



# **Preparing a Competency based Curriculum Vitae for Job Applicants**

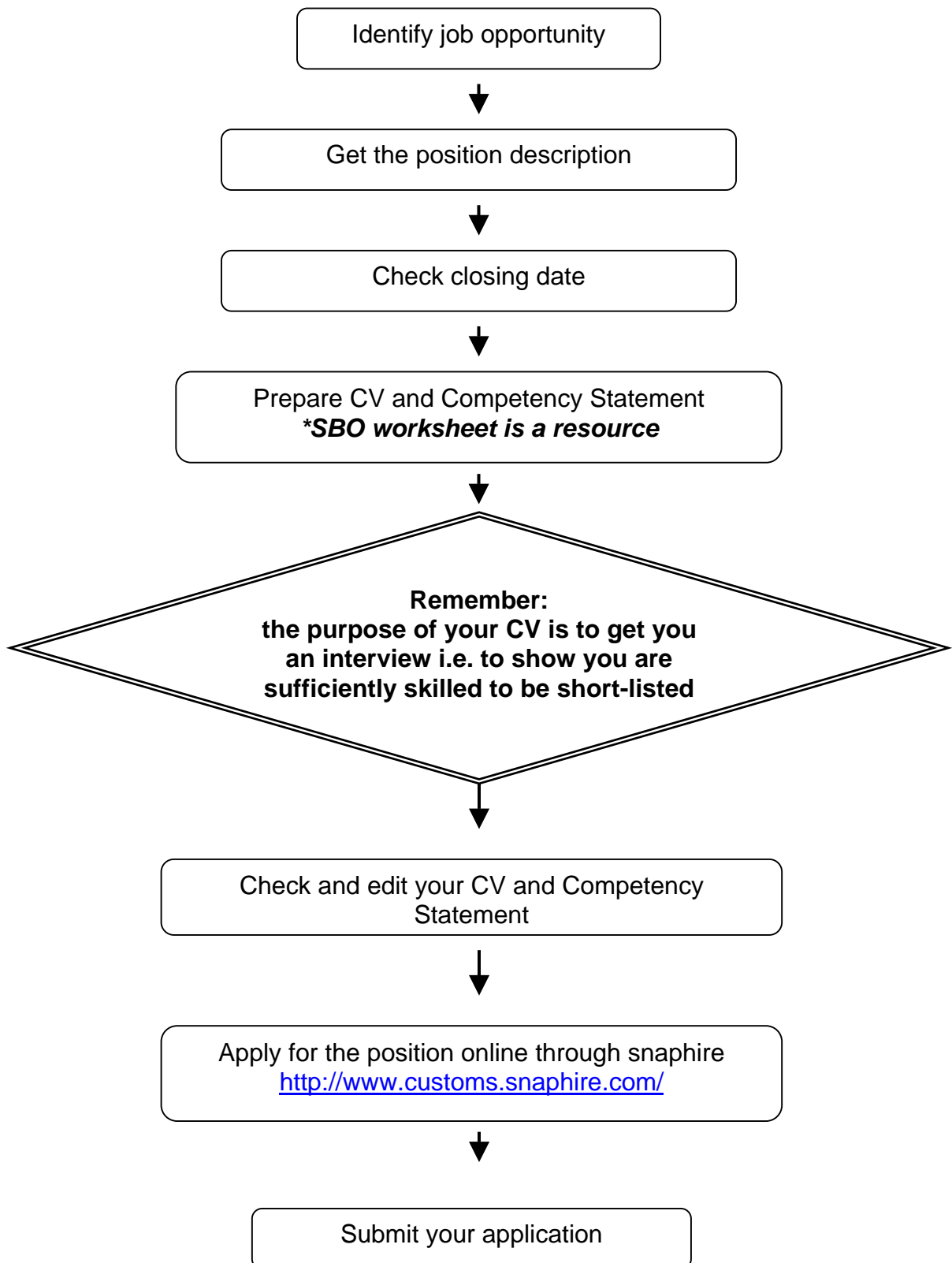
**December 2006**

# Contents

0

<b>THE APPLICATION PROCESS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PREPARING YOUR CV.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>WHY DO WE NEED A CV ?.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TYPES OF CV .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Chronological .....	3
Functional/ Results Oriented .....	3
<b>GATHERING THE FACTS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>WHAT TO INCLUDE.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Personal Details .....	4
Work History .....	5
Education and Training .....	6
Skills .....	6
Interests & Hobbies .....	7
Referees.....	7
<b>WHAT ARE COMPETENCIES? .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COMPETENCIES AND COMPETENCE ? .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>HOW CAN COMPETENCIES ADD VALUE TO THE ORGANISATION ?.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>JOB &amp; SKILL GAP ANALYSIS WORKSHEET .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>FORMAT TIPS .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>SAMPLE CV FORMAT.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Employment History .....	14
Education and Training .....	15
Interest/Hobbies .....	15
Referees.....	15
Competencies .....	16
<b>EXAMPLE COMPETENCY STATEMENT .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>KEY TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>THE INTERVIEW .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Before the Interview: .....	23
<b>FRONT OF MIND FOR THE INTERVIEWERS .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>THE BASICS IN SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>NZCS EXAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS .....</b>	<b>26</b>
Leadership.....	26
Integrity.....	26
Communication.....	26
Innovation .....	26
Customer Focus .....	26
Teamwork.....	26
Conscientiousness .....	26
<b>SBO WORKSHEET: SITUATION, BEHAVIOUR, OUTCOME .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>FINDING THE WORDS .....</b>	<b>31</b>

## The Application Process



## Preparing your CV

A Curriculum Vitae (CV) is a marketing tool where the product is you! The most important thing to remember when putting a CV together is that you need to communicate to a potential employer what you can do for them.

New Zealand Customs Service requires an up to date CV and a Competency Statement that shows, based on your experience, how you meet each of the competencies for the position you have applied for.

### Why do we need a CV?

A CV can:

- 3 Win you an interview
- 3 Sell you and your skills
- 3 Help set up some questions for the interview
- 3 Remind an interviewer about you after you have gone
- 3 Provide evidence of your written communication skills
- 3 Give the reader an insight into you.

### Types of CV

#### Chronological

Focuses on experience - what you have done.

