Title:
How to Apply for a Job Online

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Summary:
In an increasingly online marketplace, applying for jobs often means sending
your resume and cover letter electronically. Some companies have online
application forms right on their Websites.

Keywords:
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application,your resume,online application forms,resume and cover letter,hiring

Article Body:
In an increasingly online marketplace, applying for jobs often means sending
your resume and cover letter electronically. Some companies have online
application forms right on their Websites. Here, you can choose the job you wish
to apply for, plug your work experience, skills, and education into online
fields, then submit this information with a single click of a button.

Online application forms differ from another and will require different
information. For example, some companies ask that you "copy-and-paste" your
resume and cover letter into two fields. Others ask that applicants fill in
multiple fields such as "work experience," "education," etc. Still others ask
that you do both-submit your resume and cover letter, and fill in fields that
require the same employment-related information.

Whatever type of online application form a company might have, be sure that all
your information is posted in one field or another. Don't be afraid to repeat
information, especially if the form requests a resume and a separate breakdown
of your work history. Your information will be automatically uploaded into an
online database, where hiring managers will likely scout for keywords. The more
times your keywords come up, the better.

While some companies-especially large ones have online application forms, many
others simply ask candidates to e-mail their application materials to the
appropriate person or to a general employment address like
"hiringmanager@anycompany.com." Here, caution is warranted. Be sure to send your
resume and cover letter exactly as the hiring manager requests. Some employers

prefer that the resume and cover letter be attached as separate documents (usually in a Text Only format or as Microsoft Word documents). Other employers want the cover letter to be in the body of an e-mail, but the resume to be attached separately. Still others prefer that both the resume and the cover letter be pasted into the body of an e-mail. For the latter, be sure that your documents are easy to read. Resumes, which have a rather complicated format, often look messy when they are transplanted into the body of an e-mail. Says recruiter Beth Camp: "If you e-mail a resume, it has to look as good as a written resume. I would advise sending a resume both as an attachment and in the body of your e-mail." This is a good way to sidestep a possible formatting fiasco. Another way is to send your resume and cover letter electronically, then to send hard copies as well.

Some jobseekers opt to purchase domain names and to create their own Websites for the purpose of putting their resumes (and other application materials) online. The advantage of formatting your resume using HTML and making it a static Web page is that anyone can see your resume in its proper format simply by visiting your Website. Thus, instead of mailing or e-mailing your resume every time you want someone to see it, you can simply give the interested parties the right web address and they can find it for themselves. An added bonus of having your resume on a Web page is that you may attract the interest of recruiters and employers whom you hadn't even considered. To make downloading your resume easier, you may want to include on your Website copies of your resume in PDF (portable document format) and Microsoft Word files.

Unfortunately, there are downsides to putting your resume on a Website. One downside is that your information becomes accessible to everyone, even unwanted visitors. For this reason, you should never disclose your home address, social security number, or any other personal information. Another downside is that not all hiring managers will go out of their way to visit your Website. Even if your resume is only a click away, many hiring managers would nevertheless prefer that you mail or e-mail it.

In terms of how you send your application materials, it would be unwise to go against the explicit wishes of an employer. For example, don't send an attachment when copy-and-pasting is requested. Some companies shun attachments because they fear getting a virus, or because they don't have compatible software, or because they simply don't want to be bothered with the extra step of opening a document.

When assembling your application materials and putting them into an e-mail, don't fill in the "to" field until you are finished. It's all too easy to accidentally send a half-finished e-mail to a company, thus eliminating your

chances of making a decent first impression, and most likely, of getting an interview. If you were asked to copy-and-paste your resume and cover letter, be sure to scan the final outcome at least once for formatting problems, then to use a spell checker a final time.

If you are attaching your documents, be absolutely sure you are attaching the right versions (i.e., the company-tailored and updated versions) to the employer. Also, be sure that they are labeled in a professional way. One jobseeker laments his decision to save different versions of his resume under headings like "Resume for Strategic Sourcing Jobs." Says the jobseeker: "I was applying for three different types of positions. But I didn't want every prospective employer to know that. By labeling my outgoing resumes the way I did, I pretty much broadcasted the fact that I didn't have a clear career direction." Probably the best strategy for saving your resume is to do so under your name only (example: Simone Piette resume) or under your name and the name of the company (example: Greenfield resume from Simone Piette). Be sure to say in your e-mail what you have attached, and also, what software you've used. For example, you might say in the body of your e-mail: "Please see my attached resume in Microsoft Word version 2002."

Before a hiring manager even opens your e-mail, she should know exactly who you are and which job you are applying for. In the "Subject" line, write your name, the position name (and job number, if listed), and the contents of your application (example, "Simone Piette resume and cover letter for Executive Assistant Position").

If you've been referred to a position by another person, be sure to "cc" (carbon copy) or "bcc" (blind carbon copy) your reference when you apply. That is, add that person's e-mail to the "cc" or "bcc" field, which will enable that person to receive an exact copy of the e-mail you're sending to the hiring manager. The reason you want to "cc" or "bcc" your referrer is because you want to keep him in the loop. After all, if someone has offered to help you, he should know what stage you're at in the application process. (Note: Some e-mail programs don't offer "cc" or "bcc" fields, in which case you'll want to e-mail your reference separately.)

Finally, be sure to save a copy of your outgoing e-mail in your "Sent Mail" folder, just in case the e-mail doesn't go through and you need to send it again.