Developing Your Resume For Government Positions

Agenda

Getting Started

Build and Customize Your Resume

Writing Your Accomplishments in a Powerful Way

Using Similar Terms & Keywords

Organize for Ease in Understanding and Selling Yourself

Things to Remember and Things to Avoid

Why the Focus on Resumes?

The primary way for you to communicate your:

- Education
- Skills
- Experience

Most Effective Resumes

Clearly articulate how your skills and experiences align to and match the selection criteria defined by the job announcement.

Always tailor your resume to the job opportunity to which you are applying.

Getting Started

First gather useful resources, such as:

Current Resume

Position Description / Vacancy Announcement(s)

Read the entire job announcement. Focus on this critical information to understand whether or not you qualify for the position:

Duties and qualifications

How to apply (including a preview of the assessment questionnaire)

Build and Customize Your Resume

Again, tailor your resume to the position (Doesn’t mean create a new one - copy and tailor).

Match your competencies, knowledge, skills, abilities and experience to the requirements using the keywords.

Emphasize your strengths.

Leave out experience that isn’t relevant to that position.

Information to Include in Your Resume

Personal Information

- Name, mailing address, work and cell phone numbers, email address, country of citizenship, veterans preference, reinstatement eligibility(prior govt. employees), highest Federal civilian grade held (prior govt. employees).

Job information indicating position for which you are applying (**optional**)

- Announcement number, vacancy title, job series, and grade

Information to Include in Your Resume

- Include dates, hours, level of experience and examples for each work experience.
  - Federal jobs often require that you have experience in a particular type of work for a certain period of time.
  - You must show how your skills and experiences meet the qualifications and requirements listed in the job announcement to be considered for the position.

Information to Include in Your Resume

For each work experience you list, make sure you include:

Job title, series and grade (prior govt. employees).
Prior military will need to civilianize there titles/positions.
Employer's name and address.
Supervisor's name and phone number.
Start and end dates (including the month and year).
The number of hours you worked per week.
The level and amount of experience.
Examples of relevant experiences and accomplishments that prove you can perform the tasks at the level required. (on or off duty)
Your experience needs to address every required qualification.

Information to Include in Your Resume

Education

College/University, name and location

College major, type and year of degree received

If not yet received, indicate date anticipated

High School, name and location, date of diploma or GED

(You will need a copy of your transcript if you are going to include education.)

Information to Include in Your Resume

Other Qualification

- Certifications (i.e. FAC-C, warrants, project management certification, etc.)

- Job Related Training Courses
- Licenses
- Publications
- Honor Societies
- Leadership Positions (volunteer, civic, church, etc.)
- Memberships in professional organizations

Writing Your Work History

This is the most important section of your resume.

For each position held, highlight significant accomplishments made while serving in that position, remembering to use “keywords” from the description.

The USAjobs resume builder provides space for 3,000 characters for work experience (for each position). This is approx. 1 full page.

Writing Your Accomplishments

An activity is an accomplishment if…

- It sets you apart from other candidates
- It improved operations/efficiency
- It resolved a problem
- It saved money
- Completed before expected date

Writing Your Accomplishments

Describe the following when writing an accomplishment:

- Situation you faced
- Action you took
- Results of your effort
- (You can use bullets and sub-bullets or a paragraph)

Quantify Your Accomplishments

Use numbers, percentages, time and dollars to highlight your accomplishments.

- Include examples regarding the monetary worth of your accomplishments i.e. managed 250,000.00 project.
- Include examples amounts i.e served 5,000 customers in a four month period or processed on average 25 applications.

Quantify Your Accomplishments

Articulate ways you've saved money or energy, managed projects or accounts or led in your internships, jobs and extracurricular activities.

Examples (Mixed feelings on percentages)

- "Improved efficiency of document processing by 25% over the previous year."
- "Wrote 25 news releases in a three-week period under daily deadlines."
- Identified, researched and recommended a new Internet Service Provider, cutting the company's online costs by 15 percent.

Use “Numbers!”

Examples

- Wrote prospect letter that has brought in more than $25,000 in donations to date.
- Managed a student organization budget of more than $7,000.
- Assisted with twice-monthly payroll activities, ensuring employees were paid as expected and on time.
- Attended high school basketball games, interviewed players and coaches afterward, and composed 750-word articles by an 11 p.m. deadline.
- Suggested procedures that decreased average order-processing time from 10 minutes to five minutes.