Usually written in reverse chronological order, with the most relevant and recent experience first.

***“A reader retains 80% of the first page read and that decreases by 20% per page after that”*** (Mark Richards, Career Management Recruitment Professionals).

For positions applied for within Customs, it is best to use a Chronological CV, especially if there has been a natural progression in your career. It is important that you directly match your skills to those required in the role description.

#### Functional/ Results Oriented

Focuses on strengths and skills - what you can do.

Includes relevant personal information but focuses on what you have achieved in education, relevant work and other experiences.

## Gathering the Facts

The first place to start when putting together a CV is to gather the information you may want to include.

Some useful places to look for inspiration and information:

- **Job descriptions for all the positions you have held**
- **Copies of completed performance reviews and appraisals**
- **Any specific annual objectives that have been set and achieved**
- **Projects or one-off tasks you may have been involved in**
- **Letters of appreciation or commendation you have received**
- **Letters of reference from previous roles, or from attendance at training courses**

## What to Include

There are some standard headings that can help to sort the information you present in your CV.

### Personal Details

- **Name**
- **Address**
- **Telephone (private)**
- **Telephone (business)**
- **Email**
- **Fax Number**

Your contact information must be correct. If you do not want to be contacted at work, do not include your work telephone number or e-mail (particularly if it is not confidential). When providing only after hours details, be sure to specify this so that a prospective employer doesn't get frustrated ringing all day with no reply! Similarly do not include your private e-mail address if you do not check your e-mail daily.

- **Citizenship/Resident Status**
- **Date of Birth \***
- **Marital Status \***
- **Number of children \***
- **IWI Affiliation \***
- **Health**
- **Other languages (if bilingual/multilingual)**

This personal information is not critical, but can provide a better picture of you. The information marked with \* is protected under the Human Rights Act and is solely at your discretion to provide or withhold. In addition to any information you voluntarily provide regarding your health, many employers will ask you to complete a more detailed health questionnaire upon appointment to a role.

### **Work History**

List employers and jobs in reverse chronological order.

#### **Include . . .**

- Employer;
- Length of time employed;
- Type of business;
- Title or positions held;
- Nature of duties carried out;
- Number of staff;
- Creditable achievements (written in past tense);
- Skills gained.

Provide more information for the most recent and most relevant position(s). If you have had a lengthy career, the earlier positions may be summarised briefly or grouped together.

Emphasise work performed at the top level of responsibility. Describe the benefits of the work you carried out. Examples of work that you were responsible for that had positive results. In writing your key achievements, the SBO model is a good one to double-check that you have covered all of the bases:

- S - Situation** , problem or opportunity you have faced
- B - Behaviour**, the actions that you took to address the situation
- O - Outcome** that you achieved

## **Education and Training**

<b>Tertiary Education</b>	Name of institution(s), qualification(s) attained. If you are still studying, the qualification sought. This shows that you want to be up to date professionally.
<b>Secondary Education</b>	The longer the time since you left school, the less you need record about it. Years attended, name of school, highest qualification attained would be sufficient.
<b>Copies of Qualifications</b>	Copies of degrees, qualifications and certificates add bulk to the CV, it is not necessary to include them. Keep them somewhere safe so you can produce them on request.

Also gather information on any relevant short courses you have attended. Often these provide very targeted, specific skill development absolutely relevant to the job you are applying for. Conferences and seminars attended may also be included. If you have presented at a conference or seminar be sure to include information on that too!

It can also be important to detail your computer literacy, which should include your level of expertise with specific software and programmes.

## **Skills**

You may wish to include a section that highlights some of your specific skills and abilities relevant to the position applied for. Skills can be broadly divided into three key categories:

- **Personal Skills**
- **Functional Skills**
- **Technical Skills**

If you would like some ideas on how to describe our skills, refer to the lists at 'Finding the Words', page 31 on.

Do not just write a list of words but state how you have applied the skills and attributes in previous roles.

## Interests & Hobbies

<b>Sports</b>	While not necessarily pertinent to a particular position, a section with this type of information can provide a fuller picture of you as a person
<b>Clubs</b>	
<b>Voluntary Roles</b>	These roles don't need to be explained in detail unless they have some impact on the work you do.
<b>Community activity</b>	Team sports and activities are a good sign of being able to work well others, while community service is a good indicator of a person's public spirit

## Referees

<b>Relevant</b>	It is appropriate to provide names of between 2 and 4 referees who can supply references.
<b>Current</b>	A referee is asked for their opinion about you by the prospective employer and will cover areas such as character, ability and potential. Sometimes they will be sent written questionnaires; sometimes they will be telephoned.
<b>Consulted</b>	<p>It is a good idea to send referees a copy of your CV to remind them of your skills and abilities. Let them know about your application so they are not taken by surprise.</p> <p>It might even be useful to send them a copy of the position description for the position so they can prepare to comment of your performance in regard to the competencies.</p> <p>It is acceptable to say that names of referees are available on request.</p>

## What are Competencies?

Competencies are individual characteristics required for a role, which must be demonstrated to provide evidence of superior or effective performance in a job.

Competencies are defined in terms of the behaviours exhibited by a person with those characteristics. A person in a position normally requires proficiency or competence in several competencies before they can be regarded as effective in their role.

The complete competency set or model for an individual role identifies all the knowledge, skills, experiences and attributes a person should display in their behaviour when they are doing the job well.

**New Zealand Customs Service requires an up to date CV and a Competency Statement that shows, based on your experience, how you meet each of the competencies for the position you have applied for.**

**NZCS Role Descriptions give weightings according to the priority or importance placed on the competencies required for successful performance in the role. It is, therefore, paramount that you address these in your CV and accompanying letter or competency statement - they are what the NZCS is seeking for the role.** The following pages cover much of what you need to know about competencies.

## What is the difference between Competencies and Competence?

**A definition of 'Competence':**

"Demonstrating the knowledge, skills, experience, and attributes necessary to carry out a defined function effectively."

**A definition of 'Competency':**

"The description of the knowledge, skills, experience and attributes necessary to carry out a defined function effectively."

In other words competencies describe what has to be done and how well. Competence is doing the required things to the required standard. Competence in a job therefore means being competent at all aspects of each function (competency) required to be performed within the role.

