# Welcome to the Bilingual Online Job Seeker Handbook

**This step-by-step guide will help you:**

- Get ready to apply for jobs online;
- Search and apply for jobs on the internet; and
- Use email to communicate with employers.

The last page of this handbook is a "glossary," a list of important words that you will need to understand for the application process.  There are simple definitions in the glossary for each word marked with an *asterisk*(*).

We hope that you will keep this handbook as a tool for current and future job search.

## Good luck!

A project of the Bill Wright Technology Access Grant through the City of Seattle in partnership with Asian Counseling and Referral Service and Neighborhood House.

# Index for Bilingual Online Job Seeker Handbook

# BEFORE YOU START

1.   **Set up an email account**. You can set up a free email account at many different websites, including:

- Yahoo! ( http://www.mail.yahoo.com),
- Google (find the *link*\* to "Gmail" at http://www.google.com),
- Hotmail (http://www.hotmail.com).

You can send, receive, and store messages from an email account.

For help setting up an email account, see this handbook's section, "SETTING UP AN ACCOUNT OR PROFILE."

2.   **Gather all of the information you need**.

*Personal information*.  This is your full name, address, and telephone number.

**TIP**:  If you do not have a permanent address where you can get paper mail, find someone who can receive mail for you, or set up a post office box at your local post office.  Also, if you have no telephone or *voicemail,*\* you can set up free voicemail through Laser Voicemail (http://laservoicemail.tripod.com ) or another free voicemail service.

- *Employment history*.  Company names, addresses, and phone numbers of past employers and the dates you worked for them.  You will also need names of supervisors.  If you have little relevant work experience, include volunteer and unpaid work (like homemaking, childcare, or care of the elderly).

- *Educational history*.  How many years of schooling you finished, the names of the schools, and when you attended.  Include any degrees, diplomas, licenses, or certificates earned.

- *Criminal history*. If you have a *criminal history,*\* it is important to know when the crime happened, and whether you were *arrested*\* or *convicted*\* of a crime.  If you have a criminal record, please see this handbook's section, "Criminal history." NOTE: Parking and traffic tickets are not criminal convictions.

- *References*.  Most employers ask for three (3) references.  The best references are "professional" references.
  - o  <u>Professional references</u>: Supervisors, managers, owners, co-workers, or clients.
  - o  <u>Personal references</u>: People who can speak about your character.  They can be friends, landlords, teachers, or community members.

**TIP**:  Your references should be easy to reach by phone, be able to say good things about you, and speak English well.  Call your references and make sure they can recommend you before you list them.

3.   **Prepare your résumé, cover letter, and sample application before you apply**.
- *Résumé*.  Your résumé should list all of your skills and experiences that are related to the job you want.  This list can include employment experience; education and special training; special skills you have and languages you

speak.  For more help on writing your résumé, please visit the WorkSource website at http://go2worksource.com and *select*\* the link "Résumé Help."

- *Cover letter.*  Most online job applications do not ask for a *cover letter.*\* If you would like more information on how to write a cover letter, there are many resources online.  For example, visit About.com, http://esl.about.com/library/business/bl_jobs_find.htm, http://jobsearch.about.com/od/coverletters/Cover_Letters.htm; The Owl at Purdue, http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/549/01/; and Job Star, http://jobstar.org/tools/resume/cletters.php#Good)
  About.com, http://esl.about.com/library/business/bl_jobs_find.htm, http://jobsearch.about.com/od/coverletters/Cover_Letters.htm; Owl at Purdue, http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/549/01/;
  Job Star,  http://jobstar.org/tools/resume/cletters.php#Good)

**TIP**: Do NOT put the following information on a cover letter or résumé: (1) marital status; (2) date of birth; (3) sex or gender; (4) age; (5) hobbies; (6) immigration entry date or status; or (7) pictures; (8) references; (9) religious beliefs. Also, never put Social Security Numbers or banking information on a résumé (see the "Identity theft" section of this handbook).

- *Sample application*.  It is helpful to prepare a sample, paper application before you start.  You can find and print a sample application at the Quint Careers website, http://www.quintcareers.com/employment_application.pdf.  Have someone who speaks English help you with spelling and grammar.

