

St. Joseph the Worker Job Networking Club  
St. John's Catholic Church, 1055 Hughes Rd., Madison, AL

Job Club Website:

[www.stjohnbchurch.org/jobclub/jobclub.html](http://www.stjohnbchurch.org/jobclub/jobclub.html)

**Detailed Notes, 11/30/10 12:30 pm**

Guest Speaker: Melinda Inglis, Lead Instructor for the General Education Department at Virginia College at Huntsville

Subject: Completing an Application with Confidence



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**- General Information for Newcomers -**

- Maureen Chemsak is the Convener for the group.
- The Job Club has been meeting since September 15 last year.
- We completed a three-part resume workshop this Spring.  
A sample chronological resume and a sample functional resume is on the website as a model:  
[www.stjohnbchurch.org/jobclub/jobclub.html](http://www.stjohnbchurch.org/jobclub/jobclub.html)

Sample Chronological Resume:

<http://www.stjohnbchurch.org/JobClub/Presentations/Sample%20Chronological%20Resume.pdf>

Sample Functional Resume:

<http://www.stjohnbchurch.org/JobClub/Presentations/Sample%20Functional%20Resume.pdf>

- The job club has a lot of volunteers.
- The usual format for our meetings:
  - First half hour: Introductions and Announcements.
  - Second half hour: Presentation on a subject related to the job search.
  - Third half hour: Refreshments and Informal Networking [each week different job club members volunteer to provide refreshments].
- Fill out a New Members Form to be added to the e-mail list for job notices (see Yohanes).
- Meet with a volunteer for resume coaching.
- Each week during introductions, in addition to newcomers, we like to have three returning Job Club members do their "Two-Minute Elevator Speech," a short advertisement about what type of work they are looking for and a summary of their skills and experience.
- Getting together face to face once a week is important for networking, so you are not just at home glued to your computer. Job club members share information, provide emotional support, help with resume, cover letter etc..
- By a recent count, we have 380 job seekers who are active members of our networking group. Additionally we have 65 helpers who contribute in various ways. We are a networking group - we work together on a real-time basis to keep our members informed. Most of our members did not know any of the other members before joining our group, and collectively we can gather and disseminate a wealth of useful information about job opportunities and helpful tips.
- 70-80% of jobs are not advertised in the paper, or on the internet.
  - You find jobs that are not advertised through other people.
  - Identify places you would like to work and if you have limitations, like if you don't have a security clearance, then identify companies who would hire you as you are.
  - Your networking contacts are friends, family, neighbors, friends of your children, friends from church, former employers, former co-workers.
- Go to job fairs to make contacts.
- Some of the companies represented at job fairs are not actively hiring but it is a chance to get your resume in.
- Go to Community Resource Fair for the same reason: to get connected.
- VBC events: go to the vendor area which is typically open to the public.
- People get jobs in a doctor's waiting room, waiting in line to pay a bill, waiting in line at the grocery store - every time you are waiting it is an opportunity for something to happen.

- If you hear about a job, e-mail it to Maureen and she will send it out.
- St. John's parish graciously provides the meeting place and coffee, without charge.
- We don't collect any fees or dues - we are an all-volunteer organization so we would like you to pay back by bringing refreshments once every 4 months or so.
- There is a sign up sheet - check the refreshments table or see Isabel Abiseid.

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## **Some of the Job Club Volunteers:**

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• Dave Fledderman is the Job Club interface with St. John's church. He manages the information that is posted to the Job Club website [[www.stjohnbchurch.org/jobclub/jobclub.html](http://www.stjohnbchurch.org/jobclub/jobclub.html)] - which is part of St. John's church website. The website is a wealth of information - the website has detailed information, key presentations, workshop information, and a list of upcoming speakers. If you miss a meeting you can find out what has been said. The website is active, it is updated weekly. While there are a host of e-mails sent to members each week, these are not posted to the website because the information is outdated very quickly, so be sure to sign up to receive the e-mails.

Dave coaches people on resumes. He worked for 36 years as an Army civilian, the past 18 years on Redstone Arsenal and spent more than 30 years as a supervisor and selecting official.

There is a resume book maintained for reference upstairs at St. John's church. Sometimes employers who see the Job Club sign on Hughes Road stop by and ask to review any available resumes of job seekers. Dave coordinates entries in the notebook. You must sign a release form for your resume to be included in the book. See Dave for a release form, fill it out and return it to him. Any time you have an update to your resume and would like to replace your old one, provide your new resume to Dave and ask him to replace it. You do not need to sign a new release form each time.

