

David Campbell

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Statement addressing the selection criteria

Chief Executive Officer

Star Futures Youth Services

1. Understanding of the issues and challenges facing young people in contemporary culture, including the impact of social policy. Ability to engage with and communicate effectively with young people.

Almost seven years as Residential Care Worker, five as Supervisor and three as Group Manager, Widdicombe Downs Residential Care have given me an excellent understanding of the issues and challenges facing young people in today's culture and developed my ability to engage and communicate with young people.

- Three weeks ago, counselled a 17-year-old boy who had been suspended from school because of fighting. He had been doing well and was in line for a traineeship but his suspension could jeopardise his chances. He told me that he fought because he was being bullied by a number of students about being in residential care. Explained the situation to the school principal and arranged for details of all the work that he would miss during his suspension to be sent to the group home.

Helped him learn the material and complete the assignments as well as helping him develop strategies for coping with the bullying. The principal also agreed to speak to the students who were bullying him.

The result is that he is now back at school; he is no longer being bullied; his studies are going well and he has every likelihood of getting the traineeship.

2. Demonstrated leadership and motivational skills.

Good leadership is essential to running residential care. Not only do I lead the staff team of paid employees and volunteers across the three houses but I also need to lead and motivate the young people.

- Mediated in a dispute between a staff member and a resident. This was a boy who was rostered on at short notice for kitchen duties. He had planned to play computer games with one of the other residents.

He reacted angrily and threw crockery into the sink, breaking some plates and splashing a lot of water over the floor. I took him aside, and explained that it was not the staff member's fault that he had been rostered for helping in the

kitchen. When he had calmed down, he agreed and I asked him how he intended to make amends.

He said that he would clean up the kitchen area immediately and he would do the washing up after tea for the next two nights. He did this and apologised nicely to the staff member.

3. A record of success in working effectively with a Board of Management.

Work very harmoniously with the Board of Management of Widdicombe Downs Residential Care and have worked especially closely since taking on the role of Area Manager. I keep the Board informed of issues across all three houses and up-to-date with the progress that we are making.

- Three years ago, we had two houses accommodating seven young people. We knew that there was an urgent need for more residential care. I worked with the Board to do a business plan for building or purchasing a third house. To do this, I consulted Department officials and visited a number of residential care establishments in the state to get specifications and ideas. I then consulted architects to get suitable designs and cost estimates and I took these to the Board to choose a design. I researched possible sources of funding, put a proposal to the Board which was accepted and wrote a submission for a grant under the Cornwall scheme.

The submission was successful and, under the Board's direction, I invited tenders for construction. The Board selected a tender and then I oversaw construction including monitoring the budget. Completion was delayed by bad weather but came in on budget.

Before completion, I worked with the Board to recruit and select staff for the house. I organised the necessary training and clearances, and the first young people were in residence within three weeks of completion.

- Work very closely with the Board each year to plan and implement fund-raising activities. The Widdicombe Fair last year attracted people from as far away as Beechworth and Bright and raised \$22,000.

4. A proven record at a senior level of policy development, management, strategic and business planning and evaluation within a human services/community services organisation.

Almost 15 years in management positions have helped me develop high level management skills and a capacity for effective strategic and business planning. These abilities have proved invaluable in my current role as Group Manager at Widdicombe. Over the last three years, I have overseen the construction of a third residential care unit and the resulting recruitment, training and management of additional staff and volunteers. One of the most challenging instances of policy development, however, came from deciding to accept into Widdicombe a boy who initially had very challenging behaviour.

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- Two years ago, the Board asked if I would be willing to accept a 13-year-old with a history of being very difficult. He had been in foster care and living with relatives and it hadn't worked. He had been known to frequently abuse both adults and young people and to wantonly destroy other people's property. I took the request to a meeting of staff and volunteers and then had a meeting with the other three young people in the home. There was some apprehension but we agreed to take him and together we worked out strategies to help him settle in as quickly and easily as possible. I reported these strategies to the Board, along with our decision.

Initially he was very difficult. He was angry with everyone and deliberately stole or destroyed the property of other young people or the home. However, we stuck to our strategies. Gradually we gained his trust and I reported our progress to the Board who gave us a lot of support.

The big leap forward came when we discovered that he loved skateboarding. With the Board's approval, we bought him a skateboard and a staff member who is himself a skilled skateboarder takes him to the local skateboard park two or three times a week. I am now working with the Board and other staff members to see if we can help him compete in the skateboard competition in Wonthaggi next month.

5. Highly developed communication and public relations skills.

My communication skills have been developed and demonstrated throughout my career. As Compliance Manager at Cornwallis Bank, I had to inform senior management, often very diplomatically, about the risks involved with the strategic directions that they were proposing.

My public relations skills have largely been developed during my time at Widdicombe Downs. Since taking up this role, I have made several presentations to service clubs, corporate management and public forums as well as several radio interviews and one television appearance.

