



COLTON  
REDLANDS  
YUCAIPA

## Quick Tips

## Job Applications

Employers will require you to complete an application either online or on paper *whether or not* you have turned in a resume. Don't race through this process. **THIS IS AN IMPORTANT PIECE OF THE PROCESS.** *Your application will reflect on your ability to follow instructions, your character, professionalism, and thoroughness.*

When job hunting, always keep on hand your **completed sample master application**. **WHY?** Upon occasion you may be asked to complete your application on site.

### You must have ready:

\*\*The names and addresses of previous employers.

\*\*The dates you were employed at each site, the title of the position and the duties you performed. This could also include volunteer/community services—(non-paid positions).

\*\*List diplomas, degrees, and/or certificates earned (ROP, CPR, First Aid, etc.)

\*\*The names, complete addresses and telephone number of at least three professional references.

**IMPORTANT: Before using their information, you MUST ask your references for their permission. Do not list high school friends—list adults that can talk about you and your accomplishments.**

### GENERAL APPLICATION TIPS:

- If possible, make a copy of the application so you can complete a **rough draft**, then transfer the information to the final copy that will be submitted.
- Look over the entire application **first** to determine where you are going to write your pertinent information. Then read and follow all instructions carefully.
- If handwritten, print neatly, using **black ink** and maintain a consistent style of writing. KEEP IT NEAT!
- Don't leave **blanks!** Answer all questions. Use a small dash (-) or NA if something doesn't apply to you.
- Abbreviations should be avoided, but when they must be used due to space limitations, they must be grammatically correct and include punctuation. Acronyms are acceptable word forms and may be used.
- **MOST IMPORTANT: always tailor your application to the position you are seeking. Don't be generic!** Think about the position and determine what specific skills and personal strengths you have that will benefit the employer. Find a place on the application that you can write this information to personalize your application.
- CHECK YOUR SPELLING.
- Read all the fine print and sign the application.
- If possible, have someone proofread for accuracy and neatness before and after you transfer your information onto the final application.
- **Keep a copy of your submitted applications.** This helps when you are preparing for an interview. REMEMBER: THE GOAL OF YOUR APPLICATION IS TO GET YOU AN INTERVIEW!

### Remember to bring:

- Master application
- Social Security number
- Black pens
- Drivers license
- Résumé
- Letters of recommendation
- Copies of certificates etc.
- An enthusiastic attitude (YES, EVEN WHEN YOU ARE APPLYING—STAY POSITIVE!)



## Quick Tips

## Online Applications

The paper application is rapidly disappearing from the local employment market and more and more companies are going to online applications. How do you make your online application stand out from the rest? Here are a few suggestions offered by employers regarding electronic applications:

Some of these may seem like a no-brainer, but you would be surprised at how many people don't realize how the online process really works. Employers are looking for the right people, but a recruiter has no problem screening you out if you don't use care in your application process.

- Follow directions very carefully. Enter the correct data into the correct field. Complete all fields. Not just those that are required. Leave no blanks. Insert NA for not applicable or a small dash (-)
- If necessary, ask for advice on completing the application from a company recruiter, someone you know who works at the company or your Career Guidance Specialist.
- ALWAYS tailor your application to suit the position. Do not always copy and paste text from your generic resume hoping that it fits the position.
- Use keywords or the language in the job ad. Research online the position title and company website for hints on how you should word your experience/skills/strengths.
- Create a skills inventory section. If the application doesn't address this you could put this in a "comments" section. Include your "soft skills". Soft skills are your personal strengths and attributes that fit the position.
- Include numbers and statistics in your experience section if possible.
- *If the company offers an "optional" assessment test online, take it!*
- In some cases, you may be asked to attach your resume or paste it into the application. Make sure your resume can hold its own in a very simple format. For this, DO NOT use fancy bullets, text, or italics. They do not convert well. Boldface text is okay.
- If possible, spell and grammar check your application before submitting it. Have someone else look it over, if you know this can be an issue for you, just to make sure you are submitting your best work. A trick is to type your information into a word document first so you can spell check and then cut and paste it to the application. Remember this is the employer's first impression of you.
- Include a strong objective if possible. Ask a career counselor to help you word your objective.
- Follow up your electronic application with a personal email to the recruiter. A follow-up phone call is acceptable as long as the ad does not say "No phone calls". The more personal contact you can make the better, as long as it is welcomed by the recruiter or company. **Remember:** *You want that interview!*

### Remember:

- When you are at your computer completing online applications be patient and methodical.
- Have your information readily available before you sit down to complete the application. This includes: your completed master application, the job posting and any research you have done. This will allow the process to go smoothly and you will be less likely to be "timed out" of the process.
- Use a professional email and CHECK IT DAILY!!
- Keep a record of where and when you applied and when you followed up.



COLTON  
REDLANDS  
YUCAITA

## Quick Tips

## Cover Letters

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mr./Miss/Ms./Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Company Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mr./Ms. ....

**Paragraph One:** State your reason for writing, identify the position, explain why you are interested, and how you learned of the position.

**Paragraph Two:** Time to sell yourself; summarize your qualifications without repeating everything in your resume. Show how you are excited about the possibility of working for them. Your tone can be warm and more personal than your resume, but still be professional.

