

Learning English with CBC Radio – Employment Enhancement



Responding to Employer Questions: Employment Application Forms

by

Maroro Zinyemba

Project Manager: Justine Light



Daylight Consulting Inc.



CBC

**Government
of Alberta** ■

Employment Enhancement

Lesson:	Responding to Employer Questions
Topic:	Employment Application Forms
CLB Level:	6
CLB Skills :	Reading, Writing
Essential Skill(s):	Reading Text, Writing, Document Use, Computer Use, Thinking Skills

CLB Outcomes	
Reading:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners will demonstrate the ability to use a dictionary. • Learners will be able to demonstrate comprehension of a moderately complex text. • Learners will be able to access and locate information from an online source.
Writing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners will be able to fill out a detailed job application form with short comments. • Learners will be able to take notes from a page of written information
Language Skills	
Grammar Focus:	Modals – Should and Shouldn't
Vocabulary:	<i>awards, negotiation, messy, accurately, submit, comment, recommendation, emphasize, sample, performance, primarily, refer, achieved, range</i>
Workplace Culture	
Supervisors, managers, and co-workers give informal advice and make suggestions regarding work and the workplace using “should” and “shouldn’t”. Even though the suggestions and advice are not orders it is generally a good idea to seriously consider them and discuss further if need be.	

Websites:

www.alis.alberta.ca

www.learnersdictionary.com

www.hrsdc.gc.ca

www.thesaurus.com

Introduction

Before you read, complete the first two columns of the KWL chart below:

K	W	L
What I know about responding to employer questions on an employment application form.	What I want to know about responding to employer questions on an employment application form.	What I learned about responding to employer questions on an employment application form.

Pre-reading

Read the selection below and answer the questions that follow.

Part of the employment search process is completing an employment application form. A potential employer will use the information you have provided on the form to decide whether or not you are suitable for the position you are applying for. You will be required to fill in some personal information such as your name, telephone numbers, and whether or not you are allowed to work in Canada. However there are some questions that employers are not allowed to ask. Some examples of information that employers cannot ask you to provide and that is not appropriate are questions about your gender, race, religion, age, ancestry, height and weight, sexual orientation, marital status, and any health problems you may have. This is especially true when the questions have nothing to do with the job. If there is a question on an employment application form that is not appropriate you could ask the employer how the question is related to the job or you could simply write “not applicable” on the form.

For more information on this topic please go to www.alis.alberta.ca and click on Tip Sheets then search for Human Rights and You: What Can Employers Ask?

Pre-reading: Questions

1. Why do you think it is not appropriate for employers to ask you to reveal personal information such as your gender, marital status, and sexual orientation?
2. Have you ever been asked inappropriate questions by an employer?
3. Do you know which organization you can make a complaint to about inappropriate employment application questions?
4. When you are completing an employment application form what do you think you should do and what do you think you shouldn't do?

Main Reading

Title: Filling out employment application forms

Glossary¹

Below are some words and expressions used in the reading:

1. *Erasable* means can be rubbed out for example written letters on a page can be rubbed out
2. *Reference* means a person who can be asked for information about another person's character, abilities, etc. or a statement about someone's character, abilities etc.
3. *Impression* means the effect or influence that something or someone has on a person's thoughts or feelings
4. *Appraisal* means something that states an opinion about the value, condition, or importance of something.
5. *Portfolio* means a collection of documents that show recent work

As you read the selection, use *context clues* to help you figure out the meaning of the following words that you will come across: *awards, negotiation, messy, accurately*.

Reading Strategy Tip: As you read, take notes of what you should do and what you shouldn't do when filling out an employment application form.

Reading Comprehension

Filling out employment application forms

- 1 Take an erasable pen and all of the information you might need** when you go to apply for employment. Take your resumé along. Although you will use it primarily as a reference to complete the application, be sure to attach a copy of your resumé to the application. If you do not have a resumé, make sure you have the following information with you:
 - start and end dates of past employment, education and training
 - past employers, positions and job duties
 - names, telephone numbers and addresses (including postal codes) of past employers and three references.
- 2 Ask for two copies of the application form** so you can redo it if necessary. A neatly completed form creates a good impression; a messy one does not.
- 3 Take as much time as you need** to fill out the form completely and accurately. Never answer questions by referring the reader to your resumé. If possible, take the application home with you and submit it another day.