Also, you may view the resumes in the book (you must leave it in the building). You can see what other people are doing, see what format catches your eye - you may want to pattern your resume after that format. [Herb also suggested you can see who your competition is...]

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• Ed Snow has government and commercial experience. He helps people get their resume to reflect exactly what they have done to accurately portray themselves to potential employers. He has been volunteering with the Job Club since last October and is one of our presenters.

Ed's advice: There are no generic jobs. You've got to be thinking about: what do you want to do. You can have 5 different resumes, each one focused on targeting a different type of job and

highlighting a few skills in that area. A tailored resume will highlight your specific skills relevant to an open position and may help to get you called for an interview.

- Employers' HR representatives spend 10 seconds looking at your resume to determine what department to send your resume to, whether to marketing, accounting, etc.. Your objective helps to make sure it goes to the right department.

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• Laneen Manchester: Recorder

Note from Dave Fledderman [Thanks, Dave]: "Laneen Manchester graciously serves us as the note-taker and Recorder for our weekly meetings."

Invitation cards for St. Joseph the Worker Job Networking Club are available. Take one and share it with anyone you know who is looking for a job. Let them know they don't have to be alone in the job search.

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• Yohanes (pronounced like the name Johannes) Suhartoyo facilitates new member registrations. He prepares and collects the registration form for new members, takes photos, and makes coffee. Yohanes is also a Chess National Master and is willing to coach children in how to play chess (at no charge)!

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• Moses Nervis is both a job seeker and a trusty helper. He sends Maureen a lot of job announcements which are then passed on via e-mail to our members.

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• Herb Hayes is a Retired Army Officer and has owned businesses before. He spent 47 years with the government, the first 20 in the military and the last 22 in Civil Service. Herb recommends that you remain on the member list when you get a job (even if you have her take you off the e-mail distribution) - please continue to help. Give Maureen information about jobs you hear about so she can send it out to the members. And again, don't forget about our club once you get a job.

Herb also helps with resumes. His focus is on commercial resumes, since getting into the government takes a lot of time and effort. For the short term, you really need a conventional or commercial resume.

Herb suggests that for the government you should stress good writing skills - use a few paragraphs rather than bullets. He will help with government resumes once you have a primary resume. Your resume must be two pages, no more.

Everything on the resume needs to focus on the job objective. Your resume should be focused on what the employer will gain by hiring you, not how you can benefit from working for the employer.

Your objective should not state: "Seeking an opportunity to demonstrate my skills..." or that "I want a decent job in..." or "I need a full time job with medical benefits so I can pay the bills..." or that "I want training in..." even though a good job will provide you with all of these things.

The employer is not there to give you an opportunity. You need to state specifically what you have to offer a company, not what they can do for you. State what you have accomplished in your previous work history, and do not just list the various duties you were supposed to perform.

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- Isabel Abiseid volunteered to be the Refreshments Coordinator - see her to sign up to bring refreshments to a future meeting.

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- Dave Sadlowski also helps with resumes and he has made several presentations. He led the three week workshop on resumes.

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- Dave Fledderman: Google Groups

Currently Job Club Members include:  
380 job seekers.  
65 helpers.

Job Club members share information. Google Groups also allows you to share information with the group.

hiwaay had a problem with Maureen sending out so many e-mails.  
Knology shut down Dave for the same reason.

Without violating SPAM act regulations, we looked at a number of software programs, most required subscription fees - we are an all volunteer group. We decided to go with Google Groups.

Only about half of the members are signed up right now.

If you have a problem let Dave know and he will help you get set up.  
Thanks to Dave and Greg Thompson from the church for entering all of those e-mail addresses.

There are options available that reduce the number of e-mails you receive in a given day:

- Abridged Version - one e-mail a day combines the subject and first few lines of each e-mail into a single e-mail.
- Digest version - contains the full content of the message, but is condensed into one e-mail a day.

You must have your application turned in before you can be a member of the group. Outsiders cannot get your information.

Google collects information, you may get SPAM associated with job searches - this is a byproduct of the free service, but subscription services do the same thing....

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## **Announcements 11/30/10**

- Ed provided refreshments today.