**Paragraph Three:** Refer them to your resume. End with a proactive statement that asks for an interview appointment. Don't be passive and say "I hope to hear from you", say "I will call the week of", or, "on Friday, Jan 27, I will call to see if an interview time can be arranged".

Sincerely,

*Your signature*

Your typed name

Your street address (where you receive your mail)

City, State, Zip Code

Phone number

E-mail address (make sure it is your professional address—Don't have one yet?—make one at gmail.com or yahoo.com)

Enclosure

A **cover letter** is also known as a Letter of Introduction or Letter of Application. There are three basic parts to a Cover Letter.

1. *Your first paragraph* should be interesting enough to grab the reader's attention. Tell them why you are writing; identify the position for which you are applying; explain why you are interested in the position/ company.
2. *Your next paragraph* needs to briefly summarize your qualifications. You do not need to review your entire resume, but you can highlight some particular skills and make a point to show how enthusiastic you are to interview with them and prove you are a great fit for the position you seek.
3. *Lastly*, your closing paragraph needs to ask for an interview appointment. Refer them to your resume and make sure your

### FORMATTING TIPS:

Use Block Style formatting.

Make sure your letter is visually appealing. Cover the page equally. Add some space between the date and the heading or increase/decrease your margins if necessary.

This is not an essay: Single space paragraphs, double space in between paragraphs.

### Always:

- Spell and grammar check. Proofread, proofread, proofread.
- Address the letter to an individual. Avoid writing "To whom it may concern", or to general department headings.
- Remember this job is about what you can do for them, not what they can do for you.
- Be honest, confident and enthusiastic.
- Be concise—one page max.
- Refer them to your resume.
- Be professional.
- Be proactive—don't wait for them to call you—CALL THEM.
- Use good quality, light colored paper that matches your resume. Use a good printer.
- HAND DELIVER if possible, but when mailing, avoid folding your letter and resume. Use a large envelope. (9"x12")
- When emailing: email your paperwork to yourself first to make sure it doesn't lose your formatting in the email process. Make adjustments if necessary.
- Avoid abbreviations except for Mr./Ms., etc. and state abbreviations. Use action verbs and proper English. Remember, you are not texting; no BTW, LOL, FYI, etc.
- Avoid starting each sentence with the word "I".
- Keep a copy of each letter.





## Quick Tips

## Résumés

A résumé is a brief summary of your experience, education and skills. It is a marketing piece, usually one or two pages long, designed to interest an employer. *Good résumés' match the jobseeker's abilities to the job's requirements*. The best résumés' highlight an applicant's strengths and accomplishments.

There are four main steps to creating a résumé : 1) Compiling information about yourself and the occupations that interest you, 2) choosing a résumé format, 3) adding style, and 4) proofreading the final document. (You most likely will have more than one resume format—ALWAYS SAVE YOUR WORK!)

- Start by gathering and organizing your facts. Who are you and what have you done that will interest a prospective employer. Current and previous work/volunteer experience, accomplishments, education and activities, skill sets, certificates, awards etc. (*Time for honest self evaluation—use a skill inventory list if necessary.*)
- Next, **YOU MUST DO YOUR RESEARCH** regarding the position you are applying for. What necessary requirements and skills do you have that you wish to highlight for the prospective employer?
- Determine what categories you are going to list on your résumé. **You must have your personal information, education, and experience sections**, however, you can include additional sections. *These sections should maximize what your experiences have been and show the employer you would be an asset to their organization.* Some of the sections you could include are: Objective or Career Target, Highlights of Skills/Strengths, Personal Profile, Volunteer Experience, Awards and Certifications, Extra-Curricular Activities, Associations, Special Skills, or a Summary section. Look at samples of resumes to help you get ideas of what to say and how to format your page.
- Use action verbs and industry-specific terminology where appropriate. Again, ALWAYS REVIEW THE JOB ANNOUNCEMENT AND FINE-TUNE YOUR RESUME THE BEST YOU CAN TO MEET THE EMPLOYER'S CRITERIA. Sprinkle your resume with language actually found in the position description as long as it is true and accurately reflects your qualities and experience.
- Make sure your résumé is easy to read; use design elements strategically. Boldface, large type, capital letters, centering or horizontal lines make headings stand out. Bullets or italics can draw attention to key information. Your margins should be symmetrical. Make sure you have plenty of white space to make reading easier.
- Print on high-quality white or lightly colored paper using a quality printer. Keep your font size 10 or better and use simple professional sans serif fonts like Ariel, Calibri, Franklin Gothic or Tahoma.

### Online and Scanned Résumés

- Delete any bullets or special characters such as italics or underlining. Boldface is okay.
- Add a Keywords section to the top, just under your personal

information. Key words are generally descriptors that label who you are. *I.e.; bilingual, adaptable, high energy, organized, Windows XP, Vista, leadership, integrity, communication skills, hardworking, manager, analytical, 50WPM...*

- Review the job posting to

determine what keywords you need to add that accurately reflect your skills/strengths and experiences.

- When applying make sure to determine whether you need to send a scannable resume or not.



