

KEYS TO COMPLETING THE STATE OF OREGON APPLICATION FORM

When an announcement closes, applications are reviewed for minimum qualifications. All qualifying experience and training must be included on your application. Exam responses, resumes, etc. are not evaluated for minimum qualifications. Only accepted applications (those meeting the minimum qualifications) receive further consideration (such as exam grading).

- **CAREFULLY READ JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS.** They contain special instructions or requirements, including what it takes to qualify and what to submit – transcripts, skill code sheets, cover letters, exam responses, etc.
- **ILLUSTRATE HOW YOUR BACKGROUND MEETS THE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS.** The application form itself must convey how you meet the requirements listed in the “TO QUALIFY” section. You can attach extra pages if you run out of room on the form. Explain your qualifying experience in the “DUTIES” section. Your job titles can help support what you describe, but they are not enough.
- **LIST EACH JOB SEPARATELY.** Don’t lump jobs together – even if they were with the same organization. Include all relevant experience whether it was paid or unpaid.
- **AVOID JARGON OR ACRONYMS.** Convey information in commonly used terms to make the message clear.
- **COMPLETE ALL PARTS OF THE APPLICATION FORM.** Be sure all sections have been filled in. Provide an actual number for the average hours worked per week. If it is less than 40, the length of time in that job will be prorated accordingly. Don’t put “varies”, as the grader will not give credit for that job. List jobs that are relevant to the position you are applying for.
- **MAKE IT LEGIBLE.** Although it doesn’t have to be typed, it does need to be written in pen and readable.
- **SIGN AND DATE THE APPLICATION FORM.** Your application cannot be accepted without a date and your signature. Staple all supplemental pages to your application form.
- **MAKE A COPY OF YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION PACKET.** You will be asked to bring it to interviews or you may want to use it when preparing applications in the future.
- **SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION TO THE AGENCY LISTED IN THE “TO APPLY” SECTION OF THE JOB ANNOUNCEMENT.** Applications must be received by that agency by 5 PM on the closing date. FAX machines tend to be continuously busy late afternoons. Waiting until the last minute to fax your application may cause you to miss the 5 PM deadline.
- **SEE THE INSTRUCTION SHEET WITHIN THE APPLICATION FORM FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS.**

HELPFUL HINTS ON WRITING STATE ANNOUNCEMENT EXAM RESPONSES

Many state announcements include test questions. When responding to this type of announcement, there are two important things to keep in mind as you write your responses:

1. **GRADES ARE BASED ON YOUR TEST RESPONSES ONLY.** They are separate from your application. The only information that graders use when scoring test questions is your answers.
2. **EACH QUESTION IS GRADED INDEPENDENTLY.** For example, your grade for question number 1 is based on what you provide as a response to question number 1. Don't omit an answer to a question because you feel you have already answered it in a previous question. Additionally, it is not enough to say "see above" or "see question number 1."

TIPS TO REMEMBER WHEN RESPONDING

NUMBER YOUR ANSWERS TO CORRESPOND TO THE QUESTIONS. If the question has parts a, b, c; answer and number each separately.

USE THE WORD "I." Don't just write about the process or what "we" did. Tell the grader what **you** did.

AVOID VAGUE LANGUAGE. Responses such as, "I was involved in the budgeting process" aren't descriptive enough. What were your duties? What did you do to achieve results? Additionally, jargon and acronyms tend to detract from the clarity of your response.

ANSWER ALL PARTS OF THE QUESTION. Address every part – e.g., if a communications questions asks you to identify the topic, audience, etc... be sure you have covered it all.

REPEAT YOURSELF IF NECESSARY. Remember, each question is graded independently from the others. You may need to reiterate information from one response to another.

BE CONCISE, YET THOROUGH. While it is okay to describe a scenario (if it is pertinent to the question), there's no need to describe philosophies or what "experts" say on a subject. Also, unless the announcement instructs you otherwise, there is no right number of pages.

MAKE IT LEGIBLE. A grader can't score what they can't read!