

THAT OTHERS MAY RISE

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Resume Writing Tips

The goal for a resume is to get you through the doors: The screening entity (a computer program or person(s)); hiring authority; interviewers; and then most likely back to the person doing the hiring. While this document is geared towards government jobs the concepts can be applied elsewhere and have been verified by others.

Before Applying Anywhere:

- **Network as much as possible.** Network means let people get to know you while continuing to work hard, not just talking and wandering. Remember if you are going to utilize social networking sites, be careful of what you are posting, and what sites you are affiliated with, as companies **will “Google”** your name. It is much easier to hire the known, then the unknown. BUT just because you are a known person, guarantees nothing, don't blow the resume or the interview; it's rarely in the bag if the company or agency has a hiring process.
- **Do your current job and do it well.** To many times people look towards the next job and forget the current one. This is critical, especially if you are looking to move upward in your present or a related agency / area. This is an absolutely critical way to create a network, and get the next promotion/role. It's called **creating “Pull”** for your career. This means, you don't need to do the talking for your next move, as your boss and/or the people that see your work, will talk for you. *People observe and talk, they just do, understand that.*

I. Getting The Resume Through The Screening Entity

- a. **Make it Fit:** Try to learn the initial screening process of the company or Agency. Does it go through a computer for key words or is it reviewed by someone else? If it's a computer, it is all the more important to use key words. If it is a person, still use the key words, but you may have a little leeway, but don't count on it.
- b. **Make a List:** Make a list of all your work accomplishments, start with those that are most current and work back. Five years back is good, but if you need more or it is relevant to the position then go back as far as you think it makes sense. Make sure your accomplishments fit the jobs you are applying for. Example: *Able to analyze the duties of the secretary / program support assistance for a brand new position by utilizing my knowledge of functional areas of information technology and customer service to outline all responsibilities and duties of the position. This resulted in the first ever complete job analysis for the position, eliminated any redundancies in duties, and was completely accepted by leadership.* That shows the Situation, Task, Action, Result (STAR).
- c. **Make it Applicable:** Write the resume to the specific job and agency. Use exact words that are in the job announcement. As a veteran remember military jargon doesn't always equate to the civilian world, even from service to service words have different meanings.
- d. **Make it Meaningful:** Copy and paste parts from the job description you are applying for right into your resume, get the key components into your resume. **THIS DOESN'T MEAN LIE!** It means use their language then show how your experience fits their needs. Note: I have seen many people who are supremely qualified not get through the initial process.

- i. **Copy / Paste:** When applying for any federal job, copy and paste the Skills, Knowledges, and Abilities & Qualifications (SKA&Q) listed on the USA Jobs advertisement into your resume just as they are listed in the job announcement. SKA&Qs must be listed verbatim or you could get passed over. Again Don't LIE.
- ii. **How to Do It:** Open your resume in Word Doc and paste the SKA&Q directly into the top of the resume. Save that resume under a different name such as Resume SKA Job Title. Then open another copy of the resume and pick a specific SKA&Q, highlight it with a color, and copy the line into your resume where you think it will fit. Adjust any wording around it in the resume, but DON'T CHANGE THE KEY WORDS, use the exact wording out of the job posting. Keep doing that till everything in the second document is highlighted in yellow and is now pasted throughout your new resume. Since its also highlighted in your resume, you can easily see where you placed it, so keep that highlighted copy. It will take a little bit of work initially, but if you apply for the same type of jobs, you won't have to change it too much for each job. However, consider changing your resume for every job, when feasible or as required.
- iii. Example if it states in the Job Announcement "Requires **knowledge of functional areas of information technology**". Then make sure in your resume you have somewhere in one of your past jobs listings something like "Used **knowledge of functional areas of information technology** to ensure completion of XXXX XXXX resulting in a 25% decreased response times for all customers

II. The Hiring Authority

- a. **Make it Obvious:** Create a pertinent skills, knowledges, and abilities section right up front. There should never be any guessing by anyone reviewing your resume. Sometimes the person doing the final hiring will do a quick review of resumes. This can be a critical step as your resume could get put on the 'maybe later' pile or 'not even close' pile. You want 'let's interview this person' pile.
- b. **Make it Relevant:** You are advertising yourself for a specific job. Don't waste the hiring authority's time by talking about how "great of a weapons' expert" you are when applying for an office job that requires writing and speaking skills about automobiles.
- c. **Make it Impactful:** Always tell What and So What. List what you did and the So What at your most current job or the work that is most applicable to what you are applying for right now. **See Interview Preparation (Situation, Task, Action, Result (STAR)).** What happened, what needed to be done, what you did, & what was the outcome! Instead of: Participated in numerous worldwide operations. Try: Contributed to contingency operations by laying out specific contract details for critical support in Iraq, Afghanistan, Horn of Africa, and the Pacific Theater, thereby achieving 100% theater support goals and satisfaction on all contracts.
- d. **Make An Extra Step:** Make a cover letter. A cover letter lets you tell the reader why you are the perfect fit for the job and why they need you now. A fine blend of confidence and character, but more on [cover letters in our other section](#).
- e. **Make References Count:** Ensure your references are reachable and reliable. Provide good contact information for a reference; make sure they (references) know you are using them; and

ensure they have all positive remarks to say about you, and/or your work. Many times, a job offer comes down to two people and a reference can make or break that tie, **be certain.**

- f. **Make It the Right Level:** Make sure the resume shows you are ready and able to handle the position you are applying for. Especially if you are desiring to move upward or even if you want to take a step back. Show why you are ready to handle the position. Don't show them that you are over or underqualified. A cover letter can help address this area well.

III. The Interviewers

- a. **Make the Path Easy:** If you follow the above you're on the right path.
- b. **Make Sure You Know:** Know what is in your resume, a question might be asked, don't lie.
- c. **Make Another Step:** Nothing stops you from bringing, emailing, faxing, etc. a letter covering your unique talents and desire for the position. Your cover letter may not have covered it all. Here is your chance to provide the interview team with lasting thoughts on paper. Think of it as, an abridged version of a portfolio, highlighting "why they **should hire YOU over the other candidates**" - some folks create a "*spiral bound*" copy to give to each interviewer. Leave a positive and lasting impression behind.

[Next the Interview](#)

