

The Federal Resume



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It is misleading to assume that a standard resume will land you a job with Uncle Sam. Most private industry resumes are loosely structured and simply introduce the applicant to the company. Follow the guidance in this section and in Chapter Six of [The Book of U.S. Government Jobs](#) to write successful applications and resumes for the job you want in government. The application is one of the keys to successfully landing a federal job. You must write a professional application or federal resume and develop job search strategies that work. This web site and *The Book of U.S. Government Jobs* will help you achieve those goals.

It is important to remember that **YOU MUST SUBMIT ALL REQUIRED INFORMATION**. You now have the option to use a federal style resume format, the OF-612 Optional Application, and many agencies now offer online resume builders. If you don't include all required information as stated on the job announcement, your application may be rejected or at the very least you will lose valuable rating points.

There are vast differences between industry's standard brief RESUME format and the detailed information you must provide on the federal job resume format. The resume that most are accustomed to is a short one to two page introduction. Uncle Sam's resume, often three to five pages or longer, must be highly structured with specific data. [Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, \(KSAs\) statements](#) may also be required to identify the best qualified candidate for the position.

The federal application process is complex and requires applicants to thoroughly read job vacancy announcements, and provide detailed work, education, and special skills and qualifications information. Your work history and education **MUST** include the required Duties and Specialized Experience listed in the Job Announcement to rate high enough on the list to be called for an interview. The format and content is critical.

The federal government rates applicants on their work experience, education, and special qualifications. The personnel specialist rating your application is a generalist in most cases and rates you either eligible or ineligible based on the [Federal Qualification Standards](#). The qualification standards describe the general and specialized work experience and education required for each pay level within a job series. You must have a certain number of years of both general and specialized experience and/or education to be rated eligible for the position's pay grade. Past work experience and training must be presented in your resume or optional application in sufficient detail to receive a rating. If your application is rated eligible, you will be ranked against all applicants and the best qualified candidates will be referred to the selecting official. The selecting official picks from the top rated applicants. Interviews are optional; however, typically the top rated applicants are interviewed. Refer to Chapter Six of [The Book of U.S. Government Jobs](#) for guidance on how to complete your application.

Your Three Options

Applicants can either compile and [write their resume / application](#) independently with the [proper resources and knowledge](#), hire a professional [federal resume writing service](#), or use [Quick & Easy Federal Jobs Kit](#) software that generates the OF-612 Optional Application For Federal Employment form, Resumix, and other resume formats. Quick and Easy Federal Jobs Kit is a comprehensive set of tools for writing your application. This Windows 95/98/2000/ME, XP & VISTA software includes the OF 612 and OF-306 optional forms, the original SF-171 application, and it will generate resumes and applications from entered data.

PROFESSIONAL RESUME AND KSA SERVICE

If you prefer, a [professional federal resume writing service](#) can complete your resume, KSAs, and cover letters for you.

Write Your Resume

Using Proper Guidance and Samples

When writing your resume you have to consider many things and include all [required information](#). Format is also important especially with [RESUMIX](#) and online submissions. If you are good at putting your thoughts down on paper and have the time available you can complete your resume application as long as you fully understand the application process. I wrote many federal applications during my 35 + years of government service with great success. I was also a trained and certified federal rating official and reviewed and rated thousands of job applications. One of my very early job changes in federal government was from a DOD avionics technician position in Topeka Kansas to a similar DOD job in Pittsburgh, PA. I was selected for the job and shortly after reporting to work, one of the specialists I was working with stated, "The guys in the shop thought they would just throw away their tools when I reported for work." I asked him why they would think that, and he said that the supervisor had left my application out on his desk and all had read it.

The application and resume process isn't formidable, however it is detailed and you have to know what to focus on so that rating officials will be able to easily find the key duties and specialized experience that is required for the job. With a little coaching and samples that are provided in [The Book of U.S. Government Jobs](#) and The [The Federal Resume Guidebook](#), you too can get through this. Entry level job applicants can expect to spend at least 4 to 8 hours on their application. Midlevel applicants can easily spend several days just compiling key information in preparation for completing their resume. This is why I encourage all who apply to complete their resume **OFF LINE**. I don't recommend completing your resume through an agency or USAJOBS resume builder because of their limitations. It is best to write your resume and/or application on your word processor and take your time to compile the info you need, draft your work experiences, spell check and insure that you have **ALL information that is required**

in the Job Announcement. After you complete your federal style resume offline, it is a simple matter to copy and paste your resume into online resume builders.

