City of BRANDON

CAREERS AT THE CITY OF BRANDON

Application Tips

How to show the hiring team you've got what the job needs



Your application is your chance to make your case. The hiring team can only go by what's on the page—so the more clearly you connect your education, training and experience to the job posting, the easier it is for them to see what you bring.

Use this guide alongside the job posting. If they ever say different things, **follow the posting.**

FIVE STEPS TO A STANDOUT APPLICATION

01 Decode the job posting

02 Make your strengths easy to spot

03 Back it up with proof

04 Tailor your résumé and cover letter

05 Check it before you send it



STEP

1 Decode the Job Posting

Before you write a word, read the posting like a detective. Most postings sort what they're looking for into three groups:

MUST-HAVES · MANDATORY

The non-negotiables. **Address every single one and explain how you meet it.** Check the timing too—some postings let you get a qualification by a later date.

NICE-TO-HAVES · PREFERRED

Bonus points. You don't need them to apply, but **if you have one, say so!** It can help you stand out.

THE FINE PRINT · CONDITIONS

Note any schedule, licence, certification or other job conditions. Then **jot down the closing date, competition number, what to attach and how to submit.**

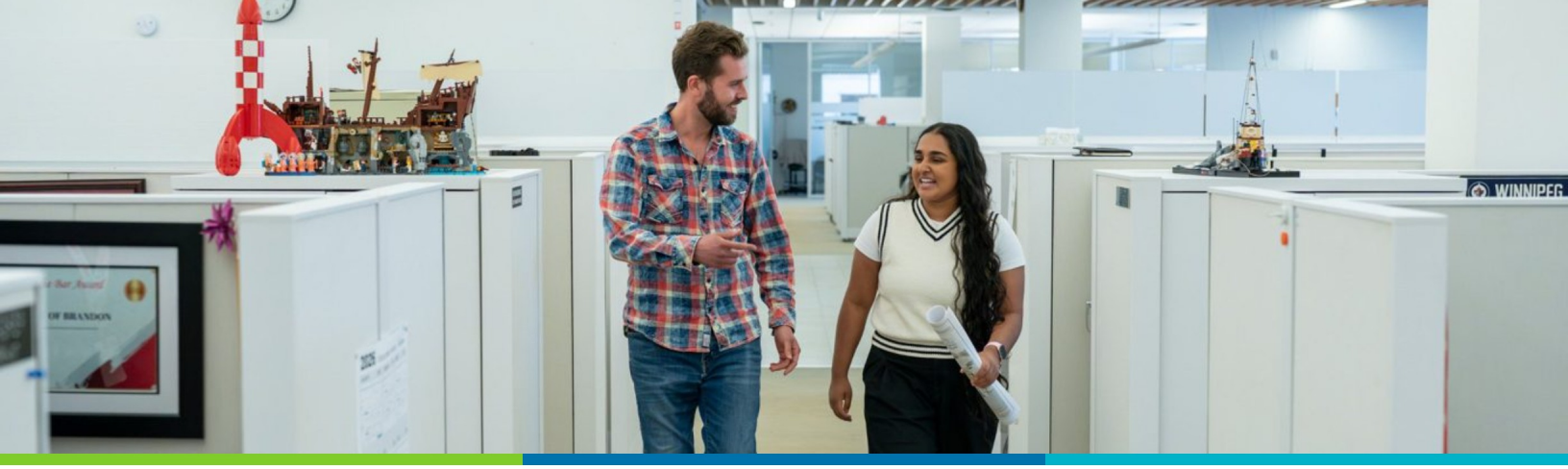
WORDS TO WATCH FOR

Must-haves

required · essential · minimum · "must have"

Nice-to-haves

preferred · an asset · desirable



STEP

2 Make Your Strengths Easy to Spot

Reviewers read a lot of applications. Help them find what they're looking for—fast.

Go beyond your job title

A title doesn't say much on its own. Describe what you actually did and how it connects to this job.

