

Online Applications

Employers are using online applications; they're here to stay. Using a company's online application system is the fastest way to get your resume noticed. Creating a "standard" resume or document to use for your job search won't work; you need to customize the content to each employer. Think from the employer's perspective – what makes you unique? So, how do you make your online application "stand out" from the competition?

- Take the online application seriously. Avoid typographical and grammatical errors. Attention to detail is important. Remember, this application will be the employer's first impression of you.
- Follow directions. Enter the correct data into the appropriate fields.
- Ask for advice. Connect with a company recruiter or an alumnus who works for the company.
- Tailor application content to the position. Don't copy and paste generic resume information.
- Use key words, buzz words, and industry jargon. Use the job description as a guide for critical words to include. Employers search key words when looking to fill for candidates to fill specific positions.
- Quantify, if possible. Include numbers and statistics on number of individuals you supervised or trained; average amount of cash in register at end of shift; percentage of sales growth or customer satisfaction.
- Complete all fields in the application (even if they are not required fields.)
- Convert your resume to an ASCII file (.txt file) and make sure the content sets you apart. Some companies will give you the option of attaching your resume to your online application. If so, review your resume to make sure it is professional and easy to read, with strong content and minimal formatting.
- If the company offers an optional online assessment test, complete it. Some employers will automatically screen out individuals who don't complete these assessments.
- Include a strong objective. Be specific and industry appropriate.
- Consider listing important and relevant skills such as languages or computer proficiency in the comments or additional information section. If you've conducted any relevant research or presentations, include it here.
- If possible, follow-up electronic applications with a personal email or phone call. A phone call to the recruiter is appropriate as long as you remain professional and the ad does not indicate "No phone calls."
- Don't count on employers reviewing paper resumes. If given the option, some employers will only review the online applications.
- Realize that networking is still important. Go to career/internship fairs if given the option. When the recruiter refers you to the website and the online application process, take the time to ask questions that will give you additional insight and impress the recruiter:
 - What happens to the resume after I click "send?" Who reviews it and how?
 - What document format will work best with your current online application system?
 - What skill sets does your company/organization value most?
 - After completing the online application, when should I follow up?
 - Which department has the current openings?
 - Which department is anticipating future openings?
- Visit the Career Center (CUB 200) for additional information and assistance. If you are having difficulty navigating an online application system, someone may be able to provide additional insight/assistance.

Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers website: www.jobweb.com