

How to Stand Out in the Application Process

Applying for a new role can feel overwhelming—especially when you're up against dozens (or hundreds) of other candidates. But with a thoughtful, strategic approach, you can rise above the crowd and show hiring managers why you're the best fit.

Here are 7 practical steps to help you stand out and boost your chances of success:

1. Tailor Your CV

Generic applications rarely make the cut. Tailor your CV to each role by highlighting the most relevant skills and experience.

 Check out our resource on [Tailoring Your CV](#) for tips on how to do this effectively.

2. Write a Compelling Cover Letter

A strong cover letter is your chance to tell your story and make a personal connection with the employer.

- If possible, address it directly to the hiring manager—it shows initiative.
- Share a short anecdote that connects your experience with the role.
- Explain why you're passionate about the organisation and how you align with its values.
- Keep it concise: 3–4 paragraphs is plenty.

3. Optimise Your Online Presence

Recruiters *will* look you up—make sure what they find supports your application.

- Keep your LinkedIn profile current and aligned with your CV.
- Follow and engage with relevant organisations and thought leaders.
- Share content or insights that reflect your interest and knowledge of the sector.

4. Prepare for the Interview

A great interview can seal the deal. Be ready to:

- Research the organisation: Understand their mission, values, and recent projects.
- Use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to answer competency questions clearly and confidently.
- Showcase your soft skills: Communication, adaptability, collaboration—come with examples.
- Ask thoughtful questions: Show your curiosity by asking about team culture, success measures, or future plans.

5. Know Your Unique Value Proposition (UVP)

What makes *you* different?

Whether it's a specialist skill, a creative mindset, or a unique lived experience, make sure your CV, cover letter, and interview answers highlight what sets you apart.

Think:

- What do I bring that others might not?
- How have I added value in past roles?

6. Tap Into Your Network

Networking can open doors that job boards can't.

- Reach out to contacts who work in the sector or organisation you're applying to.
- Ask for advice, insights, or referrals—it's not about asking for a job, but about building relationships.
- Attend industry events, virtual webinars, or local meetups to grow your connections.

7. ⌚ Be Persistent—But Patient

Job searching is rarely instant.

- Don't be discouraged by rejections—each one is a learning opportunity.
- Keep refining your materials, sharpening your interview skills, and seeking feedback.
- If you're turned down, politely ask for feedback. Constructive insights can make all the difference next time.

Remember: Standing out takes effort - but with a clear plan and consistent action, you can present your best self and make a strong impression!