



BUILDING A FEDERAL RESUME

Federal resumes differ from traditional resumes in a number of ways. Below are some of the biggest differences between federal and traditional resumes.

Federal Resume

- 2 – 5 pages
- In depth overview of all experiences
- More required information

Traditional Resume

- One page
- Concise overview of related experiences

Although a resume can be uploaded on USAJOBS, we recommend using the Resume Builder available on USAJOBS.gov. The Resume Builder will provide a step-by-step guide to creating a federal resume and will ensure that all required information is present.

RESUME SECTIONS

Candidate Information

This section of a federal resume should provide basic information.

- **Required:** Name, contact information, citizenship, whether or not the applicant claims veteran's preference and federal employee information

Work Experience

All required elements for any relevant jobs held should be listed. All components are essential to a federal resume meeting minimum qualifications.

- **Required:** Employer, location, position title, start and end date, average hours worked per week, responsibilities and accomplishments
- **Optional:** Supervisor contact information and salary

Education

All basic information about all schools attended and coursework completed should be listed. Applicants should only list degrees from accredited schools or programs.

- **Required:** Schools attended and degrees obtained
- **Optional:** Grade point average, relevant coursework taken, academic papers or projects, key presentations, honors received and other important accomplishments

Optional Information to Include

Including additional information in the optional sections can work to an applicant's advantage if relevant information is included. Remember, federal resumes can be anywhere from 2 – 5 pages in length, so applicants should include more information than traditional resumes. The optional information section gives an applicant an opportunity to highlight his or her accomplishments. If applicable advise students to include any job related training, additional references, language skills, affiliations and professional publications on his or her resume. This additional information can help an applicant prove that he or she has the qualifications for the job or even negotiate a higher salary based on qualifications.

FEDERAL RESUME WRITING TIPS

1. **Tailor the Federal Resume to the Job Announcement**

Tailoring a federal resume to a specific job description can increase an applicant's chances of moving on to the interview stage of an application process. Advise your students to resist the urge to submit a standard resume to different positions. Hiring managers can spot generic resumes. A tailored resume focuses in on the job description, specifically the duties, qualifications and requirements sections. Applicants should highlight the skills required by the agency and mirror language used in the job description.

2. **Numbers Impress Hiring Managers**

Applicants should quantify past accomplishments and experiences. Performance metrics, such as percentages, numbers and data showcase the impact an applicant had at a particular job; however, these numbers must be accurate.

3. **Market Skills and Achievements**

Showcasing knowledge, skills, and accomplishments in a federal resume is necessary to give agency representatives a reason to hire an individual. The skills and achievements highlighted do not have to be limited to work experience and education. An applicant can list experiences and activities he or she has participated in that might qualify him or her for the job, such as leadership positions in student organizations or volunteer efforts.

4. **Spelling and Grammar Matter**

Many applicants are overlooked because they fail to edit their work. Many federal agencies complain about the spelling and grammatical errors people have on their federal resume. Students should read over their resume and cover letter before they submit it.

5. **Be Concise**

Information provided on a federal resume should be relevant and concise. A wordy resume with unrelated information will not help an applicant in the application process. The quality of the information an applicant provides is more important than the quantity