The effectiveness of my public relations activities is shown by more than \$100,000 in corporate sponsorship last financial year. This came as a direct result of my speaking at the Wodonga Chamber Awards dinner in 2012.

6. Knowledge of legislation, regulations and the economic and political environments relating to the human services sector.

I have been very conscious of legislation, regulations and economic and political environments since taking on the role of Compliance Manager, Cornwallis Bank. In that role, I developed the habit of making sure that I was totally up to date with all relevant information.

Since taking over at Widdicombe Downs, I have focussed on the regulatory, political and economic environment that relates to human services.

7. Evidence of successful involvement in change management processes.

The changes that have had the most impact on Widdicombe have been the addition of the third house and the admission of a boy with very challenging behaviour. Both required careful planning, extensive discussion with all stakeholders and the development of agreed strategies to manage the change.

The fact that both changes have been successful is evidence of level of agreement and commitment we managed to get from staff, volunteers and the young people themselves. Once we were working together towards commonly agreed goals, change management was easy. When there were difficulties, and there were plenty, all parties together worked out how to overcome those difficulties and then willingly did what was necessary. It has always been a team effort and I have always involved the team in decision making and planning.

8. Proven capacity in budgeting, financial monitoring and reporting to achieve organisational goals.

My accounting degree and 20 years in banking have given me excellent financial monitoring skills which have been invaluable both in the purchase and successful operation of a general store and in the management of Widdicombe Downs, especially during its period of expansion.

- Drew up a budget of \$320,000 for the last financial year and presented it to the Board for approval. Projected income included state and federal government funding, corporate sponsorship and income from the annual Widdicombe Fair.

In spite of a reduction in government funding, we were able to achieve a slight budget surplus through some careful cost cutting that did not impact on the quality of life of our young people and through additional support provided by the Lions Club.

9. Understanding and commitment to continuous quality improvement and best practice in the human services field.

To ensure best practice at Widdicombe Downs and to maximise staff morale, I have been active in encouraging staff, both paid and volunteers, to undertake professional development training. I always budget to ensure that all contingent costs are covered and, as a result, have achieved a well trained, highly motivated team.

- With the Victorian Foster Parents Association and with delegates from two other residential care facilities, ran a very successful conference in Wangaratta. Three Widdicombe Downs staff members, one salaried and two volunteers, made a presentation on helping young people cope with depression which was very well received and one of the older boys was on stage to answer questions.

Arranged for all members of staff to attend at least one day of the three-day conference. The impact of the conference on morale at the home was fantastic.

10. Information Technology skills.

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Use a computer, a tablet and a smartphone all the time. Competent using the MS Office suite for emails, word processing, spreadsheets and presentation slides. Use MYOB Accountrightplus for all the home's accounts and stock control.

11. Ability to lead, manage, supervise and motivate staff in achieving desired goals

Have held management positions for almost 20 years. Since 2012, I have led, managed, supervised and motivated a team of twelve salaried staff and fourteen volunteers to run Widdicombe Downs three houses. During this time, we have gained five new volunteers and lost no one. Morale is high, the young people are well cared for and the home is clean and well maintained.

Much of my success has been a result of involving staff as well as the Board in setting our priorities and planning the strategies to best achieve them. In this way, staff feel 'ownership' of the plan and are, as a result, even more determined to achieve the right outcomes.

12. Ability to develop and set objectives, performance and development criteria, targets and establish priorities.

Running a successful residential care facility, as with running a successful business, requires establishing objectives and performance criteria, setting priorities and then making plans to achieve them.

My success in this area is demonstrated by the success of Widdicombe Downs. After an inspection by officers of the Department of Human Services last year, the report read that the three houses "... are clean and comfortable. There is a feeling of peace and harmony and the young people appear happy and well cared for".

13. Strong, clear and concise interpersonal skills including oral and written report presentation.

My oral and written reports to the Board, to the Department of Human Services and to sponsoring organisations have been concise, clear and well received. My ability to give less formal reports to service clubs and other community organisations together with my ability to quickly build rapport has resulted in increased support from the community in both cash donations and in-kind assistance.

14. Negotiation and conflict resolution skills.

Negotiation and conflict resolution are an important component of my role. Whether it is resolving conflict between young people or between young people and staff, it requires tact and respect of all who are involved in the conflict. A lot of negotiation is required in conflict resolution but negotiation of a slightly different sort is required when seeking corporate sponsorship. My success in this area has been demonstrated by the increase in corporate sponsorship enjoyed by the group since I became Manager in 2012.

15. Understanding of and commitment to contemporary HR principles and practices.

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Having managed staff for more than 20 years, I have a good understanding of and commitment to contemporary HR principles and practices.

Attended two one-day HR seminars last year, one on building and developing talent and the other on developing effective HR policies and procedures.

16. A current driver's licence

Manual car driver's licence since 1976. No current demerit points.

17. Full pre-employment security check

Currently have full security clearance including identification, national criminal history and working with children check. Willing to undergo a new check or provide certificates as required.