## How are Competencies used to measure Competence?

Competence is measured through observance of the behaviours exhibited by the person required to have the particular competency being measured. Commonly a Competency Model is built covering all the organisation group and job specific competencies required in the organisation.

## How can Competencies add value to the organisation?

The model contains examples of behaviour relevant to the desired level of competence in each required competency. Because competency models are defined in advance of measuring the competence of the person in a role, they provide an objective basis for assessment against known and agreed standards. The model reflects where the organisation is going, rather than where it has been.

Using a competency model adds direct value in several ways.

### **A Competency Model . . .**

- ✓ Reinforces behaviours required in the future.
- ✓ Provides a clear picture of the knowledge, skills, experiences, and attributes necessary for a person to carry out a job effectively and efficiently.
- ✓ Is a valuable tool to assist the human resources planning process and long term succession and career planning requirements.
- ✓ Is a physical measure of the company's values and, ultimately, its culture.
- ✓ Helps to define ability.

For example, a competency definition could talk about the ability to plan. Ability of itself is not visible to the naked eye. Behaviour, or the result of that behaviour, is visible. The ability to plan therefore might have as an example "Produces clear and practical plans".

### **Core Competencies can be used for:**

- Performance management;
- Management development;
- Succession planning;
- Career planning;
- Skills analysis.

### **Job Specific Competencies can be used for:**

- Recruitment;
- Performance management;
- Skills analysis.

## Putting it all together

Once you have gathered all the information you can about your suitability for the position, you can prepare your CV and application.

Make sure you have a copy of the Role Description for the position you wish to apply for.

### **How closely do you match the requirements?**

List the requirements of the job that you are applying for - in the priority that the employer (not you) would consider most important.

Rank them according to their importance, e.g. essential, desirable, optional.

Now match these to the qualities that you have and see how they compare.

This is sometimes called Job & Skills Gap Analysis. A worksheet you can use is included on the next page.

Also list the objectives and impressions that you want to convey in your first contact.

### **What should you ask about the job?**

List any questions that you may want to, or feel that you would be expected to, ask should you be offered an interview. Add to them as and when they come to mind.

Make sure you have the Correct Position Title, Location and Reference Number for the position.

## Job & Skill Gap Analysis Worksheet

1. Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

2. Department \_\_\_\_\_

3. Date Advertised \_\_\_\_\_

4. Recruitment Contact \_\_\_\_\_

5. Selection Criteria

**[My Level - 1 = very weak, 2 = weak, 3 = meets the need, 4 = strong, 5 = very strong]**

		JOB REQUIRES	MY LEVEL	I HAVE
<b>ESSENTIAL</b>	1.			
	2.			
	3.			
	4.			
	5.			
	6.			
<b>DESIRABLE</b>	1.			
	2.			
	3.			
	4.			
	5.			
	6.			
<b>HELPFUL</b>	1.			
	2.			
	3.			
	4.			
	5.			
	6.			

If there is too big a gap between what the job requires, and your own skill level, don't be surprised if you are not short-listed to be interviewed.

You may decide it is not worth applying. Some say that if you can't reach 65-70% of the criteria, it may not be worth applying.

However, it doesn't hurt to test the water!



## Format Tips

Most interviewers spend 30 seconds scanning a CV before deciding to continue or to reject the applicant. Appearance and content count.

<b>Clear</b>	<p>Use clear and readable words. A word is a symbol of a thought, concept or idea. Choosing the right words conveys information accurately and this is very important to the readability of the message.</p> <p>Don't use abbreviations or jargon, e.g. "I was responsible for all Section 266's" or "From 1980-82 I jerked all Exports entries for the Port of Christchurch".</p>
<b>Relevant</b>	<p>Your CV, skills and attributes must be current and relevant to the job. An employer doesn't care if you were blackboard monitor at Cricklewood Primary School in 1964. However, they may want to know you were on the Board of Trustees for Cricklewood Primary School 96-99.</p>
<b>Properly Organised into Sections</b>	<p>Clear headings allow the readers to skim what they are not really interested in and to easily locate important parts. It should follow a logical sequence.</p>
<b>Brief &amp; To the Point</b>	<p>2-3 pages is optimum (not including competency statement). Remember, if an employer has scores of CVs to read he/she is unlikely to read every one in detail. If your CV is large it may pay to provide a summary.</p>
<b>Grammatically Correct</b>	<p>Simple spelling and grammar errors leave an impression of an unprofessional attitude. All CV's should be proof read (especially if typed by someone other than yourself).</p> <p>Do not refer to yourself in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person (by name as if talking about someone else)</p>
<b>Attractively Presented</b>	<p>Should be typed and conservative in appearance, fonts, etc. – remember most employers are conservative. Light coloured paper is best.</p> <p>Use a serif style font for the bulk of text. It is easier to read as the line strokes of many serif fonts provide a path for the eye to follow e.g. Times New Roman.</p> <p>Contrast and add interest to your document with a different font for main titles etc., perhaps a <b>bold sans serif font</b>, make headings bigger than the text.</p> <p>Use <b>bold</b> or <b>reverse text</b> to highlight points. Italics can be hard to read.</p> <p>Use Wingdings instead of conventional bullets to provide a graphic element without detracting from the text.</p>

# Sample CV Format

(Suggestion only – not required)

## Jane Blogg's Curriculum Vitae

### Personal Details:

Address:  
Work phone:  
Home phone:  
Cell phone:  
E-mail:

### Employment History

Date appointed – current

#### **Position Title**

Company/department name  
Location/address

Brief description of role, one or two sentences or 3-4 bullet points max.

#### **Key Achievements:**

List a few things that reflect your skills or accomplishments for example:

- Quality improvements,
- Initiatives you have implemented,
- Projects you have worked on,
- Extra duties undertaken,
- Specialist skills or knowledge you have used

Usually the date appointed to your next position

Date appointed to previous role to – date left

#### **Position Title**

Company/department name  
Location/address

Brief description of role, one or two sentences or 3-4 bullet points max.