¹ Definitions taken from www.learnersdictionary.com

- 4 Follow the instructions** on the form carefully. If questions do not apply to you, write "not applicable" or "N/A."
- 5 Answer truthfully.** It is almost impossible to repair the damage if you are caught in a lie.
- 6 Be specific** about the type of work you are applying for. "Anything" does not let the employer know what you can do or the type of work you should be considered for.
- 7 List your most recent work experience first**, then the work you did before that, and so on. Be sure to describe your duties in as much detail as you have room for and emphasize the positive results you achieved.
- 8 List your most relevant education and training.** Include the dates you attended education programs, names of the schools, and the certificates or diplomas you earned. Don't forget to note short training courses, special awards and offices and memberships you have held, especially if they relate to the type of work you are applying for.
- 9** If past **salary** figures or current salary expectations are requested, give a range or state that you are open to negotiation. Check out WAGEinfo (alis.alberta.ca/wageinfo) for current salary ranges and other wage information.
- 10 Fill in the Additional Comments section if there is one.** It is the one place on the form that you can provide additional information about your personal skills and strengths and why you are interested in working for the employer.
- 11 Do not attach** copies of your marks, performance appraisals or letters of recommendation unless you are asked to do so. But do attach a resumé and have a skills portfolio with you if employers might like to see samples of your work.
- 12 Double-check the form** before you submit it. Make sure your spelling is correct and your responses are neat and complete. The overall appearance of the form should make the best possible impression of you as a job applicant.
www.alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=117

Reading Comprehension

1. What is the benefit of using an erasable pen when filling out an employment application form?
2. Suggest a reason why it is a good idea to have your resumé with you when you fill out an employment application form?
3. Describe what a messy employment application form might look like.
4. What kind of an impression do you think a messy application form makes?
5. When describing your work duties why is it important to mention positive results you achieved?
6. Why should you give a salary range and not an exact amount if a salary figure is required?

Vocabulary Development

A. Context Clues

Use context clues from the reading to guess the meaning of the following words:

1. Awards means
2. Negotiation means
3. Messy means
4. Accurately means

B. Definition Matching

The words in italics below are taken from the reading. These words are also found on the *list of the first 2000 most commonly used words of English* and on the *Academic Word List*. Match the words to the correct definition. The first one has been done for you as an example.

submit, comment, recommendation, emphasize, sample, performance, primarily, refer, achieved, range

	Word	Part of speech	Definition
1.	Emphasize	Verb	to give special attention to something
2.			to get or reach something by working hard
3.			a spoken or written statement that expresses an opinion about someone or something
4.			how well someone or something functions, works, etc.
5.			a series of numbers that includes the highest and lowest possible amounts
6.			to give a document to someone so that it can be considered or approved
7.			a formal letter that explains why a person is appropriate or qualified for a particular job, school, etc.
8.			a small amount of something that gives you information about the thing it was taken from
9.			used to indicate the main purpose of something, reason for something, etc.
10.			to look at or in something for information

C. Synonyms and Antonyms

A word can have more than one synonym and antonym. In some cases a word may not have a synonym or antonym. The table below provides more than one synonym and antonym for each of the key words. Circle or highlight the best synonym and antonym that relates to the reading. Note that there might not be an appropriate synonym or antonym. Use online reference sites such as www.thesaurus.com to help you.

Word	Synonym	Antonym
Submit	to put in, surrender	fight, disobey
Primarily	mainly, predominantly	secondarily, additionally
Emphasize	reiterate, highlight	forget, play down
Recommendation	good word, celebration	disapproval, condemnation
Sample	experiment, portion	_____

Reading Strategy

Reread the selection and note down what you should and shouldn't do when completing an employment application form. Then read the statements below and decide which column each statement fits in. Complete the table that follows.

