

Tips for Writing a Federal Resume

Points to consider:

- No resume is too long, especially when applying for a federal position
- It is ok to use the word “I”, frequently
- Clear use of bolding, italics, formatting should be uniform
- Use of a footer is advised, include – last name, date, vacancy announcement number and page numbers at a minimum

Content:

The federal resume must include information that is not needed in the private sector. Your federal resume should include the following:

- **Job announcement number, job title, and job grade** of the job for which you are applying
- Your **full name, mailing address, day and evening phone numbers** and home **e-mail**.
- **Last four digits of your Social Security number**
- **Country of citizenship**
- **Veterans Preference** - List your Veterans Preference points. Ensure that you attach or upload supporting documentation (e.g., DD214 or Statement of Service if still on Active Duty; SF-15, Application for 10-point preference; and Disability Rating Letter of 30% or more from the VA, if applicable).
- **Education** - Include: college name, city, state, zip code, majors, type and year of degrees held or number of semester hours completed, and high school name, city, state, zip code, and date of your diploma or GED, if requested. Keep in mind that your military training may qualify you. Your Verification of Military Experience and Training (VMET) document (DD Form 2586), is the best place to start your training and education inventory.
- **Work experience** (paid and unpaid) - Include: job title; duties and accomplishments; employer's name and address, including zip code; supervisor's name and phone number, starting and ending dates (month and year); hours per week; and salary. List each experience as a separate entry on the resume. Forget about military job titles or occupational codes. Instead, look at what you did. Your VMET document is a great place to start. Employers prefer proven performers, so make sure you know what employers are looking for in comparison to your military work experience.
- Indicate if your **current supervisor** can be contacted.
- Job-related **training** courses (title and year).
- Job-related **knowledge or skills** - Showing how your skills fit the company's requirements starts with an extensive inventory. Skills fall into three categories:
 1. Self-management skills refer to the way you manage yourself on the job (e.g., dependable, resourceful, etc.);
 2. Functional skills are the skills you use on the job or have used in previous jobs (e.g., operate equipment, supervise, analyze, etc.); and

3. Technical skills relate to specific skills required to perform a described task (e.g., computer programming, accounting, sales, etc.)
- Current job-related **certificates and licenses** - Make sure you understand the licensure and certification requirements for your job objective.
 - Job-related **honors, awards, special accomplishments**, leadership activities, memberships, or publications.

Remember

- Review the job announcements carefully for key words.
- Use verbs and adjectives (e.g., managed, implemented, created) that match key words identified in the job announcement.
- Eliminate military lingo (use words such as personnel instead of squad or platoon).
- Include your accomplishments; do not be shy, be truthful.
- Focus on the mission of the agency and translate your experiences.
- Your positive attitude and genuine enthusiasm goes a long way.

Johnny Smith
United States Citizen (no ssn # needed)
123 Yellowthroat Ct.
Gainesville, VA 00099
(534)-555-1111 telephone
(703) 123-4567 cellular

Position: Vacancy Announcement: Supervisory Training Specialist, Branch Chief Youth, GS-301-13/14, Vacancy Identification Number: OR441089, Announcement Number: R9-11-441089-AR **This is very important.**

Education:

- 2000, University Wisconsin – No Where, MS, M.S. Environmental Science and Policy, Major Field of Study: Tropical Ecology, Thesis: Patterns of diversity and habitat associations in a vulnerable island butterfly fauna, Tobago, West Indies
- 1995, University Chicago, IL, B.S. Biological Aspects of Conservation, Major Field of Study: Invertebrate Biology, Semester Abroad 1992 Natural Resource Management Australia and New Zealand
- 1989, Wirst Academy High School, Highland WV, High School - Diploma, May 1989

Work Experience:

United States Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, Office of the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget, Office of Youth in the Great Outdoors, Deputy Director, Duty Station – Washington, D.C.GS-301-13 step 1

Jan 01, 2010- Present, Final Annual Income \$89,033; 40 hours plus per week
Supervisor: Jill Johnson, Director, Office of Youth in the Great Outdoors
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 3557
Washington, D.C. 20241 (123) 304-0000 office phone

You may contact my supervisor. This is not one of your references. Bring another sheet of references to the interview.

