**FEDERAL RESUME TIPS**

Formatting a Federal resume is quite different from the strategies used to become employed in private industry and may vary among federal agencies. This guide provides some practical suggestions on how to help ensure that you provide the most useful information in an effective manner.

**Tailor Your Resume for Each Job Opportunity**

One size does not fit all. As you apply for jobs, tailor your resume to the position’s requirements. Study the vacancy announcement and emphasize the parts of your work history that match the qualification requirements listed there.

Do not presume a prior position title or a like title similar to the position for which you are applying inherently conveys the desired knowledge and skills. It is important to clearly articulate the actual knowledge and skills attained through that position as a match to the requirements of the position and demonstrate the ability to do the job for which you’re applying. This is easy to do when you include your results, achievements and accomplishments. Minimize the use of technical jargon or specialized terminology (e.g., military abbreviations) in your resume. Federal resumes are rated by a Human Resource Staffing Specialist against the job qualifications and your rating will determine if you qualified for the job.

**Work Experience**

When writing your federal resume, be sure to include all relevant experience. It is common for federal resumes to be longer than average, so do not cut out important details to try to fit your resume to one to two pages.

A good federal resume should clearly outline your key work experiences; volunteer experiences, academic accomplishments as well as extra-curricular activities. It should also highlight the unique skills that set you apart and make you uniquely qualified for the position.

Study the job opportunity announcement and emphasize the parts of your work history that match the qualifications listed there. Remember, human resources staffing specialists might not be familiar with your career field. To help them understand how your experience matches what is required for the vacant position, make sure that you describe your experience in laymen’s terms. Most importantly, describe job duties and accomplishments in a way that demonstrates how you are qualified. Match your specific experience, knowledge, skills and abilities to the specific requirements of the job being advertised. Don’t assume you’ll receive the benefit of the doubt—spell it out!

**Quantify and Qualify**  
*Work.* Many applicants who have had significant leadership responsibilities fail to quantify them. Often applicants will have been in a supervisory position, or were a trainer, but fail to mention how many people they were responsible for. Responsibility is not always how many people you have supervised; it can also refer to how many people you give guidance to on a daily basis. If you controlled a budget, facilities, or inventory, describe the value of your portfolio or value of the items you managed. Leadership experience comes in many different forms. Highlight any time you’ve been in a leadership role and explain how that experience will help you in the job you’re applying for.

*Extra-Curricular.* Employers recognize well roundedness and community involvement in the form of volunteerism, but most applicants simply mention an organization they volunteer or work for, with no explanation of what they do in that work. Often times these roles can demonstrate leadership, time management and project management experience. If you filled a leadership role in your extracurricular activities, be sure to describe the scope of your responsibilities.

*School.* Include and describe everything you have earned. If you have earned a high GPA, you have mostly likely made the honor roll, qualified for scholarships, have been inducted into honor societies or lettered in academics. Make sure you include this information. If you worked part time or full time while going to school, say so. It might help your prospective new employer understand why you have an “average” GPA.  
  
*Personal Life.* If you have obvious gaps in your work history or schooling be sure to explain it. Many applicants are juggling parenthood, elderly parents, full time employment, part time employment, and/or full time college, simultaneously, but don't actually say this anywhere. Employers appreciate how difficult this can be, so take credit for the time management skills you have gained from your experiences.

**Make It Personal**

Expand on your experience and what you have done as an individual and not what your office has done. Many prior military members will include information about the accomplishment of the unit they supervised, because this is how their military appraisals and awards are written. DO NOT do this in a federal resume. Include detailed descriptions of what YOU have accomplished. Do not assume the human resources staffing specialists will know your experience based on a generic job description, especially if you have previously worked for that same organization.

**For more tips and information on completing resumes: https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/**