.720

Harry Phinda: And then... or... or it's the sort of percentage of time saved, or it's... or it's... we... we were able to...

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00:43:34.860 --> 00:43:47.869

Harry Phinda: we were able to achieve a certain milestone. Those are the ones that, again, transfer something from good to great, because you're clearly demonstrating your impact. And I think that's all I have time for, but again, happy to answer questions.

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00:43:48.200 --> 00:44:11.970

Jenna Kelly: Thank you so much, Harry. You had a lot of, text-based and emoji-based appreciation, as you can hopefully see. We have time for questions now, and these presentations are intentionally lightning talks to give all of you in the room a surface-level snapshot of what different speakers, experts with different experiences have to share, and then we get into the questions, and also we'd encourage you to keep

210

00:44:11.970 --> 00:44:29.190

Jenna Kelly: talking post-event. Now, we've got quite a lot of questions in Q&A, so I'm going to encourage you to both submit your questions in the Q&A, but please also upvote questions. That will give us a really helpful indicator on the questions that are most valuable to you, and then we'll take everything else offline.

211

00:44:29.190 --> 00:44:29.810

Harry Phinda: upon time.

212

00:44:29.910 --> 00:44:35.430

Jenna Kelly: While you submit and upvote some questions, I want to let you know that we've curated a

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00:44:35.430 --> 00:45:00.039

Jenna Kelly: follow-on resource to today's topic that I think all of you will find useful. It is an exclusive teaser lesson from a course that Apolitical has on our platform called Crafting a Successful Job Application in the Public Service. It's all about mastering that STAR format that Ruth touched on earlier, so you can go to the Career Development Community after the event, you can leave a comment on the post pinned at the top of the page that I have

214

00:45:00.040 --> 00:45:13.750

Jenna Kelly: shared there. My colleague is going to share that link in the chat, so if you fire a comment on that, on that post in the community, we'll make sure we share a really helpful resource afterwards with you, and I'm sure there are lots of other resources our speakers will drop in.

215

00:45:13.920 --> 00:45:22.320

Jenna Kelly: Okay, I'm going to go into Q&A speakers. I might fire questions at, at you individually, just to see if we can get through a lot.

216

00:45:22.320 --> 00:45:47.270

Jenna Kelly: I think that this might be the most upvotes I have ever seen on a question, so it has to be the first one. Natalie, props to you for having the most upvoted ever question at apolitical events. This question is, is it okay to use your best examples or evidence in your application if you intend to use or repeat those in your interview? And this question asker has said that they've been

217

00:45:47.270 --> 00:45:57.660

Jenna Kelly: been thinking or concerned about doing that before. Ruth, you are nodding along. Sorry to out you, to direct this at you just for a nod, but do you want to take that one?

218

00:45:58.150 --> 00:46:14.000

Ruth Frost: I'm happy to, but then Harry and Kylie can absolutely fill in. Yes, it's a really simple answer. Absolutely. Why would you not, I suppose, would be the way I would phrase it. Ultimately, all you are doing at application is opening the door to the next stage. That's what you want to do, especially in the civil service.

219

00:46:14.000 --> 00:46:18.770

Ruth Frost: You are trying to get yourself an interview, and then an interview, you are almost

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00:46:18.770 --> 00:46:24.600

Ruth Frost: starting afresh. You can't assume. Kylie mentioned she'd recently sifted, and she'd had hundreds of applications.

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00:46:24.650 --> 00:46:31.559

Ruth Frost: Therefore, you can't assume that when you've been interviewed, that person who's interviewing you will necessarily remember your application.

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00:46:31.690 --> 00:46:39.759

Ruth Frost: Absolutely. If they are your best examples, use them at application to get an interview, and then use them at interviews to hopefully get the job.

223

00:46:40.750 --> 00:46:50.319

Jenna Kelly: Great, thank you so much for that, Ruth. I saw some nods from Kylie and Harry. Before I take us on to the next question, anything... anything in disagreement or particularly to add?

224

00:46:51.250 --> 00:47:13.290

Kylie White: Yeah, yeah, I totally agree. And the other thing I would add is, I guess your interview is the opportunity to expand and elaborate on that example, so you're going to be limited to a word count, so just be really concise, kind of, in that, and then in the interview, ideally, not kind of answer it in exactly the same, kind of, rote way, but kind of give it more flavor, and the,

225

00:47:13.290 --> 00:47:19.939

Kylie White: You can give a bit more of the E, and the reflection in the interview than you would maybe on, in a written example.