Statements

1. Submit a messy or sloppy application form
2. Have two copies of the employment application form
3. Tell the truth
4. Leave questions that do not apply to you blank
5. State exactly how much you expect to earn
6. Provide additional information in the comments section
7. Include letters of recommendation even if you are not asked to do so
8. Fill out the form as quickly as you can
9. Mention the type of work you are looking for
10. Write down positive results you have achieved in your work in the past

Completing Employment Application Forms	
Should do	Shouldn't do

Grammar Focus / Pragmatic Competence

Activity idea adapted from www.longman.com worksheets.

- Look at the job listed below. What skills and qualities are needed by people who do these jobs? Look up the Essential Skills Profiles for these occupations on www.hrsdc.gc.ca
 - Taxi/ Cab driver
 - Nurse
 - Office Clerk
 - Security Guard
 - Baker Assistant
 - Health Care Aide
- Imagine you operate your own employment agency and you need to find a nurse, an office clerk, a security guard, and a baker assistant. To do this you need to write job advertisements that you will post online and in the local newspaper. Write a job advertisement for each job. An example has been done for you.

WANTED – TAXI / CAB DRIVER

Should have a valid and clean driver's license, should be living in Lethbridge, should be able to read maps, shouldn't be afraid to talk to clients, should have good communication skills, should be friendly. A GPS would be an asset.

Notice the pattern:

should + verb ^{have} + noun ^{driver's license}	should + be + gerund ^{living}	should + be + adjective ^{friendly} shouldn't + be + adjective ^{afraid}
--	--	---

- The following people are looking for jobs. They have come to you as an employment agency for help. Which of the jobs that you have advertised should each person apply for? A person may be qualified for more than one job. Write down the jobs each person should apply for the jobs they shouldn't apply for and state the reasons.
 - Atiya has just graduated from high school. She had very good grades but no work experience at all. She has very good computer skills and communication skills. She needs to find a job so that she can save money to go to college. She would like to become an accountant.
 - Deena used to be a doctor in her home country. Before becoming a doctor she was a nurse. Since moving to Canada she has not been able to re-enter the medical profession. She is working on getting her nursing license to be a nurse in Alberta. She needs a job now.
 - Paul is a college student. He is in the Business Diploma Program. He needs a part-time job to help him pay his bills. He used to work as a health care aide but he quit. He does not like the sight of blood and he does not like working in health care settings. He can drive cars, trucks, and buses. He learnt to drive when he was sixteen and has never been in an accident nor has he ever been given a ticket.
 - Greg is a big, tough guy. He does not like it when people break the law. He would like to become a police officer one day in order to make the city a safer place to live.
 - Bernice is tired of being an office clerk. She does not find her job rewarding anymore. Unfortunately she does not have time to look for a new job because she works full time and when she is free she decorates cakes. She also enjoys cooking for her family.

Reading – Writing Link

Read your notes and the statements you classified in the “should do and shouldn’t do table”. Write a summary of what you have learned about completing employment application forms.

What I have learned about completing employment application forms

Link to Essential Skills

Essential skills are the skills needed for work, learning, and life (www.hrsdc.gc.ca). They are enabling skills that help you perform daily tasks as well as tasks required on the job. In this lesson you will focus on **document use** as an essential skill. You will complete an employment application form. Read the instructions below.

Imagine your name is Kuldeep Gill. You are currently unemployed and are interested in applying for the full time manager position at Deedle Dee Restaurant. This position was advertised online on the company website. You know that you have all the qualifications and skills required for the position. After getting your Bachelor's degree in Business Management, you got a job as a restaurant manager of a large restaurant in your home country. You have also worked for several restaurants here in Canada. At your last job you worked as a team leader at Lady Bug Café in Red Deer. Unfortunately the café closed down in December 2011. You had worked there for two years. Before that you worked at Tim Hortons in Edmonton for two years as a cashier. You moved from Edmonton to Red Deer so you had to look for a job. Look up the essential skills profile for restaurant and food service managers on www.hrsdc.gc.ca. You will find it under "Small business owner-operators". Look up the Restaurant Manager profile on the Alberta Occupational Profiles page on www.alis.alberta.ca The National Occupational Classification code for this occupation is NOC 0631. Use this information and your imagination to complete the employment application form on the next page.

