

# PROFESSIONAL

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## DECODING JOB POSTINGS

Do you have to meet every requirement before applying?

No. Many students read a posting and feel underqualified or that they do not have enough experience, and therefore do not apply. Below we explain what each section is really about and you will be surprised to learn that you likely qualify for many more jobs than you thought!

### JOB TITLE

- Consists of a few words to **describe** the tasks and level of responsibility of an employee. Some job titles will **vary** depending on the company so it is important not to focus only on a title.
- **Be flexible and open minded**, as the job title may not have been what you were expecting, but the responsibilities may fit your goals.
- You can look up sample job titles and job descriptions on the NOC website:

<http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/Welcome.aspx>



### JOB DUTIES OR JOB DESCRIPTION

- This section outlines the **typical tasks or responsibilities** of the position.
- There is usually **room to grow within a role**, to take on special projects, and to expand one's set of duties.
- There may be a section that says "**other duties as assigned**" which gives the employer flexibility in assigning you tasks other than the ones conveyed to you through the job posting.

### JOB QUALIFICATIONS OR REQUIREMENTS

- Certain occupations in Canada are regulated such that you must have a certain degree to practice it, i.e. Medicine MD or Law LLB.
- Other occupations are not regulated meaning that people with different but equivalent educational backgrounds may be eligible to enter them. For example, to be a counsellor one may have a Masters of Social Work, Master of Education with a specialization in counselling or a Masters in Psychology.
- You may see the qualifications broken down to minimum requirements and assets/preferences. It is advisable to have all the minimum skills to enter the role but the desired skills are comparable to a wish list and the employer knows they will likely not be able to find an individual fitting all those requirements.
- Employers may indicate # of years of experience required or preferred. Take into consideration any related experience (i.e. Volunteering), and apply if in doubt, especially if you meet all the other qualifications.
- **As long as you have at least 50% of the qualifications, it is to your advantage to apply.**

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## SHOULD YOU APPLY? CONSIDER THE OPPORTUNITY AS A WHOLE

- Will it give you a step up in your career?
- Will you be in contact with professionals in your field?
- Will you gain experience and transferrable skills?
- Will this provide you with exposure to the working environment you want to be in?
- Remember that you do not need to satisfy every requirement before you apply. The posting is simply a way to convey information about a job to you so you can choose whether you apply.

## TAILORING YOUR RESUME AND COVER LETTER

There are certain **key words** that appear in job postings and it is highly recommended that you **incorporate** those key words into **your resume and cover letter**. This is because some companies use a computerized **applicant tracking system (ATS)** filters out applications based on key words before any live person will see it!

Read the qualifications system carefully and if you have a desired qualification, present it clearly at the top of your own Highlights of Qualifications section and be sure to include how you have demonstrated it.

Consider this exercise on the next page. Fill in your own examples from the job posting(s) you are interested in. This can help you formulate how to tailor your resume and cover letter.