226

00:47:20.330 --> 00:47:45.320

Jenna Kelly: I love that, that kind of augmentation. Amazing. We have another question that is also gathering upvotes at a rate that I haven't yet seen, which is, do I need to meet 100% of the criteria for a job to apply and to stand a good chance at SIFT? How can I prepare a strong application to cover criteria that I don't have evidence for? Now, Ruth touched on this in her presentation.

227

00:47:45.320 --> 00:48:01.699

Jenna Kelly: But, Harry, I might come to you on this one, because you shared some really numerical and, very kind of qualitative, sorry, overviews, and I wonder if maybe you have that kind of approach to respond to this question, or just anything else to add about, you know, needing to meet that 100% criteria.

228

00:48:02.940 --> 00:48:27.910

Harry Phinda: So I think what we would probably say in our community and official guides is apply anyway. If you're vaguely interested in that role, if you're vaguely interested in that sort of thing, then obviously put an application in. You don't have to be 100%, hit absolutely everyone. And remember, there's also... there is a central criteria, and then sometimes there is sort of desirable criteria, and so... and so oftentimes, what they're looking at is the essential

229

00:48:27.910 --> 00:48:52.709

Harry Phinda: criteria, but there might be instances where, you know, people, maybe sort of 60, 70%, they're able to see that. Clearly, if there are roles which you don't, you know, you meet maybe 10% of the criteria, you know, the question is, is, you know, how are you going to be able to demonstrate it well through examples and through an interview that you're able to do that? So I think we need to be honest there, but I think

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00:48:52.710 --> 00:48:56.949

Harry Phinda: For me, again, this is probably some personal advice, if it's over 50%, go for it.

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00:48:57.470 --> 00:49:10.050

Jenna Kelly: And maybe a follow-on from that, and something that we've been asked throughout the questions as well, is, you know, if you're aware that you're 50%, 60%, 70% of the way there, and you decide to apply.

232

00:49:10.050 --> 00:49:34.650

Jenna Kelly: the question that was asked, specifically asked about how to stand a good chance, and how you can prepare a really strong application, and I might actually ask a follow-up here to Kylie, which is about, is there something you can pair that with maybe reaching out to the hiring manager, which was something that you touched on? And if you are, and so if there's anything else other than reaching out to the hiring manager that you think you could pair with that, conscious that you're not at 100%, what might that be?

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00:49:34.770 --> 00:49:44.739

Jenna Kelly: And then if it was reaching out to the hiring manager, do you have any tips on wording, or approaches, or communication channels? Because that's something we've been asked about a lot here.

234

00:49:47.080 --> 00:50:08.970

Kylie White: I mean, I think Ruth made the point in her talk as well around, thinking not just about your work examples, but thinking more broadly in your examples. So if there is a bit of an area where you think you're a little bit weaker, be as broad in your thinking as possible to kind of build up those examples. So, yeah, don't think it's got to be my most recent role, and that's the only kind of bit of evidence that I can provide.

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00:50:08.970 --> 00:50:11.699

Kylie White: On the hiring manager point,

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00:50:11.700 --> 00:50:32.260

Kylie White: I mean, usually, so, when I've uploaded things to civil service jobs, I put my name, happy to be contacted directly, so, you know, they're expecting it, and lots of people do reach out. So, yeah, absolutely, I'll just be open, say, you've seen the job, you'd be really interested to find out a little bit more. Can they spare, sort of, 15, 20 minutes to, to have a bit of a chat with you?

237

00:50:32.260 --> 00:50:56.159

Kylie White: And then in that conversation, it really is just a chance for you to kind of get to know the organization, the job a little bit more. I wouldn't use it to try and kind of sell yourself to the hiring manager, because that's not the kind of time and place for that. So, and remember, kind of all of the applications are blind sifted. But really, yeah, use it as a chance to kind of just get to know them a bit more.

238

00:50:56.160 --> 00:51:08.620

Kylie White: and really understand what it is they are looking for in that role. And a good question I find, which always kind of gives you just a sense of the role, is, you know, if I came in, what would be my big priorities for the first few months?

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00:51:08.620 --> 00:51:18.080

Kylie White: what is the kind of team environment like? What are the ways of working? So that will really just get you to understand a bit more about the kind of environment and the role itself.