#### **Key Achievements:**

List a few things that reflect your skills or accomplishments for example:

- Quality improvements,
- Initiatives you have implemented,
- Projects you have worked on,
- Extra duties undertaken,
- Specialist skills or knowledge you have used

Cover your most recent/relevant positions to the level suggested, older less relevant roles you can probably omit the key achievements - unless it was something truly spectacular or pertinent to the role

## Education and Training

Date Awarded/completed

Name of Qualification e.g.  
National Certificate in Border  
Management  
Institution that awarded the  
qualification e.g.  
Public Sector Training  
Organisation (PESTO)

Date

Course Completed  
NZCS Technical Training

Date

Computer skills acquired

**Include any short courses you have done that are relevant to the role, and remember to include something about your computer skills. You can include your secondary education but don't need to go into detail of subjects studied etc. e.g. 1981, University Entrance, St Mary's College is sufficient.**

## Interest/Hobbies

**This section can be used to highlight skills you have developed outside work, such as leadership roles in sports clubs or community service. It can also give the selection panel a little insight into you as a person. This sort of information is optional**

## Referees

**If you include referees, ensure you have their position title and contact details. You may state that referees are available on request.**

## Competencies

**This is the most critical section of your CV for Customs roles.**

**The competencies can be found on the last page of the Role Description.**

**Drawing from your experience, including outside of work, you must describe how you have demonstrated each competency that is required for the role.**

**You may include this as a section in your CV or in the form of a covering letter for your application. However, this information must be included.**

**An example of the type and detail of information required is included on the following pages.**

## EXAMPLE COMPETENCY STATEMENT

### 1. Comply with policies and legislation

I have worked in a number of different sections and built up my knowledge of the Customs policies and legislation relevant to each area. I understand the importance of adhering to and implementing current guidelines and enforcing the Customs & Excise Act correctly to ensure the integrity and standards of the Service remain at a high level.

I hold the position of Health and Safety Officer for my team, which requires a full understanding of the Health and Safety policies. In this role I am responsible for providing H&S orientation to new staff and ensuring all incidents were accurately reported, monitored and remedied in accordance with our policy. I am fully aware of the role these policies play and consistently follow appropriate procedures each time the need arises.

In regard to other subject areas, I have maintained my knowledge of current legislation and policies by attending training and updates whenever available and by monitoring updates on the Longroom.

I am also aware of, and support, the practice of EEO and our ongoing commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi. I have participated in the Maori Language and Tikanga courses organised by Maori network. This has given me some insight into issues of importance for my Maori colleagues and members of the public.

I adhere to the strict application of security policies and comply with these requirements in all facets of my job.

### 2. Team Member

In my 12 years service in Customs I have actively worked to maintain a positive team environment, as I believe this is essential in achieving results and for the success of the organisation as a whole.

I communicate and share information with fellow team members. I believe that giving and receiving feedback in a positive manner is invaluable in creating an effective team and act accordingly.

I have participated in many operations in my various roles and have held the role of Group Commander on 3 occasions. The structure of these operations provides excellent opportunities for team members to informally interact and I believe I have contributed to make these situations efficient, effective and successful.

I am always willing to help other staff and enjoy participating in a team environment. At team meetings I am always forthcoming with ideas for change and improvement.

I am currently working on a project which is focusing on a particular function we undertake as part of our day to day job. This project enables me to share information, “brainstorm”, and gain knowledge to ensure the needs and requirements of our clients and other business units are met.

I have been involved in many sports teams over the years but my focus now sits with soccer where I have played, and now coach junior league at a club and representative level.

### **3. Self Developer**

I am currently completing the New Zealand Certificate in Border Management and have previously successfully completed correspondence papers via Massey University. I thrive in an environment where I am given the opportunity to learn and develop new skills.

I am committed to ongoing specialist training, whenever possible, to enhance my knowledge and contribute to a higher level of achievement.

I know that if I am successful with this application I will gain many skills that will build on my effectiveness as a Customs Officer. My desire to continue upskilling and improving my work performance reflects in the professionalism and pride I bring to my work

I enjoy challenging situations and am a proactive team member who also works well independently.

### **4. Strategic Thinker**

I am very conscious of the need for all operational activities to be aligned with the strategic aims of the Service as a whole. I have read and understood the Statement of Intent 2003 – 2006, the Risk Management Framework, Strategic Plan, Maori Responsiveness Plan and operational Business Plan for our area. I see the Business Plans as being a means of specifying how the various parts of NZ Customs will contribute towards achieving these aims. I ensure that I am familiar with these plans as they are developed.

I am a forward thinker and consistently use my experience and knowledge to contribute to developing processes, which deliver on our goals and are practical, realistic and achievable.

I have developed a set of guidelines pertaining to our processes to assist staff members with their work and ensure that a consistent approach is undertaken by all.

I am currently involved in mapping the processes of Customs so that our current operations can be assessed, analysed and modified if necessary. It will focus on the processes of all agencies involved and affect such aspects as allocation of resources and staff management. This task involves various

stages and levels of planning which also includes the assessment of risk factors and vulnerabilities and how we can best manage them.

In my day to day work I am frequently using tools such as General Query, reading Tactical Intelligence Reports and, as a consequence, have developed strong profiling skills which have resulted in some excellent “finds”. I have also been responsible for instigating operations in conjunction with other officers and have developed a good awareness of the various factors and issues that affect these processes and the Service as a whole.

Outside of work I have been an Auckland representative soccer coach for many years. This role involved a lot of planning, preparation, analysis and provided a host of opportunities to develop strategies to encourage a positive team and a positive result.

## **Key Technical Competencies**

### **1. Tactical, operational and strategic intelligence analysis knowledge and experience**

As a Customs Officer I understand the importance of intelligence in all facets of the Service. I am an honest and trustworthy officer whose performance reviews reflect all the principles required for intelligence analysis.

I understand the Intelligence Cycle and the products and services that result from it.

As an Inspections Officer I realise the importance of the information I supply to Intelligence. I am constantly collecting raw information in my day to day work and can quickly decide whether the data is worthy of a CUSMOD report. As a result of any decisions that require action I always promptly and accurately prepare reports that are of a high standard.

All areas I have worked in have had associated risks which need to be identified and treated. I understand the principles of risk management and the need for it to be incorporated into all planning and operational processes.

