Tips for filling in your application form

At Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind we want to ensure that the right people for the job get through to interview stage and you won't get an interview if you a) don't meet the essential criteria and b) if you don't fill in your application properly

We want to support applicants to make the best of this opportunity to tell us about yourself.

First of all check the job description and person specification to see if you meet the minimum criteria. If you're not sure whether your experience or qualifications are suitable call us to find out.

Then when you decide to apply for a post and fill in an application read the tips below…

Electronic application forms

If you choose to complete the form on computer then you will be able to run a spell check in a package like Microsoft Word – but remember that a spell check isn't fool proof! It doesn't always spot mistakes if you have spelt a word correctly but it is the wrong word it won't alert you. Remember to save the final copy of your application so that you can refer back to it.

Paper application forms

If you're filling in a form by hand, write as neatly as you can in black ink. Maybe print more than one blank copy out in case you make mistakes.

Personal Statement

This are your opportunity to sell yourself and tell us why you meet the requirements for the post.

You should address each of the essential requirements as listed in person specification, in order, with a short paragraph for each.

It's really important that you give examples because they provide clear evidence that you've got a skill and know how to apply it in real situations.

For example, instead of making a simple claim like, 'I'm good at supporting people', it would tell us much more if you put, 'In my current job I have worked closely with small groups and individuals to support them with life skills and confidence building'.

After providing an example, reflecting on the experience shows that you can learn from your experiences and are always trying to improve. For example, you could say that "I have been able to see how working with small groups motivates service users"

Using similar examples and 'what if' situations

Even if you haven't got the experience to show that you've got a particular skill, you could say how similar experiences and skills would help you approach this area. For example, 'my experience of working with small groups has given me skills that I could transfer to the tutor role at the recovery college as I have had to manage group dynamics and ensure everyone gets to have some input'

In addition to showing how you meet the person specification, we want to know about your enthusiasm for the job and what has attracted you to the Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind. You should tell us what you can bring to the organisation.

When you have completed your application form, including your personal statement its time to check it.

Check and recheck

Get it right — whether your form is electronic or on paper you should:

- read it over a few times to check for spelling and grammatical errors - these are one of the most common reasons applications are rejected – its good practice to get someone else to read it for you as you will see what you want to see when you have written it yourself.
- check you've filled in **all** the boxes that are relevant to you. If you leave an empty box we might think your form is incomplete. If a box isn't relevant, put 'N/A' (not applicable) in the space provided
- Once you're happy with the form
- photocopy or print out the finished form, so that you have a record of what you've written. You'll need to be able to refer back to it at the interview stage
- take note of the closing date and **send your application** form to arrive in good time.

Good Luck!