



Job Applications – how not to blow it.

So for 90% of job applications – this is what happens.... You see the vacancy advertised online and you click on the 'APPLY' button attach your cv and bobs your uncle – now just wait for the interviews. And wait and wait and wait.

Because it's not going to happen – you have put no effort into your application and the employer is not going to waste his time on you either. So how should you do this?

Well if you really want a job show them that you really want THIS job and that you are ideal for it – do not expect them to wade through your CV and hundreds of others looking for that spark of inspiration – chances are they will not even open it. The key is your letter of application. Even if you email your application never miss out on the opportunity to sell yourself so that they are panting with excitement to read your CV.

The email can be your Application Letter and should be polite and concise and full of reasons to employ you. Full of reasons to put your application at the top of the pile not the bottom – that's where the emails that say 'CV attached please consider my application' will stay. In fact we have seen some that our blank and the employer has to guess that a cv is attached! Others include the Application letter as an attachment as well – better than nothing – but there is nothing to excite or entice the company to open it – especially when there are half a dozen applicants that HAVE made their email exciting and noteworthy.

See our advice note on writing the ideal application letter.

So now we come to the CV – this must be short and punchy if you are going to catch the eye of the interviewer. So throw away that 5 page CV and condense it into the relevant points on to 2 pages - What ever you do don't make a generic CV - (or application letter) make each one specific to the job you want to apply for – a general CV will not be able to target the specific qualities and attributes required for each vacancy. If the company is looking for a person with excellent people skills – your CV should show in the first page just how good you are at managing or getting on with people. Tailor each one to highlight the skills that you have that match the skills required.

But, what ever you do – don't lie about these skills. As this will surely trip you up at interview and then you are wasting your time as well as the companies. Make sure also that any gap in your CV is covered as employers do not like surprises and will simply ignore your application if things do not stack up.

See our advice note on writing the ideal CV

With all of this, make sure that you apply in plenty of time – keep an eye out for suitable vacancies or better still, sign up for our JobAlertz and be advised of every suitable vacancy as it appears. The first applications show that you are eager, show that you are organised and compare favourably with late applications. The first one or two that drop on the desk are going to be examined with much more interest than the 100th.

Should you follow up your application? If there is no closing date and you have not heard after 2 or three weeks or within 10 days of a closing date then yes – a politely written letter personally addressed to the right person asking if they have received your application and expressing again just how keen you are will be a useful prompt and could pay dividends if they are struggling to shortlist.

So now – you have the interview – see our advice note on interviews!