Use Similar Terms to Qualifications

Experience needs to address every required qualification in the job announcement.

Hiring agencies will look for specific terms in your resume to make sure you have the experience they’re seeking.

Keywords

Which keywords do you need to add based on the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities required for the position?

Remember a Single keyword communicates multiple skills and qualifications.

Recruiter reads the keyword “analyst,”

- Might assume you have experience in collecting data, evaluating effectiveness, and researching and developing new processes.

True or False?

Resumes are scanned for keywords by an automated system.

Partially true: In most agencies, the resumes are scanned by real people, Human Resource (HR) Specialists. However, NASA uses a contextual grammar based Artificial Intelligence software for an automated resume review.

**Resume review is used as one step, in a multi-step application review process. This process includes a review of all required areas of the applicant’s eligibility and qualifications for the announcement.

Organize your Resume to Make it Easy to Understand

Place your most current experience first.

Provide greater detail for experience that is relevant.

Show all experiences and accomplishments under the job in which you earned it.

Use either bullet or paragraph format to describe your experiences and accomplishments.

Use plain language. Avoid acronyms and terms that are not easily understood.

The Sales Pitch

It is crucial that your resume effectively sells your credentials.

Display key selling points prominently at the top of the first page of the resume and directly address each question asked in the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) section.

Selling Yourself

Look at your resume and ask:

- Can a hiring manager see my main credentials within 10 to 15 seconds?
- Does critical information jump off the page?
- Do I effectively sell myself on the top quarter of the first page?

Things to Remember

- Use the correct verb tense (Present tense for current position, past tense for past positions)
- Use action verbs
- Use keywords
- Write clearly in plain English
- Proof read again and again

Use an Editor’s Eye

- Check your resume for spelling and grammatical errors and have someone else, with a good eye for detail, review your resume.
- Check for alignment, layout, etc.

A resume doesn’t have to contain every detail of your work experience. So be judicious. If your college days are far behind you, does it really matter that you pledged a fraternity or delivered pizza? The editing step will be difficult if you are holding on to your past for emotional reasons.

Things to Avoid

Don’t begin every sentence with “I”

Don’t ramble; Be concise with descriptions (Bullet Statements can aid with this item)

Don’t lift statements verbatim from your position description

Don’t write your resume like it’s one long essay

Don’t use acronyms, spell them out.

Important Facts about the Federal Hiring Process

The Federal Government does have a standard job application. Your resume is your application.

Hiring agencies use the job announcement to describe the job and list the required qualifications and responsibilities.

After applying, the hiring agency uses the information in your resume to verify if you have the required qualifications stated in the job announcement.

Once the hiring agency has determined who is qualified, they may use other assessments such as interviews or testing to determine the best qualified applications.

What Should I Leave Out of My Resume?

Do not include the following types of information in your profile or resume:

- Classified or government sensitive information
- Social Security Number (SSN)
- Photos of yourself
- Personal information, such as age, gender, religious affiliation, etc.
- Encrypted and digitally signed documents

Traditional vs. Federal Resumes

Forget what you know about typical resume writing. Your federal resume should be more detailed and run two-to-five pages in length for an entry-level job. A federal resume uses the same information from a typical resume, but goes into more depth about your skills, past duties and accomplishments.

http://gogovernment.org/how_to_apply/write_your_federal_resume/create_your_resume.php

Federal Resume Example

John D. Oe
111 Somewhere Drive
Outthere, NE 68000
Cell: 402.000.0000
Email: xxxxx123@xxxxx.xxx

Country of Citizenship: United States of America
Veterans' Preference: No
Highest Grade: If applicable, GS-0002-07, MM/YYYY – MM/YYYY

Availability: Job Type: Permanent, Temporary, Recent Graduates, etc.
Work Schedule: Full Time

Desired Location: US-FL-Orlando
US-FL-Cape Canaveral

Federal Resume Example (Continued)

Work Experience:

The Federal Government
Omaha, NE

MM/YYYY – MM/YYYY
Grade Level: 12
Hours per week: 40

Public Affairs Specialist
Supervisor: Johan Schmidt (402-xxx-xxxx)
Contact Supervisor: Yes or No

- Supervised ten contractors on communications, ensured project was delivered $3,000.00 under budget and ahead of scheduled by fourteen days.
- Contacted and pitched media for program publicity resulting in four printed articles, two in the local newspaper and two in national trade magazine.
- Facilitated biweekly team meetings and conducted monthly diversity training presentations for thirty internal employees.
- Wrote fifteen articles regarding foreign education initiatives in agency newsletter and press releases.

