

# General information about applying for work

## Responding to advertised positions

Depending on where the advertisement appears and what it asks for, here are some pointers about responding to advertised positions.

**Before doing anything, consider:**

- > Does the position match your skills and areas of interest?
- > Will you be a competitive applicant based on your skills and what is being requested?
- > Check the closing date for the application and make sure you have enough time to apply.
- > Read all the information in the advertisement, including any documents attached if it is online, and ensure you understand what is required to apply.
- > If you have any questions, always call the employer to find out more.



## Before formally applying, always call the employer and find out some more details about the position

- > It is wise to call about a position before applying. Job applications and interviews take a lot of time and effort, so try not to waste time by applying for jobs without first finding out you have the exact skills required and are in with a chance!
- > Calling the employer prior to applying for a job allows you to find out specific information to include in your application. A great start against your competitors who haven't bothered to find out more details!
- > First impressions count. Speak clearly, know and practise what you are going to say before you ring (for more information, see page 30). Have a healthy amount of enthusiasm for the job, but don't sound too over excited!
- > Prepare your questions, ring and state your name, the job you are interested in and where you saw it advertised.
- > If your phone contact results in a meeting, take your resume to give to the person when you meet and make sure you have recorded their name (on your job search contact list, page 23) so you remember it when seeing them in person.

## Emailing your letter of application plus your resume in response to an advertised position

- > It is likely you will be emailing your application letter and resume to employers nowadays.
- > It is polite to write a few sentences in the body of your email saying: To whom it may concern (include the person's name wherever possible), what job you are applying for/position number, what documents you have attached, a salutation and your name. Be brief as you will have already included a letter and resume outlining all the details regarding your skills and reason for applying.
- > Check your letter and resume are attached before sending your email and check each document to ensure you have attached the correct version.
- > For more information regarding cover letters and resumes see pages 36 and 42.
- > Ensure you provide an appropriate title for each document including your name and the name of the document (eg Resume).
- > Provide all details the advertisement asks for and in the way the employer has requested.

## Uploading documents for online applications

- > If you are applying online, you will need to 'upload' your letter and resume and if requested, your responses to key selection criteria.
- > Give yourself plenty of time. Do not wait until you have no room for errors. (See more info about online applications on page 31.)
- > Prior to commencing your application, see if there are page or word limits. This will ensure you don't waste time writing heaps of detail, only to find you can only add 250 words of text!
- > Ensure all your documents have uploaded correctly. Print a copy of the 'application number' you have been assigned.
- > Make sure you have entered all details correctly in any required fields. Check spelling.
- > Check contents have been cut and pasted correctly if required.
- > Also check document size and accepted formats. Some sites ask for word documents only, so do not attach PDF copies.

## Sending a formal application that involves addressing selection criteria

- > The addressing of selection criteria is usually required for more skilled or responsible positions – however this type of application is becoming increasingly common (for more information on selection criteria, see page 59).
- > If you do not address each criterion individually, your application may not be considered, so it is worthwhile spending some time learning how to respond.
- > Doing it well can take some time and thought. You need to be prepared and not leave it to the last minute.
- > You may consider getting someone to help you – if you have a friend or colleague that you trust and respect, or you can pay for private services.
- > Almost always you will be requested for a covering letter of application along with a resume.
- > If you are addressing selection criteria and do not have the required skill, qualification or quality, don't leave it blank! Demonstrate how you have been able to undertake similar challenges in the past or explain that you can quickly gain that new skill etc.
- > If you need further assistance contact your local **Career Centre** or another service. Please refer to the list from page 74.

- > You can also give examples from other aspects of your life when addressing selection criteria, your responses don't always need to be work related. Remember about transferable skills!
- > You need to show how you meet each criterion individually, giving specific examples of how you've used that skill or quality, when you did this, and what was the result of your actions. This is especially important when the question states the term 'demonstrated'.

### Completing an application form to apply for an existing vacancy

- > Some larger businesses may have an application form that every applicant must fill out (for more information, see page 82).
- > Fill it out correctly and check the back to make sure you don't miss anything. If they need more personal information that you don't have on you, ask if you can take the form with you and return it completed as soon as possible.
- > Many places now request application forms are completed online (for more information on online application forms see page 84).

### Applying in person to a notice in the front window of a shop or business

- > These jobs often go very quickly, so chase it straight away. Often the first person to apply who seems suitable will get the job.
- > Don't forget it's those first impressions that count! Speak clearly, be polite, dress appropriately for the occasion and make sure you catch the name of the person you are dealing with.
- > Take a relevant version of your resume with you in your Employment Folder.

**LABOURER WANTED**  
Must be fit and keen to work.  
Own transport required.  
Phone Brad 0447 899 764 after 6.00pm

**WORK AVAILABLE**  
For experienced person  
Enquire within.

## Filling out application forms

If you are required to fill out an application form, it is important to do it right! The following provides some suggestions that may be helpful in filling out application forms.

There are generally three types of application forms:

- 1 Hard copy forms you obtain directly from an employer;
- 2 Printable application forms available electronically from a website, or emailed to the employer when you are applying for a specific job (usually attached to the advertisement); and
- 3 Online application forms when you enter your information into an online database (see page 84).

Use Quick tips 2 and 3 – filling out hard copy forms and printable application forms (page 82) while filling out job application forms to make sure you have completed them correctly.

## Using the telephone when contacting employers

When using the telephone, what you say and how you communicate will be extremely important as the employer will only be able to hear your voice and listen to what you are saying. As the employer cannot see your facial expressions and body language, be sure to remain calm and confident!

The more organised you are before you make your call, the more effective the conversation will be. This will also improve your chances of getting an interview. Similarly, if you are contacting potential employers enquiring about work opportunities and not responding to advertised positions, your telephone technique will need to be professional, confident and sounding like you are organised.

Many people feel nervous about contacting employers via phone and have general anxieties about not being able to 'think on the spot' and how to respond to difficult, unexpected questions or situations. The best possible way to overcome some of these fears is to be prepared, which will make you more confident and relaxed.



*REMEMBER: A phone call to an employer can, in some instances, be regarded as an interview. So be prepared!*

Go to Quick tip 4 – Contacting employers by phone (page 83) for tips on preparing yourself to speak with an employer on the phone.