

APPLICATIONS

One of the most common practices in your job search will be to fill out applications.

You have probably done this numerous times, never thinking twice if it was completed correctly. After all, it is just a series of questions about you and your education and work history. Who knows the answers to those questions better than you? Actually, the employer might, by what you say or don't say on the application.

Employers use the information they collect on applications to screen potential candidates out.

The questions are designed to extract negative information from the applicant. This allows employers to limit the amount of people they will contact for an interview.

Listed below are some tips to assist you in this process:

- Use erasable blue or black ink or type your application. Be neat.
- Read and follow all the directions carefully. Be consistent throughout your application.
- Provide only positive information. An example would be if you were asked a question about a negative termination from a job you may write "will discuss at interview." This will afford you the opportunity to explain your situation before the employer comes to his own assumptions.
- Try to avoid gaps in employment. If you have a good reason for a gap, such as raising a family or returning to school, then state it. If you did odd jobs for money, say self-employed.
- Most applications ask if you have ever been convicted of a felony. If you have, you need to state so. Remember being arrested and being convicted of a felony are two entirely different circumstances; so make sure you know your situation when answering this question.

- Unless you have a disability that will prevent you from doing your job safely and efficiently, it is okay to answer no to the disability question.
- If you left a job on bad terms but found another job, then state that you left for a better employment opportunity or a career change. If you relocated or returned to school, then say so. If you were laid off, then say laid off due to business slow down.
- If you don't have much experience for the job you want then emphasize related experience or transferable skills. Transferable skills are skills that carry over from job to job. Examples of these would be organizational skills, problem-solving skills, and being multi-task oriented.
- When asked about salary requirements, it is always best to write open or negotiable. This will help you avoid being screened out by entering either too high or too low of a salary.
- It is always best to list a broader position when answering the position desired question. General office instead of secretary will probably open you up to a variety of opportunities within the company.