During my correspondence study with Massey I developed my research skills, for example: as a requirement for the Business Communications paper I had to present a study on a specific topic for presentation to my peers. This assessment required that I collect information from various sources e.g. Library, internet etc, analyse and interpret that data and disseminate it back through my verbal presentation.

### **2. Identify and gather relevant information**

Using my profiling and examining skills I am constantly identifying new and potential sources of information.

I am frequently required to question clients and gather information that will assist me in making effective decisions. Any relevant information I collect is

always conveyed to the Intelligence cycle in a confident manner. If a situation arises where I am unsure of necessary action, or need advice, I will not hesitate to contact specialist officers.

Various projects I have been involved in have enabled me to develop effective planning and time management skills. Outside of work I manage the Auckland National League Soccer team. This is an in-depth role, which requires all aspects of planning and a high level of organisation to be successful.

I understand Operational Orders and the importance of clear and concise Terms of Reference. I am an excellent communicator with good listening skills and enjoy the challenge of negotiating a beneficial outcome for all when the need arises.

I am constantly dealing with both internal and external clients that present a range of potentially problematic issues. I always apply logical thinking and sound judgement to each situation and can resolve these issues amicably while applying the necessary policies and legislation. I work well under pressure and maintain a confident attitude towards my work.

As a regular part of my function I am often locating information which requires more in-depth research to decide whether goods should be referred to other sections or agencies. I will often use tools such as CUSMOD and the internet to assist me in these decisions.

### **3. Analyse information effectively and efficiently**

In my various roles, I have gained valuable experience and have enhanced my abilities to evaluate and analyse goods and documents effectively during this time. I am fully aware of the impact any conclusions and recommendations I make will have on mine and other business units.

In my role as Health Liaison Officer I am often called upon to make recommendations to staff regarding medicines and advise the appropriate action that should be taken. Any recommendations I make are always well supported by necessary research, data and relevant information.

I am confident in my use of CUSMOD system, the internet, my profiling skills and my ability to liaise and develop good working relationships with internal and external business units to effectively analyse and interpret any information as required.

As a product of any analysis completed, any reports required are always clear, concise and relevant to the objectives of the work area concerned and the Service as a whole.

At the Inspections Base I screened and analysed manifests on a regular basis and often, in the course of examination would need to analyse invoices and ensure that contents of packages were correct in accordance with them.

I have excellent written communication skills and understand the need to be accurate and professional in all forms of media. I also try and anticipate the needs of clients and exceed expectations wherever possible.

My Customs experience assists me in adding value to all information I produce. I am always collecting and processing information and understand the workings of the Intelligence cycle once I place information into the system.

I always find it rewarding to see the results and outcomes of “hits” I have made and find the intelligence produced as a consequence of this, invaluable in my work as an Officer.

#### **4. Provide intelligence to meet client needs. Particular emphasis to be placed on the Services strategic plan and the Intelligence Plan.**

I have been involved in a number of projects and operations where I have been required to produce and interpret reports, data, processes and the like to meet the needs of our clients. I am always punctual and meet deadlines without problems. I produce a high standard of work that is congruent with the Customs Service strategic plan and am confident I can work effectively within the guidelines of the Intelligence plan.

I am confident in my oral communication skills and frequently brief staff at team meetings on any “finds” or business related matters that need to be conveyed.

I have intercepted goods where I have needed to do further research and liaise with other areas to make an effective decision. When these circumstances arise I always carry out any relevant checks and locate necessary information for presentation to these work areas so an appropriate course of action can be ensured.

I am comfortable providing feedback as required and believe it can positively affect and help promote an efficient workplace.

In operations we have undertaken I promote the two-way flow of information and believe it is essential in operations being successful.

I actively participate in any briefings as required, and understand their importance as an effective means of dissemination.

## The Interview

Using the CVs, the selection panel shortlist applicants to interview.

NZCS uses panel interviews as the standard selection method. The interviews are pre-planned and questions are based on the competencies for the job. Unless there is specific prior agreement among the panel, the short-listing process is excluded from the final selection method.

The panel may also decide to supplement the selection process by using; Presentations (external and internal applicants), Simulation Exercises (external and internal applicants), Psychometric tests, Cognitive Tests (internal and external applicants), Personality Profiling (internal applicants for Team Leaders and other management roles, external applicants for any role), Tests of management aptitudes (external and internal applicants for Team Leader and other management positions), Assessment Centres.

If the panel chooses to use any of these methods, they will decide whether to use them with all short-listed applicants or only the preferred candidate(s) (time frames and costs will be part of this decision). You will be advised if any of these will be used.

### **Remember:**

**the Interview is an entirely separate process from short-listing. Short-listed applicants are on an 'even playing field' for the interview. Do Not assume the panel already has information from your CV or knowledge of your work experience.**

Your job is to convince the panel of how well you meet each of the competencies for the job.

Review your CV and competency statement:

- How can you expand on the examples you have included?
- What other examples can you add? (from all sources e.g. sport, voluntary roles etc) **\*SBO worksheet is a resource**

### **PRACTICE!**

Try out different ways of saying things.  
Be prepared to assert yourself during the interview – if the panel do not ask you about one of your strengths, make sure YOU cover it.  
Comment on all relevant aspects of your CV  
– remember the 'even playing field'

## Preparing for the Interview

The interview enables the employer to assess your suitability for the specific position. Good preparation is the best predictor of a successful interview.

### **At the interview, you should:**

- Present your experience and abilities to the employer in the most coherent manner possible
- Check whether your needs and wants are going to be met in the job
- Get the panel excited about the possibility of hiring you

Interviewers will want to be convinced that you have given this position considerable thought. They will expect specific examples of how you have achieved things in the past, and how you will build on these to deliver benefits to the organisation.

As with writing your competency statement, prepare to discuss specific examples that highlight how your skills and approach match the competencies. Remember SBO:

- 3 Describe the Situation,
- 3 Describe your Behaviour, explain the actions you took,
- 3 State the Outcome – this does not always need to be successful, providing your Behaviour matched the relevant competency and you were able to learn from the situation.

