

Successful Job Applications

Employers use job applications to screen job candidates so it's important to complete applications honestly, accurately, and completely. How successfully you complete job applications may make the difference in whether or not you get an interview or a job.

Make a Positive Impression

Think of the job application as your personal marketing tool. It's your opportunity to make a positive impression and stand out among a pile of other applications. It also provides a sample of your work, and is a reflection of who you are. Take the job application seriously and take the time to do your best.

Follow these tips to make a positive impression with your job application.

Create a Master Application

A master application is an application that contains all the information you will need to complete an actual job application. Use it as a reference when you complete job applications for actual job openings and be sure to include:

- Current and former employer names and addresses
- Employment start and end dates
- Salary
- Job duties
- Education information including dates and degrees earned
- Supervisors' names
- Reason for leaving
- Certifications
- Contact information for at least three business-related references (Request permission from references first)

Pick up a Personal Data Record or Generic Application from any Job Service office and use it as your master application.

Complete Each Job Application Precisely and Professionally

Your application's appearance will be the interviewer's first impression of you. Make it a good impression; be thorough and neat.

- Read the entire application before completing it so you know what information is needed.
- Be honest. Do not exaggerate.
- Use black ink unless instructed otherwise.
- Print neatly. If an employer cannot read your writing, you will not get an interview.
- Fill in all the blanks. Write 'N/A' (not applicable) in any blank that does not apply to you.
- Do not write 'See Résumé' anywhere on the application.

- Complete the application as if you are not attaching a résumé. This shows that you are thorough and do not take shortcuts.
- Give complete information about your job duties, skills and abilities. Include the skills you possess that are listed in the job announcement.
- Proofread your application. Check your spelling and grammar. Ask a friend, family member, or Job Service staff to look it over.
- Make sure your application is clean. If it gets dirty, complete a new one. Do not use correction fluid or tape. It is OK to ask for two applications from the employer.
- Sign and date the application. Many employers will not consider your application unless it is signed and dated.

Online and In-Store Kiosk Applications

The same basic guidelines apply for completing online and in-store kiosk job applications, but it's important to also consider the following:

- Online and kiosk applications may 'time out,' and may give no option to 'go back' or 'save.'
- Online and kiosk applications may not have a spell-check feature.
- Programs may analyze your activity, such as your speed and accuracy, as you complete the application.
- Online applications may use questionnaires to gauge your honesty, integrity, and personality.
- You may want to have a résumé to 'upload' or 'cut and paste' into the online application. Visit a Job Service office for assistance if you do not have a prepared résumé.
- Consider printing a blank application from the employer's website or kiosk if possible. Complete the application by hand and then use it as a master application to complete the online or kiosk job application. Make sure everything is spelled correctly on your master application and/or résumé, so when you transfer your information you have no errors. Then you will have all the necessary information and can easily transfer it to the application.
- Proofread your application carefully. Do not assume that spell-checkers catch all errors. Look for missing words, phone numbers, and dates of employment.

Be prepared to interview

If you enter a business to pick up or complete an application, always be dressed appropriately and ready to interview. The employer may want to interview you immediately.

- Seek positions alone. Never take friends, family, or children with you. Employers want to know that you have childcare and can complete tasks independently.
- Turn off your cell phone before entering a business to apply for a job. Having a cell phone ring or vibrate while talking to a potential employer is distracting and starts you off on the wrong foot. This is your opportunity to make an impression. Make it a good one.

Job Service North Dakota is an equal opportunity employer/program provider.
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.