Federal Resume Example (Continued)

Education: Bachelor of Science, (May 2004), National American University, Rapid City, SD 57701 US
306.50 Quarter Hours
GPA: 3.83 out of 4.0
Major: Applied Management
Relevant Coursework, Licenses and Certifications:
Institute on Public Affairs, Public Affairs Administrator, Level II (2011)

Language Skills: English

Spoken:	Advanced
Written:	Advanced
Read:	Advanced

Federal Resume Example (Continued)

Affiliations: National Public Affairs Association Vice-Present (2012 – present)

Additional Skills: Grant writing experience, awarded " Dream Catchers Award" by Community and Recreation Services, Delaware county Government, Dec. 2015
Master in Microsoft Office Programs, conduct training for other assigned employees.

Leadership and Service Roles: Combined Federal Campaign Board of Directors, Chair (2014 – present)
Leads a volunteer board of 30 federal employees, providing leadership in the management of the federal charity campaign.

References: Name –Position
Organization or Business Name
Address
Phone Number and Email address.

Example of an Outline Format

Resume Preview

Print Resume

KATHRYN K TROUTMAN
655 West Lake Road
Catonsville, MD 21228 US
Day Phone: 907-333-3333
Email: kathryn@resume-place.com

Work Experience:

Southside Independent School District - Everyone Caring Prog
San Antonio, TX United States
SOCIAL WORKER
Supervisor: Marta Garcia (2105555555)
Okay to contact this Supervisor: Yes

02/2007 - Present
Salary: 69,334.00 USD Per Year
Hours per week: 50

PROVIDE DIRECT SOCIAL SERVICES to a variety of individuals from various socio-economic cultural, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. Work under FEDERAL GRANT from McKinney Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act to serve over 400 homeless families per year, totaling 2800 homeless families within the San Antonio area.

• Managed a case for a homeless, single veteran and his children who were living in their car. I evaluated the veteran's situation, abilities and capabilities. I assessed their vulnerability and prioritized their needs for emergency intervention. Contact with six emergency shelters resulted in one that had availably for males with children. I referred them to transitional housing resources and to the San Antonio Housing Authority. The children's district schools were contacted and I gained cooperation for the children to continue in their schools.

• RESULTS: Family was able to obtain temporary housing; the children's education was not disrupted and they were provided transportation to and from school.

INDEPENDENTLY ASSESS STUDENT'S AND FAMILY'S NEEDS by addressing their physical, mental, social, and educational situation. Identify student and family problems, strengths, weaknesses, coping skills and types of assistance needed. Formulate and implement treatment plan. Provide counseling and crisis intervention for students and families.

PROVIDE OUTREACH, ASSESSMENT, REFERRALS AND CASE MANAGEMENT demonstrating knowledge of the principles and theoretical concepts of social work. Assist students and families in accessing educational, medical, and other support services within the community.

How Long Is Too Long For a Federal Resume?

Don’t worry about the one to two page rule.

However, you still want to be discernable. (Don’t put in so much information, that you get lost in the details!)

Don’t hide great work.

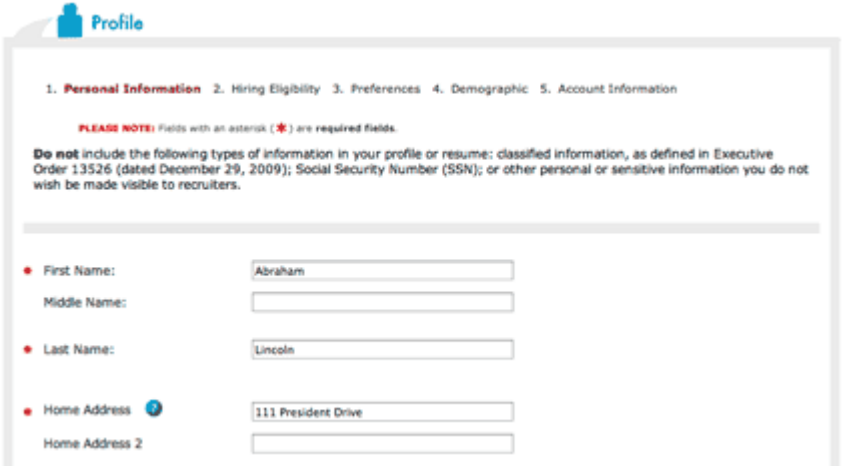
Have a trusted advisor review.