### **Before the Interview:**

- Think about what the interviewer wants to know: your past experience and achievements – with specific examples.
- Think about the reasons why there is a good match between your skills and what the employer is looking for.
- Refresh your familiarity with your CV and competency statement; take them with you to refer to (if you are nervous you can forget things).
- Think about what you enjoy doing, where you want to head longer-term and where this position fits for you.
- Prepare the questions you will ask during the interview. It is important to determine through questioning whether this position meets your career needs. Your questions are also a way to show the panel how much thought you have given to the role.
- Dress in clothes that are appropriate for the position. If in doubt err on the conservative side, clean and tidy are a must – details can make an impact e.g. remember nails and shoes.

## Front Of mind for the interviewers

NZCS uses structured panel interviews for staff selection. The panel will usually consist of a Chair and at least two others. The panel prepares the questions they will ask based on the competencies for the position and will ask the same questions of each candidate, except where they may wish to explore any of the specific examples you offer in more detail.

While the question and answer process happens on the surface level, experienced interviewers will also be ticking off a number of other more subtle points. These typically include:

- Are you open, confident and mature in your presentation?
- How effective and convincing is your verbal communication?
- Do you show evidence of leadership and initiative?
- How do you react to a stressful situation (the interview)?
- What degree of enthusiasm and determination do you show?
- Do I feel confident with the thought of you representing our organisation?

## The Basics in Summary

- Arrive a few minutes early or on time at latest.
- If presented with an application to fill out, complete it honestly!
- Be sure to listen to the interviewers outline of the organisation and position – you can refer back to this when asking questions or emphasising your point!
- Never make derogatory remarks about your present or former employers, even if you have had difficulties with them as it will always make the potential employer wonder what you will say about them!
- Think about what is really being asked by the interviewer(s); use pauses to think about the core issue behind the words.
- Ask for clarification if you are unsure about what is being asked.
- Use “pregnant pauses” and silence to emphasise your point – it is better to leave what has been said than to over explain or waffle.
- Thank the interviewer(s) for their time and re-emphasise your interest in the role as you depart.

## NZCS example interview questions

Competency	Example Questions
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell us about a leadership role you have had in a work situation. (If you cannot think of a work example, use a situation from your personal or social life.) What were the challenges that this role presented to you? How did you deal with these? What was the outcome?</li> <li>• Describe the process you use when delegating a responsibility to one of your staff. Give an example from your recent experience. What was the outcome for you, your staff member and the business?</li> </ul>
Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe a situation that required you to compromise one of your basic principles. What was the situation? What principle did you compromise? Why did you compromise? How did you feel about it?</li> <li>• Give us an example of a time when you were let down by someone else not meeting their commitment to you. What did you learn from this experience? What would you do next time?</li> </ul>
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give an example of a presentation you have made recently which pleased you. What made it successful? What tools or aides did you use to help get your message across?</li> <li>• Tell us about a situation where you had a complex concept to explain to a number of people with varying levels of understanding. How did you ensure that everyone understood the concept that you were explaining?</li> </ul>
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What tangible improvements have you personally made to the way in which the business operates? How did you sell the benefits of the changes to the rest of the business?</li> <li>• Give an example of a time where you came up with a solution to a problem that was completely different. Why was it different? What was the result?</li> </ul>
Customer Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give an example of a time when you believe you exceeded a customer's expectation. How did you achieve this? What was the result?</li> <li>• Give a specific example of a time when you could not meet a customer's request. How did you manage the situation? What was the outcome?</li> </ul>
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell us about a situation where a team you were in was not working well or to its full potential. What was your role in the team? What was the cause of the problem? What did you do to try to fix the problem?</li> <li>• Describe the role you naturally play in a team? How has this contributed to the success of the team? How have you encouraged others to work as a team?</li> </ul>
Conscientiousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An urgent matter arises at work 30 minutes before you are scheduled to finish, which will require you to stay behind to attend to. What will you do?</li> </ul>

## SBO Worksheet: Situation, Behaviour, Outcome

- ◆ Use this work sheet to capture your most relevant experiences for each competency
- ◆ You do not have to write something separately for every point. Think of real situations that illustrate how you have used or demonstrated the competencies sought. In one situation you will often use a number of different competencies
- ◆ When you have captured as many good example as you can think of, then you can pick the best to write up for your application.
- ◆ Be clear and concise in your application, definitely less than a page per competency
- ◆ When you prepare for your interview think about how you will tell the 'story' of each event – remember you are the 'star' and the stories are to showcase your skills. It is ok to talk about situations that did not go well, as long as you emphasise what you learnt from them.
- ◆ What are the examples you can discuss and build on during the interview or add in that were not included in your application?

	<u>Situation</u>	<u>Behaviour</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
<b>Competency and Description</b>	<b>Description of Situations where I have demonstrated this competency</b>	<b>What I did in these situations</b>	<b>What was the outcome of what I did?</b>
•			

	<b>Situation</b>	<b>Behaviour</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Competency and Description</b>	<b>Description of Situations where I have demonstrated this competency.</b>	<b>What I did in these situations.</b>	<b>What was the outcome of what I did?</b>
•			
•			

	<b><u>Situation</u></b>	<b><u>Behaviour</u></b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>
<b>Competency and Description</b>	<b>Description of Situations where I have demonstrated this competency.</b>	<b>What I did in these situations.</b>	<b>What was the outcome of what I did?</b>
<b>Communicator:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective orally and in writing;</li> <li>• Displays professionalism, consideration and courtesy.</li> <li>• Logical, clear and concise with both colleagues and clients.</li> <li>• Accurately documents procedures carried out and observations and conclusions made to departmental standards.</li> </ul>			
<b>Self Manager :</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strives for continuous self-development and effective personal work practices.</li> <li>• Actively seeks continuous improvement in own skills and performance and identifies areas for self-development.</li> <li>• Adheres to NZCS dress standards and maintains a high standard of personal presentation at all times.</li> <li>• Displays a flexible attitude in undertaking a wide range of activities where required.</li> </ul>			

<b><u>Competency</u></b>	<b><u>Situation</u></b>	<b><u>Behaviour</u></b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>
<p><b>Team Member:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes to developing an effective and supportive team environment in order to achieve collective and organisational goals.</li> <li>• Participates and co-operates with other team members in achieving team objectives.</li> <li>• Shares expertise, knowledge and information for the benefit of all.</li> <li>• Voluntarily provides training, help, guidance and advice to other team members.</li> <li>• Gives/shares information in a positive manner.</li> <li>• Demonstrates commitment to organisational values, best practice benchmarks and desired behaviours.</li> </ul>			

## Finding the words

Many people find it difficult to find just the right words for their CV and Competency Statements. The lists in this section are intended to get you started.

