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Challenge-Context-Action-Result (CCAR) Model

ECQ statement should include no more than 2 examples (per ECQ) of relevant experience that matches the ECQ criteria. Describe specific challenges, actions and results.

- **Challenge** – describe a specific problem or goal
- **Context** – individuals and groups you worked with and/or environment in which you worked to address a challenge
- **Action** – what you specifically did to address the challenge
- **Result** – measures/outcomes that had some impact on the organization. This demonstrates the quality and effectiveness of leadership skills

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Challenge-Context-Action-Result (CCAR) Model

- Results-oriented approach
- Requires focus on the leadership skills needed to manage programs, process, and people.
- Provides a more complete picture of:
 - Applicant's leadership competencies
 - Specific role played in an organization's success.
- Focus on the candidate's accomplishments, not the organization's.
- No more than **2 examples** per ECQ.

CCAR Model

Challenge

describe a specific problem or goal



Context

describe individuals and groups you worked with and/or environment in which you worked to address a challenge



Action

discuss specific actions you took to address the challenge



Result

measures/outcomes that had some impact on the organization. This demonstrates the quality and effectiveness of leadership skills

ECQ CCAR Writing Model

Challenge	Describe a specific problem or goal.
Context	Talk about the individuals and groups you worked with, and/or the environment in which you worked, to tackle the particular challenge described.
Action	Discuss the specific actions you took to address the challenge described.
Result	Give specific examples of the results of your actions in addressing the challenge described. These accomplishments demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of your leadership skills.



(CCAR) Model

Quick Example

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Challenge

Energy Information Administration (EIA) **lacked a formal, corporate, and strategic approach to managing and operating its web assets**. My vision was to completely revamp the way EIA approached its web management activities by developing an integrated, corporate approach. Program **officials strongly resisted my initial efforts** to consolidate web management as they feared that giving up the existing approach would cause them to lose control of their resources.

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Context

The agency had taken a completely decentralized approach to web operations, with each program office independently managing its own substantial web holdings. Therefore, the agency hosted a myriad of websites and applications that had disjointed navigation models and produced a high amount of redundancy and duplication.

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Action

To overcome resistance, **I met** with them individually and in groups, and strongly championed the integrated approach. **I demonstrated** how the current approach was highly duplicative and inefficient, and was hampering progress in advancing its missions and meeting customer needs. To garner broader support, **I created** and led a study group in examining critical issues and also **led** them in a series of exercises to gain an understanding of the major shortcomings of the existing website.

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Result

As a result of my leadership, the corporate approach to web management became a prominently **featured in EIA's Strategic Plan**, making it one of the agency's top priorities over the next five years. **Progress in implementing** the new plan has already made the EIA web a much more dynamic and responsive tool that is now widely used by customers and stakeholders.



Sample Exercise

Pass

vs.

Fail

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General Concepts

Make Sure:

- **Write-up is focused on demonstrated executive leadership**
- **Examples are less than 10 years old**
- **Candidate followed CCAR model**
- **Examples were clear and easy to follow**
- **Not to leave open ended questions throughout write-up**
- **Examples are relevant to leadership**
- **Majority of competencies are addressed**
- **Examples organized well**

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Reviewing and Writing Tips

Make sure to:

- **Strictly adhere to 1 inch margins, 12pt font and 10 page narrative limit. (Number pages)**
- **Limit introductory summaries to 2 paragraphs (it counts towards 10 page narrative limit)**
- **Follow the CCAR (Challenge-Context-Action-Result) model**
- **Quantify experience (numbers, percentages, and timelines)**
- **Use measurable results (whenever possible)**
- **Use action oriented verbs (Active Voice vs passive voice)**

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Reviewing and Writing Tips

Make sure to:

- **Describe experience and accomplishments in a clear and organized manner. Tell the story and be succinct.**
- **Use personal “I” instead of the third person**
- **Write in Layman’s terms**
- **Proofread**
- **Spell out and limit the use of Acronyms**

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Reviewing and Writing Tips

Avoid:

- **Using the same example for more than one ECQ**
- **Vague statements**
- **Statements that describe personal beliefs, philosophies, or commitment to a social or political cause**
- **Grammatical errors and typos**
- **Using examples or experiences that are older than 10 years**

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Reviewing and Writing Tips

Avoid:

- Referring readers to other parts of the ECQ narrative
- Overuse of bolding and underlining
- Making disparaging remarks about former managers
- Revealing information about political affiliation or activities
- Using bureaucratic words and expressions
- Including ECQ definitions

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Resources

Guide to SES Qualifications

www.opm.gov/ses/references/GuidetoSESQuals_2010.pdf