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- Maureen:

Many employers do not hire between Thanksgiving and New Years. Use this time to work on your resume, etc.

You should spend at least 40 hours a week looking for a job [or on activities related to the job search].

If you spend 40 hours a week, it will take you 6-12 weeks to find a job.

If you spend 24 hours a week, it will take you 12-24 weeks to find a job.

If you spend 12 hours a week, it will take you 24-48 weeks to find a job.

This is not just looking at online job boards, but also includes, information interviewing, networking.

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- Announcement:

Isabel got a job! She will be working for West Corporation.

Therefore, we need a new refreshment coordinator. Enlist people to volunteer on the sign up sheet.

West Corporation is still hiring. They need to hire 90 people with a customer service background by the end of the year. They have an A+ rating with the Better Business Bureau. Their at-home program is one of only two at-home programs in Huntsville that the Better Business Bureau will recommend.

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- Maureen:

We have quite a few people who have been finding employment.

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- Maureen:

FedEx, UPS, etc. is hiring seasonal workers.

Member Comment: I expect to have them tell me I am overqualified.

Maureen: Go to them and say, I'm an engineer and I'm looking for seasonal work and I'm willing to do whatever you need me to.

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• Member Comment:  
Go in with the attitude that this is the job that you want.

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• New Member: Saw the sign out front.

Maureen: you were led here.

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• Maureen:  
Note to person with a logistics background:  
UPS advertises logistics now.

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• Maureen:  
Note to Veterans:  
Still Serving Veterans organization is very helpful to veterans.

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• New Member:  
Heard about the Job Networking Club from his brother.

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• Job Fair:  
Westin Bridge Street

The Huntsville Times  
Engineering, Technology and Security Clearance Career Expo  
Monday, December 6  
10 am - 4:30 pm  
Westin Huntsville

Companies are seeking experienced professionals with the following backgrounds:

- Engineering (all disciplines)
- Electrical
- Mechanical
- Electronics
- Defense

- Intelligence
- Hardware
- Software Development
- Systems Engineering
- Network Administrators
- Risk Management
- Modeling & Simulation
- Military Operations
- Satellite
- Radar
- Imagery
- Database Development
- Geospatial
- GIS
- Manufacturing
- Technology
- Semiconductor
- Cyber Security / Computer Forensics
- Milstar
- Satcom
- Infosec
- Information Security
- Integration & Test
- Network Engineering
- IT/IS
- Spawar
- A & P
- Composites
- Design
- Quality
- Test
- CAD
- Program & Project Managers
- Imaging
- Manufacturing
- Civil
- Construction Management
- Chemical
- Process
- Navigation
- Java/J2EE
- Aerospace
- Avionics
- Communications
- HUMINT
- SIGINT



- GPS
- Energy
- Nuclear
- Power
- and much more

[http://www.huntsvillealabamusa.com/workforce/2010\\_careerfairs.html](http://www.huntsvillealabamusa.com/workforce/2010_careerfairs.html)

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• Job Fair:  
Redstone 10-2 today (11/30/10).  
Defense Technology & Intelligence Career Fair  
(1000-1400) - Bldg. 1500 –  
Access to Redstone Arsenal (RSA) Required

[www.TransitionCareers.com](http://www.TransitionCareers.com)

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• Job Opportunity:  
Yulista has 80 positions open for Engineers.

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• Job Opportunity:  
Torch was looking for 60 - hiring  
They want 3 people deep on the bench

Both Yulista & Torch support the Army.  
Most jobs are waiting for Congress to approve funding.

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• Abdi:  
Job Seeker Business Card.  
Kristen had one long before he did.  
At networking events people were asking for a business card. You can't really hand out a resume in that situation.

Create the card online:

[www.vistaprint.com](http://www.vistaprint.com)

Example:

- Name.
- Areas of engineering interested in.
- Cell phone number
- e-mail address
- Same design and things done in the past.

Provide a credit card number and you will receive the cards in the mail in a few days.

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• Melinda:

Made up a two-sided card for Student Civic Group.  
~250 cards for ~\$6-\$7 [the cost of the shipping].

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• Member Comment:

At the office supply store you can buy packets of computer-ready business card stock [perforated sheets] - Avery makes them. Get the template online. This way you only have to do a sheet at a time. It is ultimately more expensive per card than bulk, but you can customize it as needed without printing a large quantity that are all identical.

