Tips for Filling Out a Job Application

If you are a job seeker, you will probably have to fill out one or more application forms. You should know that employers do read the forms, and that the way you prepare the application can make a big difference in getting an interview and being hired for the job!

Be Prepared
Make sure you know the correct names, dates, places and other information you will need. It may be helpful to create a sample application to bring with you when you apply for a job, in case you must fill out an application form on the spot.

Ask If You May Take A Blank Application Home
Filling out the form at home can be easier as you are able to take your time and do a good job. If possible, ask for an extra form, just in case.

Read The Form
Before you start writing, look for instructions that say "use pen only" or that tells you to list information in a certain order.

Be Neat
Use a pen or, if you take the form home, you might want to type the information in. If you need to correct a mistake, use white-out.

Answer All Questions Completely And Correctly
Know proper dates, addresses and how to spell names and places. Don't make up answers.

Be Positive
List what you have been doing, not what you haven't done. For example, if you have been unemployed for a period of time, show the work you have been busy with, such as going to school, managing a household or doing carpentry on your home. If paid experience is not specified, list any volunteer jobs or activities that can show your skill and ability to work.

Be Clear
Know the position title you are applying for and the right salary range. You may have to do some research to find this information. Also, most application forms ask when you will be available to start work. Be prepared to answer this question.

Alert References Beforehand
List people whom you have checked with and who have agreed to give a reference. There are two kinds of references, 1) Character or Friend, 2) Employer. Do not use relatives as references.

Re-read The Application When You Are Finished
Make sure you correct any errors or omissions. Check your spelling. Read the application out loud to someone else to make sure it reads smoothly. Then, hand it in person to the employer or mail it. If handing in an application in person, take the time to dress professionally (or in appropriate attire for the job you are applying for). This is the often the first impression you will make and you should think of it as a first interview. Employers pay attention to behaviors even when people are dropping off applications or resumes! If you are mailing the form, it is a good idea for you to make a copy for yourself and to note the date you sent the application. Also, when mailing an application, be sure to send a cover letter re-stating your interest and qualifications.