240

00:51:18.600 --> 00:51:38.440

Jenna Kelly: Thank you so much for that, Kylie, that's really clear. We've had another question, which is... and it's had some, plus ones in the chat, and it's about structuring a personal statement, and it's asking, if you had to kind of opt for one or the other, is it best to use two or three well-explained examples which meet the job spec.

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00:51:38.440 --> 00:51:42.540

Jenna Kelly: Or is a different example for each point in the job spec?

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00:51:42.780 --> 00:51:57.409

Jenna Kelly: potentially slightly less well explained, or still well explained. I mean, they're comparable, right? And Ruth, maybe I'll ask you if you had a kind of, you know, advice on structure of a personal statement, how might you advise one goes about that when it comes to examples?

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00:51:58.250 --> 00:52:05.370

Ruth Frost: I think as long as you are clear, and you signpost, it probably doesn't overly matter.

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00:52:05.520 --> 00:52:20.169

Ruth Frost: If you are going to use one example to cover more than one criteria, you need to be clear you're doing so. That's kind of when I was talking about the idea of taking words in from the advert, and putting it in there.

245

00:52:20.170 --> 00:52:38.290

Ruth Frost: you need to sign... whatever you do, you need to be able to signpost it to the hiring manager that says, these are my examples, it's really clear, you can see where my evidence is included. A really good hint and tip for doing that is, once you think you've written your application, and you think you've covered everything off, regardless if you've got an individual example for each piece.

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00:52:38.350 --> 00:52:46.160

Ruth Frost: of kind of criteria, whether you've combined them, is to get somebody to read it for you. It could be a friend, a family member, a colleague.

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00:52:46.160 --> 00:52:59.520

Ruth Frost: They don't need to know anything about the role. All you need to do is give them your application and the advert, and you need to say, do you think I've covered these points? I know it sounds daft. I asked my teenage daughter, teenagers are kind of notoriously critical.

248

00:52:59.520 --> 00:53:08.599

Ruth Frost: she was the first one to say to me, no, you haven't, that doesn't make sense. Do you know, don't ask your best mate who's always going to say you're brilliant regardless. So it's just a good way of checking it.

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00:53:08.900 --> 00:53:21.809

Jenna Kelly: That's... that is a good, a good piece of advice. If anyone has any... any teenagers willing to, be... be cr... crucial and blunt, that might be useful. And maybe a follow-up to that is,

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00:53:21.810 --> 00:53:34.159

Jenna Kelly: You touched on this a little, but in terms of equal weighting to the criteria, or assuming that the criteria in the advert reflects a prioritization, did you have anything to share on that in terms of the personal statement?

251

00:53:35.690 --> 00:53:36.280

Ruth Frost: Back to me.

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00:53:36.280 --> 00:53:37.499

Jenna Kelly: Yeah, back to you.

253

00:53:37.500 --> 00:53:50.210

Ruth Frost: Sorry, I agree with Harry, read the advert. The advert will tell you if there's an essential minimum criteria, or any kind of essential criteria, it'll be in the advert. If some of them are desirable, it will be in the advert.

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00:53:50.210 --> 00:53:57.810

Ruth Frost: Don't necessarily assume that if it doesn't say that, that the order they're listed in reflects a priority order. It sometimes doesn't.

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00:53:57.810 --> 00:54:04.760

Ruth Frost: But if there is anything that is that kind of minimum essential criteria, it will say... it should say so. Yeah.

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00:54:04.760 --> 00:54:10.579

Jenna Kelly: Okay, perfect. Thank you, Ruth. Harry, I'm going to come to you with this one, and it's a question about G7.

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00:54:10.580 --> 00:54:26.929

Jenna Kelly: campaigns, and this question asker has said that they seem to require fives to pass to interview, at the moment. And do you have any advice on what takes an example from a 4 to a 5? Are there any little... is there an embellishment or a little lift there?

258

00:54:27.910 --> 00:54:52.739

Harry Phinda: Yeah, so just to say to everyone as well, it is a really tough environment out there now in terms of application. So, one of the sessions we run is around mindset, and actually, you know, sometimes you feel like you've put an amazing application, you feel like you've got it all the way there, and then, you know, you might not. Again, that's quite high. You know, when I first applied, I don't think... I mean, they didn't mark them the same way, but again, the... so minimum criteria...

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00:54:52.740 --> 00:55:05.079

Harry Phinda: seem to be, sort of, sometimes achievable. So what I would say is, the structure, so it's very much what I talked about, the sort of three... three bits. Making sure you really understand what the behavior is.