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• Maureen:

It is like a "mini-me," a mini-mini resume.  
Make sure it looks professional, just like when you're working.

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• Member Comment:

Drop them off when you have an interview. It is a reminder of you for them, when they don't remember a lot of things about a lot of other people.

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• Maureen Question:

Does anyone know of any good Debt Management Counseling?

Answer: There is one on Pratt, near the National Children's Advocacy Center.

Answer: Consumer Credit Counseling (CCC) - non-profit.

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"Consumer Credit Counseling Service is non-profit agency with the goal of helping people to solve their financial crises."

Huntsville Area Office  
1015 Airport Road SW  
Huntsville , AL 35802  
(256) 881-1000

Office hours:

Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Friday and Saturday 8:30 a.m. - noon

[www.mycrreditcounselors.com](http://www.mycrreditcounselors.com)

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[  
Another, according to Google:  
"

[www.FamilyCredit.org](http://www.FamilyCredit.org)

Licensed credit counseling & debt consolidation. BBB Rated A+.

"

]

Answer: If you are a member of Redstone Federal Credit Union, talk to them first. They have many services available free to members. The manager at the Redstone Federal Credit Union branch on Airport Road is very knowledgeable about credit and consolidating.

Answer: Start with your bank first.

Caution: Debt forgiveness can be considered income, may get a 1099 from the IRS. That is a good question to ask: "Do you report the remaining balance to the IRS as income?"

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• Maureen:

Marcie said the United Way needs a Receptionist.

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• Member Comment:

Had an interview to be a paid volunteer with United Way!

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• Member Comment:

Knows a Veteran who has no disability, is unemployed, and gets everything for free - full medical benefits.

Contact Bill Koch at Still Serving Veterans.

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Past Job Club speaker

Still Serving Veterans - Case Manager

[www.StillServingVeterans.org](http://www.StillServingVeterans.org)

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There is also a different VA office downtown you can go to.

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Madison County Veterans Service Office

Harley F. Goble, Jr. - Veterans Service Officer

Laura Skinner - Assistant Veterans Service Officer

Kevin Walker - Assistant Veterans Service Officer

Wesley Conner - Administrative Support Assistant

Office Location

115-B Washington Street  
Huntsville, AL 35801

Mailing Address

100 Northside Square Box 398  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
Phone: (256) 532-1662  
FAX: (256) 532-1562  
Email Address: [harley.goble@va.alabama.gov](mailto:harley.goble@va.alabama.gov)

Monday thru Friday  
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

<http://www.va.state.al.us/county%20pages/Madison.htm>

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• Member Question:

How much money can you make working part time before it affects your unemployment compensation?

Answer: Contact the Career Center.

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<http://dir.alabama.gov/>  
Huntsville Career Center:  
(256) 851-0537  
2535 Sparkman Drive NW  
Huntsville , AL 35810  
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Huntsville-AL/Huntsville-Career-Center/406795371118>

Contact: Mike Fowler

Email: [Huntsville@alcc.alabama.gov](mailto:Huntsville@alcc.alabama.gov)

Unemployment Compensation Handbook:  
[http://dir.alabama.gov/docs/guides/uc\\_brr.pdf](http://dir.alabama.gov/docs/guides/uc_brr.pdf)

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• **The speaker for the next meeting (December 7) is Lisa Taylor, from ITT Tech.**  
**Subject: Brand Identity: How to Market Yourself.**

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## Guest Presentation 11/30/10

### Speaker: Melinda Inglis, Lead Instructor for the General Education Department at Virginia College at Huntsville

Melinda Inglis  
Learning Frameworks Lead Instructor  
General Education Instructor  
Advisor, PASS IT ON  
VIRGINIA COLLEGE AT HUNTSVILLE  
2800-A Bob Wallace  
Huntsville, AL 35805  
[melinda.inglis@vc.edu](mailto:melinda.inglis@vc.edu)  
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- Melinda Inglis is a Lead Instructor for the General Education Department at Virginia College at Huntsville.
- She teaches Learning Frameworks which is a life skills class developed by The Pacific Institute designed to help students transition back into college.
- Teaches all the English courses:
  - From prep to advanced English.
  - Also Contemporary Literature.
- Instructor for the Career Focus class which teaches graduating students:
  - Resumé writing.
  - Portfolio development.
  - Interviewing skills.
  - Marketing strategies in a job search.
- Advisor to the PASS IT ON student civic organization on campus which promotes:
  - Civic duty.
  - Goal-setting.
  - Professionalism.
- Mindful Teacher trainer for Virginia College at Huntsville campus.
- Corporate trainer who assists in training new Virginia College campuses.