4.  **Leave yourself an hour or more to finish each application.**

5.  **Take good notes to help you remember where and when you applied for jobs.**
    Include *usernames*\* and *passwords*\* in your notes.  Example:

| Employer & Date of Application | Position | Username (agent, profile name) | Password | Responses & Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hilton Hotels 4/26/2008 | Receptionist | Annielee | Squid456# | No response |
| Swedish Medical Centers 4/26/2008 | Administrative Assistant | annielee1 | Squid456 | Yes.  Emailed confirmation of application on 4/26/2008. |
| University of Washington 4/28/2008 | Clerical | Annie_lee | Squid456#1 | Yes.  Emailed confirmation of application on 4/26/2008.Interview on 5/12/2008. |

# SEARCHING FOR JOBS AND APPLICATIONS ONLINE

1.  **Job search websites**.  Some helpful job search websites are http://www.go2worksource.com ;
    http://www.monster.com ; http://www.quintcareers.com ; http://www.truecareers.com ; http://hotjobs.yahoo.com ;
    http://seattle.craigslist.org, and there are many more.  Most of these websites let you search by the city, state, and
    type of job you want.   For help deciding which job categories interest you see the "Top 10 Quintessential Jobs" link
    on the QuintCareers.com website at http://www.quintcareers.com.

2.  **Specific employer websites**.  Many companies let you apply for jobs right on their websites. For example, you can
    search on the City of Seattle website at http://www.seattle.gov/jobs.  Click on the "HOT JOBS" button at the lower
    right corner.



You can find a company's *home page*\* by searching online. Common *search engines*\* are Google
(http://www.google.com ) & Yahoo! (http://www.yahoo.com). Here is an example of how you might search for Hilton
Hotels.
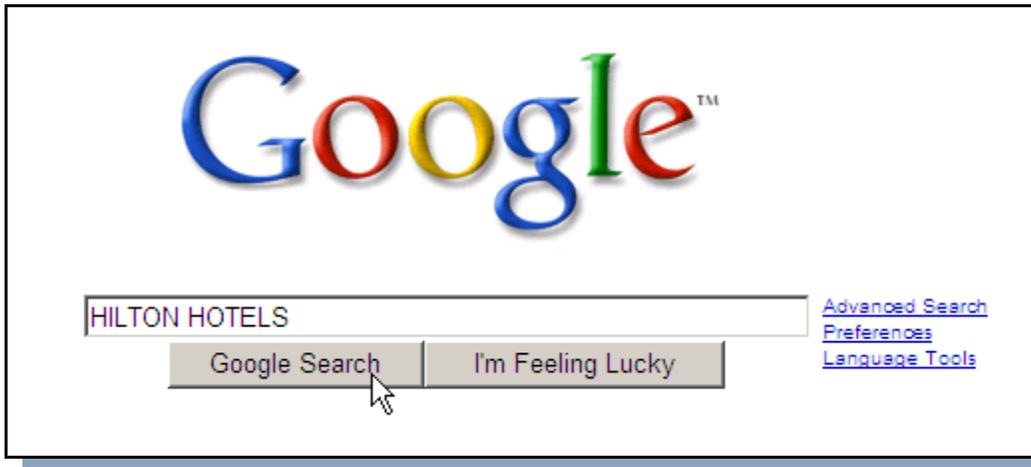
The search result will look like the list below. You will notice the "Hilton Worldwide Home Page" is a few selections down from the top.
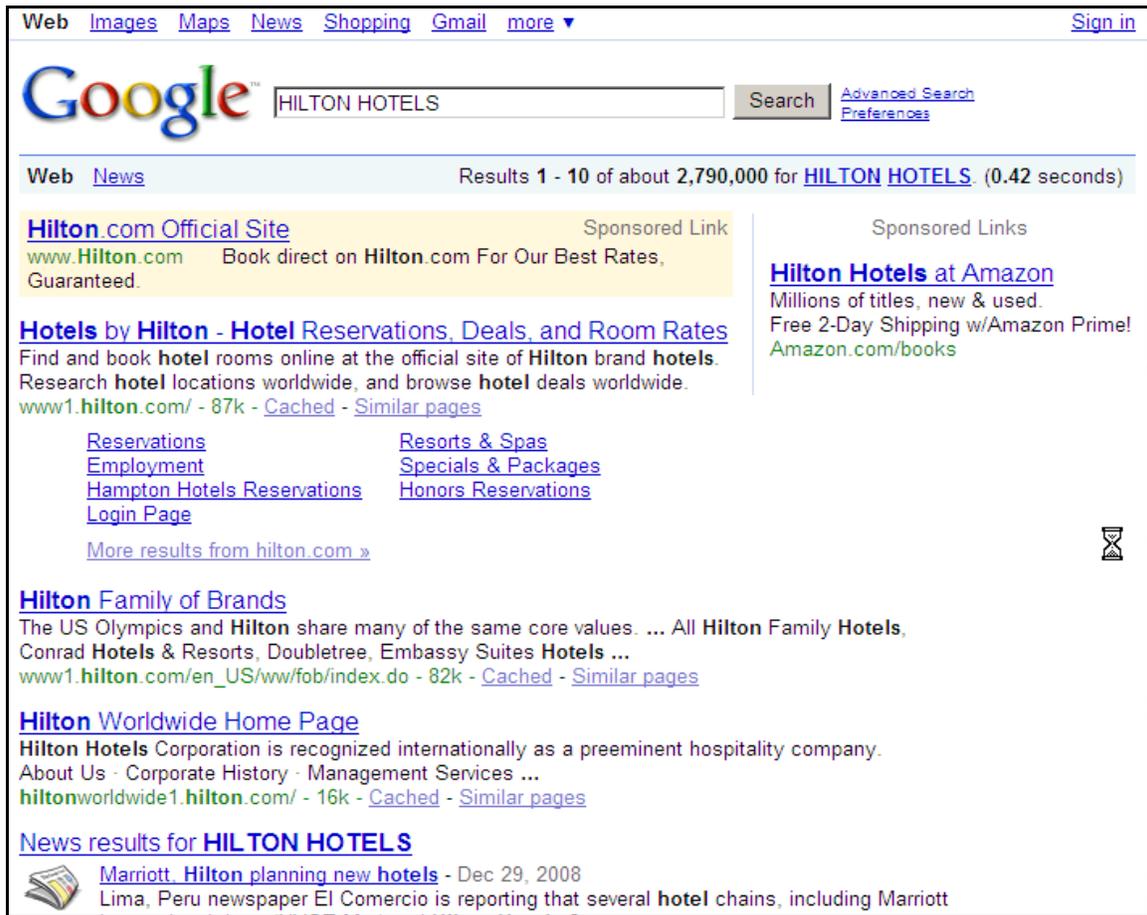


