



Solution

Top Tips for Writing a Federal Resume

By Danielle Ramos

Opportunities for Federal employment have never been better! Nevertheless, applying for a Federal job is a complex process.

Some of the challenges may be:

- Not knowing where to start to apply for Federal jobs
- Not knowing how to navigate usajobs.gov, the Federal job search site
- Not knowing how to format the Federal resume correctly

Follow the tips below, and you should be well on your way to land a Federal job interview!

Personal information:

Make sure you list your full name, mailing address, zip code, phone number, and email address.

Educational qualifications:

Ensure you list the name and city of each institution that you have attended in chronological order (with the most recent listed first). Also, list the type of degrees and/or diploma you earned. You may also list any academic awards or other special recognition you received, including Dean's List, Magna Cum Laude, etc. If you have yet completed the degree, indicate when you expect to receive your degree (i.e., Expected May 2021).

Clarification:

You need to clarify your work experience and education in detail to show that you are QUALIFIED for the position. Do not write for the sake of writing and ramble on with a list of duties and responsibilities; clearly demonstrate your results and accomplishments.



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Key Words:

Include keywords from the Federal job announcement so you may get your resume in the hands of a human being. Make sure your resume is as descriptive as possible, so someone working outside of your field will understand the impact you have had and subsequently forward your resume to the hiring manager.

Accomplishments:

Assuming you have previous work experience relevant to the position you seek, include it with details. Writing your duties and responsibilities is important, but you need to showcase your accomplishments in each position you have ever held.

Pay Attention to Directions:

Make sure your Federal resume and application are complete before you click that submit button! If it does not include all the information and documents requested, you may lose consideration for the position.

You may be inclined to submit your resume to a variety of positions and eventually become frustrated when you do not advance in the hiring process. However, if you tailor your resume to the specific vacancy, your chances of moving to the next stage in the application process will increase drastically.

Automatic Searches:

If you do not have time to search USAJOBS every week, set up a search to notify you of new positions every day. Often, positions are only open for a week, and you could miss out by not visiting the site regularly. When you set up a search notification, it will email you with news jobs daily or weekly.

Applying to the Correct Positions:

Some jobs are only open to status candidates (veterans, prior employees, spouses, etc.), and some are open to all United States citizens. In your search, make sure you are including those jobs reserved for status candidates if you qualify. Some jobs will post two announcements: one for status candidates and one for the public. Ensure you apply to the right one for your status.

Matching Your Skills to the Correct Position:

All government jobs have a series number. For example, IT jobs are in the 2200 series, with 2210 being the most common. Make sure you study the list of series to determine which ones to include in your search. There are *help pages* on USAJOBS that will assist in matching your skills to a job title or series of jobs.



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Upload and submit through USAJOBS:

You can upload and save these documents to your USAJOBS account. Once uploaded, you can submit these forms with your job application as needed.

Prepare:

The first thing you want to do to prepare is to collect your information and build a description of your knowledge, skills, and experience. Once completed, you will include it in your resume. This is vital and could ultimately determine whether you are called in for an interview or not.

CREATE A USAJOBS PROFILE:

Start with creating an account on USAJOBS.gov. You can build and store up to 5 Federal resumes.

What Should be Included:

Be sure to include your name, contact information (including email address), work experience, employer, title, hours worked per week, start and end date, and accomplishments. Also, list your education, schools, courses, and degrees obtained. List other notable achievements and relevant courses completed.

List Numbers, Quantify as Much as Possible:

Numbers excite hiring managers! Be sure to highlight your numbers, data, and percentages. Go into detail and describe a specific impact you had on a particular position. Listing actual measures goes a long way with hiring managers!

Be Distinctive:

There is not a one-size-fits-all Federal resume. You should create a unique resume for yourself. You want to portray your knowledge, skills, and experience as a perfect match for the qualifications to show you have the requirements to perform the job. To do this, scan the job announcement and focus on the portions of your work history, skills, and education that match the job requirements.

Resume Length:

Corporate resumes are generally 1 to 2 pages in length. However, your Federal resume should be roughly three pages but no more than five pages in length for a position. The length of your Federal resume will vary. Typically, you should go as far back as ten years. However, if you are still qualified to do a job that you held over 15 years ago, you can include it as well. The real key is to ensure it is recent and relevant to the Federal job announcement for which you are applying.

Tailor:

Time and time again, candidates use a generic resume to apply for each position. One size typically



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never fits all when applying to Federal positions. If you utilize the same career documents when applying for a Federal position, you will simply keep spinning your wheels.

Sell Yourself:

Don't be shy! Sell your achievements and yourself! Give that hiring manager a reason to make you a #1 candidate. Include your accomplishments that go beyond work experience and education. This may set your application above the rest of the applicant pool, even better if they correspond to the qualifications for the position!

Additional Reminders:

Remember, the quality of your information is more important than the quantity. Do not assume the hiring manager is familiar with the organizations on your resume. Do not list education, certifications, or experience that are not related to the position for which you are applying. Proofread your spelling and grammar. Ask a professional or peer to check over your resume for mistakes.

The Federal hiring process can be tedious, and you should have a plan. Give the hiring manager the information they are seeking; this will make it easier for them to select and hire **you**. If you are thorough and implement the tips above, and your effort should pay off!

Dannielle Ramos Rash is a 4th generation Army Veteran and Founder of First Class Résumés & Career Services. Her company provides Federal résumés for Veterans around the globe and stands by their motto "Taking You Higher To Get Hired." Dannielle has been featured in the "Military Transition" chapter of Modernize Your Job Search Letters: Get Noticed...Get Hired and co-authored the book Mastering Your Career Journey: 11 Career Experts Unveil the Secrets to Success.

Dannielle has written civilian and Federal résumé s for thousands of military Veterans and has been coined a "Résumé Goddess" by her clientele. She is a Camouflaged Sisters resident expert on Federal résumé s and the Federal hiring process. Dannielle has been a contributor in Forward March Magazine since conception and Women Who Served Magazine. Finally, she has been featured in Behind The Rank, Vol. 1, and 2, which are Bestsellers on Amazon in the categories of United States Veterans History, United States Military History, and Women History.