- Past managerial positions dealt with HR duties, especially:
  - Hiring and
  - Training new employees.

She will send out the PowerPoint presentation (watch for the e-mail from Maureen).



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## **Presentation: Completing an Application with Confidence**

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- Why do we have to fill out applications?

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• You want to make a good first impression. Give credibility. It is a chance to give some extra information that is not on your resume. To get you the interview, or give more information after the interview depending on when they have you fill out the application.

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• It helps make the job application process equal for everyone. It makes it easier for them to collect generalized information about all of the applicants as a whole: how many men, how many women, etc.

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- It is also used to weed out applicants. If you slop the information on there and cross it out it tells me you are not a detail oriented person. You don't care about your work. If you leave blanks they may think you don't really care about how you do your work.

The receptionist is feeding information back to the hiring managers: How long did it take you to fill it out, did you bring your own pen, did you treat them disrespectfully?

Secretaries are very important. Many applications are thrown out by the secretary because you didn't treat them well. We (HR) ask them to screen them for us and they are happy to do it. This one treated me poorly, this one is going directly into the trash...

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What Do You Need To Complete An Application With Confidence?

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- Previous and current addresses:

Where did you live 10 years ago? You need to know this ahead of time.

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- Phone numbers.

Be careful who you entrust with answering your calls from potential employers. Some employers call the phone number given, and the person answering says, "What do you want?!" Then they hang up...

Some [job seekers] never get the message [that a potential employer tried to contact them].

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- Emergency contact information.

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- Driver License Number.

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- Social Security Number.

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- Education:

- Degrees.
- Schools.
- Addresses.
- GPA.

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- Portfolio.

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- Proof of eligibility to work in the U.S.

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- Military service:
  - Rank.
  - Dates.

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- Convictions, indictments.

You don't have to give any information they don't ask. They may only be asking for felony convictions. Do not put down traffic tickets in your answers. There are a lot of questions that are illegal, and things they don't need to know - and that they don't want to know.

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- Employer Information:
  - Employer.
  - Title.
  - Work Description.
  - Dates.
  - The reason you left.

This is a great place where you can get extra information in. You need to keep your resume to a one page format, but you can put that extra information in here.

You don't know if they are going to go by the resume or the application.  
DO NOT put, "See resume." - It indicates laziness to them.

The resume and application serve two different purposes. You don't know how they are going to use them.

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- References.

Put your top two references on the reference sheet and on the application, but if they have space for three or four I put different ones for the others. This gives them a choice of which references they will contact, and they are all equally good. Make sure you have asked them before. You need to know they are going to say the right things. It never hurts to coach your references: "I just interviewed. It's this type of job. They looking for this / these skills..."

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- Explain gaps in your employment.

Fill it in here in your work section just like you would on your resume. If you were an at home parent, you were learning transferrable skills:  
Ran household accounts, went to school.

Question: Do I need to explain a two month gap?

Answer: Some say one month, others say two or three months off.

It is easy to do [be off two months?].

One person decided to stay and travel with her children "spend time with family" - once you mention children, it is a legitimate question for them to ask - then the recession hit and she had no idea it would be so hard to find another job.

Maureen: Volunteering helps to fill that gap.

Question: Caregiver. Took time off while building a house, oversaw household accounts, worked with architects, construction people... Find a way to build it into the resume.

Question: Will it help or hurt?

A: it depends on how you handle it. If you have too long a gap it can hurt. You can always find some skill and make it apply.

If your reason for leaving is you became ill, they may shy away from you. How do you navigate around that? Be concise. If they don't ask, don't list it.

If your were fired, put it in as positive a light as possible. Downsizing is a good word. Fired and quit are negative words. I would suggest you say it was, "By mutual agreement for medical reasons, will discuss further in the interview." Then focus more on the skills section.

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- Tips for information needed:

Gather all the information together on a fact sheet. Do not turn in your fact sheet with your application! Make sure you keep your fact sheet updated.

To get dates, etc. locate old W2s, pay stubs, tax forms - you can even call the Social Security office.

If the company comes back even five years later and finds out you lied on your application, you can be fired.

