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(559) 278-2381
Monday – Friday (8 am – 5 pm)
www.csufresno.edu/careers

Federal Resume-Writing

Introduction to Federal Resume-Writing

Federal resumes like Federal applications are very different than private-sector resumes. Federal resumes request information that most private companies do not and may be multiple pages long depending on your experience. Below is a checklist of items and information to include:

- ☐ **Contact Information:** Your full name, full mailing address, day and evening phone numbers, home e-mail, social security number and country of citizenship
- ☐ **Job Information:** Job announcement number, job title, and job grade
- ☐ **Other Information (top part of resume):** Veteran's preference, reinstatement eligibility (for former federal employees) and highest federal civilian grade held (also include job series and dates at that grade)
- ☐ **Education:**
  - o College (name, city, state, zip code, your majors, type and year of degrees held or semester hours completed);
  - o High School (name and address including city, state, zip code and date of diploma/GED, if requested)
- ☐ **Work Experience:**
  - o Paid and unpaid (job titles, duties and accomplishments, employer's name and address including zip code, supervisor's name and phone number, starting and ending dates with month and year, hours per week and salary and list each experience as separate entry on resume)
  - o Indicate if current supervisor can be contacted; job-related training courses (title and year)
  - o Job-related knowledge or skills
  - o Current job-related certificates and licenses
  - o Job-related honors
- ☐ **Other Categories:** Awards, special accomplishments, leadership, activities, memberships, or publications

In addition, here are some additional checklist items for your resume**:**
- ☐ Analyze the job announcements carefully for keywords and government language
- ☐ Include your accomplishments; don't be shy, be truthful
- ☐ Focus on the mission of the agency and translate your experience into terms that would make sense for that agency
- ☐ Use more nouns and titles (e.g. writer, team leader, database administrator) to allow for identification in a keyword search
- ☐ KSA's: An Essential Attachment to Your Federal Resume
- ☐ Use reverse-chronological format (your most recent positions listed first)
- ☐ Avoid using "I" in resume (note: okay in Federal application-writing, but not in resumes)
- ☐ Include page numbers on every page

Since Federal resume-writing is more detailed than a private-industry resume, you do not need to create a new resume for each position you are applying. However, we recommend you tailor your resume to your desired position by changing your "Profile" or "Qualifications Profile" (see below for further details).

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Federal Resume Section Headings

Section Headings (technical applicants): For technical applicants, where the emphasis is on licenses, certifications and educational training:

- Personal and Job Information
- Profile
- Critical Skills and/or Accomplishments
- Licenses and Certifications
- Education and Training (this can move after Professional Experience if experience is more important than education)
- Professional Experience
- Other Qualifications (memberships, publications, presentations, community associations, special interests, travel, and so on)

Section Headings (non-technical applicants): Resume organization for a position that does not require specific education or licenses (Professional Experience is listed before Education):

- Personal and Job Information
- Profile
- Critical Skills and/or Accomplishments
- Professional Experience
- Education
- Training
- Other Qualifications

Specific Section Information/Examples

Here are some examples of how you can write information for the above mentioned areas:

- **Objective:** Lead Management and Program, GS-0343-13
- **Federal Civilian Status:**

  Example 1 (for current or former Federal employees):
  "Federal Civilian Status: Writer-Editor, GS-301, 11/9, April 1993 to present"
  Example 2 (for current or former Federal employees):
  "Federal Civilian Status: Program Analyst, GS-301, 12/10, April 1993 to May 2001" or,
  Example 3 (not current Federal employee or are Federal employee with no Federal status):
  "Federal Civilian Status: N/A"

- **Veterans' Preference:**

  If yes, write:
  "Veterans' Preference: 5-point preference, U.S. Army, Sergeant, April 1991-April 1998, Honorably Discharged"
  If no, write:
  "Veterans' Preference: N/A"

  For more information on Veterans' Preference and Employment Programs, please visit: www.usajobs.gov, click on the "Veterans" tab and then click on "Overview" under "Your Veterans' Preference Status".

