

12 Online Application Tips

Online applications are increasing common. Follow the tips below to manage your applications successfully.

1. Keep your personal information close to the vest

No credible employer will ask for – and you shouldn't offer – personal information such as bank account or credit numbers, mother's maiden name, or identifying characteristics such as eye color.

2. Verify the legitimacy of a company or recruiter before completing an online application

Speak with industry groups or do an online search about the prospective firms of interest to learn about their reputation as an employer.

3. Update your resume

You may be applying for the same type of job but in different industries. Your resume should include up-to-date information that is tailored to that particular company and industry.

4. Have an online version of your resume and cover letter readily available

You can "cut and paste" from the company's own documents to the on-line application as needed.

5. Keep a copy of your resume, the actual job description and any other company information

You will have easier reference to customize responses and for follow-up.

6. Think about your salary expectations

When entering a desired salary, you should include a range over any one fast and hard figure. If you're asked to provide your salary expectations and you are not allowed to enter "Open" or "Negotiable," it is considered acceptable to enter all zeros in that field before submitting.

7. Attach a cover letter with your resume

Attach a cover letter with your resume if the application allows it.

8. Reread your completed application -- before hitting "send"

Be sure to proofread your online application to ensure it is completed correctly before submitting. You may not be allowed to reapply or have a time constraint for reapplying. Typos aren't any more acceptable online than they are on paper.

9. Prepare for technical glitches

Save a completed online application for your files or print out a copy before submitting in case you need to reenter data or resubmit.

10. Consistency counts

Job seekers should realize the information provided in the online application must match any other information provided as this information may be used when conducting background checks. Any data inconsistencies, inaccuracies, or misrepresentations may be used to decline an interview in the first place or in the event you are hired, be used as legal grounds for potential disciplinary action.

11. Understand the risks involved in posting a resume in a database

Sites cannot control your resume after an employer or recruiter has downloaded it. When it comes to resume databases, job seekers should know the risks of posting their resume in a database.

12. Keep a record of where you have posted your resume

Delete resumes from the sites where you have posted it after you've finished your job search.