Deedle Dee Restaurant Employment Application Form									
Date of application: _____					Date available to start: _____				
How did you hear about this opportunity? _____									
My Availability and Job Position (Please check all that apply)									
Position	Status	Hours that I am available to work							
<input type="checkbox"/> Cashier	<input type="checkbox"/> F/T		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
<input type="checkbox"/> Manager	<input type="checkbox"/> P/T	Start							
		End							
Expected Pay: _____		Hours I can work per week: _____							
Personal Information (Please print)									
First name: _____					Last Name: _____				
Address: _____									
City: _____			Province: _____			Postal Code: _____			
Home Phone#: () _____			Cell Phone#: () _____			Email: _____			
Are you legally eligible to work in Canada?					<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
Educational Background (Please check one)									
Highest level of education completed	<input type="checkbox"/> High School Diploma		<input type="checkbox"/> College Diploma		<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree		<input type="checkbox"/> Masters/ PhD		
Employment History (Please print)									
Most Recent / Current Employer					Can we contact this employer?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Company name: _____			Start Date: _____		End Date: _____				
Supervisor name: _____					Phone #: () _____				
Position and Duties: _____					Reason for leaving: _____				
Previous Employer					Can we contact this employer?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Company name: _____			Start Date: _____		End Date: _____				
Supervisor name: _____					Phone #: () _____				
Position and Duties: _____					Reason for leaving: _____				
Additional Information (Write in the space provided below)									
At Deedle Dee Restaurant we pride ourselves in excellent service. How would you contribute to our team?									
References									
List three references. Please do not list relatives.									
Name	Occupation	Relationship	Phone #	Email					
<p>I certify that information contained in this application is true and complete. I understand that false information may be grounds for not hiring me or for immediate termination of employment at any point in the future if I am hired. I authorize the verification of any or all information listed above.</p>									
SIGNATURE: _____					DATE: _____				

Answer Keys

Pre-reading: Questions

1. This information could lead to discrimination.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Alberta Human Rights Commission
4. Answers will vary.

Reading Comprehension

1. With an erasable pen you can erase/ delete/ rub out what you have written but no longer want to appear on the form.
2. It is a good idea to have your resumé with you so that you can refer to it and make sure you write down accurate information.
3. A messy employment application form is one that does not have neat handwriting. Words might be crossed out all over the form. There might be food stains and spilt coffee. Answers will vary.
4. A messy form gives a negative impression of the person applying. The employer might think that the applicant does not pay attention and is sloppy. Answers will vary.
5. The positive results you achieved show your strengths and give a good impression of you.
6. A range gives room for you to negotiate your salary.

Vocabulary Development

A. Context Clues

1. Awards are prizes that are given to someone or something for being excellent in something	2. A negotiation is a formal discussion between people who are trying to reach an agreement
3. Messy means not clean or tidy, carelessly done	4. Accurately means when something is done without mistakes

B. Definition Matching

	Word	Part of speech	Definition
1.	Emphasize	Verb	to give special attention to something
2.	Achieved	Verb	to get or reach something by working hard
3.	Comment	Noun	a spoken or written statement that expresses an opinion about someone or something
4.	Performance	Noun	how well someone or something functions, works, etc.
5.	Range	Noun	a series of numbers that includes the highest and lowest possible amounts
6.	Submit	Verb	to give a document to someone so that it can be considered or approved
7.	Recommendation	Noun	a formal letter that explains why a person is appropriate or qualified for a particular job, school, etc.
8.	Sample	Noun	a small amount of something that gives you information about the thing it was taken from
9.	Primarily	Adverb	used to indicate the main purpose of something, reason for something, etc.
10.	Refer	Verb	to look at or in something for information

C. Synonyms and Antonyms

Word	Synonym	Antonym
Submit	to put in, surrender	fight, disobey
Primarily	mainly, predominantly	secondarily, additionally
Emphasize	reiterate, highlight	forget, play down
Recommendation	good word, celebration	disapproval, condemnation
Sample	experiment, portion	_____

Reading Strategy

Completing Employment Application Forms	
<p>Should do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have two copies of the employment application form • Tell the truth • Provide additional information in the comments section • Mention the type of work you are looking for • Write down positive results you have achieved in your work in the past 	<p>Shouldn't do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit a messy or sloppy application form • Leave questions that do not apply to you blank • State exactly how much you expect to earn • Include letters of recommendation even if you are not asked to do so • Fill out the form as quickly as you can

Grammar Focus / Pragmatic Competence

Answers will vary. These are just suggested answers.