3. **Local and national newspapers**. You can search for jobs from newspaper websites. The Seattle Times website links to the NW Jobs website at http://marketplace.nwsource.com/jobs. You can also search at the Seattle Weekly at http://www.seattleweekly.com.

4. **Finding job applications on websites**. When you go to a specific company or organization's website, there should be a link to the "careers," "jobs," or "employment" page. The link may be in very small type at the top or the bottom of the home page. It may look like this:



STORES & EVENTS | CAREERS | CUSTOMER SERVICE

5. **Drop-down menus**. You can search for jobs by location and job category on the careers page. Most websites use drop-down menus to help you search for jobs (see picture below). For example, to select a state from a drop-down menu like the one pictured below, click the left button of your *mouse*\* on the arrow to the right of "Select." This opens the menu and you can use your mouse to select a state. *Highlight*\* a state and click again on the left button of your mouse.



Ohio
Oklahoma
Ontario
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Carolina
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Virginia
Washington
Wisconsin
United Kingdom
Select...

Drop-down menus may allow you to search by *keywords,*\* like "nursing," "clerical," or "construction," for example.

6. **Maps and pictures**. Some websites use maps or pictures to help you search for jobs in a particular city, state, or country. Click once on the left button of your mouse on the picture or part of the map where you want to work.

7. **Beginning your application**. To begin filling out an application or *profile,*\* you may have to select a button that says "Apply Now."



Apply Now
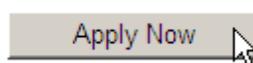
# SETTING UP AN ACCOUNT OR PROFILE

1. **Account.**   Usually, job search, company, and email websites have users create an *account*.* They may call this account by another name like *profile*,* *agent*,* or *login name*,* or you may have to click on a link that says *register*.* You will have to create a *password*\* too. If you create an account, the website will keep your basic information, and you will not have to type it again.

