

# COMPLETING JOB APPLICATIONS

Most people rush through the application process without spending a fraction of the time spent on the résumé. However, many people get hired off of the information contained in their job application and not their résumé. **The company job application is the only legal document you submit.** Your résumé is important, but *do not neglect the importance of job applications.*

Read the application thoroughly and follow the directions. Slow down and take your time. **A messy incomplete application will not get you an interview.** Print neatly and clearly.

Often **the way you complete the application is used as the first screening process** (timeliness, neatness, accuracy). If you cannot spell very well, take a pocket spellchecker with you. Better safe than sorry! To an employer, **this is their first impression of your work.**

## Here Are Some General Tips on Completing Employer Job Applications

- **Take a MASTER information sheet containing:**
  - All previous employers/job related/Volunteer experiences.
  - Inventory List of skills you have developed from previous employment or skills developed in Girl Scouts, 4H, Sports, and/or school. Highlight the ones that relate to the specific skill sets the employer is seeking in applicant. Refer to the job posting/job announcement for this information.
  - Names, addresses and phone numbers of references.
- Bring along your résumé for quick reference to dates and company names. **Make sure the dates on your résumé and job application match.**
- Bring along any reference numbers and addresses, in case needed.
- **Read the whole form carefully before starting.**
- **Job Applications are easier to read IF they are typed.** If the company you are applying to for a job provides an e-application form for their candidates, use it.
- If typing your answers is not an option, make sure you use a good pen and write clearly. In fact, it is best to use a new pen, and then there is no chance it will run out half way through completing your job application form. Appearance is important!
- **Use your best handwriting; if they cannot read it, they will not call.**
- Bring along an erasable pen, you can erase mistakes, and after a while, the ink dries and becomes permanent. **(Black or Blue Ink ONLY;** no colorful gel pens)
- Fill in all information on the application (Do not say "See résumé "). **Leave no blanks.** Instead, if the information requested does not apply to you, put N/A (for "not applicable"). *This informs the staff reviewing your application that you did not simply skip the question.*
- Many jobs list a specific number of years experience required in certain skills. Make **sure you make it clear in your application that you have the required experience.**
- **Be ready to complete the application there.** Many companies will not let you take the form with you to fill out at home. Do not take this personally. In some industries, basic reading and writing skills are essential, and many companies want to see that you do not need help in reading or completing the application.
- Try to make a copy of the job application form you are submitting. This allows you to review the information prior to the interview. Sometimes many weeks will go by before you receive a call for an interview. A copy also allows you to maintain a master file of jobs applied for. Once you hear from the company, notate on the application what you were told. Document feedback and use it to improve upon.