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<u>Specific Section Information/Examples Cont.</u>
- **Qualifications Profile:**
  Highly organized and detail-focused Full-Charge Bookkeeper with track record of accurately and efficiently supporting overall accounting activities.
  - ♦ Comprehensive knowledge of accounting and auditing principles, A/P, A/R, payroll, general ledger postings, invoicing, taxation issues, and regulatory compliance guidelines.
  - ♦ Expertise in developing and delivering monthly, quarterly, and annual Profit and Loss Statements and Balance Sheets for management within strict deadlines.
  - ♦ Keen ability to analyze cost control, providing timely and frequent financial information that supports corporate goals and objectives.
  - ♦ Proven ability to identify and implement improvements to streamline processes and increase efficiency and productivity.
  - ♦ Excellent technology skills; quickly incorporate propriety applications and new methodologies.

<u>Helpful Resume-Writing Information</u>
One of the most difficult areas of resume-writing is the "Work Experience" section. Some aspects about the work experience section to keep in mind as you write your resume are as follows:
- ***Most Important Section.*** The Work Experience section is the most important on a resume. This is the section an application reviewer will find the best information about whether you are qualified for the position and where you can gain points for being highly considered for the position you are seeking. There are different subheadings you can use to write your current and previous jobs. These will not necessarily be used all at the same time. They are as follows:
  - o Job Information and Compliance Details (title of job, agency, office, address, supervisor, supervisor's phone, salary, hours per week)
  - o Introduction (overview of the office's mission and service)
  - o Duties & Responsibilities
  - o Accomplishments/Projects
  - o Teams/Collateral Duties
- ***Duration of Work Experiences Listed.*** Your work history should cover the last 10 years. Anything longer than 10 years is not of interest to the human resources reviewer.
- ***Describing Past Jobs.*** You should not include too long history of your work experiences, but many applicants make their descriptions too short. Find a balance between the two and make sure that there is a detailed description of the duties performed at your particular job. Include any accomplishments in separate section.
- ***Length of Current Job Description.*** The description for your current job should be the longest description of all the other positions that you have held. In terms of length, depending on duration of this position, this job description can be three paragraphs in length to three pages long. Once this description has been written, the bulk of the writing difficulty for your work experience is over.
- ***Length of Second Job Description.*** This description should be shorter than the first job description unless your second job is more closely related to your job objective. If not, then this will be half as long as your first or current job description.
- ***Including Community Service, Volunteer Positions or Unpaid Experience.*** Any and all work experiences that are paid or unpaid should be included in your resume. The format is not the same as the work experience descriptions. A more brief description with just a few lines of information is best. Content to include in this section incorporates "Community and civic leadership positions," "Association or nonprofit leadership positions," "Teaching," "Consulting," and "Small-business experiences".

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Core Competencies to Meet

Human resource specialists look for certain "core competencies" in your Federal resume. According to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, core competencies are "observable, measurable pattern of skills, knowledge, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform work roles or occupational functions successfully." Each industry has different core competencies, but the types of competencies companies seek are: customer service, project management, teamwork, working under pressure, attention to detail, flexibility, decision-making, problem-solving or resourcefulness.

You can integrate core competencies throughout your resume in such sections as your Profile, Work Experience, or at the end of your resume in the Other Qualifications. For more information and detailed examples of including competencies into your Federal resume, see Kathryn Kraemer Troutman's book *Federal Resume Guidebook* located in our Career Services Library, Joyal 256.

Finding Agency's Core Competencies

You can visit: www.opm.gov/hrd/lead/trnginfo/trnginfo.htm#core to find specific core competencies or go to the Federal agency's direct website and search for "core competencies". If the specific agency's website does not list core competencies, then you can use any search engine to find "core competencies" in the field you are seeking.

