



CV Skills and Interview Techniques

Completing a job application form

Many employers prefer you to complete their standard job application form, rather than to send in your own CV. If you are asked to complete an application form, you should complete it in full. An employer may reject your application if you fill in only part of it and refer them to an attached CV.

Together with the application form, you will often be sent some background information about the organisation that you are applying to, a person specification and job description.

Background information

This has been sent to give you some additional information about the organisation. You should read this and increase your knowledge by looking at the organisation's website. A prospective employer will often tailor their interview questions to try to find out how much you know about them as research demonstrates your interest in the organisation and the job.

Person specification

This is a list of the qualities that the employer considers most important for the job. For example, they might want a 'team player', 'self starter' or someone with a particular type of experience. Frequently the person specification will appear in the form of a table, and against each of the requirements that the employer will be looking for, they might show the level of need for that requirement, i.e. it may be essential, highly desirable or simply desirable for you to have that skill/aptitude.

Job description

The job description will tell you about the job itself, the hours, salary and what the job involves. For example, a job description for a Nursery Supervisor will include information about the number of children that you will be working with, the activities that you will undertake, and the level of responsibility that you will have. The person specification will state that the experience of supervising other's within a team environment is essential.

You should always tailor your application form to take into account the detail of the job description and the person specification. If an employer is looking for someone with sound administrative skills, you may wish to emphasise your computer skills and training. It is helpful to the employer if you address each item on the job specification so that they can see easily whether or not you have the right skills and experience for the job. Try to give real examples of situations in which you have employed the skills they are looking for.

Remember when you send a CV or complete an application form, keep a copy of what you have sent to the company – including your covering letter.