It’s more about relevance and content than it is about length.

Building your profile on usajobs

Provide **basic information**, including your name, contact information, and citizenship. Most positions require applicants to be a **U.S. citizen** in order to apply, but there may be exceptions for hard to fill jobs. You also need to identify whether you have **ever worked for the federal government** and whether you **qualify for veteran's preference**. If you have never served on active duty in the Armed Forces, then you are not eligible for veteran's preference.

Required: Name, contact information, citizenship, whether you claim veteran's preference, federal employee information.

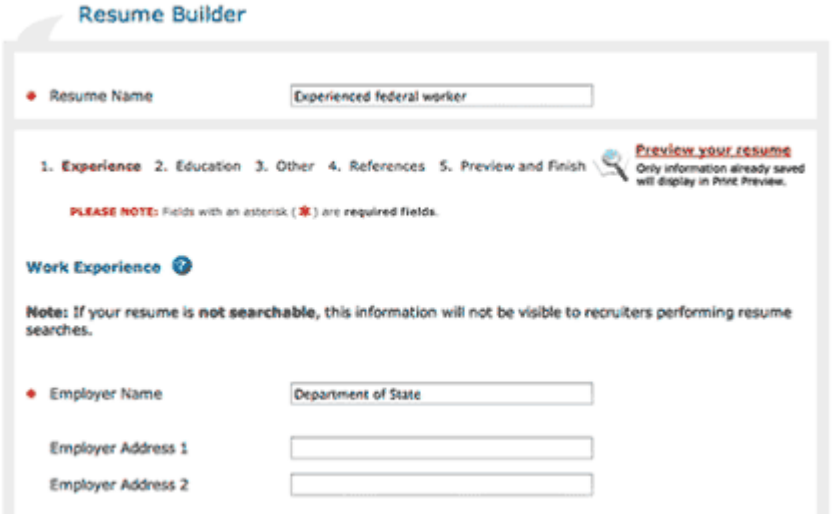


Work Experience

List the **required elements** for any relevant jobs you've held. Each component is essential to your resume **meeting the minimum qualifications**. Experienced workers may choose to list only jobs held in the last 10 years.

Required: Employer, location, position title, start and end date, average hours worked per week, responsibilities and accomplishments

Optional: You may want to include your supervisor(s) as a reference. Including your salary is also optional and will not exclude your resume from consideration

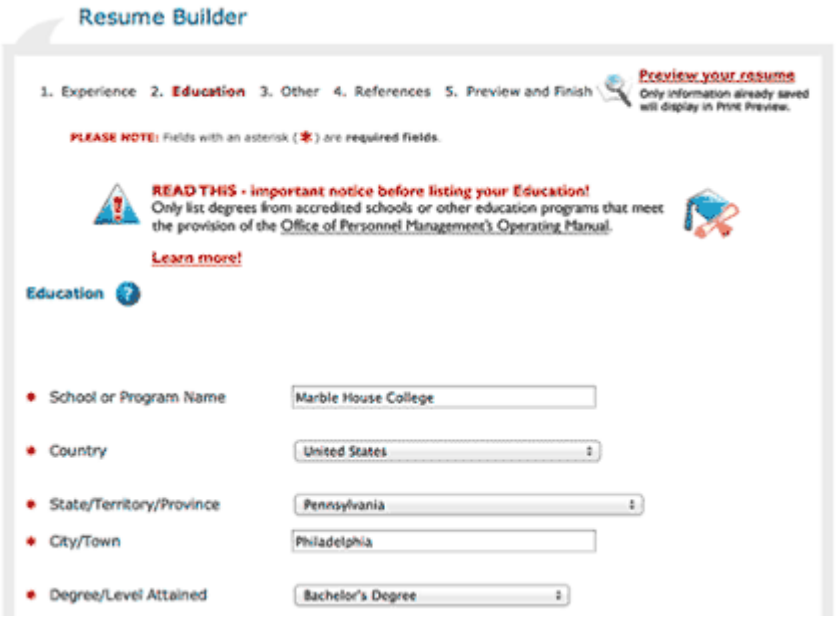


Education

Include basic information about all **schools attended and coursework completed**. Only list degrees from accredited schools or programs that meet the Office of Personnel Management's standards. If you wish to **substitute education for experience** to qualify for a job, you must include the information about coursework in your resume. To ensure that you receive appropriate credit for your academic credentials, you should provide as much information as possible.

