

Complete a Job Application

TO RECEIVE EMPLOYMENT, you must first be able to confidently complete a job application. To do so, you need to be familiar with application forms and with mistakes applicants make that leave a negative impression.

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Objectives:



1. Identify terms and abbreviations commonly found on a job application.
2. Identify guidelines for completing a job application.
3. Identify common job application mistakes.

Key Terms:



convicted
dependents
felony
forename
given name
maiden name
references
surname
work history

Job Application Terms and Abbreviations

It is important to recognize and comprehend the common terms and abbreviations found on job applications. Knowledge of these terms will allow you to focus on the answers and the overall quality of the application.

TERMS

Numerous terms and definitions are important to comprehend on the common job application.

- ◆ **Surname** is the applicant's last name or legal name.
- ◆ **Forename** and **given name** are terms commonly used that refer to the applicant's first name.
- ◆ MAIDEN NAME is a female applicant's last name before marriage.
- ◆ Residential address or permanent address refers to the applicant's home address.
- ◆ **Dependents** are individuals that a person supports financially, such as children.
- ◆ Next of kin refers to your closest relative. In most cases, this will be a person's parents or legal guardians.
- ◆ WORK HISTORY is a list of previous jobs and employers for whom you have worked.
- ◆ **References** are individuals who can recommend you for a job or speak about your character.
- ◆ **Convicted** refers to being found guilty of a crime. Many job applications ask if the applicant has ever been found guilty of a felony.
- ◆ A **felony** is a crime more serious than a misdemeanor and may be punishable by imprisonment.

ABBREVIATIONS

Many abbreviations and definitions are important to comprehend on the common job application.

- ◆ D.O.B.: date of birth
- ◆ SS#: Social Security number
- ◆ Co: company
- ◆ Zip: zip code
- ◆ Mo: month
- ◆ Yr: year
- ◆ Tel: telephone number
- ◆ No: number

Guidelines for Completing a Job Application

Job applications often involve completing a written or online job application form provided by the employer. Applicants should heed the following guidelines for completing a job application.

FORM AND PRESENTATION

The job application communicates important information about you to the employer. It communicates your job interests, skills, education, and job history or experience. The job application also shares your availability, your ability to spell and communicate effectively in writing, and your ability to follow directions.



FIGURE 1. Many job applications can now be completed over the Internet.

Previous Employer Information

Job applications often require that you complete many detailed questions. Therefore, have the necessary documents and items with you to make answering the questions easy and accurate. The most obvious item that you will need is a writing utensil—a black or blue pen; no other colors of ink should be used. You must also be able to list all of your previous employers, including their details. These details include:

1. Name, address, and phone number of company
2. Name and title of immediate supervisor
3. Start date and end dates of employment
4. Starting and ending salaries
5. Reasons for leaving

Miscellaneous Information

To make the listing of details accurate and complete, it helps to have the information listed on a worksheet form or an index card. Do not rely on your memory.

You will also need to list:

1. Where you attended school (name, address, city, and state)
2. Social Security number
3. Driver's license number
4. List of references (at least three), including
 - a. Name, address, city/ state, phone number
 - b. Their position or title
 - c. Relationship to applicant (e.g., supervisor or co-worker)

Presentation Tips

Presentation counts as much as content.

- ◆ Write legibly; consider printing.
- ◆ Use proper grammar and spelling.
- ◆ List your most recent job first when completing your work history.
- ◆ List your most recent schools first when completing your education history.
- ◆ Read and follow all directions carefully.
- ◆ Do not leave blank spaces; write N/A when data is not applicable.
- ◆ Always be completely honest.
- ◆ Be specific with regards to your availability; know when you can start and when you are available to work.
- ◆ Double-check all information before turning in an application.
- ◆ Do not forget to sign the completed application.
- ◆ Always state a positive reason for leaving a job (i.e., to take a more challenging position; to concentrate on school work).
- ◆ Ask permission before you use someone as a reference!
- ◆ You are not required to answer questions about race, religion, sex, marital status, children, or financial status.

APPLICATION LETTER (COVER LETTER)

Job applicants should also consider preparing an application letter or cover letter. This letter should be prepared using a business format. The standard format is as follows:

1. Block or modified block style; equal margins
2. Return address of applicant
3. Recipient's name and address
4. Salutation (greeting)
5. Body of letter

The body is the meat of the letter. Here you must think and organize in terms of paragraphs. In the first paragraph, explain why you are writing (e.g., the position for which you are applying, how you learned of the position, and your interest). In the second paragraph, describe your qualifications for the job and how you fit the job requirements. Then provide examples of your skills. In the third paragraph, briefly restate your interest and qualifications; ask for an interview, or state your intended plan to follow up the letter with personal contact.

6. Formal closing, followed by signature and typed name
7. Enclosure (i.e., résumé or application)

COVER LETTER EXAMPLE

Review the following example cover letter.

543 Tower Lane Road
Addison, IL 61543

January 25, 20—
Ms. Andrea Tankard
Staff Recruiter, Human Resources
Massachusetts General Hospital
432 Maine St.
Glen Springs, IL 60014

Dear Ms. Tankard:

I am applying for the part-time position of patient care technician, which was advertised in Saturday's *Chicago Tribune*. My education, skills, and career interests are well matched to this position, and I believe I could be a valuable employee in your organization.

