Grossmont College
Career Center / Student Employment Services

Application Basics

WHAT IS AN APPLICATION FORM?

An application form provides an employer with information about you. Employers need this information to see if you are the right person for the job they need to fill.

Remember to bring everything (with you that you will need) when filling out applications. Be organized. When a job seeker has to borrow a pen or the telephone book, a *business-like* impression is not the result. The following items are required when completing applications:

- *Ball point pens (black or blue ink)*
- *A "Fact Sheet" or your copy of a completed application with pertinent data, (i.e., personal/professional references, addresses, phone numbers, correct dates, etc.).*
- *Copies of your Resume.*

Using application forms to screen out applicants is fast and more efficient than going through the Interview process. Employers can look through a stack of 100 job applications much more quickly than they can talk to 100 people. Many applicants will be ruled out after a quick glance at their applications. The employer's *goal* is to select workers who

- ➢ *Can do the job*
- ➢ *Will be reliable*
- ➢ *Can be trusted*
- ➢ *Will work hard*

So use your application to help make a good first impression and avoid answers that can screen you out. Remember that employers often judge the appearance of an application as a clue to how much importance you put on the quality of your work.
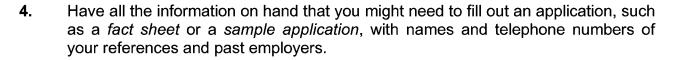
★
- **Learn what to expect from most applications**
- **Present the best possible impression** ★
- **Gather the needed information in advance**

TIPS TO FOLLOW WHEN COMPLETING APPLICATIONS:

1. Greet the receptionist politely when requesting or submitting an application.

2. The receptionist's impression is often passed along.

3. Be honest in your answers.

4. Have all the information on hand that you might need to fill out an application, such as a *fact sheet* or a *sample application*, with names and telephone numbers of your references and past employers.

5. Use blue or black ink pens. (Erasable pens are also helpful.)

6. Print clearly and legibly.

7. Fill out the form neatly and accurately.

8. Apply for a specific position, rather than entering "anything," or "open" for the desired position.

9. Leave no blanks.

10. Write "Does Not Apply" (or "N/A" for Not Applicable) in the space if the question does not apply.

11. Read and check the application for completeness before turning it in to the employer.

12. Be sure to sign and date the application.

13. Mail or turn the application in to the correct person or place.

APPLICATION BASICS

Complete any application form as neatly as possible. If it is sloppy, it suggests that you are impatient or inattentive to detail. If it is extremely neat and complete, it suggests that you are methodical, patient and detail-oriented.

Your pen should allow you to print neatly without blobs, smudges or smears. A fine-point makes it easier to print small. Avoid erasures and cross-outs; they indicate concern or anxiety about that topic.

Read ALL instructions before writing anything on the application. Many application forms begin with general instructions, such **as "Print in ink" or "Type."** Since employers want to hire people who can follow instructions on the job, the way you follow instructions on the application gives an indication of what kind of employee you will be.

If an application question does not apply to you, write **"N/A"** for **"Not Applicable"**. If an honest answer to a question might screen you out of the candidate pool for the position, leave it blank or write **"will explain in interview."** Never admit anything negative about yourself without the opportunity to give an explanation.

Name:

List your name in the order just as it is asked for on an application. Most application forms ask for last name first, then first name and then middle name or initial. Do not use nicknames unless there is a special blank for it. You want to demonstrate that you are businesslike, so use your complete legal name. Most applications require a signature at the end. Sign your name as you sign checks or legal papers.

Address:

All applications ask for your current address. Use an address where you receive your mail. Some ask for previous addresses or your permanent address. You may also be asked how long you lived at your current address. Be prepared with house numbers and zip codes.

Telephone Number:

Provide your phone number with an area code. Since many employers contact applicants by phone rather than by mail, it is extremely important that you list a number
that is likely to be answered during the day. If no one can answer your phone, list the number of someone reliable who can accept your messages, or indicate if a fax, pager

or answering machine number can be used. Make sure everyone at that number knows that employers will be calling you, so positive manner represent you to the caller.

Print the number, including area code, completely and neatly. If the number is an office with an extension, include the extension number. It is a good idea to list two numbers; if the first number is unanswered, people can try the second.
Note: *Follow normal cautionary measuring when completing personal information online.*

Social Security Number:

Make sure that your Social Security number is clear, correct and listed legibly. If you do not have a social security number, apply for one at your nearest Social Security Office.

Date of Birth:

If possible, avoid entering birth dates or school graduation dates on an application. Date of birth and age can only be asked before hiring to satisfy minimum age requirements. Answer this question if you are a minor or might appear under age.

Position Sought:

Always fill in the space for the **"Position Desired."** Never write **"any" or "will do anything."** You should know what you want to do so the employer can visualize how your special skills will meet their company's needs. It is acceptable to list more than one position. Do some research first so you know job titles used at the company and those you are qualified for. If you have had a job, it is best if the job applied for represents a step forward.

Health Requirements:

Health requirements must be met for the job. If a physical examination is a condition of employment, the employer must pay for it and can only request it after you are hired.

Salary Desired:

In the **salary desired** field write **"open" or "negotiable"**. It is best not to commit to a salary figure that could be too low or too high. Use the Career Center Library to research salary ranges for your chosen job title. Know the market value of the position. Salaries are computed by the hour, week, two-week period, month or year. You should compute your desired salary in terms of each pay period.

Availability:

In the **availability** field write **"immediately,"** if you are available to start right away. If currently employed, indicate that you will be able to start after you give two weeks notice. Giving two weeks notice is respectful and courteous to your current employer and demonstrates the possibility of future behavior to a perspective employer. Make certain you are aware of the hours required of you. New employees rarely have the opportunity to choose hours or shift.