- Atiya should apply for the office clerk position because she has good computer and communication skills.
- Deena should apply for the health care aide position because she has a background in health.
- Paul should apply for the taxi / cab driver position because he can drive and he has a clean driving record. He should not apply for the health care aide position because he does not like working in health care facilities.
- Greg should apply for the security guard position because he likes to maintain law and order.
- Bernice should not apply for the office clerk position. She should apply for the baker assistant position because she enjoys cake decorating.

Deedle Dee Restaurant Employment Application Form

Date of application: *January 24, 2012* Date available to start: *Immediately*

How did you hear about this opportunity? *Online on the company website*

My Availability and Job Position (Please check all that apply)

Position	Status	Hours that I am available to work							
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cashier <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manager	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F/T <input type="checkbox"/> P/T	Start	<i>7AM</i>	<i>7AM</i>	<i>7AM</i>	<i>7AM</i>	<i>7AM</i>	<i>7AM</i>	<i>7AM</i>
	End	<i>11PM</i>	<i>11PM</i>	<i>11PM</i>	<i>11PM</i>	<i>11PM</i>	<i>11PM</i>	<i>11PM</i>	<i>11PM</i>

Expected Pay: *\$2000*
 - *\$2,500*
per month

Hours I can work per week: *40 hours per week*

Personal Information (Please print)

First name: *Kuldeep* Last Name: *Gill*

Address: *14112 - 24 Ave*

City: *Red Deer* Province: *Alberta* Postal Code: *T9S 1V6*

Home Phone#: *(403) 123-456* Cell Phone#: *(403) 678-9101* Email: *kuldeepG@yahoo.ca*

Are you legally eligible to work in Canada? Yes No

Educational Background (Please check one)

Highest level of education completed: High School Diploma College Diploma Bachelor's Degree Masters/PhD

Employment History (Please print)

Most Recent / Current Employer Can we contact this employer? Yes No

Company name: *Lady Bug Cafe* Start Date: *March 2009* End Date: *December 2011*

Supervisor name: *Lorna Bower* Phone #: *(403) 897-6655*

Position and Duties: *Manager. I supervised the servers, seated clients, handled any customer complaints*

Reason for leaving: *The cafe closed down.*

Previous Employer Can we contact this employer? Yes No

Company name: Tim Hortons Start Date: January 2007 End Date: February 2009

Supervisor name: Pedro De Souza Phone #: (780) 444-8856

Position and Duties: Cashier. I took customer orders and processed the sale.

Reason for leaving: I moved to Red Deer and had to find another job.

Additional Information (Write in the space provided below)

At Deedle Dee Restaurant we pride ourselves in excellent service. How would you contribute to our team?
I am an excellent team player and motivator. I am hardworking and punctual. I have a degree in business management so I know and understand a lot about managing a business. I have good oral communication skills and I work well with others. I have won many awards at my previous places of employment. I won the worker of the month award at Tim Horton's and I won the Most Valuable Manager award at Lady Bug Cafe. In my home country I won three awards for good service.

References

List three references. Please do not list relatives.

Name	Occupation	Relationship	Phone #	Email
<i>Lorna Bower</i>	<i>Business Woman</i>	<i>Former Supervisor</i>	<i>403-897-6655</i>	<i>lbower@gmail.com</i>
<i>Pedro De Souza</i>	<i>Manager</i>	<i>Former supervisor</i>	<i>780-444-8856</i>	<i>Souza@yahoo.ca</i>
<i>Kandila Londo</i>	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Mentor</i>	<i>403-258-369</i>	<i>londok@shaw.ca</i>

I certify that information contained in this application is true and complete. I understand that false information may be grounds for not hiring me or for immediate termination of employment at any point in the future if I am hired. I authorize the verification of any or all information listed above.

SIGNATURE: Kuldeep Gill

DATE: January 24, 2012