Online Applications

Completing Online Applications

The following is some advice to consider when completing online applications:

- Consider starting the process early - it can take time
- Ensure you have cheap and reliable access to the internet, perhaps at your university
- Brows the organisation's website and application from to get an overview of their requirements
- Complete responses offline, perhaps in Microsoft Word and cut and paste once completed
- Edit as you would for a paper application
- Ask someone else to read your responses and to give you feedback from an employer's point of view
- Use the spell checker
- Research the organisation: what skills are they seeking? do you meet the selection criteria? What type of person is an ideal 'fit'? What has been happening in the organisation?
- Tailor every application to the needs of each organisation. Try to find out how the organisation will search and select applications. Will they use keyword searches or a backend tool that scores responses (e.g. distinction results will score higher than passes and 3 year of part-time work will score higher that 1 year)?
- A keyword search is used when recruiters have a list of terminology they are looking for. They are looking for specific words so it's your job to make sure that you mirror their language in your application. (For e.g., use 'time management rather than 'organisation and planning' if that is what was asked for).
- Identify who the contact person is. this may be difficult if an agency is handling the online process. Speak to the contact person and ask an intelligent question that shows you have an understanding of the position. Don't ask a question for which the answer is obvious or which could have easily found out on the organisation's website.
- Use professional business language in any telephone and email contact with the organisation
- Ensure your email address and answering machine message reflect the professional image you want to convey
- save regularly when you are completing the application
- Save a copy of each application you submit and make a note of any contact you have with the organisation in relation to your application
- Phone to confirm the application has been received and save the record of acknowledgement of your application just in case there is a problem

Warnings

- Forms may only be available whilst the organisation is actively recruiting
- some companies allow application forms to be completed over a number of sessions, so make sure you save each session
- Some companies only allow applicants a single sitting, so make sure you have everything ready when you complete the form

Resources

The Careers Library at Swinburne has a video entitled "Your Jobs Online", which gives a very informative overview of completing online applications.
The Graduate Careers website www.graduatecareers.com.au also provides further information on online applications.

Being competitive

Whatever type of application you are required to submit, choose the type of style, format and content that you feel best presents your skills and talents, as applying for graduate or vacation positions is a competitive process. Ensure that you treat every application with a great deal of care by tailoring your cover letter, resume and selection criteria in order to make an impression with an individual employer. A well prepared application will encourage a prospective employer to want to meet you face-to-face. Your job application will get you in the door - now you've got to close the deal