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00:55:05.470 --> 00:55:29.919

Harry Phinda: making sure your structure is right, so making sure you're making it easy for them to go through your application. Again, you know, oftentimes hiring managers these days are going for 150 to 200 applications per job, so, you know, you really, really need to be able to do that. I'm not sure what the internal figures are, but I know the external figures are that. And then, when you're talking about your results, and you're talking about that, making sure that you use metrics

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00:55:30.020 --> 00:55:36.970

Harry Phinda: And ensuring that those metrics are, you know, actually change... are...

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00:55:36.970 --> 00:55:59.329

Harry Phinda: are measurable. And then the last thing is the reflection point. I think a lot of people don't do that, and I think that can make you a sort of differentiator, is if you're able to put

the reflection or the evaluation, as Kylie mentioned earlier, that does make you a differentiator. So... so yeah, I mean, it's really difficult with scoring because, again, different people score differently, it's a very individual practice.

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00:55:59.330 --> 00:56:06.230

Harry Phinda: But I think if you're able to do those, then you're putting yourself at the sort of best, best chance to score as much as you possibly can.

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00:56:06.860 --> 00:56:31.669

Jenna Kelly: Thank you so much, Harry, and thank you for framing that answer with, it's tough at the moment, it's a tough environment. I think, you know, advice and guidance and all of your wonderful, wonderful tips are really, really useful, and I think we should be taking those, but I also think it's helpful to frame this in the context of anyone that might be finding it difficult or having a tough time. That's an important thing to acknowledge. We have had, just as we get closer to the

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00:56:31.670 --> 00:56:56.599

Jenna Kelly: time to say goodbye. We had nearly 3,000 of you register to join today, which I chose not to tell our speakers until afterwards, because there was something quite unsettling, potentially, about that many people joining to listen, but I think that you all three have been so wonderful, and I hope that you enjoyed sharing and enjoyed learning from our attendees. We've also had about 200 questions from you all, which we could not even

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00:56:56.600 --> 00:57:21.140

Jenna Kelly: Even if we probably spent a full day on this event, get round two. So, I just wanted to say thank you, everyone, for registering to join, for asking questions. Myself and the apolitical team will come together afterwards and think about how we can get as many of those answers to you as possible. Please do go to the career development community, that is a great place, and please also join me, as you are already doing in your hundreds, in saying a huge, huge, huge thank you to our speakers, to Kylie.

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00:57:21.140 --> 00:57:30.540

Jenna Kelly: and to Harry and to Ruth for taking time out of their weeks and days to think about how to best help you all write standout applications. We appreciate it.

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00:57:30.540 --> 00:57:45.999

Jenna Kelly: While you are saying your thank yous, my team is going to pull up a very quick poll just to ask how you found today. It's really easy. On a scale of 1 to 10, rank your agreement with

this statement. This event was a valuable use of my time. 10 means that you completely agree, and 1 means that you completely disagree.

269

00:57:46.000 --> 00:58:06.739

Jenna Kelly: And we always take your opinions and your feedback on board really seriously to make our events and your learning as best they can be. And while you're responding to that poll, or after you've done so, and we do have a few more events coming up that you can register to join us at again. A reminder that if you can't join us live, you can register, and we'll send the recording and the resources to you after the event.

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00:58:06.740 --> 00:58:27.459

Jenna Kelly: So next week, which might be useful for all of you, we have What Exceptional Public Sector Leaders Do Differently. That is on Tuesday, and lots of you said that you were aiming to apply for a more senior role. So please do join us at that if you're an aspiring or a current leader. Then we have How to Influence Without Formal Authority next week on Wednesday, so two events that speak to leadership at every level.

271

00:58:27.460 --> 00:58:44.710

Jenna Kelly: And then later this month, I'm really excited to be looking at career development, another dedicated look, this time on career progression for neurodiverse public servants, looking at, how to support neurodivergent people and public servants, to work on career progression with some really wonderful speakers.

272

00:58:45.230 --> 00:59:10.170

Jenna Kelly: That is all we have time for today. I had a really great time with you all, I hope that you did too, and just a reminder that we will be sending the recording and the resources to anyone who was here today, or who couldn't make it, so please keep an eye out for that email, and we hope to see you at another apolitical event next week, next month, or very soon. So have a wonderful, wonderful rest of Wednesday and rest of week, everyone. Thank you again, Kylie, Harry, and Ruth, and goodbye!