The Office of Youth in the Great Outdoors provides **Department-wide leadership**, coordination and direction regarding the promotion, use and expansion of programs to educate, engage and employ youth at the Department of the Interior to develop the future leaders in the conservation profession. The purpose of my work is to manage, implement, analyze/monitor, oversee, evaluate and review Department-wide youth conservation, leadership, engagement, education, employment and volunteer programs. These programs cut across many Federal agencies, local and state government organizations, elementary, secondary and post secondary education institutions, and non-profit organizations and therefore the work affects a wide range of agency activities and initiatives.

As the Deputy Director of the Office of Youth in the Great Outdoors I oversee and provide strategic and targeted program support in the direction, management and coordination of Departmental efforts to provide a wide variety of conservation-related jobs, internships, career, service, educational and leadership opportunities/training for youth. I identify issues and problems regarding youth conservation, leadership, education, education, employment and volunteer programs and make appropriate recommendations and improvements where necessary. I advise senior level Departmental officials in written and oral formats on all matters within the scope of **Office of Youth in the Great Outdoors**. I

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manage resources to ensure high performance, greater public accountability, quality service and participant satisfaction. I frequently identify program issues to be addressed by policy and write all or significant segments of position papers, briefing documents, talking points, policy documents and other related correspondence. I establish standards, policy and procedures for youth programming operations to ensure the forward movement of program goals and objectives. I develop, implement and lead small and large-scale complex programs to improve and increase youth engagement, education and employment opportunities that support the conservation, preservation and awareness of natural, cultural and historical resources across all bureaus of the Department nation-wide. As many of these complex programs are new to the Department, I am responsible for institutionalizing these programs, providing oversight and conducting evaluations, as well as identifying issues or problems to ensure that these partnerships and programs provide significant positive impacts. This involves the extensive monitoring of youth programs to ensure compliance with established procedures, regulations and policies. I am also responsible for writing and developing new policies, standards, procedures and/or guidance where there is little to no precedent.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) - Pacific Islands Office, Honolulu, HI, Duty Station – Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Fish and Wildlife Biologist GS-401-12 step 3

Feb 07- Dec 2009, Final Annual Income \$63,341 plus Cost of Living Adjustment; 40 hours plus per week
Supervisor: Ted Campbell, USFWS, Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office (PIFWO)
300 Ala Moana Blvd. Room 3-124
Honolulu, HI 96850 (546) 123-0000 office phone (855) 336-5576 cellular
You may not contact my supervisor. No longer in the position.

I represented the USFWS in the CNMI and was the staff lead in facilitating interests, concerns, and communication between federal, state, and regional entities. I provided leadership, oversight and coordination for the Department of the Interior and advised senior regional and field office directors in written and oral formats on such matters as: 1.) the formulation of overall program objectives, 2.) the collaboration and coordination of regional programs, 3.) the improvement and standardization of methods or procedures, 4.) the development of new methodologies and techniques for fish and wildlife resource protection, 5.) the leveraging and expanding support/participation of state, regional, and community organizations and groups, and 6.) professional leadership and authoritative consultant services to various entities and agencies both national and international. The objective of this position was to build program capacity to enable community leaders/groups/members to become active participants in conserving regional natural resources. This was a promotional step from the position list below.

Make sure these tie to the announcement

Job-Related Training Courses:

- DOI Helicopter Crew Safety and Sling Load Training Crew Certification May 2009
- NOAA Social Marketing Survey Development March 2009
- DOI Federal Information Systems Security Awareness 2009
- DOI Open Water Module Motorboat Operator Feb. 2009
- DOI BLM NEPA Training Module 1 and 2 Oct 2008

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Paper/Oral Presentations:

- BLM-NLCS 10Th Anniversary and 10 year Planning Meeting, Los Vegas, NV 2010
- North American Assoc. Environmental Educators, Buffalo, NY, Oct. 2010
- Grassroots Gathering, Children & Nature Network, Princeton, NJ, Aug 2010
- League of United Latin American Citizens, Albuquerque, NM, July 2010
- Haskell Indian Nations University Youth Leadership Workshop, Lawrence, KS July, 2010

Written Publications:

Cruz J., R. Harper, M. Swift, and N. Hawley 2009. Adult provisioning and post-breeding migration of Wedged-tailed Shearwaters. in press.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2008. Terrestrial Resource Surveys of Tinian and Aguiguan, Mariana Islands Area. Report to Marine Force Pacific (MARFORPAC) and Naval Facilities (NAVFAC), Pearl Harbor Honolulu, HI

Martin, G., L. Williams, N. Hawley, and P. Radley. 2008. Wildlife and Vegetation Surveys, Asuncion 2008. Technical Report 11 CNMI-DFW, unpubl.

