

## **Do's and Don'ts for Applying to the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (BPELSG)**

### **Do's**

- Provide a PE/PG licensed responsible in charge in your area of work. For example, if you are applying as a Civil PE, then list a responsible in charge with a Civil PE license not another field like chemical, electrical, or mechanical.
- Before or while asking for a reference, share some work products with your references and have them provide feedback
- Focus on critical thinking analyses and less on number crunching elements of your work or simple code/standard compliance. If the compliance is more complex, then explain why it is not so simple to determine
- Emphasize the 'grey areas' in your work – interpretations of law, engineering principles, and controversial topics
- Incorporate other dimensions and outside factors that impact your work into your qualifying experience and explain why and how your work requires engineering and geology principles in order to make critical decisions. An example of that is if you have to incorporate weather into your project because of wet, dry, or windy conditions. Another example is if your project is near the Pacific Ocean, how does that impact your project if there are environmental impacts or things like saltwater that you have to consider.
- Refer to BPELSG literature ([https://www.bpelsg.ca.gov/laws/pe\\_act.pdf](https://www.bpelsg.ca.gov/laws/pe_act.pdf)), laws, and definitions for professional engineering work and qualifying experience
- Civil engineering has five disciplines – Structural, Geotechnical, Transportation, Water Resources and Environmental. Focus on your area of expertise and connect why your work is related to that field. For example, storm water affects water quality which directly impacts water resources used for drinking, environment, agriculture, water rights, etc. Best management practices and NPDES are used for managing that. Explain how your work folds into that.

### **Don'ts**

- Obtain a reference from an individual identified as responsible in charge that doesn't have a PE/PG
- Focus on draft work, computer aided design (CAD), creating spreadsheets without explanation of the critical thinking and analysis aspects
- Provide examples of linear work processes – such as simple review of forms/paperwork to make sure that full name, addresses, emails, phone numbers are not missing or accurate.
- Copy and paste the same reference/justification for each reference. Meaning each referral from you list of references should be unique. I have heard of applicants pretty much copying and pasting the entire reference/justification for each referral and then just getting the signatures from their references. That is an easy red flag for them to find.

## **Sample Response from a Rejected PE Application**

### **Summary of deficiencies:**

1. Engagement information does not sufficiently describe civil engineering work, as defined in Business and Professions Code section 6731. Non-qualifying work are tasks that do not require a licensed Civil Engineer to be in responsible charge.
  - a. Examples of non-qualifying work: plan, design, or report review, code or permit compliance verification, client or project team coordination, quantity take-off determination, unspecified plan or report development, alternatives assessment, creating cost estimates or schedules, feasibility or capacity analysis or reporting, quality control/assurance, etc.
2. Work experience is vague, general-in-nature, and does not adequately explain your role in performing civil engineering work nor demonstrate the ability to use sound and independent judgement in making decisions to progress towards becoming a Professional Engineer.

### **What they are looking for:**

- Information must accurately describe your level of responsibility in relation to what discretion you used in furtherance of the work product, including what reports, codes, or requirements you considered to document your rational thought process and/or use of engineering judgement.
- Your description of decisions made should expand on demonstrating your subject knowledge gained through education and job experience.
- Use all sections within each engagement to build a complete picture of your duties in developing civil engineering work products for specific projects, making sure it aligns with the definition civil engineering work in Business and Professions Code section 6731.