A word of caution. Once you have your resume completed and posted on USAJOBS or one of the many other agency resume builders, it's easy to submit that same resume to apply for other job vacancies. That can be a mistake that can cost you a possible job. Before resubmitting that same resume for another job vacancy READ the job announcement thoroughly to insure that other duties and specialized experience are not required for the new position. If you find different requirements, and you possess the new duties or specialized experience, incorporate them into your resume. It is not unusual to apply for the same job series and find other requirements, or new or additional KSA statements.

SPECIAL OFFER

Save when you order both titles, *The Book of U.S. Government Jobs* 10th edition and *The Federal Resume Guidebook*. Go to the [Shopping Cart](#) for pricing.

These resources have everything you will need to find job vacancies, determine what's available, and most importantly what you need to do to get your foot in the door and land a high paying and secure government job. You will also discover the secrets to preparing a professional federal style resume that will get the attention of rating officials and get you HIRED. Everything you need to pursue a high paying and secure government career is included in these two highly acclaimed books by the two best known government career book authors.

[Kathryn Troutman](#), the author of [The Federal Resume Guidebook](#) is known as the "*Federal Resume Guru*" is a well known career counselor. [Dennis Damp](#), the author of [The Book of U.S. Government Jobs](#), retired from federal service in 2005 with 35 years and 7 months service. Damp knows first hand what it takes to go from job hunter to hired, and everything in between.

Agency Forms

(OF-612, Declaration For Federal Employment, and OPM Form 1203)

Two new optional forms are now available. The "[Optional Application for Federal Employment Form OF-612](#)" is a simplified application for individuals who prefer a form. It is particularly useful for applicants who do not have extensive job-related qualifications, such as recent graduates or applicants for entry level or wage grade positions. This optional application contains information considered to be the minimum necessary to determine an applicant's qualifications. Federal agencies could not require all applicants to use the optional application, except where the agency had developed a computer-compatible version of the optional application. Forms are available from the same sources listed above.

If you decide to use the OF-612 form, [Quick & Easy Federal Jobs Kit](#) software generates the OF-612, Resumix, and other resume formats. This software provides a comprehensive set of tools for writing your application and is Windows 95/98/2000/ME, XP & VISTA compatible. It includes over a dozen federal forms including the OF 612 and OF-306 optional forms, the original SF-171 application, and it will generate resumes and applications from entered data. It automatically expands as you enter your work experience, KSAs and educational background.

The second form, "Declaration for Federal Employment", OF-306 is used primarily to collect information on conduct and suitability, and also on other matters, such as receipt of a government annuity. Agencies have the option of asking applicants to complete this optional form at any time during the hiring process, but it is required by all appointees, those selected for a job. It is anticipated that only the final few applicants who have a good chance of receiving a job offer would complete this form. This form also warns applicants of the consequences of submitting fraudulent information and to ask them to certify the accuracy of all of their application materials.

OPM Form 1203, Form C, assists agencies when computer-assisted techniques are used to rate job applicants. Applicants must complete OPM Form 1203, an optical scan form designed or optional online **Occupational Questionnaires** to collect applicant information and qualifications in a format suitable for automated processing. Different version of the forms are used, depending on the occupation or automated system being used. Most of this data is now submitted online through Occupational Questionnaires.

Three [OF-612 downloadable versions](#) of this form are available on this site.

[KSA \(Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Other Characteristics\)](#)



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KSAs are also referred to as Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other Characteristics (KSAOs). They are required for the selecting official to identify the best qualified candidate for the position. Most look at writing KSAOs as drudgery, however it is a necessary part of your employment application, if requested on the job announcement. To qualify for a position you must meet two types of factors; *Selective Factors* and *Quality Ranking Factors*.

KSAOs are attributes needed to perform a specific job function that are demonstrate through qualifying training, education and experience. The following definitions will help you understand what the selecting official is looking for when reviewing your submissions:

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Knowledge - An organized body of information, usually of a factual or procedural nature, which if applied, makes adequate performance on the job possible.

