

Tips for Applying for a Job at IRCOM

FOR EVERYONE

Submitting an application:

- Pick a résumé style that best demonstrates why you are the best candidate for the job (no one style is preferred although simple and clear is best). Read the job posting and description very carefully. Tailor your résumé and cover letter to the position. Make sure your résumé is well-organized, nicely formatted, and pulls out the core skills, experience and education we are looking for. Same with your cover letter- use it to 'sell' yourself and clearly explain how your skills, education and experience fit the position and how you fit with the organization.
- Please feel free to reflect international experience and tie it clearly to your suitability for the position.
- We recommend that a résumé be 1-2 pages (maximum, unless you are applying for a senior management position) and that a cover letter be 1 to 1.5 pages maximum. Electronic submissions are preferred. Ensure there are no typos - get a second reader to help out.

For interviews:

- Do your background research. Check out our website, understand our mission, values, learn about our programs, read our Annual Report, etc.
- Think about this position and what it might look like at an organization like IRCOM. We want to see what and how people think about the position/program, not just how their qualifications match the posting.
- Research common interview questions on the internet and practice, practice, practice! If you tend to speak at length - practice giving concise answers. Opposite if you are a person of few words.
- When you answer questions, do not say "I would do this" or "I would do that." Instead, say, "When I was at X Agency, I helped resolve this kind of situation. This is what I did." This is called a behavioural response - we want you to build a picture in our minds of work you have done, so please give concrete examples wherever possible. This is one of the most common mistakes people make - being too "theoretical" and not giving concrete examples.
- Do come prepared with a question(s) to ask at the end (practical questions are fine, such as, "When does the position start?" but we really like thoughtful questions)
- In interviews, we also assess fit with the organization in terms of IRCOM's Values. They are on our website. Also, our postings have a link to a statement about our principles and approaches, and this too, guides us in assessing fit.
- Do come with paper and pen, and do not hesitate to write down complex questions and/or ask for them to be repeated
- Do come with a set of 3 references, typed and formatted, with ideally 2 work references and 1 personal reference. If you are new to Winnipeg or Canada, we can check references abroad, but please give us good information on how to contact them. Make sure to inform your references before you come to the interview.
- In some communities and among some groups of people 'selling yourself' in an interview does not feel natural. However, this is your chance to show us that you have confidence in yourself. If talking

about yourself makes you feel uncomfortable, practice with someone, or visualize yourself in the interview- this sometimes helps feel more at ease in real life. Remember, most positions bring in 30-40 resumes, so if we've called you in, we are very interested in you and want to learn more.

- If you are not successful, please do not give up. We know of many people who have applied and been interviewed more than once and have eventually been successful. Do ask for feedback – few people do, but we often have many insights to share that may help in future job search.

FOR IRCOM STAFF WHO APPLY FOR POSITIONS (THESE ARE BASED ON OUR EXPERIENCES):

- Do all of the above. Do not take shortcuts. The expectations for internal candidates are high(er), because you have access to much more information about IRCOM and what we do.
- Dress up for the interview.
- We expect you to know us, and to be familiar with us, of course. But sometimes people are 'too familiar' and assume we have seen them in action – and they hold back on details because of this, or say things like "You know I'm very good at connecting with parents, you've seen me in program." We need to compare responses across candidates and rich answers with details are appreciated.
- In answering questions, consider the skill set of the team you might be joining and how your experience and education will complement the team and contribute to a stronger team.
- Come prepared and expect to show and demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of IRCOM across programs. This can mean being familiar with various program areas, challenges (and how to address them based on what you know), new initiatives, and program direction. You have access to our Strategic Plan and other internal documents – we also expect you to reflect an understanding of overall organizational direction, in your interview.
- Do not assume we know your references. Come with a typed list of references as if you were an external candidate. Yes, you can have references from within IRCOM.
- Think about the position you are applying for – saying you want to further your career or move up in the organization is fine, but we will be looking for more depth in your responses, e.g., talk about the position and how it fits into the overall organization, your vision for the program/position, what are key success factors for such a position, etc.
- If you are applying for a management position, we want to see a managerial perspective (e.g., a response to a question about staff wellness should not only focus on activities such as Staff Retreat or Spa Day, but also include reflections on creating a positive workplace, supporting staff to meet their performance development goals or to find work-life balance, etc.)
- For managerial or lead positions, we are also taking into account how you have demonstrated leadership and taken initiative within your current position - when have you "stepped up" and played a lead role in significant program improvements, cross-program or whole-organization initiatives?
- Feel free to meet with people in the program, before the interview. People on the interview panel may decline but others can definitely meet.