How to prepare for an application
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Preparing an application for a new job is bound to feel daunting, but it can also be a fun and insightful journey. Completing an application gives you the chance to look at yourself, what strengths you have and how these will help you secure that new career. It gives you an opportunity to really reflect on the experiences you have had, what you have learnt and how you can transfer the skills into a new role. This guide will help take you through the journey of preparing and completing an application. The end of this journey should leave you feeling proud of what you have achieved.

Research

So you’ve been on the job boards and have found a job that interests you, now it’s time to do some research! There might be some information about the organisation on the advert, but is this enough to really get to know the company you’re applying to? Looking now can save you the time and effort of completing an application for an organisation that you feel may not help you bring your career aspirations to life.

Your research should focus on the history of the company, their mission statement and if there any new projects and initiatives they have been working on. This information will also help you to loop your application questions back to the company, making your answer more relatable to the person reviewing your application.
What’s important when starting and completing an application?

One of the most important things to do is to ensure you always **READ** what is being asked in the application. It is easy to be swept up in the process of finding a job and completing the application as quickly as possible. Give yourself **time** to look through all the information you have been given and answer the application questions thoroughly. Reading through the question carefully will help you shape your answers effectively.

**Personal Brand**

Who you are and what you can bring to the company are some of the main focuses for the recruiter. Your personal brand is how you **sell** yourself to the recruiter. It can be difficult to think about what your particular personal brand would be, so let’s play a little game… If someone was to say your name, what would be the first three **positive** words that would pop into their heads? Jot these down on a bit of paper, these words are going to be the foundation of creating your personal brand. These words would be what **attracts** an employer; for example, if your word is confident, you will need to be able to give evidence of when you have shown confidence, maybe having to deliver a presentation to a group of individuals or taking a team leader role in a group task.

**Experience**

In some applications there will be competency questions, these are questions where you use **real life events** to show how you made a decision and what the outcome of your actions were - we always recommend the **STAR** technique. This technique will help you to structure your answers effectively. Remember, that the experiences you use do not have to come from employment. Where you may not have much or any work experience you can use examples from other opportunities you have had such as volunteering, education or any extra-curricular activities. These experiences also show the recruiter a bit more about your personality. You can make a **positive experience** out of a challenging situation! If something did not go to plan you can still use this as an example as long as you use it as a learning experience. This will show employers that you can **reflect on challenges**, evaluate what went well or what you would have done differently.

**Situation**
Introduce the situation to set the scene and provide context.

**Task**
Describe the task. What needed to be done and why?

**Action**
Explain what action you took.

**Result**
Describe the result in terms of benefits realised.
What are the right words to use?

Positive language! You want your application to stand out for all the right reasons and using positive language can help - simple changes can make your answers more engaging. As an example of positive language ideas, instead of saying something was ‘difficult’ use the word ‘challenging’ instead. The internet has great examples of positive language and how you can use this in an application. If you find yourself using the same words over and over again, you can use a thesaurus to give you some new options and help to expand your vocabulary.

Proof Read It!

The application is all done and you have completed the different sections – now proof read! Reading your application thoroughly is important, this is to ensure that you are happy and confident with the information you’re sharing. Make sure to check for any obvious spelling and grammar mistakes. You can always ask a friend or family member to check over your application - a fresh pair of eyes always helps to see things that may have been missed.

Sources

We have a large amount of resources that we encourage you to look at on our Early Careers Youtube channel. There is also an extensive amount of helpful advice on the national careers service website which has information on how to complete an application and how to create the prefect CV.

We hope this guide has helped you and we look forward to reading through your application very soon! For more information and to apply to our roles please head to our website: www.thalesgroup.com/en/uk-career

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