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application online, which will mean the application form is part of the process of submitting your application on a specified website. The rules for completing application forms, whether electronically by email, in hard paper form, or online are the same however.

Some application forms include questions such as "why are you applying for this position," "what are your key qualifications or strengths", "what is your leadership experience" etc. With some preparation, these questions can be a fantastic opportunity for you to sell yourself. Make sure you answer the question fully, and do not include purely generic or broad statements. These responses should also be organisation focussed, and not include statements about the benefit of the position for yourself. For example "I am applying for this position because I believe your highly regarded organisation would be a good company to work for, and it would help me to advance my career." This does not tell the organisation why you are the best person for the job and why they should hire you.

Back to Basics: The Application Form

Rule number 1: don't underestimate the importance of the application form!

While the application form may seem like the least important part of your application, it does hold significant importance. I have seen panel members discard entire applications because the application form was not filled in properly and they believed this is an indication of poor attention to detail ... which just happened to be one of the selection criteria. Imagine spending hours and hours of work on your application only to have it immediately discarded because you ticked the wrong box on your application form.

Most Public Service organisations will have an application form that they want you to complete and submit as part of your application. Application management is becoming more streamlined and managed electronically, so you may be required to submit your

If you are submitting your application online, it is a good idea to write it in a word processing document first, and then cut and paste. This will ensure you don't lose any information should you experience technical difficulties while on the internet. It also allows you to use automated spelling and grammar checkers.

Five tips for application forms:

1. It might seem obvious, but make sure you are using the right form. Make sure it is for the right department, and it is current. Don't rely on a form that you used for a similar application 2 years ago – check that it is current.
2. Understand how the organisation wants you to submit your application. Some organisations don't like you to attach your form to your resume, because they send these to different departments. Other organisations prefer your application to be submitted electronically (by email) as one whole document – that is, not

Application forms (and organisation names!) change all the time, so don't rely on the form you used two years ago – check that it is current!



as separate attachments. Don't risk your application being delayed, or not accepted at all by not following these directions.

3. Unless it is stated as such, assume that all fields are compulsory to fill out. If there are optional fields, such as date of birth, ethnicity, disability information etc, use your discretion in supplying this information. The organisation usually only uses this for statistical purposes, and it is not an essential component of your application. It is against the law to discriminate against these factors.
4. Make sure you understand the question. For example, a lot of forms will ask for your "substantive" and "actual" level, if you are already employed in the public service. Do you know the difference between substantive and actual? Are you putting the right levels in the right boxes?
5. Save humour for later on. While some questions may seem stupid or look like they are just asking for a humorous response, don't do it! While the selection panel may have a bit of a giggle, they are also less likely to treat you seriously.

for any jobs, or jobs for which you are over-qualified shows a lack of self-esteem. It's important to remember also that no-one is confident in every aspect of their lives. A student who is an excellent basketball player may be confident on the court but completely lacking in confidence when he has to write an academic assignment.

How can you improve your self-esteem and use it your advantage when looking for a job? Here are a few tips to help you:

Talk to someone who is familiar with your abilities and who has encouraged and motivated you in the past. This could be a family member, a friend or colleague.

Find activities about which you already feel confident, no matter how insignificant or unrelated to work they may seem. So if you can sing, cook great meals, bake delicious cakes, play a sport well or have a hobby in which you are skilled, do it more often and allow yourself to be conscious of the feeling of confidence it brings. Allow yourself to enhance that feeling by basking in it afterwards.

Make a list of your achievements. These can be successes you've had as a student, in previous jobs or in any other aspect of your life. This will help you to feel better about yourself and add to the feelings of confidence.

Feature Article

Self Confidence Building for Job Hunters By Waller Jamison

One crucial factor to the success of your job search is confidence. Being unaware of your own potential, or being too timid to apply for suitable could result in your ending up in a job which does not stretch you and will become boring very quickly.

No-one feels supremely confident all the time and a little anxiety before a job interview is perfectly normal. So is the thought that other people might be better qualified than you. However, being so anxious that you don't apply

Make a list of your achievements. These can be successes you've had as a student, in previous jobs or in any other aspect of your life. This will help you to feel better about yourself and add to the feelings of confidence.

List your transferable skills. This will give you a more realistic view of your capabilities and you may be surprised to realize just how many skills you have. Include soft skills, such as communication skills, team building skills and the ability to work on your own initiative. These may not seem very important, but in fact, employers state that soft skills are the ones in which candidates are most lacking. So if you have good soft skills, you are very much in demand in the marketplace.

You can also increase your chances of getting an interview by taking the time to produce a good résumé, researching the job and the company in



advance. If offered an interview, you can then improve the likelihood of being hired by preparing answers to questions in advance.

Not everyone who appears confident really is. In fact many of those who seem super-confident on the outside are actually quite the opposite underneath. So if you work on boosting your self-esteem, you will soon be as confident as many other applicants.

Want to change career, but don't know how? To sign up for Waller's free career change course, go to [Design Your Ideal Career](#).

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Reader Questions

Q. Do you have any tips for proof reading an application before sending it in?

A. A good technique to help you pick up on errors while proof reading is to read your application out loud. Most people skim read, which in practice means that the brain is only taking in the most important pieces of information, and does not pay close attention to possible errors and mistakes in spelling and grammar. Another good technique for proof reading is to print out your application and read it in hard copy, rather than off the computer. If you read your application out loud at a normal speaking pace, and in a different format than you are used to seeing on the computer screen, you are forcing your brain to process words individually, and see things in a different format, and this extra attention will assist in effective proof reading.

Do you have any questions about applying for a government job that you think other newsletter readers might also want the answer to? Send them to us at the email address below (unfortunately we won't be able to provide individual responses, so keep your eyes peeled on future editions of the newsletter!)

admin@publicservicejobs.com.au

Recruitment News

www.publicservicejobs.com.au has re-launched, with a new logo, a new look, and new search capabilities!

This is the only website you need to find all permanent vacancies in State and Federal Governments departments Australia wide.

www.publicservicejobs.com.au will now focus specifically on government job vacancies, with the new site www.selection-criteria.com.au taking up the banner for government job applications.

While still in their early days, www.publicservicejobs.com.au and www.selection-criteria.com.au will continue to develop and grow, offering government applicants free tools and resources, as well as paid services and products for sale.

Make sure you bookmark these sites and return regularly to see what's new!

Read your application out loud at normal speaking pace to help pick up on errors.



Product Spotlight



Get That Job! The Best Guide to Applying for a Government Job – 3rd edition

It's been almost a year since the 2nd edition was released, so it's time for an update!

The 3rd edition was launched this month, and has had a make-over of it's selection criteria section. It now includes a never seen before easy 5 step formula for writing statements against selection criteria.

Each step in the formula is straight forward and the formula comes with examples and exercises so the reader can follow along and see their own statements against selection criteria appear before their eyes.

Check out the "products" section of www.selection-criteria.com.au for more information, or to view the table of contents.

**** SPECIAL OFFER ****

To celebrate the release of the 3rd edition, Get That Job! will be available for newsletter subscribers to download for \$15.00 (that's half price!) until Monday 23rd July 2007.

To take up this offer, go to the [special newsletter subscriber's page](http://selection-criteria.com.au/getthatjob_newsletterspecial.html) (selection-criteria.com.au/getthatjob_newsletterspecial.html) and enter the discount code "newsletter" (without the quotation marks).

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