

# Applicant Quick Guide

## Applications

- **REVIEW THE JOB POSTING** to see what knowledge, skills, abilities, experience (to include equipment), certifications, training, etc. are being sought. If you have any of these qualifications, **SPELL THEM OUT** in your application or cover letter and/or resume. Provide **DETAIL!**

**Poor example:** Served customers, ordered food, cleaned, supervised staff, used the register, opened and closed restaurant.

**Better example:** Responsible for supervising up to six crew members in a fast-paced restaurant. In charge of scheduling, handling call-outs, minor disciplinary issues, hiring of staff, delegating responsibilities, training of new staff. Assisted in inventory management to include taking daily inventories and amending the order lists. Created spreadsheet and labeling procedures to reduce food waste. Responsible for sanitation and cleaning. Received safety award for limiting accidents in my shift. Closed register and ensured the accurate counting of money and tracking of sales and cash in Excel. Constant customer interaction and service.

- **ASSUME THAT THOSE SCREENING YOUR APPLICATION DO NOT KNOW YOU OR WHAT YOU DO.** Providing minimal information on your application may decrease your chances for an interview. All applications and supporting documents are screened and scored based on criteria important to the position.
- **INCLUDE ANY RELEVANT EXPERIENCE.** This could involve side jobs or volunteer work.
- **PROOFREAD** your application. **UPDATE** it to reflect current information and responsibilities as well as to reflect the qualifications that may differ dependent upon the position for which you are applying.

## Interviews

- Again, **ASSUME THAT THOSE INTERVIEWING YOU DO NOT KNOW YOU OR WHAT YOU DO** and **PROVIDE DETAIL and EXAMPLES** when answering questions.

**Sample question:** Why do you feel that you are the best person for this position?

**Poor example:** I am a hard worker. I have been here 10 years. You know what I do and am capable of.

**Better example:** I am dependable. My supervisor will tell you that I volunteer to come in early or stay late to ensure a job gets done. I pride myself on doing a job to the best of my abilities. I brought some emails from customers praising the quality of work and the customer service I gave them. I have over 10 years' experience doing this type of work, am highly skilled in troubleshooting and have maintained my skills through refresher courses.

- **PRACTICE** answering questions that would be relevant to the position. Review job posting for clues.
- **FOCUS ON WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM OTHER CANDIDATES.**

*These guidelines are pulled from the **JMU Facilities Application and Interview Training: Putting Your Best Foot Forward.***

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The following is a simplified template of the main components of a resume along with some examples. The order of these components should be revised to have most relevant and important information closer to the top.

	<b>Name</b>
	<b>Contact Information:</b> (Address, phone number, email)
<b>Objective:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not necessary, but could be helpful if objective relates specifically to targeted job.</li> <li>• Example: To obtain a collegiate-level strength and conditioning position where I can help athletes to achieve their highest performance potential.</li> </ul>
<b>Summary:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great ways to provide a professional overview as well as point out key <i>relevant</i> qualifications, skills, experiences, strengths, accomplishments, types of equipment, certifications, computer software, etc.</li> <li>• Example: <u>Skills Summary</u> (for construction worker) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*22 years skilled journeyman      *Shielded metal arc welding      *AWS-certified welding</li> <li>*Flux core (FCAW) welding      *Demolition      *English/Spanish fluency</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Work History:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In chronological order starting with the most recent job</li> <li>• Example: <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><i>Journeyman Iron Worker, Iron Workers Local 263, Grand Prairie, TX, 2/2005—11/2010</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Laid out, fitted and fabricated metal components. Heated, formed and dressed metal parts with hand tools, torch and arc welding equipment. Adjusted functional equipment...</p> </li> </ul>
<b>Computer Skills:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specify software programs in which you are experienced</li> <li>• Example: Proficient in Word, Excel, AiM...</li> </ul>
<b>Education / Training:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include vocational/technical schools and any relevant trainings</li> <li>• Example: <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Massanutten Vocational School, HVAC I and II</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">JMU Emerging Leaders certificate</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Excel Basic and Intermediate Training</p> </li> </ul>

#### Resume tips:

- Application guidelines (see page 1) also apply to resumes, particularly with respect to tailoring each resume to targeted job and providing detail and specific examples.
- Templates are great tools to format resumes. They can be found in Word and on the internet.
- Focus on accomplishments, ways that you excel in your work.

## Cover Letters

The cover letter is an opportunity to sell yourself in a format that is more personal or conversational than the application or resume.

- Specify the position for which you are applying
- Convey your interest/passion in the position
- Specify WHY you would be an *asset* and HOW you could *make a difference*
  - ◇ Focus on main selling points that are *relevant* to the position, for example: years of experience, specific computer experience.
- Grab their attention with relevant accomplishments or examples not in other documents.

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