KSA - Tips to Writing an Effective KSA

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In order to apply for a Federal job opening, candidates are generally required to submit a narrative statement known as a KSA, sometimes to support their resume or in lieu of it. In continuation of what we discussed last week about KSAs and their purpose, we will now look into certain rules that go into creating an effective KSA statement.

1. **Reviewing the job announcement:**
   Make sure to read the job opening VERY carefully in order to understand perfectly the requirements of the vacancy. When the specialist reviews your document, he or she will be looking out if you possess those aspects of the knowledge, skills, and abilities that were listed on the advertisement.
2. **Put together information about yourself:**
   It is crucial to include all the information about yourself that is relevant to the position being applied for. The hiring authority wants to see what all you have done in the past and your caliber to contribute your best. Include information such as:

   a. Work experience
   b. Accomplishments (solid evidence that speaks of your knowledge, skills, and abilities such as creative problem-solving; implementing new approaches to getting things done; additional responsibilities taken; and any commendations or awards received)
   c. Training and education you have received or have provided to others
   d. Team responsibilities and acting or special assignments
   e. Contributions made (independently or as part of a team) towards publications, research, or products
   f. Presentations made at conferences, in-house or to other agencies
   g. Performance appraisals
3. **Relate your information to the job announcement:**
   Go though all the information that you have gathered till now about yourself, and relate any and all parts to the position you seek. Do not hesitate or restrict yourself to including only work related information which relates to the requirements of the job posting. You could mention anything starting from actual work experience, to skills or knowledge acquired through activities and encounters that could be non-work related. As long as it has relevance to the job posting, you MUST include it. For instance, if managerial skills have been listed in the announcement, mention all those experiences related to the skill, whether it is a prior managerial post that you held or simply being in charge of a youth group. Both experiences are equally important. The bottom line is to match your skills to the KSA requirements.
4. **Writing the KSA:**
   Once you have sorted out all the information, you will realize that writing a KSA is not as

difficult (if you follow a few rules), as it is tedious. Unlike a resume which could more or less be used to apply for a variety of jobs, every federal position that you apply to would require a new KSA. However, if you keep certain things in mind, you can craft an effective KSA with ease.

a. Focus on key words related to the job positing and write your statements in a clear and concise manner. Style is not as important as the content. Make sure that the reader understands what you have written. Long and complex sentences should be avoided.
b. Whether big or small, mention everything that is relevant to the job search and demonstrate how your knowledge, skills, and abilities relate to the vacancy.
c. Your KSA should be written in a personal yet professional manner in order to convey your qualities to the hiring authority.

KSAs hold tremendous importance in the evaluation process and applicants are scored according to the responses they give to the job announcement. The manner in which you put this forward, will by and large determine your score. You need to understand that during a Federal job recruitment process, more importance is always given to the KSA than what you include in the resume, and hence great care must be taken in its creation.

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