

Job Applications

THE COMPETITION for jobs is extensive, so the better prepared you are, the more likely you will find the job that's right for you. There are proven ways for you to stand out from the crowd.

First, make a good initial impression by being professional, responsible, honest, determined, sincere, and confident in person, on the phone, or online. Whatever the medium, proper articulation is essential. When you approach job applications with confidence, you will display a positive attitude.



Objectives:



1. Explain how to research a job opportunity.
2. Describe two methods of applying for a job.
3. Identify the common types of information requested on a job application form.

Key Terms:



company literature
cost of living
employment desired
formal letter of application

market
past employment
personal information
personal visitation
quality of life

references
suppliers

Research a Job Opportunity Before Applying

Before applying, you should conduct research about a potential job. Familiarize yourself with the employer and the type of business. This will allow you to discuss the job opening intelligently. There are many sources where you can find this information. Among them are:

- ◆ **Company literature**—catalogs, brochures, and reports produced by the employer. This material will provide an overview of the company's products and services.

- ◆ **Employees**—people who already work for the employer. These individuals can provide a good deal of information about the company’s products, services, and working environment.
- ◆ **Suppliers**—businesses that supply goods and services to the employer. These businesses will have knowledge of the company’s products and business practices.

The **market** is the area of business or the industry in which the potential employer is engaged. Does the company operate in a market that allows for growth and advancement?

You should also research the community in which you will be living if hired. Explore:

- ◆ The **cost of living**—the cost of housing, food, utilities, and insurance in a particular city or town.
- ◆ The **quality of life**—the recreational and social advantages of living in the community.
- ◆ The **school system**—the quality of education that’s available in the community. This will be important to applicants with children.



FIGURE 1. Much job hunting and preparation for interviews can be done online. Companies post information about their history, products, and goals.

Two Common Methods of Applying for a Job

Personal visitation is the act of completing an application in person. When applying in person:

- ◆ **Dress and groom properly**—This is important in making a good impression.
- ◆ **State the purpose of the visit**—Inform the company receptionist that you are seeking employment. If the company is seeking applicants, it will have specific procedures for you to follow.
- ◆ **Complete the employment application form**—This form provides the employer with information about your education, experience, and goals. Carefully read and follow all instructions in completing the form.
- ◆ **Allow sufficient interview time**—Schedule personal visits so that you have time to neatly and accurately complete the application form.



FURTHER EXPLORATION...

ONLINE CONNECTION: Job Engines and Networking

Job searching online has replaced “pounding the pavement.” Online job boards bring your job search onto your computer screen. Searching for jobs online is convenient and efficient when you narrow down job information to the data that is important to you.

Career and job search networking can help you find a job and later advance up the employment ladder. Job search engines, job boards, company websites, social media, and professional networking sites are available to you. More than 80 percent of job seekers find jobs through networks. Your network includes family, neighbors, past and present bosses and coworkers, friends with similar interests, guidance counselors, alumni—anyone who might have a connection can assist you. Your network can help you find job leads, provide referrals, or give you inside information on career fields and companies you might want to explore.

Job engines such as Indeed (indeed.com) have job listings from thousands of websites as company career pages, job boards, newspaper classified ads, and associations. You will be able to locate salary trends, read and participate in discussion forums, research companies, and find company employees through social networks. Some other search engines include LinkUp (linkup.com), SimplyHired (simplyhired.com), and US.jobs (us.jobs).

- ◆ *Be prepared*—Bring records that will help you provide accurate information and dates on the application form. Also, bring your own pen for completing the form.

Some companies may request a formal letter of application before an interview is scheduled. A **formal letter of application** is a business letter that indicates a candidate is applying for a job. It is an important tool in seeking employment and demands careful preparation to create a good first impression.

Many businesses now request that application be made online. Check the company’s website, or call for specific instructions.

Common Types of Information Requested on an Application Form

Application forms commonly ask for the same types of information.

- ◆ **Personal information**—This includes your name, address, telephone number, email address, and social security number.
- ◆ **Employment desired**—This is the position you are applying for. You may also be asked for the date you could begin working and the salary or wages desired.

◆ **Education**—This is the levels and types of education you have completed. Specific locations and dates related to your education may also be requested.

◆ **Past employment**—This is a history of previous jobs you have held. Be prepared to provide each previous employer's name and address, the time you were employed, and your reason for leaving.

◆ **References**—These are individuals who can provide the employer with your qualifications and character. Provide complete information so that the employer may easily contact the references. Always obtain the permission of the references before listing them.



FIGURE 2. A written or online application form will require you to give complete information about yourself, the type of employment you desire, your educational experience, and your employment history. References may be requested at the time of the initial application or later.

Summary:



Before applying, you should conduct research about a potential job. You will want to learn about company products, services, and working environment. You will also want to know if the company operates in a market that allows for growth and advancement. This will allow you to experience the interview as an informed and intelligent applicant.

You may apply for a job by personal visitation, you may send a formal letter of application, or you may apply online. Check the company's website or call for specific instructions.

You will want to be prepared to answer questions on the application about your personal identity, the employment you are seeking, your employment history, and your education. Personal references may be requested at the time of application or later. Have all this information organized and written out in advance of the application and interview to save time and give the impression that you are prepared and efficient.

Checking Your Knowledge:



1. Why is it wise to research a job before an interview?
2. What are sources you should use to research a job?
3. Define cost of living and quality of life in relation to your job search.
4. When you apply for a job in person, what type of information should you prepare in advance?
5. Why is it important to have the prior permission of people you use as references?

Expanding Your Knowledge:



For full-time or part-time employment, you will need to fill out an application. The more prepared you are, the easier the process will be. You can download and print a sample application at <http://savoyinn.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/job-application.pdf>.

Web Links:



Job Applications

http://jobsearch.about.com/od/jobapplications/Job_Applications.htm

Apply for Jobs

<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/jobapplications/tp/apply-for-jobs.htm>

careeronestop

<http://www.careeronestop.org/JobSearch/Apply/WaystoApply.aspx>

Application Methods

<http://www.monash.edu.au/careers/students-grads/apply-for-a-job/application-methods.html>

Applying for a Job

<http://www.pearsonschoolsandfecolleges.co.uk/FEAndVocational/BusinessandAdministration/BTEC/WorkSkills/Samples/WorkSkillsWorkbook1/BTECL2WorkskillsWorkbookUnit5.pdf>