2. **Username and Password**.   Different websites ask for different combinations of numbers, letters, and symbols (like *, #, &) for usernames and passwords.  If possible, use the same or similar username and password at each website.
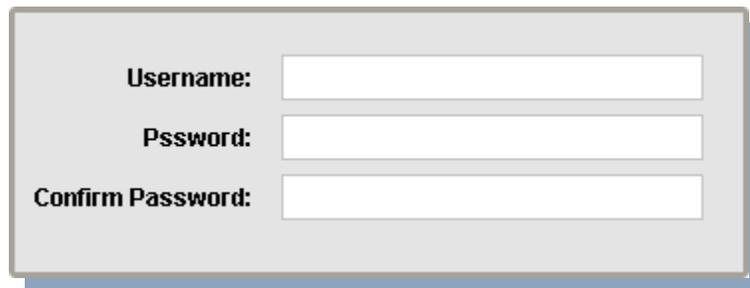


- **USERNAMES:**
  - o   Should be easy for you to remember, for example, all or part of your name or a pet's name.
  - o   Can use numbers, letters, and symbols.

- **PASSWORDS:**
  - o   Should be secret and difficult for other people to guess.
  - o   NEVER use any part of your name, your birth date, or social security number.
  - o   If possible, use a combination of numbers, letters, and symbols.
  - o   Enter your password carefully.  You will not see the letters and numbers you type—you will only see dots. You cannot see any mistakes you make.
  - o   When you create a username and password, usually you will have to enter the password twice.  A website will not accept your password unless you type it exactly the same in both *fields*.*
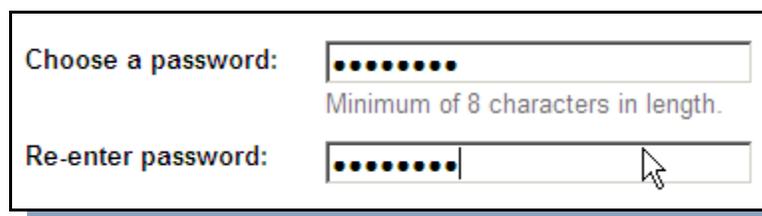


  - o   If you use capital letters when you create your password, you will have to type it the same way every time you *log in*\* .
  - o   Be careful to avoid selecting the "Caps Lock" key on your keyboard.
  - o   Remember to take notes.

# UPLOADING RÉSUMÉ AND COVER LETTER

1. **Browse buttons**. When a website asks you to *upload*\* your résumé, it shows you a *browse*\* button. Browse buttons look like this:
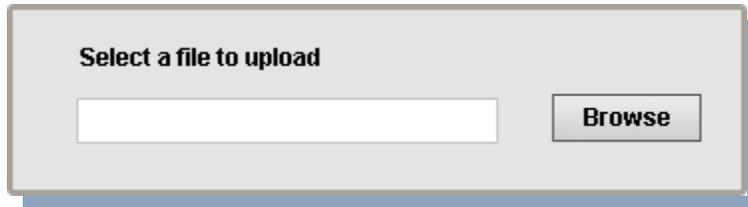


