

JOB APPLICATIONS

HOW TO COMPLETE A JOB APPLICATION

- Prospective employers get a lot more information from an application than facts and numbers. They also check for:
 - Neatness
 - Completeness
 - Spelling and Grammar
 - Organizational skills
- The application is a chance for you to keep your name in the “prospective employee” file and out of the wastebasket.
- Treat the application with the respect that it demands and do not be sloppy!
- Remember to **TAKE YOUR TIME!** An incomplete application could affect the best opportunity of your lifetime.

TIPS FOR COMPLETING A JOB APPLICATION

Always **PRINT** in **INK**.

READ EVERY LINE and FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY: If you are careful about this when you fill out your application, the prospective employer will probably conclude that you are a careful worker, too. Follow all directions printed on the application. For example, use the date format that is requested on the application (month and year, year only, etc.) Show the employer that you can do what is expected of you.

ANSWER EVERY QUESTION: The employer needs to know that you did read it, but it does not fit your situation. If the question does not apply to you, answer the question with “N/A,” meaning “not applicable,” or draw a line through the space given for that answer. Be as specific as possible with all of your answers. Do not write “see résumé,” even if you are going to attach one. Answer all questions with the proper information.

BE NEAT: Print clearly so that it can be easily read. Ask what is meant by abbreviations on the application form if you do not know them. Think before you write to avoid mistakes. If you do make a mistake, draw one line through it, do not blotch it out. This simple document paints a pretty good picture of you, so take advantage of this and make sure it paints the best picture possible.

COMPLETE THE APPLICATION YOURSELF: Employers want to know how well you read and write, not how well someone else can read and write.

SPELL CORRECTLY: If you do not know how to spell a word, choose another word with the same meaning or check the dictionary.

BE HONEST: Don't give false information. Employers do follow through and check most of the information given on the application. Putting false information on an application is the quickest way to get your application tossed into the wastebasket.

WHAT TO TAKE WITH YOU

- Most of the time you will not be able to take the application home with you — it will need to be completed on the spot, so **BE PREPARED!**
- Carry a blue or black pen with you; never use pencil or colored ink.
- Put together a folder and include the following information:
 - Copies of your résumé
 - Copies of Letters of Recommendation
 - List of references
 - Completed sample application
 - Scrap paper or a notepad
 - Thank You cards

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HOW TO ANSWER, “HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME?” Be honest and answer the question directly. Most employers perform a background check on their employees, so they will find out the truth. If asked, it is ok to tell them when and where the crime took place. If asked to explain, say “I have learned from my mistakes and would like to discuss further.”

LIST ALL EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE: List any education, experience, on-the-job training, co-op or volunteer experience that have given you skills for any type of work. Have dates, addresses, and names available. If you have any special licenses or belong to a trade union or youth group, include that information.

PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE: Describe your previous work experience accurately and completely. Employers look for applications with skills, abilities, special trainings (i.e. safety, CPR, Hazmat, Quality Assurance, Microsoft Word) and experience. If you had a paper route, did babysitting, or did odd jobs, you should include these as well. Be sure to list the different types of equipment and/or machines you have operated.

SPECIAL SKILLS AND ABILITIES: “What special skills or abilities do you have to offer?” Many applications ask a question like this one. DO NOT leave it blank! It is your chance to shine above everybody else. Practice a couple of short sentences that reflect a good image of you. If you haven’t had a lot of work experiences, refer to a good work attitude, reliability, accuracy, etc. Pick whatever makes you look your best, but be honest.

SALARY DESIRED: Do not pin yourself down to a dollar figure. You will probably come out ahead in the long run with an answer like “negotiable.” What you are saying with this type of answer is, “we’ll talk about it later.” If a job order shows a pay range, it is acceptable to enter that pay range on the application.

PERSONAL REFERENCES: Be prepared to provide three work references and have as much information ready as possible, including name, address, phone number, and job title. References should only be used with permission from that person. Call and alert the people you are using as references to let them know that he/she may be getting a call.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/COMMENTS SECTION: Do not leave this blank. In this section feel free to indicate anything that you may think is important to your work/skill history that is not listed elsewhere on the application. Such as mechanical abilities, math skills, personal skills (i.e. organized, multi-task, quick learner, etc.), construction skills, electronics, healthcare/direct care, clerical, etc. This can include transferable skills that you have learned outside of your work experiences as well. You may also indicate in the comment section that you are eligible for On-The- Job Training through the Michigan Works Agency.

WHAT TO ATTACH TO THE APPLICATION: A complete résumé, with references, and one or two letters of recommendation.

Use a sample generic application to help you practice and prepare.