

Tips for writing a federal resume

Resumes for applying for positions within the federal government often have different requirements from your standard resume. Here are a few tips to help your resume be effective.



1. **Don't forget to include information specific to the job as advertised.** Information such as the job number, grade and title of the jobs you are interested in applying for.
2. **Include personal information** such as your full name, mailing address with ZIP code, any phone numbers, Social Security Number, reinstatement eligibility and civilian grade, including the job series and dates that you held the previous position.
3. **Write your educational qualifications in chronological order**, starting from high school to college. Include the name and city of each institution, and the type and year of diploma/degree received. Don't forget to highlight the grades that you received and any awards. Make detailed descriptions in the KSA.
4. **You must specifically mention the major subjects and total credits you have earned.** While writing these points, you may be tempted to make use of bullet points - however, while these work well for resumes targeting civilian positions, they may not be well received when applying for federal jobs.
5. **You should explain things in great detail.** The underlying reason for this is that education counts a lot more in federal recruitment than in the private sector. Therefore, you should use this format to show (read: market) how well you qualify for the job through your education.
6. **Even if your education does not exactly match** the qualifications as advertised, you can still qualify through equivalent experience. In this case, you can get over this hurdle by explicitly spelling out your previous experience and how it relates to the job at hand.
7. **Federal resumes are not scanned by machines** in most cases, which in itself must be a welcome relief. Since your resume will most likely be read by an actual, live human, make sure that you make the most of it by being as descriptive as possible.
8. **If you have previous work experience having relevance to the job in question, include it with full details.** Give the telephone numbers of employers, position(s) you held, numbers of hours per week and salary. Writing your accomplishments and duties (to a lesser extent) is important. You should also indicate whether it is OK to contact the previous employer.
9. **Don't forget to write about any other qualifications that may be even slightly related to the job.** Explain why you think they are similar by giving concrete examples such as software used, etc. Memberships, certificates or awards also count heavily in federal job applications.
10. **Don't forget to enclose the KSA and mention it in the resume.** Avoid the KSA becoming a verbatim copy of your resume. Write the KSA in your own style, without borrowing from samples and use lots of examples to justify your application. Always type your full name and sign it.

The bottom line here is that you cannot follow the same rules for federal resumes as for civilian ones. By following the tips above, and writing your KSA's descriptively and succinctly, you will be well on your way to landing that federal job.

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Your federal resume **MUST** contain the following information:

JOB INFORMATION

- Announcement number, title and grade(s) of the job for which you are applying.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

- Full name, mailing address (*with Zip Code*) and day and evening phone numbers.
- Social Security Number
- Country of citizenship (*Most federal jobs require United States citizenship.*)

VETERANS' PREFERENCE

If you served on active duty in the U.S. military and were separated under honorable conditions, you may be eligible for veterans' preference. For more details, visit OPM's web site at <http://www.opm.gov/>.

REINSTATEMENT ELIGIBILITY (Federal Civilian Status)

- Highest federal civilian grade held (*Also give job series and dates held.*) If not applicable write N/A

EDUCATION

High School

- Name, city, and State (*Zip Code if known*)
- Date of diploma or GED

Colleges and universities

- Name, city, state, and zip code
- Majors
- Type and year of any degrees received (*If no degree, show total credits earned and indicate whether semester or quarter hours.*)

Send a copy of your college transcript only if the job vacancy announcement requests it.

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WORK EXPERIENCE

Give the following information for your paid and non-paid work experience related to the job for which you are applying. (*Do not send job descriptions.*)

- Job title (*include series and grade if federal job*)
- Duties and accomplishments
- Employer's name and address (*city, state, zip code*)
- Supervisor's name and phone number
- Starting and ending dates (*month and year*)
- Hours per week
- Salary

Indicate if they may contact your current supervisor under your references.

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

- Job-related training courses (*title and year*)
- Job-related skills; for example, other languages, computer software/hardware, tools, machinery, typing speed.
- Job-related certificates and licenses (*current only*)
- Job-related honors, awards, and special accomplishments; for example, publications; memberships in professional or honor societies; leadership activities; public speaking; and performance awards. (*Give dates but do not send documents unless requested.*)