When you click on the left button of your mouse on the browse button, a window appears with a drop down-menu. The drop-down should be labeled "Look in." Click on the location of your résumé or other document.
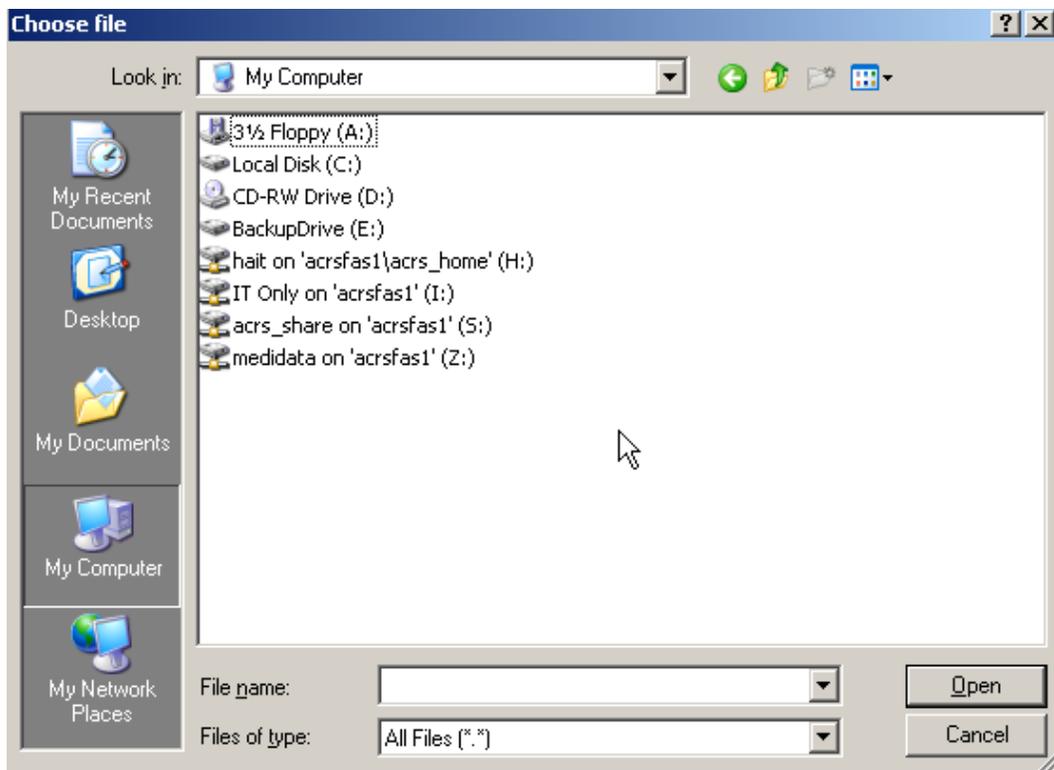


2. **Copy and paste**. Some websites do not let you upload a résumé. Instead, you must type the information from your résumé into special fields. Typing all of your information can take a lot of time; so if possible, copy and paste the information directly from your résumé. Follow these directions to copy and paste:

a. Highlight the text you want to copy by holding down the left button on your mouse at the beginning of the text you want to copy. *Drag*\* the mouse along until you reach the end of the text. Release the left button. The text you want to copy should be highlighted.

b. Click **Edit** on the *toolbar*\* of your word processing or text only program. This opens the Edit menu.

c. Scroll down and click on **Copy**.

9

File  Edit  View  Insert  Format  Help

Undo          Ctrl+Z

Cut           Ctrl+X
Copy          Ctrl+C
Paste         Ctrl+V
Paste Special...
Clear         Del
Select All    Ctrl+A

Find...       Ctrl+F
Find Next     F3
Replace...    Ctrl+H

Links...
Object Properties  Alt+Enter
Object

Aria
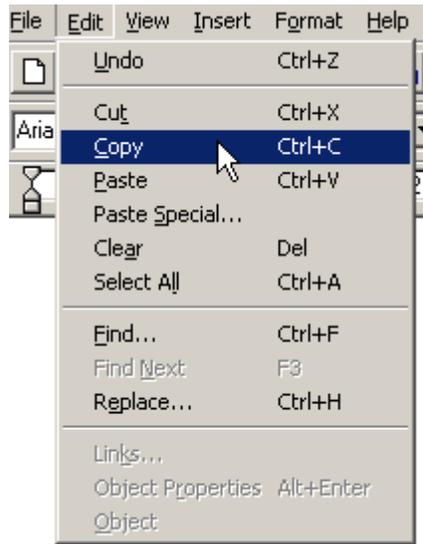
d.  Go to the website where you want to paste your information, and place the *cursor** in the right field (or *text box**) by clicking on the left button one time.

e.  Again, click **Edit** on the *toolbar** of your word processing or text only program.

f.  Scroll down to **Paste** and click on the left button.