According to the advertisement, this position requires excellent communication and organizational skills. As a class officer, I demonstrated these skills well, especially in performing my duties as class president. I also possess certificates in CPR and first aid, which would help me provide safe care to your patients. Through my experience in Health Science & Technology class at the Technical Center of Addison, I have learned many patient care skills that I am anxious to use while working with patients in your facility.

I am eager to learn more about the position and to become a member of your health care team. Please call me at your earliest convenience to schedule an interview. I can be reached at (312) 954-2543 after 3:30 p.m. each weekday.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Stacy Montrose
Enclosure: Résumé

RÉSUMÉ

Job applicants should also consider submitting a résumé. (A separate lesson on writing a résumé is provided in the Lesson Plan Library.)



FIGURE 2. A professionally written résumé.

Common Job Application Mistakes

To complete a job application with the highest degree of accuracy and completeness, it is helpful to know the common pitfalls or mistakes so you can avoid them. The most common mistakes are:

- ◆ Misspelled words
- ◆ Grammatical errors
- ◆ Crossed out writing
- ◆ Sloppy and illegible writing
- ◆ Wrinkled, messy, or dog-eared application pages

- ◆ Inaccurate or incomplete information
- ◆ Unanswered questions
- ◆ Not following directions
- ◆ Forgetting to sign the completed application
- ◆ Negative statements regarding reasons for leaving previous jobs
- ◆ Neglecting to include references

JOB APPLICATION

The best way to become more comfortable with job applications is to complete several practice applications. Use the outline of information below to gather your facts, and complete the practice application. Then complete the applications as they appear on the Sample Job Applications Web site at <http://www.nhlink.net/employe/example.htm>.

Sample Job Application

Please PRINT all information (except signature)

Date: ____ / ____ / ____ SS#: _____ - _____ - _____

Name: _____
 Surname First Middle Maiden

Address: _____
 No. Street City State Zip

Home phone number: (_____) _____ - _____

Cell phone number: (_____) _____ - _____

E-mail address: _____

D.O.B.: ____ / ____ / ____ If under 18, please indicate age: _____ yrs.

If you are under 16, do you have (or can you obtain) a Worker's Permit? Yes No

Position applying for: _____ Desired salary: _____

Employment desired: ____ Full-time ____ Part-time ____ Temporary

Days/hours available to work:

Mon.

Tues.

Wed.

Thurs.

Fri.

Sat.

Sun.

How many hours are you available to work each week? _____ hrs./wk.

Are you available to work nights? Yes No

What date are you available to start work? _____ / _____ / _____

Have you ever worked for this company in the past? Yes No

If yes, specify dates and position held: _____

Education:

Type of school, name of school, and complete address

No. of yrs. completed

Major, degree, or anticipated graduation date

High school

College

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? Yes No

If yes, explain conviction(s), nature of offense(s) leading to conviction, when offenses were committed, sentences imposed, and type of rehabilitation.

Do you have a driver's license? Yes No

What is your means of transportation to work? _____

If the position for which you are applying requires you to drive a vehicle, complete the following:

Driver's license number: _____

State of issue: _____

Expiration date: _____ / _____ / _____

Have you ever been in the Armed Forces / Military? Yes No

Are you a member of the National Guard? Yes No

Work history (List the most recent job first; include part-time and summer jobs):

Place of employment: _____

Address: _____

City, state, and zip code: _____

Dates of employment (month/year to month/year): ____ / ____ to ____ / ____

Name of supervisor: _____ Phone number: _____

List several duties/responsibilities you had: _____

Starting salary: _____ per _____ ending salary: _____ per _____

Reason(s) for leaving: _____

Place of employment: _____

Address: _____

City, state, and zip code: _____

Dates of employment (month/year to month/year): ____ / ____ to ____ / ____

Name of supervisor: _____ Phone number: _____

List several duties/responsibilities you had: _____

Starting salary: _____ per _____ ending salary: _____ per _____

Reason(s) for leaving: _____

Can we contact your current employer? Yes No

References:

	Reference 1	Reference 2	Reference 3
Name	_____	_____	_____
Title	_____	_____	_____
Address	_____	_____	_____
Phone number	_____	_____	_____
Relationship	_____	_____	_____

Special skills: List below any special skills or training you have that may qualify you for the position for which you are applying.

I certify that the information on this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any false information on this application may be grounds for not hiring me.

Signature

Summary:



The job application is a necessary step in the job-seeking process. The job application has you complete a great deal of information that the potential employer deems important. Often the information on the application is similar to that which may be in your résumé and cover letter, thus it makes sense to prepare both of these documents as well.

It is important to recognize and comprehend the common terms and abbreviations found on job applications to best understand what the application is asking. Pay attention to form and to the presentation of your information. To avoid the common application mistakes, it is best to review those that most others make. With some preparation and practice, the job application can become a successful step in the job-search process.

Checking Your Knowledge:



1. What common job application item refers to a female applicant's name before marriage?
2. What common job application item refers to individuals who can recommend you for a job or speak about your character?
3. What common job application items are a summary of previous jobs and employers for whom you worked?
4. Define the abbreviation "D.O.B."
5. Define the abbreviation "SS#."

Expanding Your Knowledge:



Ask a human resource director from a local business to review your practice applications and cover letters. Then ask if he or she is willing to provide you with some valuable feedback in the form of constructive criticism.

Web Links:



Career Resources Toolkit for Job-Seekers

http://www.quintcareers.com/career_resources.html

Job Application Guide

<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/jobapplications/a/jobapplication.htm>

Online Job Applications

http://jobsearch.about.com/od/jobapplications/a/jobapplication_3.htm