Required: Schools attended, degrees obtained

Optional: Grade point averages, relevant coursework taken, academic papers or projects, key presentations, honors received, other important accomplishments



Optional Information to Include

Job related training--include any classes, seminars, coursework, certifications, or trainings you have completed that relates to your professional development and the position description.

References-- In addition to your supervisors, you may choose to provide professional or personal references who can vouch for your character, work ethic and dependability. Individuals you have worked with closely—such as colleagues, classmates and mentors—will add to your credibility as an applicant.

Optional Information to Include

Language skills--Include any language experience you may have and level of proficiency.

Affiliations--List any professional associations, societies, clubs or other organizations you are affiliated with. Highlight any leadership role and volunteer experience you may have had, to the extent that it relates to the job description.

Professional publications--Include any publications you have contributed to, along with the publication name and date.

Optional Information to Include

Additional information--You can include any other relevant pieces of your resume in this section: skills, awards, leadership activities, public speaking engagements, volunteer experience or other items that may not fit in a section above. You may choose to list your availability, the type of work environment you seek and your desired location. These items will not exclude your resume from consideration, but are simply used for recruiters to determine your interest.

Tips for Formatting Resumes in USAJOBS Resume Builder

You can copy and paste text from Word documents into the resume builder. However, some formatting in these documents may not work in the USAJOBS resume builder. To correct formatting errors inside your resume, you must first save the original file in a .txt format.

To copy and paste from Word:

1. Open up your Word document or other word processing tool.
2. Select the File tab at the top.
3. Go to the Save As option.
4. Choose to save it as a Plain Text (*.txt) file.
5. Open the new file and ensure the text appears in an acceptable format.
6. Copy and paste your resume text into the resume builder.

USAJOBS: Tips for Success

Your application will be reviewed based solely on the information you provide in your application.

Do not assume that the HR Specialist will “read between the lines” when it comes to your work experience. Be as detailed as possible!

Why Is It Important to Carefully Craft Your Resume?

HR Specialist reviews application package and makes eligibility and qualification determinations for each applicant.

- Eligibility is determined by the Area of Consideration stated in the Vacancy Announcement; applicants must submit documentation to prove that they are within that area (i.e., SF-50 to prove federal status eligibility, DD-214 to prove Veterans eligibility).
  - You must read the Who May Apply and Required Documentation sections to find the Area of Consideration. READ, READ, READ!
- Qualifications are determined based on applicant's work experience in relation to the position for which they applied.
  - HR Specialist looks at the applicant's resume and responses to the vacancy questions to determine qualifications.

Why Is It Important to Carefully Craft Your Resume?

If an applicant's self-rated answers are not supported by the information given in the resume and essay responses (see image below), the HR Specialist will deduct points which could result in the candidate not being considered as a "Best Qualified" candidate for the position.

Multiple Choice Question #1: Which of the following best describes your experience providing customer service to telecommunications customers?
Applicant Response:
5. I am highly skilled at this function. I have worked with customers to successfully resolve a variety of telecommunication issues including technical service problems and billing errors. I have been acknowledged for my ability to solve problems/issues for angry, distressed, or rude customers.

Essay Question #1: Please describe your experience providing customer service to telecommunications customers. Describe one or two of the most significant problems/issues you dealt with and the solutions you developed. Limit your response to 2,000 characters, which is approximately one half typewritten page in length.
Applicant Response: n/a

THIS COULD CAUSE THE APPLICANT TO NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR AN INTERVIEW.

What to Expect Next

- Applicants are given scores based on the responses to the vacancy questions. These scores determine the top candidates.
- Only the names of the Best Qualified candidates are sent forward on the Certificate of Referral to hiring managers for further consideration for Merit Promotion announcements.

Questions?

- Information for this presentation was obtained from a Leadership Development Course, as presented by Nikki Montag.