Neurodiversity: Job Search Tips and Checklist

Are you searching for a job or preparing for an interview? Here’s some advice from the Autism Resource Centre on how to prepare.

Before you apply

There are some things you should consider before you start applying. Here are some questions to consider.

- What are your interests? What are your talents?
- Where have you worked or volunteered before?
- Are you comfortable telling people you’re on the autism spectrum? How do you want to share this information?

When you apply

- Apply for work you would feel capable of doing. For example, if you’re not a strong multi-tasker, don’t apply for jobs that require multi-tasking. If you can’t work 40 hours per week, don’t apply for full-time positions.
- Research extra information on the type of jobs you’re applying for. Job descriptions or postings may not include all information about a job type.

Preparing for the interview

- Research common interview questions and search for potential hidden meaning behind questions.
- There are many social rules surrounding interviews, and you should be aware of these.
- The interview begins long before the questions start — your punctuality, appearance and even your interaction with the receptionist and security all matter.

At the interview

- Be ready to answer questions about your prior work experience. It’s important to talk about your experiences in a positive way.
- Research the dress code for your future place of work, and dress in a way that matches those employees.
- No matter what outfit you wear, make sure your clothes are clean and tidy.
- Don’t be afraid to ask for written questions or ask your interviewer to repeat a question.
- Thank your interviewers for their time before leaving.

When you get the job

- Avoid gossip and use humour carefully; many hidden social rules in the workplace can be complicated to navigate.
- Ask your supervisor or coworkers if you aren’t sure about the procedure or steps for a task.
- Dress appropriately — observe how others dress on a typical day and dress accordingly.
Job search checklist

Here’s a checklist of items you need to consider before applying for positions.

Application date and position

✔ Use the date of the application on your resume and cover letter.
✔ Ensure the application matches the position you’re applying for. Cross-reference with the job posting.

Hiring manager and company name

✔ Include the hiring manager’s name on the cover letter.
  ✔ If the posting doesn’t include the name, check the company’s website to try and find the hiring manager’s name.
✔ Ensure you have the correct name and spelling of the company in your cover letter.

Application tips

✔ Adjust your resume and cover letter to include keywords from job postings.
✔ Check your resume for proper spelling and grammar — this is the first product of work you’re submitting to represent yourself.
✔ Ensure there are no punctuation errors or inconsistent formatting.
✔ Read your application from the end to the beginning to help identify spelling errors.

Job search tips

✔ Set a goal for the number of applications you would like to submit per day or week.
✔ Schedule time into your day or week to ensure you spend time on your job search.
✔ Record each job you apply for. Keep a copy of the posting with the version of your application that you submitted.
  ✔ If you have several job postings to apply for, prioritize them by the deadline. Set smaller goals for yourself to complete the applications on time.
✔ Every application is good practice. Remember, applying doesn’t mean you’re hired — there’s still time to decide if you’re interested in proceeding with an interview if you get a response.

We’re here to help if you’d like further support in preparing for your job search. Visit the Career Access Professional Services (CAPS) section of our website for more information on accessing our services.