**Please Read This Before Completing your Application Form**

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|  | Tips for completing your Application Form |



Completing job Application Forms can be time consuming and hard – often you’re so keen to get the job that you don’t know where to start. Regardless of how much you may want the job, don’t put off starting to fill in the Application Form; **it can take a lot longer to fill in than you think** and if you are up late the night before the deadline to get it to us, you won’t be giving yourself the best chance possible.

## Common job application mistakes

It can be easy to make mistakes, especially if you’re rushing through an application. Take your time and avoid making any of these blunders:

* Spelling mistakes and grammar errors.
* Addressing the application to the wrong person.
* Not following instructions on the form (particularly where we ask you to tell us how you meet the person specification !)
* Not tailoring your responses to fit the job you are applying for (please don’t use the same answers you’ve given in a different application for a different job – it probably won’t fit).
* Leaving gaps in your employment history.
* Missing the deadline to get the form to us.
* Making untruthful statements in the hope that you will be invited to interview.
* Saying it, not proving it:

You can’t just say that you can do what we are asking for and that you meet the Person Specification for the job; **you have to give us examples** which show you have the experience and the skills we are looking for. For example:

“I can work under pressure”, without telling us how you have done this in the past.

## Education

It is important that you have the qualifications we have said that we need for the job role. Make sure you list all of the qualifications you have – don’t assume we won’t be interested in adult education classes and anything outside of secondary education / high school. Include all certificates, degrees, etc.

**Do not tell us you have a qualification if you don’t** – you will be asked to bring your certificates with you for us to see; if you do not provide them we will assume that you do not have the qualification.

## Present job

We need to know where you are working at the moment – even if it is completely different to the job you are applying for. If you are not working or have just left education, it is alright to tell us this on the form and leave this section blank.

## Previous Jobs

It’s important to include your full employment history, starting with your most recent job and working backwards – not forgetting any voluntary or unpaid jobs and even holiday jobs.

If you have been unemployed, or taken time off to care for someone, travel, or do voluntary work, etc., make sure you include these details, outlining what you did and where you went, what jobs or volunteer work you undertook during that time and any skills you acquired along the way.

*Make sure all your employment dates are correct.*

*If there are gaps in your employment – periods where you were unemployed, studying, travelling, caring for someone – please let us know.* Do not leave any gaps unexplained.

## Other Experience

Remember to think about your interests and hobbies, and any voluntary work you do that might be relevant to the job you’re applying for. Think about the skills you need in other areas that would be relevant to the job you’re applying for and tell us about them.

## Suitability

***Tell us why you want this job, why you are applying and why you want to work at BACKUP.*** Please take some time to put this together – it helps us to assess how suitable you are for the job you’ve applied for.

Have a look at our website, at what we do and at our values.

Include examples from your current or previous employment to support your case and show us how you can bring value to our service users and the charity as a whole.

## Person Specification

***It is really important that you use this section of the Application Form to show us why you are the ideal person for the job***. One way to do this is to match your skills to the ‘*person specification*’. The person specification outlines the knowledge and skills that we are looking for. It is divided into two categories: ‘*essential*’ and ‘*desirable*’ and you need to go through the points that we are assessing on the Application Form and tell how you meet them.

If you are applying for two similar roles, with different working patterns, for example, a waking night post, and a day time post, you must clearly show how you meet the criteria ***for both positions.***

***What if I don’t meet the criteria ?***

**We won’t ask you to attend an interview if you don’t meet the essential criteria of the Person Specification**. If you believe that you are perfect for the job in every way apart from missing one or two areas, contact the Business Support Team at BACKUP and ask if there is a contact person you can speak to about your potential application.

## CVs

Please do not send us a CV instead of filling in your Application Form – ***we will not accept it and we will not invite you to interview.***

We use our own Application Form to gather the same information on all people applying for a role, in the same way so that we can compare them all equally. Application Forms ‘*level the playing field*’.

You can send us your CV ***in support*** of your Application Form, if you wish.

## Criminal Offences

Having a criminal record won’t necessarily stop us from appointing you; if you get invited to interview we will need to discuss what happened. Do not leave out a conviction if you have one – this could affect your application, or result in us having to dismiss you if we appoint you and then find out later that you lied to us.

## References

Ideally, you should have two references. One should be from your current employer, the other can be from a different employer, or a character reference from a current colleague.

If that’s not applicable – or possible – make sure you include someone who has worked with you in a permanent position, was a lecturer if you haven’t worked since leaving college, a teacher, or someone who worked with while you were a volunteer.

*We will not accept a reference from a member of your family.*

## Interview

If you are invited to an interview, please arrive 10 minutes early.

Think about how you want to present yourself to the Panel – we won’t judge you if you do not wear a suit, but we will expect you to be presentable.

***If after being invited to interview you find you’ve changed your mind or are no longer interested in the position, please contact Business Support to let us know you will not be coming.***

BACKUP North West

**March 25**

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This document is due for renewal on the

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