## Quick Tips

### Dress for Success

Part of the hiring decision is based on nonverbal elements in an interview—eye contact, body language, handshake, posture, listening skills, clothing, grooming and accessories. Will dressing properly get you the job? Of course not, but it will give you a competitive edge and make a positive first impression. Here are a few general suggestions that should help:

- Clothing should be clean, pressed and professional. Nothing faddish or extreme! Focus on a good fit, neutral colors (gray, navy, black) and well thought out combinations. Brown and tan are also okay, although somewhat less formal. Use color in moderation.
- Clothing should be appropriate to the position. Know and understand the difference between professional and business casual dress. Do your research as to how the people dress where you are applying, and then step it up a notch. Be careful when researching to make sure you are not visiting the company on a “casual day” and misinterpret the dress code.
- Remove piercings and cover tattoos.
- No jeans, spandex, missing buttons, or frayed or tattered clothing.
- Apply cologne sparingly or not at all.
- Bring a simple portfolio with extra copies of your résumé, awards/certifications/licenses, or letters of recommendation, that would apply to the position that you are applying for.
- **GOOD INTERVIEW CLOTHING IS AN INVESTMENT THAT WILL PAY OFF!** You will be more confident and more likely to make a positive first impression. If you are still unsure about what to wear, **ASK** your ROP Career Guidance Specialist for advice.

#### Tips for Women

- Go easy on the makeup.
- Neutral nail colors and length. No acrylic nails for medical positions.
- Nothing too tight, too short or too revealing!
- Keep jewelry to a minimum. Nothing big, flashy or dangly.
- Avoid flowing pants/skirts.
- Tailored clothing tends to work best. Dress pants, a simple dress, jackets, collared shirts as opposed to a t-shirt. Avoid sleeveless shirts.
- Closed toe shoes are best! Moderate heels. Nice flats can

work as well.

- Carry a smaller, sleek purse. Avoid the big, bulky, brightly colored or patterned purses.

#### Tips for Men

- Hair should be clean, well groomed and neatly styled. No baseball hats or caps.
- Shave or if you have facial hair, such as a mustache or beard, it should be neatly trimmed.
- Suit and tie, dress pants/dress shirts, sport coats, dress socks (no white). Collared polo shirts/khaki pants are only appropriate for less formal positions.
- Wear a conservative tie that

coordinates well and is tied correctly (<http://tie-a-tie.net>)

- Polish your shoes.

#### Remember:

- Less is more. Keep your look simple.
- No gum, candy or other objects in your mouth.
- Brushed teeth and fresh breath.
- Give a firm handshake, make eye contact, don't fidget.
- Be friendly, speak up and **SMILE!**

*It is better to be conservatively over dressed than underdressed.*

**GOOD LUCK!**



## Quick Tips

## The Interview Process

The primary idea of the interview is to share information. Are you the right person for the job? Is this the right job for you? With proper preparation you can relieve some of the stress that interviewing usually creates.

### Before the Interview:

- Research the company, the position, the salary range and the interview process itself. ***I cannot stress this enough.*** Use the company website, Google, talk to current or former employees, review the job posting, call Human Resources and ask questions. Do whatever it takes to be knowledgeable about the company and the position.
- Review the position and practice answers to common questions: Why should we hire you? What do you know about our company? What specific skills and strengths do you have that make you a good fit? Tell me about yourself. Where do you see yourself in 5 years? How will you benefit this organization?
- Prepare questions to ask your interviewer. (It is usually a good idea to write these questions down while you are doing your research.) Choose meaningful questions that matter to you. Do not ask about money, vacations or company perks in the interview process—only ask about this after you have been offered the job.
- Go alone and arrive early (10 to 15 minutes).
- Turn off your cell phone and leave it in your pocket/purse.
- Visit the site prior to the interview to determine location, parking and travel time. Consider the time of day of your interview when determining travel time.
- Take time for good grooming/hygiene. Don't forget to bring your portfolio with your résumé and other supporting documents.
- Be pleasant with everyone you come in contact with.
- Have a nice smile and good firm handshake for all you meet.

### During the Interview:

- Wait to be asked to be seated. Watch your posture and your body language. Sit up straight and don't fidget.
- Maintain good eye contact with your interviewer or interviewers.
- Stress your qualities and skills that are good fit for **this** position. When answering questions give some examples of how your experience/strengths can benefit the employer. Maybe a brief story or two to reinforce your point. Practice with your Career Advisor or another adult that can be objective with you. Get comfortable talking about yourself.
- Don't give out unwarranted personal information or opinions.
- Do not speak unkindly of former employers or of people/experiences in general. Be upbeat and positive.
- At the end of the interview make sure to thank all involved in the process. If you really want that position, make sure they know that before you leave. "I would really like to work here—I hope to hear from you soon".
- If possible, ask for a business card and then **FOLLOW UP with a thank you note/letter within 24 hours.** A well worded email can work, especially if you know they are making the decision that day. **DON'T FORGET THIS FINAL STEP!**

**BE AN ACTIVE LISTENER!**

**RELAX AND BE YOURSELF!**

**BE CONFIDENT AND SMILE!**