

# Application Guide

## Application Guide

### Getting Started

#### Identifying Potential Roles

- **The Ascend Network** provides a great way to find potential job opportunities that suit your interests. In addition, many universities provide programs such as Handshake or Simplicity to assist in finding these opportunities.
- Determine your preferences for job function, industry, and location, and use these parameters to inform your search.

#### When and How Often to Apply

- Instead of applying to as many roles as possible, it is recommended that you **apply only for jobs you really want**. Focus more time on tailoring your resume to each position. A hiring manager will be able to tell if you took the time to submit a customized application rather than one that is generic and not specific to the company or the role.
- Consistent submission of applications leads to greater rates of success in landing interviews and job offers. So, while the quality of applications is better than quantity, it does work to your benefit to **be consistent** by regularly researching companies and submitting applications.
- Invitations to interview are a fantastic next step after submitting an application, but they do not guarantee that you will get the job, so **continue applying while interviews and offers are pending**.
- **Avoid applying to multiple roles within the same organization**. 1-2 at a time is fine, but more than that might show the hiring manager that you are not truly interested in the role(s).
- Whenever possible, **apply directly through the company's website** instead of through a third-party such as LinkedIn. This shows extra effort on the part of the applicant and genuine interest in the organization. Additionally, applications submitted directly through their website are often given priority over ones that come through third-party sites.

### The Application

#### Cover Letters & Resumes

- Your application will be stronger if you **submit a cover letter and resume, even if an application does not require them**. Providing a well-written cover letter shows employers why you're interested in the position or company. This creates a better first impression than just an application or resume alone.
- Be sure that you **review your resume and tailor it to each position** to which you apply. You want to make sure your resume displays the qualities you want employers to see in you when they read it.
- Ensure that you **proofread all your documents!** Typos can potentially disqualify you from being considered for a position. Have someone you trust review your documents to check for errors.



## Social Media and Online Professionalism

- When applying for positions it is important that you **maintain an air of professionalism online**. It is common for employers to use social media as a tool to vet candidates during the hiring process. This means that as an applicant, you should make sure that you either **set your accounts to private, or do your best to make your profiles appear clean** by removing photos, posts, or comments that might come across as unprofessional.
- On the topic of social media, it is highly encouraged to **create a LinkedIn profile**. LinkedIn is a common social media platform for employers to review applicants. In addition, LinkedIn makes it easy to list all of your skills and qualifications directly on your profile.

## Reaching Out to Employers

- Even if an employer does not have a position listed on their website, it could be worth reaching out to inquire about possible future openings. If you find a company that really resonates with you **send an email introducing yourself, sharing your interest in the company, and asking how you might be able to learn more about them**. You might discover a job opening that wasn't yet posted or is about to be posted, and your initiative may help to set you apart.
- However, it is very important when reaching out to employers that you **do not overwhelm their hiring managers** with emails or phone calls. An email is usually preferred to a phone call. If you don't get a response after the first or second attempt to reach out, it is not recommended that you continue making outreach.

### Ascend Tip

Clearly and professionally name your files before uploading documents for a job application. A good, standardized naming format for these documents such as "John Smith Resume" makes it easier for a potential employer to locate your information in the future.

## What comes next?

### Checking in With Employers

- **Only follow up with employers if they provide you with contact information** on the application or career page.
- A polite **email to follow up** is appropriate if you haven't heard back about your application status within about two weeks from the time you applied.
- In your email, **reiterate your interest** in the company and the role, and ask if there might be any update about your application status.

### Keep Open Communication

- Be sure you are **keeping your lines of communication open**. Regularly check your inbox (including your spam folder!) and have your phone with you ready to answer any calls. A potential employer will be looking for you to follow-up in a timely manner!
- **Set your voicemail message to a professional recording** that includes your name, such as *"Hi, you have reached John Smith. Please leave me a message and I'll return your call as soon as possible."*