Convictions - Misdemeanor/Felony:

Some applications request information about prior misdemeanor or felony convictions. Answer all application questions carefully and answer truthfully, adding *"will discuss at Interview."* If you feel that answering a question will hurt you, than leave that question blank. During the interview you can discuss with the employer what you left out of the application. Never lie on an application as falsification of information can result in your termination.

"Illegal" Questions:

Laws have been passed to keep employers from using certain information to make a decision about hiring. For this reason, most applications do not ask for information about age, race, religion, national origin, disabilities, or other personal details.

In some cases, this information is allowed in order to make hiring decisions about certain jobs or to ensure that job requirements are met. In other cases, the employer may be using out-of-date applications that ask questions that are no longer legal.

Education   Training*   Certification**

Most applications ask detailed questions about your education, so be prepared with schools you attended, dates and the state you were enrolled and degrees earned. If there is not enough space, list only schools from which you graduated. Be prepared to provide transcripts if requested.

Specialized training may relate to a position that you held when you were in military service. If so, emphasize the duties you performed that relate to the job you are currently applying for. Have all appropriate forms available, such as certificates.

If you have any professional certification, licenses, or registrations, list them. For example, a **Licensed Cosmetologist, Dental Hygienist**, or a **Special Class Driver's License**. Leave future schooling blank if you are not sure of your goals. If asked how
your education was financed list the percentage of tuition and expenses which you earned. For example, *"earned 25 percent of college tuition and expenses."*

Previous Employment:

This section is extremely important to employers and usually asks you for your job titles and dates of employment. Be prepared with names and addresses of former employers. Use *"reverse chronological order,"* listing present job first and move back in time. Between the education section and the work experience section, all years should be explained.

Under *"Reason for Leaving,"* make positive statements about yourself and your goals. Do not infer anything negative about your former employers. Examples to use would be, *"they cut staff with less seniority", or "made a career change","returned to school", "reorganization", or "job/contract ended".*

List everything you did on a job, including skills, accomplishments, results, equipment used, new skills you learned, training you received, people you trained or supervised, and other details. Employers are often interested in what you do outside of work because it reflects your interests and abilities. Highlight any **club activities, or volunteer work, or organizations you belong to**, that relate to the job you are seeking.

When providing employer addresses and phone numbers, if you know that someone from the organization will not speak highly of you, direct the new employer to another person in a position of responsibility within that organization.

References:

Always talk to your **references** before beginning your job search and ask permission to use their name, address and phone numbers on your application(s). Former employers, business acquaintances, and teachers are all acceptable references. Keep your references listed accurately on your sample application or information form and have it with you during your application process.

THE POWER OF WORDS

Action words are very useful in describing your skills, professional experience, education, life experience and accomplishments. They give employers a **positive impression and help them understand what you can do.**

Action words are important tools for the Job Search process and can be used on the Application, Resume and Interview.

Look over the list below and circle those Action Words that might be used in completing your application.

accept	acquire	allocate	analyze
anticipate	approve	arrange	assemble
assist	assume	authorize	change
compare	consider	contact	contribute
control	coordinate	counsel	create
decide	define	demonstrate	design
determine	develop	direct	encourage
evaluate	execute	exercise	furnish
give	guide	handle	identify
improve	maintain	make	manage
meet	monitor	organize	plan
prepare	procure	progress	promote
purchase	receive	recommend	report
require	resources	review	schedule
secure	select	ship	stimulate
strengthen	supervise	supply	teach
test	train	upgrade	utilize

COMMON MISTAKES THAT JOB SEEKERS MAKE ON APPLICATIONS ARE:

√ Not following directions

√ Misspelled words

√ Crossed out writing

√ Wrinkled or messy application form

√ Incomplete information or unanswered questions

√ Not applying for a specific position

√ Incomplete work history, or large unexplained gaps in work history

√ Overlapping or conflicting employment dates with no explanation

√ Application not turned in by the deadline

√ Use of troublesome words, such as "quit" or "fired"

√ Forgetting to sign the application

Applicant's Name (Last)	First	Middle Initial	Social Security Number - -
Mailing Address (Number)	Street		Work Telephone Number ( )
City	State	Zip Code	Home Telephone Number ( )

EDUCATION

Name of School	Location of School	Degree or Course of Study	Date Completed

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY – Begin with your most recent job. List each job separately.

Job Title	Dates Worked From _____ To _____	Pay $ _____ Per_____
Name of Employer		Name of Supervisor
Address:	City	State Zip Code
Telephone Number ( )	Reason for Leaving:	
Duties Performed:		

Job Title	Dates Worked From _____ To _____	Pay $ _____ Per _____
Name of Employer		Name of Supervisor
Address:	City	State Zip Code
Telephone Number ( )	Reason for Leaving:	
Duties Performed:		

Job Title	Dates Worked From _____ To _____	Pay $ _____ Per _____
Name of Employer		Name of Supervisor
Address:	City	State Zip Code
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Duties Performed:		

Job Title	Dates Worked From _____ To _____	Pay $ _____ Per _____
Name of Employer		Name of Supervisor
Address:	City	State Zip Code
Telephone Number ( )	Reason for Leaving:	
Duties Performed:		

PERSONAL REFERENCES: List the names of three references that employers may contact.

1) Name	Telephone # ( )	Relationship (Teacher etc.)
Address:	City	State Zip Code
2) Name	Telephone # ( )	Relationship (Teacher etc.)
Address:	City	State Zip Code
3) Name	Telephone # ( )	Relationship (Teacher etc.)
Address:	City	State Zip Code

Sample Application Form

APPLICATION BASICS

Created and Developed by

Grossmont College Career Center
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G R O S S M O N T
C O L L E G E

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