File  Edit  View  Insert  Format  Help

Undo          Ctrl+Z

Cut           Ctrl+X
Copy          Ctrl+C
Paste         Ctrl+V
Paste Special...
Clear         Del
Select All    Ctrl+A

Find...       Ctrl+F
Find Next     F3
Replace...    Ctrl+H

Links...
Object Properties  Alt+Enter
Object

Aria
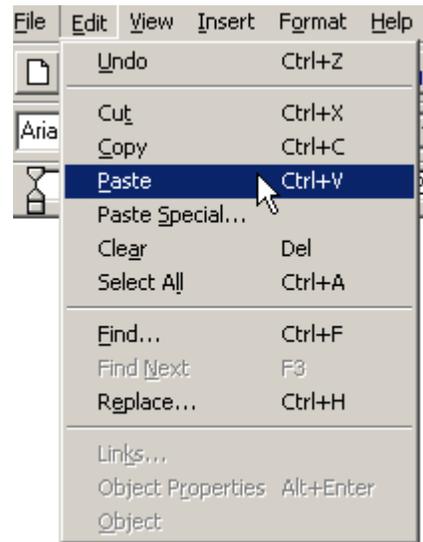
The text you wanted to copy should appear in the field.  Read the text carefully and correct any errors.

3.  **Simple format**.  You should create your résumé in the simplest *format** so any employer can open it with any web *browser** or *operating system.**   Follow these suggestions to create a résumé in a simple, easily scanned format.

a.  Open your résumé in your word processor program, like Microsoft Word.
b.  Use a simple, even *font** like Courier.
c.  Do NOT use "tabs."

10

d. Do NOT "indent" (by hitting the space bar or "Tab") or "center" your text. Keep all lines justified to the left of the paper (see below).



Align Left

e.  Do NOT use **bold**, *italics*, or <u>underlining</u>. Use ALL CAPS for emphasis.
f. Do NOT use automated bullets or lists (see below).
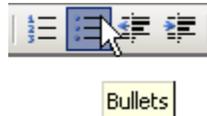


Bullets

Instead, use asterisks (*), hyphens (-), or plus signs (+) to create a bullet style list.

g. Save your document in two different formats: (a) Rich Text; and (b) Plain Text. For example: Go to the "File" drop-down menu and find "Save As." Save a version of your document as "TEXT ONLY" or "Plain Text." Now you can open the document in Notepad or another plain text program.
h. Close your document and open it again in "Notepad" or another plain text program. Check to make sure it looks right.
i. Save any changes you made.

See the WorkSource website for more information on "scannable" résumés. http://www.go2worksource.com (select *résumé help*).

**TIP**: Use a more attractive résumé format to bring to interviews

# COMMON ONLINE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. **Personal information.** Most online job applications ask you to fill out personal, employment, and education information. Take special care to protect your personal information.

2. **Educate yourself about identity theft!** Identity theft is a risk when you post your information online. It includes crimes like someone using your social security number so they can work, using your credit card information to buy goods without your permission, or using other aspects of your identity to commit crimes. For more detailed advice on protecting yourself from identity theft, see one of the nonprofit identity theft websites like World Privacy Forum (http://www.worldprivacyforum.org/jobscams.html) or Privacy Rights Clearinghouse (http://www.privacyrights.org/identity.htm).

3. **Short answer questions.** Some applications require you to write in sentences. If they do, keep your answers short and professional. Here are a few examples of possible questions and answers:

> Q: Why do you want to work for our company? (Grocery Store)
>
> A: I want to work for your company because I respect the quality of food that you sell, and I like the friendly atmosphere of your stores.

> Q: What qualities make you the right person for this job? (Produce Worker)
>
> A: I am the right person for this job because I worked at a fruit and vegetable store for two years in my home country, I love fresh produce, and I enjoy helping people choose healthy foods for their families. I also enjoy working on my own and as part of a team.

**TIP**: You should never put personal statements like "I need this job because my landlord just raised my rent," or "My husband still lives in my home country, so I need to work to support my family."

4. **Reason for leaving your former job**. After you type your employment history, some applications ask for your "reason for leaving" a job. Keep your answers short, positive, and honest. Do not try to explain everything.

| DO USE POSITIVE PHRASES: | DO NOT USE NEGATIVE PRASES: |
|---|---|
| • Wanted a more challenging job<br>• Wanted a job with more responsibility<br>• Work was seasonal<br>• Wanted a career change<br>• Needed permanent full-time work<br>• Lack of work | • Quit<br>• Fired<br>• Job was too dirty.<br>• Laid-off<br>• Not enough pay<br>• Too far away<br>• Work was too hard |

5. **Educate yourself about discrimination**. In King County, an employer cannot discriminate against you based on race, color, religion, *disability*\*, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, Section 8 housing subsidy, ancestry, retaliation or age. Also employers can only ask certain kinds of questions concerning <u>disabilities</u> or <u>criminal history</u> in the *job application process* (pre-employment). For examples of fair and unfair interview and application questions, see the Washington Administrative Code, WAC §162-12-140 (find these regulations at http://www.leg.wa.gov/legislature).

