

Conviction Questions on Applications

Tips to Master the Job Application:

- A company’s policy may require you to fill out an application before being considered for a job
- An application allows an employer to compare you to other applicants
- Remember you are being evaluated on the way you fill the application out, not just your work history and education

Follow Directions:

- Employers see how a job seeker completes an application as a test of his or her ability to follow directions
- Do not just jump right in because the application may have hidden surprises
- Read the application completely – especially the directions – before starting to write

Neatness Counts:

- Print legibly, all information should be printed so an employer can read it
- Sloppy applications tell employers that your work may be sloppy

Fill in the Blanks:

- Fill in all the blanks
- Use a dash or N/A (Not Applicable) if the question does not apply to you; this shows that you read the entire question
- Obviously do not write in areas that say “Do Not Write” or “Office Use Only”
- Make extra copies of paper applications in case you mess up

Things to remember:

- When asked on an application, desired pay, it is best to answer **Negotiable** or **Open**
- DO NOT use lazy responses such as “See Resume or “Same”
- Be sure to have all your previous employment and education information written down and with you; Names, dates, phone numbers, addresses should all be kept in a notebook or “Master Job Application”
- **Be Prepared**
- Never bad mouth a prior employer or supervisor on an application or during an interview

Reasons for leaving:

NEVER WRITE	WRITE INSTEAD
Fired	Job Ended or Let Go
Boss always picked on me	Left to pursue other opportunities
Went to (or released from) prison/jail	Moved or Relocated
I Quit	Left to pursue other opportunities

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Criminal record checks by employers are common. The employer may even ask you to sign a release form to allow them to look beyond what is just public record. Don't be afraid. Be honest, it's the best policy. If the door opens for that job GREAT! If it doesn't, shake the dust off and move forward. Don't ever give up.

Things to remember:

- Do not lie
- Do not give details of your crime(s)
- Do not get defensive or place blame on others
- Keep your answers short, sweet and to the point

On Applications:

Examples of how the conviction question may look on application

- "Have you been convicted of a felony in the past X amount of years?"
- "Have you ever been convicted of any crime?" (Felony or Misdemeanor)
- "Have you been convicted or received a deferred adjudication for a felony under any state or federal law?"
- "Were you convicted for a federal offense?"
- "Is there anything else we should consider about your application?"

When responding you need to make sure to answer with a complete sentence such as "I would like the opportunity to discuss this in person".

If you are currently on probation or parole, you will need to put something more in the explanation section since your PO/ISO is required to contact your employer if you are hired.

If your conviction is outside the time frame specified in the question, then you can answer:

- "No, but, I would like an opportunity to discuss this in person"
- "No I have not been convicted of a felony in the last 7 years, but I would like an opportunity to discuss this further in person"
- "I have not been convicted in the past (5,7,10) years as specified on the job application, but I would like an opportunity to discuss this further in person"

If the question is limited to felonies, you are not required to list any misdemeanors

If in the conviction question it asks for a detailed description and dates the following is suggested:

- Use the terms "person centered conviction" (or conviction history for more than one conviction)
- Use the terms "non-violent conviction" (or conviction history for more than one conviction)
- Use a date range for more than one conviction (i.e. 1997-2006)