

the case. An application can be used to verify the data presented on the résumé and can also be used to obtain data omitted on the résumé, such as employment dates. The major advantage of application blanks over résumés is that the organization, rather than the applicant, dictates what information is presented. As a result, information critical to success on the job is less likely to be omitted by the applicant or overlooked by the reviewer of the résumé. The major issue with application blanks is to make sure that information requested is critical to job success, following the logic of prediction discussed earlier.

A sample application blank is provided in Exhibit 8.4. As with most application blanks, the major sections are personal information, employment desired, educational background, special interests and abilities, work experience, and suggested references. The only information sought from the application blank should be KSAOs that can be demonstrated as relevant to the job. This not only avoids wasting the organization's and the applicant's time but also protects the employer from charges of unfair discrimination (see "Legal Issues" at the end of this chapter). Note the disclaimer statement at the bottom of the application blank. It provides certain legal protections to the organization, which are discussed in "Legal Issues." Asking applicants to sign a disclaimer may also decrease the incentive to distort or falsify information.

Educational Requirements

Special care needs to be taken in wording items on an application blank when soliciting information about educational experiences and performance.¹⁴ Following are several particularly important areas pertaining to educational requirement information on application blanks.

Level of Education. Level of education or degree is one element of educational performance used to predict job performance. Often, level of education is measured by the attainment of a degree. Despite its pervasive use, it is not clear that level of education is a truly useful selection measure. Some economists and sociologists question its importance, and a meta-analysis suggested that the correlation between education and task performance was relatively small (across all measures of task performance, $\bar{r}_{xy} = .10$).¹⁵

The recent economic downturn that left many unemployed, coupled with the rising cost of college tuition, has left many questioning the value of a college degree. "Is college worth it?" asks author and former US secretary of education Warren Bennett. Critics argue that the traditional path of going to a "bricks and mortar" college or university and earning a degree is no longer as useful. Instead, they argue that massive open online courses can educate people at a much cheaper cost, and that education is more about a mind-set rather than a four-year program. They also point to famous billionaires such as Mark Zuckerberg and Bill Gates, both of whom dropped out of college. As Mike Hagen, who dropped out of Princeton in 2006 and started a mobile app, noted, in Silicon Valley, eschewing college is "almost a