

Selective Factors

In addition to the component of the minimum qualification requirements that is expressed as occupational qualification standards, selective factors identify any qualifications that are also important for the job. These are already required when the person starts the job.

Characteristics of a selective factor

Characteristics of a selective factor include:

- Extensive training or experience to develop;
- Essential for successful performance on the job, (i.e., if individuals do not have the selective factor, they cannot perform the job);
- Almost always are geared toward a specific technical competency/KSA; and
- Cannot be learned on the job in a "reasonable" amount of time.

When using selective factors, you should specify the required proficiency level. Based on their characteristics, selective factors can be used as a "screen out" – that is, if an applicant does not meet a selective factor he/she is ineligible for further consideration.

Example of a selective factor

A commonly applied selective factor is a special language requirement. Learning a language involves several years of training and for certain positions, a person cannot perform successfully unless he or she can communicate in a second language. In addition, applicants cannot compensate for a lower language proficiency level with higher levels of proficiency on other competencies. In these types of situations, it is appropriate to apply a special language requirement as a selective factor. Because selective factors are used as "screen outs," you should take all of these conditions into consideration when you identify selective factors that appropriately limit applicant consideration. For more information on establishing a proficiency level, see [Chapter 2, Indicators of Proficiency](#).

Documenting selective factors

You may establish selective factors for any position without OPM's approval except when using a single gender as a selective placement factor (see [Chapter 6, Section A, Positions Restricted to One Gender](#).) However, you should establish and document these selective factors through the job analysis process (see Appendix G) by identifying:

- The competencies/KSAs basic to and essential for satisfactory performance of the job;
- The duties or tasks the incumbent will perform that require the possession of the requested competencies/KSAs; and
- The education, experience, or other qualifications that provide evidence of the possession of the competencies/KSAs (optional).

If you cannot document a selective factor as enhancing the candidates' ability, you can use it as a quality ranking factor (see [Quality Ranking Factors](#)).