- **Disabilities**. For more information about discrimination based on disabilities and "reasonable accommodations," contact Washington Protection and Advocacy System, http://www.wpas-rights.org/, 1-800-562-2702 (TTY 1-800-905-0209), or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission of Seattle, http://www.eeoc.gov/seattle/index.html, 1-800-669-4000.

- **Criminal history.** The Seattle Office for Civil Rights has a helpful brochure that you can read online at: http://www.seattle.gov/civilrights/documents/CriminalRecordsfact_sheet.pdf. You can also contact the Seattle Office for Civil Rights (http://www.seattle.gov/civilrights/) for a referral to a legal services agency that may be able to help you.

- **Background checks.** Many employers conduct criminal background checks. If you have questions about what your background check will show, visit the WATCH website (Washington Access to Criminal History) at https://watch.wsp.wa.gov/ and select "FAQ" from the left menu (Frequently Asked Questions).

6. **Fill in all fields before you move to the next page or submit your application**. If you create an account, you may be able to go back and correct information later. But not all websites allow for this, so you should come prepared to fill in all fields the fist time you fill out the application.

7. **Select only one circle or box**.  Most applications will ask you to choose answers from bullets, circles, or boxes.  Usually, you can only pick one answer per question.  If you can select more that one, the question will say "select [or check] all that apply."
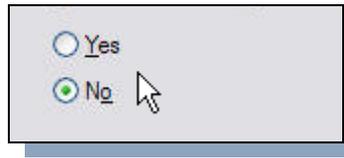
# SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

1. **If possible, save your work**.  Some online job applications let you save your work and come back later to finish and submit your application.  But do not assume you can do this on every website.

2. **Initials.**  Online, your *initials** may act like your signature.  Usually an employer is asking you to promise the truth of the information on your application when it asks for your initials.  It is important to tell the truth on all job applications.

3. **Submit button**.  When you finish your application, edit your work, and select the submit button.  Usually, you cannot make changes to your application once you submit it.

[ Submit ]

# COMMUNICATING BY EMAIL WITH EMPLOYERS

1. **Watch for confirmation emails**.  When an application asks you for your email address, you should receive an email confirming that the employer received your application.

2. **Replying to employer emails**.  After a company contacts you to tell you it received your application, you may get a second email asking to set up an interview.  If an employer writes to you and offers you a few choices of interview times and dates, your reply should look something like this:

> **To:** [Email address of company or hiring staff].
>
> Add Cc | Add Bcc
>
> **Subject:** RE: Interview with company
>
> 📎 Attach a file  📧 Add event invitation
>
> **B** *I* U ℱ· ᴛT· Tₐ Tₐ 🎨 😊 🔗 ≟ ≡ ◁ ▷ ❝ ▤ ▤ ▤      Check Spelling
>
> Tₓ « Plain Text
>
> Dear [Company name, Human Resource Manager, or other name],
>
> Thank you for offering to interview me. I can be available for an interview on [date and time]. Please let me know what I should bring with me. I look forward to meeting you.
>
> Sincerely,
> [Your name]

If you cannot meet at any of the times the employer lists, suggest some other days or times, but if possible, be flexible.

**TIP**: "Emoticons" like smiley faces, graphics, animated images, exclamation points (!!!), decorative fonts, and unusual font colors (like pink, green, or red) should always be avoided.

# TECHNICAL PROBLEMS

1. **Timing out**.  You may *time out\** if you take too long to fill out your application online. When you time out, your application may be lost, and you may have to start all over again.  If possible, save your work every 2 to 5 minutes, and be prepared with all of the information and documents you need when you sit down to fill out applications on the computer.

2. **Freezing**.  Some websites take a long time to upload onto a computer.  After you click on a link at one of these sites, wait until your "hourglass"  turns back into an "arrow" .  The hourglass shows you that your computer is still "thinking" or trying to *load\** the web page.  If you keep clicking on the same picture or map, your computer may freeze.  This is also true for "next" or "submit" buttons.