### Personal attributes

<i>Adaptable</i>	<i>Efficient</i>	<i>Loyal</i>	<i>Reliable</i>
<i>Adventurous</i>	<i>Empathetic</i>	<i>Mechanical</i>	<i>Resourceful</i>
<i>Aggressive</i>	<i>Emphatic</i>	<i>Methodical</i>	<i>Responsible</i>
<i>Agreeable</i>	<i>Energetic</i>	<i>Meticulous</i>	<i>Sarcastic</i>
<i>Alert</i>	<i>Enterprising</i>	<i>Moody</i>	<i>Scholarly</i>
<i>Ambitious</i>	<i>Enthusiastic</i>	<i>Natural</i>	<i>Scientific</i>
<i>Analytical</i>	<i>Expressive</i>	<i>Neat</i>	<i>Self controlled</i>
<i>Argumentative</i>	<i>Firm</i>	<i>Normal</i>	<i>Self-aware</i>
<i>Artistic</i>	<i>Flexible</i>	<i>Obedient</i>	<i>Self-confident</i>
<i>Assertive</i>	<i>Frank</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>Self-starter</i>
<i>Boastful</i>	<i>Friendly</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Sensitive</i>
<i>Calm</i>	<i>Fussy</i>	<i>Open-minded</i>	<i>Serious</i>
<i>Capable</i>	<i>Generous</i>	<i>Opportunistic</i>	<i>Sincere</i>
<i>Cautious</i>	<i>Genuine</i>	<i>Optimistic</i>	<i>Sociable</i>
<i>Competitive</i>	<i>Good judgement</i>	<i>Orderly</i>	<i>Spontaneous</i>
<i>Confident</i>	<i>Good Leader</i>	<i>Organised</i>	<i>Stable</i>
<i>Conforming</i>	<i>Good-natured</i>	<i>Original</i>	<i>Striving</i>
<i>Conscientious</i>	<i>Helpful</i>	<i>Outspoken</i>	<i>Sympathetic</i>
<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Highly Trained</i>	<i>Patient</i>	<i>Systematic</i>
<i>Conventional</i>	<i>Honest</i>	<i>Persistent</i>	<i>Tactful</i>
<i>Co-operative</i>	<i>Humorous</i>	<i>Persuasive</i>	<i>Talented</i>
<i>Courageous</i>	<i>Idealistic</i>	<i>Poised</i>	<i>Talkative</i>
<i>Creative</i>	<i>Imaginative</i>	<i>Polite</i>	<i>Thorough</i>
<i>Critical</i>	<i>Independent</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Thrifty</i>
<i>Curious</i>	<i>Individualistic</i>	<i>Practical</i>	<i>Tidy</i>
<i>Decisive</i>	<i>Insightful</i>	<i>Practical-minded</i>	<i>Tolerant</i>
<i>Dedicated</i>	<i>Intellectual</i>	<i>Precise</i>	<i>Tough</i>
<i>Dependable</i>	<i>Intelligent</i>	<i>Professional</i>	<i>Trusting</i>
<i>Determined</i>	<i>Introverted</i>	<i>Punctual</i>	<i>Understanding</i>
<i>Diplomatic</i>	<i>Intuitive</i>	<i>Quick minded</i>	<i>Versatile</i>
<i>Dominant</i>	<i>Inventive</i>	<i>Rational</i>	<i>Warm</i>
<i>Dynamic</i>	<i>Kind</i>	<i>Receptive</i>	<i>Witty</i>
<i>Easygoing</i>	<i>Logical</i>	<i>Relaxed</i>	

### “Action/doing words”

achieving  
acting  
adapting  
addressing  
administering  
advising  
analysing  
anticipating  
arbitrating  
arranging  
ascertaining  
assembling  
assessing

Controlling  
co-ordinating  
Coping  
Counselling  
Creating  
Deciding  
Defining  
Delivering  
Designing  
Detailing  
Detecting  
Determining  
Developing

Evaluating  
Examining  
expanding  
experimenting  
explaining  
expressing  
extracting  
filing  
financing  
fixing  
following  
formulating  
founding

attaining  
auditing  
budgeting  
building  
calculating  
charting  
checking  
classifying  
coaching  
collecting  
communicating  
compiling  
completing  
composing  
computing  
conceptualising  
conducting  
conserving  
consolidating  
constructing  
innovating  
inspecting  
inspiring  
installing  
instituting  
instructing  
integrating  
interpreting  
interviewing  
intuiting  
inventing  
inventorying  
investigating  
judging  
keeping  
leading  
learning  
lecturing  
lifting  
listening  
logging  
maintaining  
making  
managing  
manipulating  
mediating  
meeting  
memorising  
mentoring  
modelling

Devising  
Diagnosing  
Digging  
Directing  
Discovering  
Dispensing  
Displaying  
Disproving  
Dissecting  
Distributing  
Diverting  
Dramatising  
Drawing  
Driving  
Editing  
Eliminating  
Empathising  
Enforcing  
Establishing  
Estimating  
Organising  
Originating  
Overseeing  
Painting  
Perceiving  
Performing  
Persuading  
Photographing  
Piloting  
Planning  
Playing  
Predicting  
Preparing  
Prescribing  
Presenting  
Printing  
problem solving  
Processing  
Producing  
Programming  
Projecting  
Promoting  
proof-reading  
Protecting  
Providing  
Publicising  
Purchasing  
Questioning  
Raising  
Reading

gathering  
generating  
getting  
giving  
guiding  
handling  
having responsibility  
heading  
helping  
hypothesising  
identifying  
illustrating  
imagining  
implementing  
improving  
improvising  
increasing  
influencing  
informing  
initiating  
rehabilitating  
relating  
remembering  
rendering  
repairing  
reporting  
representing  
researching  
revolving  
responding  
restoring  
retrieving  
reviewing  
risking  
scheduling  
selecting  
selling  
sensing  
separating  
serving  
setting  
setting-up  
sewing  
shaping  
sharing  
showing  
singing  
sketching  
solving  
sorting

monitoring  
motivating  
navigating  
negotiating  
observing  
obtaining  
offering  
operating  
ordering  
taking  
taking instructions  
talking  
teaching  
team-building  
telling  
tending  
testing and proving  
training  
transcribing  
translating

