

How to complete an application form – a brief guide to getting it right

There are a number of things you should do to make your application form stand out. Make the most of this opportunity to sell yourself to the prospective employers before you meet them and increase the probability of getting an interview:

- Make sure you have a spare copy of the application form so you can have a practice go to help reduce the number of mistakes you make. If the application form is online you could print a few copies.
- Always read the Person specification and think about the relevant skills or knowledge you have and list them on a spare copy of the application form
- Always read and the whole application form before you begin filling it in.
- In the additional information section concentrate on listing achievements that are most relevant to the job you're applying for. This section gives you an extra chance to sell yourself. You could mention anything you've gained over your career such as awards or extra qualifications. Refer to the person specification and list them under the headings on the Person Specification and add information one item at a time. Treat each section as if it is a question and then answer it in terms of your personal knowledge/skills/experiences whichever is applicable.
- Ask a trusted friend or family member to read it through and give you a second opinion
- Read your completed form before sending it off, carefully checking for grammar and spelling errors.
- Keep a copy of your completed form so you can refer to what you've written in an interview.

There are also a few things you should try to avoid at all costs:

- Don't miss out any questions. Some may not be relevant, but you should at least add 'not applicable' or write no experience of this but I have or I can..... and give examples
- Don't include your CV unless you're specifically asked to, it's just doubling up on information.
- Don't include anything you can't back up at an interview.

Most application forms will use the same basic format as your CV, so a certain amount of copying can be done. There are however, certain areas such as the additional information section will require a little more thought.

Good Luck