## [Filling Out a Job Application](http://www.employmentspot.com/employment-articles/filling-out-a-job-application/)

Many companies require a cover letter and resume of all potential employees, but it is becoming increasingly common to require a job application as well. A job application gives the company a chance to ask pre-interview questions of candidates, and it gives candidates another chance to highlight their skills and experience. Unfortunately, a botched job application can also hurt your chances of getting a job or even rule you out as an employee entirely. Spend as much time as you can on an application and give your answers careful thought. Adhere to the following tips when filling out your next job application. Then download a sample application form to practice.

* **Come Prepared**. Some companies will ask you to arrive early for an interview so that you can spend some time filling out a job application form. These forms vary in length from 1 to 5 pages and may include some difficult questions. When you come to an interview, always bring information that you may need when filling out a job application. For example, a standard job application will ask about your previous employment. You may need your former supervisor’s name, address, telephone number and email. Not everyone may know this information off the top of their heads. Also bring the addresses and phone numbers of personal references or information that may be required for a credit check.
* **Fill Everything Out**. Treat the job application like a medical history form and do not leave anything out. Your doctor would want you to answer every question, and so will the hiring managers. If you cannot remember exactly how much money you made when starting at your previous company, include a salary range. Your job application form, when complete, should be neat and include all the required information. Avoid answering questions with “see resume” or “N/A” if you can. Potential employers never like to see job applications that indicate a lazy candidate!
* **Treat A Job Application Like Your Resume.** In other words, make it great. If you have the luxury of filling out a job application online, use spell check and edit your answers for grammatical errors. Try to have a friend proofread your application before submitting it. If you must fill out a job application in person before an interview, use dark pen and carefully print all answers. If your potential employer cannot read your answers he or she will be less likely to follow up with previous employers or references. You never want to frustrate the hiring manager with an illegible job application.
* **Ask For Help**. If you arrive at an interview and the administrative assistant hands you an unexpected application, do not panic. You may not have enough time before the interview starts to finish all of the questions, especially if one or two require extended answers or explanations. Rather than turning in an incomplete job application form, ask for extra time after the interview has ended. If a particular question confuses you, ask the administrative assistant or receptionist for guidance. Always remember to say “please” and “thank you” because many employers ask these employees for information about prospective candidates.
* **Online Job Application Forms**. Some job application forms will be less obvious if they are online. When applying for a position via an online job posting, you may be asked a series of questions that you can answer off the top of your head. Be careful. These questions may be screening questions designed by the employer to differentiate between candidates. Take your time when answering these questions and always make sure that your answers, if written, are properly punctuated and spelled correctly.
* **Be Consistent**. Your resume will be the central feature of your job quest. A cover letter will also assist you in getting an interview. When filling out a job application, make sure that you keep all information, such as dates, job titles and duties, consistent. A simple mistake on your job application form could cost you the job if your employer finds a troubling discrepancy. Double check all materials submitted to the hiring manager to maintain a consistent employment history.
* **Always remember** that every step in the hiring process helps to form a hiring manager’s impression of you. Job applications provide additional information. Whether before or after the interview, online or in person, job application forms will be added to your file at best and ruin your chances of employment at worst. Follow these basic guidelines whenever you fill out a job application form.