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- Have all of your supplies ready: Pen, resume, reference page, dress professionally. They are watching to see if you came prepared, or did you need to borrow a pen, etc.

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- Be well dressed [even if you are only going in to pick up an application]: they may give you an on-the-spot interview. Also making a good impression on the Receptionist is very important.

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### Completing a Job Application with Confidence

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- Use blue or black ink. Nothing else.

Erasable pen can smudge and make it look bad. If you make an error, go ask for a new application.

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- Look the application over thoroughly before you start in order to avoid mistakes.

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- Have proper identification with you.

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- Don't put N/A. It makes it look like you don't want to fill it out - put, "Does not apply."

A lot of the purpose of the application is to see how detail-oriented you are, to find out if you take the time to do it right.

For some companies they really don't care about the content, but trained job hunters will. It is very important.

Member Comment: I was taught to draw a line through the question if it does not apply.

Answer: Some say draw a line through it, some say use N/A, but it is better to put "Does Not Apply." It shows that you took time to read the question and that the question meant something to you. Some people just put N/A for most everything because they are too lazy to fill it out.

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- Proofread! proofread! proofread!

I can't emphasize that enough.

Go back over it. Print neatly, legibly. Print. Do not use cursive writing.

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- Read instructions carefully and follow directions exactly.

For example, if you wrote first name, last name and they want last name, first name, it shows you don't follow directions.

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- Complete each answer honestly. If you have something [awkward] that needs to be addressed, write as little as possible to answer it. If it asks for you to add an explanation - they don't really want you to write a lot. Add, "Will discuss in the interview." They want to see how concise you are. And it shows that you expect to be called in for an interview.

As mentioned earlier, see what each question asks for. Do not volunteer information you do not have to (indicted, convicted).

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- Use the language of the job advertisement. For example, if they are looking for excellence, make sure you use that word on the application (and on the resume).

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- Don't use negative words:

- Don't
- No
- Never
- Fired
- Quit...

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- Apply for a specific position rather than "anything available."

It shows you have a positive self image, that you know what you want to do, and shows motivation and ambition.

[The way HR works, they route the resume / application to a specific department. If your application / resume does not have a specific job title stated, they will probably throw it away. You don't want to make them work at trying to figure out where to place you. It is ok to have several different resumes with different career objectives because they will sent them to different departments.]

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- As mentioned earlier, do not leave any question blank. If it doesn't apply to you write, "Does Not Apply" not N/A. Do not write, "See resume" in any section, such as the work section.

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- Member Question: How do you handle the issue of taking time off to be a caregiver for your elderly parents, while doing odd jobs to make ends meet?

Answer: Caregiver is medical related and customer service related. No one will fault you for caring for your parents and wanting to support yourself. And, you explain, now you are trying to get back into your field.

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- Try not to put in any dates - birthdates, graduation dates, don't put your high school graduation date - they try to put that in there to see if they can get information they can't ask. They are trying to find out how old you are and that can turn into a discrimination issue later.

Put the month and day of graduation, but not the year. If you put it in, it becomes a legally valid question they are allowed to ask you.

Some will ask you for your birth date so they can do a background check and drug check on you and it is in fine print we don't really expect you to put it in. It is a decision for you: how badly do you want that job?

Member Comment: A lot of online forms will require you to put a date in there.

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- Member Question: Is a credit check part of a background check?

Answer: Some of them do. For Engineers they check everything they say it is optional - but it is not really. If you refuse to do it, they are not going to hire you.

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- Member Question: Do you have to put down your ethnic background?

Answer: They have to report this information in aggregate to show that they are not discriminating.

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- Do not give out your driver license number or social security number on the application because of identity theft because you don't know where that information is going. Say, "I will provide that information upon hire."

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- Give examples to illustrate your successes!

Book: Job Guides: Filling Out Job Applications - Expert Help Filling Out Job Applications So YOU Win An Interview

Example from the book: When demonstrating their skills, anyone can write: "I have successfully influenced project managers in my division." But give an example; saved money, etc.

It is far better to say: "I have successfully influenced project managers in my division. In September, I put forward a suggestion to change the way in which incoming calls were dealt with. My suggestion was adopted and resulted in an 18% fall in call waiting times."

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- The application is the most important document [it is a legal document]. If they find out you lied on your application, even five years later, you can be fired.

