

## 3.8 COMPLETE APPLICATION FORMS

### What to Know

Using the **Master Application Worksheet** (refer to section 1.2, Create a Career Catalog) makes filling out application forms much easier. Almost every employer will require you to fill out an application form, even though the company may already have your resume and cover letter. Applications may be used to make the first “cut” in screening applicants for interviews. The form may be a test to see how well you follow directions. It is always a good idea to take your time and do it well.

When possible get two copies of the form. Use one as a draft copy before completing the final form.

### What to Do

Use the following suggestions to complete application forms:

1. Be prepared when you fill out the form.
2. Read and follow all directions **before** beginning to fill out the form.
3. Make your application neat and easy to read—it will be judged on appearance and content. If possible, type the form. If you can't type the form, print neatly.
4. Do not write “see resume,” even if the application repeats information.
5. Read each question and decide how you will answer before you begin to write. This will help you fit the answer into the available space, as well as write the best answer.
6. Answer all questions. If a question does not apply or you feel the question invades your privacy, write N/A for “not applicable.” **Do not leave blank spaces.**
7. Do not scratch out or write over mistakes. If you must correct over a mistake, cross out the error completely with a single line (—).
8. Take your time, but work steadily. If you take too long filling out an application at the company, the employer may think you are not prepared.
9. Answer questions honestly—never lie, and do not use sarcastic answers.
10. Ask questions if you do not understand something about the form.
11. After you complete the form, check it for accuracy, correct grammar, and spelling. Make sure it is neat, and make a copy for your records.

12. Follow up on the application at regular intervals (about every week) until you hear from the employer.
13. Work Experience: Make sure you have all the information you will need with you. Work on describing your duties before you fill out an application, so you can be brief and clear in your descriptions. If you prefer not to give your salary history, write “will discuss in interview” in the space provided. However, keep in mind some employers will screen you out. When giving your reason for leaving, never give a negative answer. “I completed my military goal,” “moved,” and “seasonal,” are all very acceptable answers. Do not write “fired.” If you were fired, write “will discuss in interview.”
14. Position Desired: Always fill in this space! Never write “any” or “will do anything!” Do some research first so you know what jobs you qualify for and are available in the company.
15. Salary Desired: Before filling out an application, be sure you know the lowest salary you would accept and the wage range for the position you want. Call a few companies in the area and ask the pay range for the type of job for which you are applying. It is okay to write “open” or “negotiable” rather than putting a figure on the application to identify the salary.
16. Availability: Unless you cannot start a job right away, write “immediately” in this space. Otherwise, write the date you will be available to start work. If asked what hours or shifts you will work, write “open” unless you have specific requirements.
17. Special Skills, Abilities and Training: You are often asked to list any special skills, abilities, experiences and/or training you have that relates to the position you want. This is an opportunity for you to highlight anything that may possibly set you apart from other applicants.

### Your Right to Privacy

According to the Personal Privacy Act it is inappropriate for employers to request certain information on application forms. If you encounter a job application that requests this information, it is your decision whether or not to supply it. If you choose not to answer these types of questions make sure you write N/A (for Not Applicable) to indicate you have seen the question. Some examples of inappropriate questions include: date of birth, marital status, dependents, health, citizenship, and social or religious affiliations.

*I am not afraid of tomorrow, for I have seen yesterday and I love today. (William Allen White)*