

Completing the Application Form

Almost every employer will require you to fill out an application form, even though the company may already have your resume and cover letter. Applications may be used as a tool in screening applicants for interviews. Always take your time when filling out the application form. Use one as a draft copy before completing the final form. There is a sample Master Application Form in the Supplemental Section of this manual (see Page 24). Use the following suggestions to complete application forms:

1. Be prepared when you fill out the form. Have all necessary information easily accessible.
2. Read and follow all directions before beginning to fill out the form.
3. Make your application form neat and easy to read — it will be judged on appearance and content. If possible, type the form. If you can't type, print neatly.
4. Do not write "see resume," even if the application repeats information.
5. Read each question and decide how you will answer before you begin to write. This helps you fit the answer into the available space and to write the best answer.
6. Answer all questions. If a question does not apply or you feel the question invades your privacy, write "N/A" for "not applicable." Do not leave blank spaces.
7. Do not scratch out or write over mistakes. If you must correct over a mistake, cross out the error completely with a single line (—).
8. Take your time, but work steadily. If you take too long filling out an application at the company, the employer may think you were not properly prepared or that you work too slowly.
9. Answer questions honestly — never lie — and do not use sarcastic answers.
10. Ask for clarification if you do not understand something about the form.
11. After you complete the form, check it for accuracy, correct grammar and spelling.
12. Make sure it is neat, and make a copy for your records.
13. Follow up at regular intervals (about every week) until you hear from the employer.
14. **Work Experience:** Make sure you have all the information you will need with you. Work on describing your duties before you fill out an application so you can be brief and clear in your descriptions. When you prefer not to give your salary history, you should rarely use "will discuss in interview." However, keep in mind that some employers will screen you out for doing this. When giving your reason for leaving, never give a negative answer — "completed goals," "moved" and "seasonal" are all acceptable answers. Do not write "fired." Always list the reason in a positive sentence. Again, keep in mind that some employers will screen you out for doing this.