Examples include knowledge of:

Federal Regulations and Directives
Operational systems and procedures
Budget and accounting principals
Engineering practices
Environmental Compliance Law
Administrative practices

Skill - The manipulation of data, things, or people through manual, mental or verbal means. Skills are measurable through testing, can be observed, and quantifiable. Often referred to as expertness that comes from training, practice, etc.

Examples include skill in:

Keyboard data entry
Motor vehicle operation
Computer software proficiency
Electronic or computer repair
Carpentry, plumbing and/or HVAC repair
Second language proficiency

Ability - The capacity to perform a physical or mental activity at the present time. Typically abilities are apparent through functions completed on the job. Abilities and skills are often interchangeable in KSAOs. The main difference is that ability is the capacity to perform where a skill is the actual manipulation of data, things or people. You may have the ability but unless observed through actions that ability may not transfer to a skill set.

Examples include the ability to:

Organize and plan work (observed at work)
Analyze situations, programs and problems
Communicate orally and in writing
Coach and mentor others

Other Characteristics - Mental or physical attributes or characteristics that don't fall under the other areas.

Examples are:

Proactive - takes initiative to get things done without prompting
Copes well in stressful environments - handles complex tasks

Reliability - assigned work is completed ahead of schedule and the quality of work is exceptional
Multiple work assignments - capable of successfully handling various and sundry tasks

This factor is required for jobs that to a greater degree encounter these characteristics such as jobs with the Federal Aviation Administration in air traffic control, work at nuclear power plants, and careers in law enforcement.

This information is excerpted from the all new 9th edition of [*The Book of U.S. Government Jobs*](#). This new title provides specific guidance on how to assess each job announcement and write effective KSAs that will get the selecting officials attention. This book will help you complete a dynamic and professional application.

RESUMIX



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RESUMIX® generally refers to the products of Resumix corporation. These products are designed to use software and artificial intelligence to review large amounts of resumes, index them, and determine which ones meet the requirements of a position and are suitable for further review.

Resumix is being used for filling most U.S. Appropriated Fund positions within the Department of Defense, the Air Force, and the Veteran's Administration. It is designed to streamline and expedite recruiting. The system is being used successfully in many larger private sector organizations including Continental Airlines and Disney Corporation. The DOD intends to use RESUMIX for recruiting current federal employees within the DOD, transferees from other federal agencies, or former federal employees seeking reinstatement. The DOD recently announced that it will no longer accept any other forms of applications for recruitment of status employees, current federal workers. U.S. Citizens currently not employed by the U.S. Government would use the traditional competitive application methods mentioned earlier in this chapter.

With RESUMIX resumes are E-mailed to a dedicated computer where the format is reviewed. After the review, properly formatted resumes are forwarded to the RESUMIX database. The same procedure applies to resumes received via mail except those are scanned directly into the database. The computer reads your resume and identifies information such as your name, address, education, and your unique skills.

Tailoring Your Resume to the Job Announcement

The key to landing a job with Uncle Sam is to tailor your federal style résumé and application to the core duties and responsibilities listed in the job announcement. Those who take the time to

develop a comprehensive and properly formatted tailored application package will improve their rating and get the attention of the selecting official.

Read the **job announcement** thoroughly for the position you are applying for and pay attention to the required Duties and Responsibilities. Look for special skills or other evaluation factors that are needed. Highlight the key duties and responsibilities and then incorporate them frequently in your work experience, occupational questionnaire and KSA write-ups. You must provide specific examples of the work experience you have that is relevant to the job you are bidding on. Detailed step-by-step guidance on how to tailor your federal style resume to the job announcement is available in Chapter Six, starting on page 130. This section takes you through an actual job announcement and shows you how to identify key information to tailor your resume.

Don't use the exact same application for all jobs that you apply for. The key is to read the job announcement and then tailor your application to that specific job. Detailed guidance on how to tailor your résumé is included in this chapter. Jobs within the same series from different agencies often have different skill sets or required experience. Read the announcement and ensure that your application includes the required knowledge, skills and abilities.