

## Top 10 Tips for Teens Completing Job Applications

**Whenever possible take the application home** or fill it out online, so you don't have to rush while sitting in an employment office. Make a list of all the information you need to include on your application prior to filling it out, or practice sample applications before heading to your interview.

**Neatness counts.** Have a friend or parent with nice handwriting fill out your applications with you if you have sloppy handwriting. If you have access to a copy machine, make a copy of it so it will be easier to fill out the rest of your applications by copying from the one that is complete.

**Show the employer that you can follow directions** by filling in all sections of the application form. If you don't have information to put in a box you can say N/A (not applicable). Review all the questions carefully to make sure you understand what they are asking for. If you don't have formal work experience, it's fine to list jobs like babysitting or yard work on your application. Request help from a parent or guidance counselor if you need assistance responding to any confusing items.

**Check your application for spelling and grammar mistakes** and have someone else review it, as well. Put your finger on every word to make sure it is okay even if you are typing and using spellcheck.

**Make sure you emphasize the job responsibilities of your past jobs which are most relevant** to your target position when completing your descriptions. For example, suppose that you only spent 15% of your time generating documents in your campus job, but it will be the primary function in a target job. List that activity first on the application when describing your campus job, so your key qualification is easily noticed.

**Use action words** to lead your phrases when describing past jobs.

**Employers for teen jobs value reliability**, especially in terms of attendance and punctuality. Try to incorporate references to perfect attendance and punctuality, if possible.

**Don't forget to include any honors or awards** since employers will likely think a high GPA or Honor Society membership, for example, is evidence of a strong work ethic.

**Get a list of references.** Be prepared to furnish the names, job titles and contact information for references. If you haven't held a formal job, consider asking families for whom you babysit or have done odd jobs for, as well as teachers or coaches. Let people know if you plan to list them as a reference so they won't be surprised if they get a call or email message.

**Check your phone.** You will need to list your phone number on the application, so be sure that the voice mail message on your cell is suitable for an employer to hear. Check messages regularly so you don't miss any calls from employers.