Use clear headings

Try "Mandatory Qualifications" and "Preferred Qualifications" in your cover letter or summary. Your résumé fills in the details.

Follow the posting's order

Where you can, cover the requirements in the same order the posting lists them. Reviewers will find your proof faster.

Speak the posting's language—honestly

Use the same names for credentials, software, equipment and duties—as long as you really know them. Spell out acronyms, and don't just copy the requirements without proof.

Get specific

Include your role, the employer or organization, dates, what you did and what you were responsible for. Mention if it was full-time, part-time, seasonal or volunteer.

Make credentials easy to find

List each credential's name, where you got it, whether it's complete and any expiry date. Still in progress or expired? Say so—never list it as current.

STEP

3 Back It Up with Proof

Saying you have a skill is a start. Showing where you used it is what convinces. **Try this formula:**

The requirement → **Where and when you got it** → **What you actually did** + **A result** if you have a real one

These examples are made up—swap in your own real details.

MANDATORY EXPERIENCE

Instead of ~~"I'm experienced in customer service,"~~ try:

"Customer Service Clerk, ABC Organization, May 2022–August 2025: responded to telephone and in-person enquiries, explained service procedures, processed payments and referred complex concerns to the appropriate department."

MANDATORY EDUCATION

"Office Administration Certificate, [Institution], completed [Month Year]. Relevant coursework included records management and business communications."

PREFERRED QUALIFICATION

"Preferred qualification—spreadsheet experience: used Microsoft Excel in my [role] at [organization] from [dates] to maintain tracking logs, sort records and prepare monthly summaries."

TRANSFERABLE EXPERIENCE

"In my part-time retail job, I explained store policies, handled payments accurately and helped customers with their questions—skills that carry over to front-counter service at the City."

Missing a requirement? Be honest.

Never claim a qualification you don't have. If the posting accepts an "equivalent combination of education and experience," spell out your combination—don't assume reviewers will connect the dots. Not sure what counts? **Contact the person listed in the posting and ask.**

STEP

4 Tailor Your Résumé and Cover Letter

One résumé doesn't fit every job. A few smart tweaks make yours speak directly to this one.

- **Name the job.** Include the exact job title and competition number, if there is one.
- **Lead with your best match.** Open with a short summary of how you meet the must-haves, then add any nice-to-haves.
- **Let your résumé hold the details.** Use clear dates and short bullet points about what you did and what you achieved.
- **Use your cover letter to connect the dots.** If the posting asks for one (or accepts one), share why you want the job and link your background to the requirements. No need to repeat your whole résumé.
- **Highlight skills that matter here.** If the posting asks for them and you have real examples, mention things like serving the public, keeping accurate records, confidentiality, safety, teamwork or following procedures.
- **Keep it clean and focused.** Use consistent headings, plain language and relevant examples. Only include the personal information and documents the posting asks for.



TWO DOCUMENTS, TWO JOBS

Résumé

The details: dates, roles and short bullet points.

Cover letter

The story: how that experience fits this job.

STEP

5 Check It Before You Send It

Run through this list before you hit submit.

- [ ] I covered every must-have and explained how I meet it—or was upfront about any gap.
- [ ] I pointed out the nice-to-haves I bring.
- [ ] My examples show where, when and how I got my experience.
- [ ] My education, licences and certificates are listed accurately—including whether they're complete or current.
- [ ] My résumé, cover letter and application form all tell the same story.
- [ ] I'm submitting it the way the posting asks, with every requested document in the right format.
- [ ] I double-checked the job title, competition number, contact details, spelling and grammar.
- [ ] I know the closing date (and time and time zone, if listed), and I'm submitting with time to spare.
- [ ] I saved a copy of my application and any confirmation I received.

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KEY TAKEAWAY

Don't make the hiring team guess.

Spell out the must-haves and nice-to-haves you bring, and back each one up with real examples. It won't guarantee an interview, but it makes your application much easier to review.

READY TO APPLY?

Scan for current opportunities

brandon.ca/city-hall/careers

