

Stand Out from the Job-seeking Crowd – How to Write a Brilliant Application

You've applied for hundreds of jobs but you either don't hear a thing or you get the 'we regret to inform you' email. What is going wrong?

It's easy to feel despair at this point and a belief that the job market is impossible but it could just come down to your application and a few simple things you can do to improve this.

Here's our top tips for increasing the chances of your application being put onto the short list pile.

1. BEFORE APPLYING! Assess your cyber-image.

If your return email address is givemebeer77@hotmail.com or buttcheeks babe@yahoo.com, you should probably not expect a call back. Get a new email address if this is the case. Just your name and a combo of letters is safe. Similarly, check your social media pages – do you have controversial viewpoints expressed (we're talking all the 'ists' - like sexist, racist and ageist) or are you constantly 'LIT' and looking like you party every waking moment? Is every second word the F-bomb? Then we suggest you check your Privacy settings and only show that side of you to the people who love you regardless, your friends and family. Check your photo albums though as these can still be accessed regardless of your privacy settings. Perhaps delete those images of you at 3am downing a beer in a dodgy club surrounded by extremely tattooed biker dudes. Believe me, employers are checking you out on social media. Never underestimate this!

2. READ THE APPLICATION – 3 Times.

Okay, if you're now looking good (and perhaps inspired to lift your game) let's get cracking. You've found the job you want and you're about to shoot off your resume to the email address on the bottom of the page. STOP! This is a trick and in your rush, you are falling for it. In job ads, employers will often give specific instructions, their sneaky way of weeding out the people who do not read the details. For instance, the ad may say, 'address all key selection criteria, include a cover letter and in the subject line of your email, quote this number'. If you just send them your resume without any of the above done, you are immediately kaput. Read the application 3 times and write down the instructions. This very step could put you in the top 10% of applicants and straight onto the short list pile because you'd be surprised how many people just don't read instructions. Don't be one of them.

3. ASSESS AND ADJUST YOUR RESUME – Every time!

So you've seen a job ad in a law firm as a junior legal secretary but your resume only has your job history working in your brother's printing business and that stint you did at Hungry Jacks. This is where you need to re-fashion your resume. Think about other experiences or learnings for example, the Legal Studies

units you excelled in at school or the work experience you did in year 11 for Jonson, Daley & Smith law firm. Or maybe you did some office-related work or admin work for a friend, include that. Perhaps you have excellent computer skills and excelled in English, highlight that. Collect any back-up references from those involved (eg a teacher, the friend you did admin work for or the boss at Jonson, Daley & Smith) and add them to your resume. Now save this version of your resume for other applications that may be similar in the future. Check out our further [resume tips](#) when applying for jobs.

4. COVER LETTER

Nail your first impression on paper! Use our three-step "Why, How and Who" method to ensure your [cover letter](#) grabs their attention from the get-go.

5. SPELLING AND GRAMMAR – make no mistake about it!

Bad spelling or grammar is a huge red flag to employers and could immediately get your application tossed in the 'no' pile, particularly if written communication is a part of the role. If this is not your forte, utilize all the tools you can. An obvious one is spell-check but there are also some neat apps out there like [Grammarly](#) which will take a written paragraph and word it for you in correct grammar. Even better if you can get someone who has great written communication skills to proof-read your application, for instance, a friend, parent, teacher or job agency consultant.

Whatever you do, don't give up!

You've done all of the above but if you don't hear back, don't beat yourself up. It's a competitive market and, depending on the industry, the odds are that for every 10, 20 or even 30 jobs you apply for, you'll get one interview.

Keep applying to increase your odds. Every application you do will get better and the more you do, the better your odds at gaining an interview.

You may also want to check out our article on [Where the Jobs](#) are, because not all jobs are advertised online.