Awards

- Super Biologist 2010, National Conservation Training Center, Shepherdstown, WV
- Extreme Biologist 2009, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge, NM

Affiliations:

- The Herpetologist League – Member
- Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles – Member
- Ecological Society of America – Member

Writing for “Knowledge, Skills & Abilities” or KSA

Apply the same rules when writing KSAs that you would in submitting an essay response or writing sample — use the active tense, don’t ramble, and make sure you are answering the question being asked. Most importantly, don’t forget to read it over before submitting your responses!

KSA TIPS

- Read the job announcement carefully, highlighting key words or phrases describing the position responsibilities so you remember to address those points in your KSA responses.
- Go back to your résumé and outline a list of experiences you’ve had that address each KSA. Review each list and select the items that best illustrate a link between your experience and each KSA as you compose your responses.
- Add information relevant to each KSA that may not be included in your resume — such as any specialized training, publications, leadership roles, student activities, and awards. Make sure you take credit for your entire range of experiences including volunteer work, internships, school projects, and extracurricular activities.
- Link all these different examples explicitly to the KSA questions. Whether you’ve worked as a waitress or cashier, served as a student club officer, or volunteered at a nursing home, the key is to tie these experiences back to the KSAs in a way that demonstrates that you are the best candidate for the job being advertised.
- Write your KSAs in the first person, and use concrete examples to illustrate your skills. This is your opportunity to more fully elaborate on skills and responsibilities outlined in your resume, and examples are much more compelling than simple assertions.
- Be sure to include examples that demonstrate your ability to take initiative.
- Focus on any outcomes to which you directly contributed, citing quantitative data where possible. For example, use data that measures how much (like how much money or time you generated or saved), or how many (like how many people attended, how many units you produced), and point to positive change (percentage growth or savings) wherever possible.
- Make sure your answers reflect your level of responsibility. Similarly, clearly identify who you interacted with and how (e.g., providing key information to a manager, working with a group of peers, or supervising a team).
- Tailor each KSA answer to read between half a page and a page in length. Remember that a busy person will be reading through your application, so it is important to find the right balance between providing compelling information and information overload.
- Review your answers to ensure they are succinct and easy to read. Always use plain language and don’t use acronyms. Focus on content, and don’t forget to proofread.
- Ask a friend who knows you well to read over your finished answers. Your reader should make sure that you have included all of your relevant experiences, that your responses flow well, and that the answers don’t contain any typos or grammatical errors.

Writing for “Knowledge, Skills & Abilities” or KSA

A SAMPLE KSA

Below are examples of answers to a common KSA, “skill in written communication.” It should be clear to you which are the stronger responses.

Example of a Poor Response

My communication skills are excellent. I am often asked to help out in this regard and have been commended for my work.

Example of a Better Response

In the past 10 months, I have taken over a number of writing assignments previously held by my supervisor:

- I have been drafting monthly reports on leasing activities under the purview of our office. These are routinely approved by my supervisor without change and are circulated to 10 field offices and Regional Directors.
- I have assumed the responsibility of reporter for the quarterly meeting of the bureau’s Research Directors. Reports of these meetings are reviewed by the Director’s Office prior to distribution to all participants.
- In January, I completed the course, “Writing Analytical Reports,” offered through the National Independent Study Center. This was a six-month course involving 24 hours of training and covering such areas as: planning an analytical report; collecting and analyzing data; identifying possible solutions to problems addressed in the report; and organizing, writing, and editing the report.

In addition, while I was a student in college I developed and was recognized for my strong written communication skills in a variety of capacities:

- After my junior year, I was selected for a summer internship with my state representative, for whom I drafted constituent correspondence and press releases. Though I was an intern, the majority of the letters and press releases I wrote were sent out without modification.
- During my senior year, I served as the chapter president of my honor society, and routinely wrote progress reports to send to the headquarters of the honor society.
- Throughout college I was a staff writer for the student daily newspaper. As a reporter I wrote both short news stories as well as in-depth feature articles on a weekly basis, and was selected for the feature writing award by the editorial board my junior year.