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## Tips to know when completing your application with confidence

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[from the PowerPoint presentation - some of it is a review of items covered earlier:]

- "A company may be using the application for observation purposes. How long did it take you to complete the application? How well did you treat the employees you encountered? How did you dress? How detail oriented are you? How well do you follow directions? Are there any discrepancies between your resume and your application?

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- A company may be obtaining permission to complete necessary steps in the employment process. Most applications contain signed releases for the company to complete a background check, contact your previous employers and your personal references. They might ask you to consent to a drug screen or submit to other tests, such as lie detector or driving skill evaluation; many times you are not even aware you are giving permission to these things. It is important to read everything carefully before you sign.

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- A company may just be asking for a signed document on file needed from each employee to go to work.

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- Just remember to follow each step carefully, be prepared, and read thoroughly. There are discrimination laws in place to protect you.

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## Mistakes To Avoid on Applications

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- Some of the most common mistakes that job seekers make on applications, according to several sources including WorkSmart!, a site developed by the Employment Development Department by the State of California, are:

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[www.worksmart.ca.gov](http://www.worksmart.ca.gov)  
[http://www.worksmart.ca.gov/tips\\_application.html](http://www.worksmart.ca.gov/tips_application.html)  
]

1. Not following directions.
2. Misspelled words.
3. Crossed-out writing.

4. Not printed.
5. Wrinkled or messy application form. Wadded up like you carried it around in your purse with you for a week, or your man-bag...just kidding [ : ) ].
6. Incomplete information or unanswered questions.
7. Not applying for a specific position.
8. Incomplete work history, or large unexplained gaps in work history.
9. Overlapping or conflicting employment dates with no explanation.
10. Application not turned in by the deadline.
11. Use of troublesome words, such as "quit" or "fired."
12. Forgetting to sign the application.

An additional error is having information that does not coincide with your resume!

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### Online and Web Applications

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- Online applications are very similar with these additional tips:
  1. Save your work periodically for online applications, in case of problems, or you need to come back to complete it later. Something always happens after the third page...
  2. Be prepared to take tests in the middle of the application. Do not rush. Take your time so you get the correct answer.
  3. When asked what position you want, do not select "any." It will get your application immediately thrown out.
  4. Have your resume open in another window, so you can copy and paste information into the application.
  5. Be sure you have provided the answer you want before going to the next page. Once you click to the next page, you may not be able to go back.

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## e-mail Applications

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- Tips for e-mail applications:

1. Don't make it sound like you are texting. Make it sound professional, like a formal letter.
2. Be brief and to the point, only 2-3 paragraphs.
3. Proofread for errors!
4. Include your signature with your name, email, and phone number.
5. Include the job title you are applying for in the subject line.
6. Send you resume as a Microsoft Word document if they ask for it, otherwise paste it in the body of the e-mail.
7. Send the email to yourself first, to be sure it looks appropriate.

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- Member Question:

What do you do about the Salary Requirement question?

Answer: Do not put a salary requirement.

[From previous presentations (Maureen): Put "Negotiable," "Flexible," or if it is an online form and it won't take text, enter "0," and if it won't take zero, put in "10." They know you won't work for free. They will call you in for an interview, and your goal is to get as many interviews as possible because "the resume gets you the interview, the interview gets you the job!"]

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## Practicing with Confidence

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- [www.job-applications.com](http://www.job-applications.com)

Practice online, or print and practice.

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- Maureen: Google SF171 - a government form. Download it, fill it out and carry it with you.

### Member Comment:

Even better is SF86 - Security Form application. It can be completed in 2 hours, but you had to research it for two weeks...

It has every conceivable question. It is handy to take with you. It is 30 pages long.

They want a street address so they can send someone physically to that address. A post office box will not be accepted.

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• Sources:

- About.com: Job Searching/Job Application Guide – Email Job Applications

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[www.about.com](http://www.about.com)

<http://jobsearch.about.com/>

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[http://jobsearch.about.com/od/jobapplications/a/jobapplicationguide\\_4.htm](http://jobsearch.about.com/od/jobapplications/a/jobapplicationguide_4.htm)

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- EDD: State of California –WorkSmart! / Tips for Success - The Application

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- Job Guides: Filling Out Job Applications - Expert Help Filling Out Job Applications so YOU Win An Interview

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<http://www.job-application-and-interview-advice.com/filling-out-job-applications.html>