**Application Form Filling**

The areas on your application form where you can make a real difference are the description of your previous job, the supporting information and references. The information below explains in more details why the strong example is so much better than the weak example.  Look at the differences between them as these can be applied to any application form that you fill out.

**Employment History**

Details of your current or most recent employer - Description of your duties and responsibilities

**Weak Example**

General office duties like answering the phone and talking to people who come into the school. Helping out with meetings and doing 1st aid if a child hurts themselves.

This is weak because there is not enough description of the office duties in her last job so they would find it hard to know what that role actually entailed.

**Strong Example**

General office duties such as ordering office supplies, filing and generally ensuring that the office was presentable and welcoming. I was the first point of contact for anyone contacting the school and handled all enquiries made by teachers, pupils, visitors and parents either in person, by phone or in an email. I was required to coordinated staff meetings and type up notes and minutes and I was the appointed 1st Aider at work and designated H&S person for the school.

This is strong because it gives a detailed yet brief description of the duties performed in the previous role. It also picks out some of the essential qualities needed for the job she is applying for.

**Additional or Supporting Information**

In this section please give your reasons for applying for this post and additional information which shows how you match the person specification for the job (you will have been sent this document with the application form). This can include relevant skills, knowledge, experience, voluntary activities and training etc. If relevant to the post for which you are applying you should include details about research experience, publications or poster presentation, clinical care (knowledge and skills) and clinical audit.

**Weak Example**

I would like this job as I would like to earn some more money to spend on my holidays. It seems interesting and similar to the job I used to do.

I have children of my own and get involved in their activities. I help out with the Scouts group and also at the local NHS Clinic. I have been a member of the school PTA for a few years and like sorting out the finances. I am good on the computer and can manage my

time well. I enjoy meeting and talking to new people and like to play badminton with my friends.

This is weak because:

Not enough information and has left out a lot of relevant examples of her ability to do the job. Has not covered all of the points on the ‘Essential’ criteria list so is unlikely to get an interview unless they have very few applicants.

* Not a good opening statement as it implies that she only wants the job for the money
* **Strong Example of a Supporting Statement**
* I would like to apply for the role of Public Health Support Worker as advertised on NHS Jobs website. I feel that it would be a rewarding job to which I could bring my [**office management skills**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) and [**customer care experience**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389). I also highly value the work of the NHS as I have first hand knowledge of the difference it can make and would be delighted to work for this organisation. [**I like working in a variety of places**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) and with different types of people as I find this very interesting and motivating.
* I am looking for a part time role that is challenging, varied and where I can use the experiences that I gained from 5 years working in a [**busy school office**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389). It was in that role that I was able to [**develop my verbal and written communication skills**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) as I was required to handle all office enquiries. These could sometimes be very challenging as they came from pupils, teachers, visitors and parents [**who were sometime very upset about an issue**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389). I had to learn how to deal with [**stressful situations calmly**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) and know how to help find a quick solution to a problem. I had to act in a professional manner at all times and adhere to the school strict [**equality and confidentiality policies**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) as I was handling [**children’s data and personal details.**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389)
* I was required to organise staff meetings which could be tricky trying to coordinate 30 busy people’s diaries. I became skilled at [**getting all the paperwork ready on time**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389). I was also responsible for minute taking during the meetings so I put myself through an online [**E-typing course**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) to improve my speed and typing accuracy.
* I was expected to use a [**wide range of IT programmes and often helped out the other office staff**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) who were not quite so good on Word and Excel. [**I used all forms of communication such as phone, email, face-to-face**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) to contact and respond to queries coming into the office and I am confident with them all.
* I have had to [**learn effective time management strategies**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) in order to get both children to school or to their after school activities on time. I often have to do this on my own as my husband works away from home a lot. It required me to be [**very organised and prioritise everything**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) to make sure everything gets done.
* [**I drive a car**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) and am [**used to taking all of the equipment to and from the Scouts hut**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) when I help out there everything week. I love helping out and interactive with young children and encouraging them to do new activities. I am enthusiastic about most things that I do and I think this helps a lot with the Scouts as you often have to encourage some children to get involved. [**You really need to be able to use your own initiative and think on your feet**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) as to what activities you could be doing with the children to make sure they don’t get bored and misbehave. It [**requires good team working**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) as there are lots of
* people all trying to get different things done. I have been CRB checked for this role and [**understand child protection issues**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389)
* I have had [**experience of dealing with distressed people**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389), particularly in the NHS Clinic where [**I am a volunteer play worker**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389). Some parents are understandably upset when their child is ill in the clinic and I find it rewarding if I can provide some comfort for them. [**I have experience of dealing with sensitive situations**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) as I see many vulnerable young children and their families and you have to learn how best to support them during their time at the clinic. I started helping out at the Clinic as my son has to regularly go there himself. [**I have 2 children of my own so can empathise with their distress.**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389)
* Whilst acting as the school’s PTA Finance Officer for the last 2 years, I have had to use many[**interpersonal skills to negotiate with other members**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389) about what to spend the schools funds on. I have the responsibility of completing the [**finance paperwork which has to be very accurate and delivered on time.**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Default.aspx?pageid=389)
* I would very much like to undertake this role so I hope that you will consider my application.
* [**Why is this strong supporting information?**](http://www.dayinthelife.org.uk/Data/Sites/7/Popups/Jobs/application-good-supporting-info.htm)

**Opening Statement**

* Should be a positive statement of why you want this particular job
* If you can, say why you want to work for this particular organisation

**Closing Statement**

* A positive summary statement at the end helps to finish it off

**Work and Personal Life Evidence**

* Recent work related evidence is the best type to use on an application form
* Personal life experiences are also very valid and should be used where necessary, especially if you have not worked for a while.
* Make sure that any statements you use are backed up with evidence that is relevant and can be easily be spoken about during an interview

**Volunteering**

* Volunteering is a great way to develop more skills that employers are looking for
* It shows a level of commitment that is commendable
* If it can be in s relevant field i.e in the NHS if you are applying for work there then even better!

**General**

* Take phrases from the job description and tailor it to this application form
* Use words that the recruiters use as they are often ‘buzz’ words that they are specifically looking so it actually makes their job easier if you reuse them
* You should really be able to come up with a relevant example of how you have demonstrated your ability to do all of the ‘Essential’ criteria
* If you cannot then, you need to explain why you have not needed to use that skill in the past but are confident that you could learn it quickly
* If you can mention some of the ‘Desirable’ critieria as well that would increase your chances of getting an interview

**Employment Gaps**

* Always mention any gaps in employment which might be due to gap years, family commitments, unemployment etc
* Explain what you did during this period and how it might have helped your personal development

### References

* Please give the names of the people who have agreed to supply references. For all positions you must provide 2 references. If you are, or have been employed, these should be your two most recent employers. These may include your line manager or someone in a position of responsibility who can comment on your work experience, competence, personal qualities and suitability for the post. If you are a student please provide contact details of a teacher at your school, college or university. Please note that personal references such as friends and relatives are not acceptable. For all posts written references obtained must cover the preceding 3 years of employment. All referees will be approached prior to interview unless you indicate otherwise.