3. **Back and forward buttons**.  Most applications do not let you use the "back" and "forward" buttons on your web browser.  Example:



    If you use back and forward buttons, you may loose all of your work.  Instead, use a website's "previous" or "next" buttons to get from page to page.

4. **Red stars and red text**.  Check your work carefully before hitting the "next," "continue," or "submit" buttons.  If you make mistakes or required information is missing, you will not be able to move to the next page or submit your application.  When this happens, you will see the problem highlighted in red or in red font (red type).  Sometimes a website uses red stars to show you where the required information goes.  If a question does not apply to you, you can always put "N/A" (not applicable), "None," or "0."

## FINDING COMPUTERS TO USE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

If you do not have your own computer or if your computer is very old, you can use a public computer.  The City of Seattle has created a list of Community Technology Centers (CTCs), which includes centers based in housing projects, human service agencies, libraries, places of worship, schools, or community centers. Some of these are open to the public, and others only serve members, students, or housing project residents. You can find this list of CTCs at http://www.seattle.gov/tech/ctc/.

# GLOSSARY

1. **Agent**:  Some websites call your account, your "agent."

2. **Arrest**: When officers of the law take a person into legal custody.

3. **Background check**:  The process an employer uses to look up a person's public records.  It usually includes records of past employment, credit record, and criminal history.

4. **Browse button**:  The "button" a person uses to find and upload files as an attachment to an online job application or email.

5. **Browser**:  Lets you search for and open documents and websites on the internet.

6. **Conviction**:  When a court finds you guilty of a crime, you are "convicted."

7. **Cover letter**: A letter that one sends with a resume and or job application to introduce oneself and express interest and qualifications for a particular job.

8. **Criminal history**:  A person's record of criminal activity.

9. **Cursor**:  The blinking line where you can begin typing.

10. **Disability**:  The U.S. Supreme Court explains that to be disabled, a person must have an impairment that prevents or severely restricts the individual from doing activities that are of central importance to most people's daily lives—like walking, seeing, hearing, bathing, household chores, or brushing teeth.  For statutory definition see 42 U.S.C. § 12102(2).

11. **Drag**:  When you physically move your mouse while holding the left button down, creating highlighting or moving an object on your computer screen.

12. **Field**:  A space for typing information in an online application.

13. **Font**:  A style of letter type, like Times New Roman or Courier.

14. **Format**:  The style and layout of a document.

15. **Highlight**:  To color certain text grey, black, or another color so that you can cut, paste, or copy it.

16. **Home page**:  The first or main page of a website, used give basic information about the site or the company.

17. **Initials**:  Your initials are the first letter of each of your names: first, middle, and last.  For example, the President's full name is "Barack Hussein Obama," and his initials are **BHO**.

18. **Keyword**:  A word an employer uses, like "clerical," to categorize applicants and match them with available jobs.

19. **Link**:  A word or picture that when left clicked (or selected) takes the user to another web page.

20. **Load:**  When an operating system reads a program, a web page, or a file and opens or makes it run.

21. **Login name**: A username, used to get into your online account.

22. **Mouse**:  The small, hand-held item one uses to select text, click "buttons," and move cursors and pictures on computer programs and systems.

23. **Operating system**:  The software that runs programs on computers. Operating systems include Microsoft® Windows® XP® or Apple® Computer's OS, among many others.

24. **Password**: A secret set of letters, numbers, and/or symbols created and used to access online services like email or other online accounts.

25. **Profile**:  Your personal information, usually including your resume information.  It can also be used to mean "username."

26. **Register**: To enter your name and information into a computer system.

27. **Select**: To left-click on a word or a picture that links you to another page, or to highlight text.

28. **Search engine**:  Systems like Google, Alta Vista, and Excite that allow computer users to search for documents and websites on the internet.

29. **Text boxes**:  See "field" (above).

30. **Time out**:  When you exceed a time limit.

31. **Toolbar**: Where the icons are located at the top of your word document or web browser.

32. **Upload**: To move a file (like a word document) from one system, disk, or computer to another.

33. **Username**: A personalized set of letters, numbers, and/or symbols.  It is not secret like a password.

34. **Voicemail**: A recorded phone message.