Format, Font & Style

- Type style for employers' names should be different than the style used for job titles
- Same is true for college name and degree title
- Ideal amount of white space around resume is 1 to 1.5 inches (if necessary, use 0.75 inches)
- The best font types to use are Times New Roman or Arial (other acceptable fonts: Bookman, Souvenir, or Century Gothic)

Federal Resume Action Words

Including action words in Federal resumes are very important. Please refer to Appendix A for Federal Resume action words as you put together your descriptions for your resume.

For Federal resume samples, please visit our Career Services' homepage at: www.csufresno.edu/careers. Click on "Students," then on "Job Search Preparation" and you then will see "Federal Resume Samples". The above information has been obtained from George Mason University's Career Services (http://careers.gmu.edu/students/jobfind/fedjobs/resume.cfm) and Kathryn Kraemer Troutman's *Federal Resume Guidebook*.

If you have any questions about applying for Federal jobs, creating a Federal resume or would like career assistance, please visit Career Services and meet with a career counselor. We are located in the Joyal Administration Building, Room 256. You may also schedule an appointment with a career counselor by calling: (559) 278-2381. Additionally, Kathryn Kraemer Troutman's Federal Resume Guidebook has great samples that can be found in our Career Services' library.

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Appendix A: Federal Resume Action Words

The following is an excerpt of Kathryn Kraemer Troutman's Federal resume books, and what she says about incorporating action words in resumes. Here is a list of action words and verbs you should incorporate in your Federal resume:

- Complex or highly complex
- Unique
- Energetic
- Creative

The following list is a compilation of more than 100 powerful words for resume writing based on more than 15 years of professional resume writing experience. There are undoubtedly many more. Keep this list near your computer or wherever you work on your resume as a handy reference. It will be a great tool when you think you are stuck for a word. The list is arranged into categories. Just by picking words for the various categories and modifying them as needed, you will be already to a quality resume.

These words are nouns and verbs, quantifiers, interpersonal traits, abilities, core competencies, and industry jargon. These exceptional words will demonstrate your level of independence and impress the reader.

Creation

These verbs demonstrate initiative, resourcefulness, organizational skills, and creativity.

assemble	conceive	convene	create	design
forge	form	formulate	invent	implement
initiate	realize	spearhead	plan	

First or Only

The Navy Job Kit gives these instructions: "Use modifiers to define the frequency at which you perform tasks, i.e., occasionally, regularly, once or twice per year, monthly, weekly, daily. Use words that define the level and scope of your experience and skills." These quantifiers are important. If you do not tell readers you were the sole support for 15 professionals, how will they know it?

chief	first	foremost	greatest	most
leading	number one	singular	one	only
prime	single	sole	unparalleled	top
unique	unrivaled			

Outcomes

To demonstrate that you can "get things done," use these words to demonstrate action and results.

communication	cooperation	cost-effective	efficiency	morale
outcomes	output	productivity		

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Employment

These words demonstrate movement, action, and decision-making abilities.

deploy	employ	exercise	use	utilize

Leadership

Leaders are in demand – whether you are a manager, administrative staffer, or tradesperson. If you are a team leader, foreman, supervisor, or lead, define your leadership responsibilities.

(be) in chief (of)
(be) in charge (of)
(be) in responsible for

administer	control	direct	govern	head up
lead	manage	oversee	run	supervise

Primacy

How important are you to the project? Are you a subject-matter expert? If you are, say so.

advisor	co-worker	key	major	expert
primary	principal	subject matter	source person	lead
sole source				

Persuasion

The ability to persuade is a significant trait for success. Persuasive skills and language can be used in describing teamwork.

coach	galvanize	inspire	lobby	rally
persuade	(re)invigorate	(re)vitalize	unify	unite

Success

The word "success" suggests results and positive thinking. The reader believes you are successful because you have written in your resume.

accomplish	achieve	attain	master
score (a victory)	succeed	sustain	