Realising  
Reasoning  
Receiving  
Recommending  
Reconciling  
Recording  
Recruiting  
Reducing  
Referring  
Travelling  
Treating  
trouble-shooting  
Tutoring  
Typing  
Umpiring  
Understanding  
Understudying  
Undertaking  
Unifying

speaking  
studying  
summarising  
supervising  
supplying  
symbolising  
synergising  
synthesising  
systematising  
uniting  
upgrading  
using  
utilising  
verbalising  
washing  
weighing  
winning  
working  
writing

## “Strengths and Qualities”

able to concentrate	Determined	leader
able to handle stress	Diplomatic	loyal
accepting	easy going	mature
action oriented	efficient	mediating
active	empathic	methodical
adaptable	energetic	musical
adventurous	enthusiastic	neighbourly
affectionate	entrepreneurial	open to change
ambitious	experimenting	open to compromise
analytic	fair	optimistic
artistic	flexible	orderly
assertive	forceful	organise
attentive to detail	friendly	outdoor
aware	generous	outgoing
busy	gentle	patient
calculating	good with your hands	perfectionist
calm	happy	persevering
capable	hard working	persuasive
caring	helpful	physical strength
cautious	honest	polite
cheerful	humour	self starter
competitive	idealistic	positive
communicative	imaginative	playful
confident	independent	practical
conscientious	initiating	quick to learn
considerate	innovative	reliable
co-operative	inquiring	resourceful
courageous	integrity	risk taking
cultural knowledge	inventive	searching
curious	just	self controlled
decisive	kind	self reliant
dependable	language	sense of colour/design
serious	Supportive	thrifty
sensitive	Sympathetic	trustworthy
sincere	Tactful	understanding
sociable	Tolerant	unselfish
stable	Thorough	warm
steady	Thoughtful	

## “Functional Skills”

<i>Analyse</i>	<i>Debate</i>	<i>Inform</i>	<i>Recommend</i>
<i>Arrange</i>	<i>Diagnose</i>	<i>Inspect</i>	<i>Research</i>
<i>Administer</i>	<i>Deliver</i>	<i>Instruct</i>	<i>Recruit</i>
<i>Accomplish</i>	<i>Establish</i>	<i>Install</i>	<i>Revise</i>
<i>Activate</i>	<i>Expand</i>	<i>Introduce</i>	<i>Rectify</i>
<i>Adjust</i>	<i>Examine</i>	<i>Interview</i>	<i>Reorganise</i>
<i>Achieve</i>	<i>Encourage</i>	<i>Judge</i>	<i>Report</i>
<i>Apply</i>	<i>Eliminate</i>	<i>Learn</i>	<i>Renegotiate</i>
<i>Attain</i>	<i>Expedite</i>	<i>Launch</i>	<i>Review</i>
<i>Assemble</i>	<i>Execute</i>	<i>Listen</i>	<i>Recognise</i>
<i>Appraise</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Manage</i>	<i>Release</i>
<i>Assign</i>	<i>Explain</i>	<i>Maintain</i>	<i>Render (service)</i>
<i>Authorise</i>	<i>Evaluate</i>	<i>Monitor</i>	<i>Reconcile</i>
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Enlist</i>	<i>Manipulate</i>	<i>Succeed</i>
<i>Build</i>	<i>Exceed</i>	<i>Mould</i>	<i>Sell</i>
<i>Coach</i>	<i>Empower</i>	<i>Motivate</i>	<i>Schedule</i>
<i>Control</i>	<i>Edit</i>	<i>Memorise</i>	<i>Summarise</i>
<i>Coordinate</i>	<i>Forecast</i>	<i>Modulate</i>	<i>Set-up</i>
<i>Create</i>	<i>Follow-up/through</i>	<i>Mediate</i>	<i>Supervise</i>
<i>Conduct</i>	<i>Finalise</i>	<i>Merge</i>	<i>Systemise</i>
<i>Calculate</i>	<i>Foresee</i>	<i>Negotiate</i>	<i>Simplify</i>
<i>Catalogue</i>	<i>Figure out</i>	<i>Organise</i>	<i>Select</i>
<i>Classify</i>	<i>Foster (relationships)</i>	<i>Observe</i>	<i>Save</i>
<i>Consolidate</i>	<i>Facilitate</i>	<i>Oversee</i>	<i>Sort</i>
<i>Communicate</i>	<i>Formulate</i>	<i>Operate</i>	<i>Strengthen</i>
<i>Compute</i>	<i>Generate</i>	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Service</i>
<i>Counsel</i>	<i>Guide</i>	<i>Persuade</i>	<i>Stimulate</i>
<i>Conceive</i>	<i>Hire</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Solve</i>
<i>Compile</i>	<i>Help</i>	<i>Participate</i>	<i>Teach</i>
<i>Construct</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>Perform</i>	<i>Train</i>
<i>Consult</i>	<i>Institute</i>	<i>Perceive</i>	<i>Tend</i>
<i>Compare</i>	<i>Implement</i>	<i>Promote</i>	<i>Trouble shoot</i>
<i>Compose</i>	<i>Improve</i>	<i>Propose</i>	<i>Translate</i>
<i>Complete</i>	<i>Institute</i>	<i>Programme</i>	<i>Transfer</i>
<i>Design</i>	<i>Increase</i>	<i>Preside</i>	<i>Uncover</i>
<i>Develop</i>	<i>Invent</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Unravel</i>
<i>Direct</i>	<i>Innovate</i>	<i>Prepare</i>	<i>Utilise</i>
<i>Delegate</i>	<i>Investigate</i>	<i>Produce</i>	<i>Verify</i>
<i>Demonstrate</i>	<i>Index</i>	<i>Problem solve</i>	<i>View</i>
<i>Define</i>	<i>Interpret</i>	<i>Question</i>	<i>Write</i>