

Export-Import Bank

Tips for Applying for Federal Employment

Writing a Resume

Knowing how to write a resume is a valuable skill to have in today's job market. Your resume is the first impression you give to a potential employer – it is *your* marketing piece. A well-written resume can help you land an interview or may lead to new job opportunities. Whether you are actively seeking a job at Export-Import Bank, another Federal agency, or just want to update your existing resume, this guide will assist you in making your resume, and thereby you, stand out from the crowd.

Information to Include

Having the right information at your fingertips will be helpful as you create your resume. Here is a list of the information you will need:

- Employer names, addresses, and telephone numbers
- List of your responsibilities
- Training
- Education
- Dates of employment
- Your job title/series
- Salary/GS level and step
- Awards received

If you are a current or former Federal employee, you should also have:

- Last SF-50
- Last performance appraisal

Sections to Include in Your Resume

Your resume should provide enough information to enable an employer to see, at a glance, who you are, where you can be reached, what work experience you have, what knowledge you possess, and why you are qualified for the position. At a minimum, your resume should include:

Personal Information

Your full name, mailing address with zip code, area code and phone number, and email address should be included at the top of your resume.

Education

Indicate schools attended, date degree(s) were conferred and GPAs. If a degree was not awarded, provide the number of credits received.

Work Experience

Provide job title, dates of employment, salary, hours worked per week, employers name and address, supervisor's name, contact phone number and whether or not s/he may be contacted.

Other Qualification

Provide job-related training courses, skills, certificates, honors, awards, professional certifications, special accomplishments, and memberships in professional or honor societies and organizations.

Effective Words

The purpose of a Federal resume is to demonstrate those qualities that will set one candidate apart from another. Below is a list of words to consider when creating your Federal resume.

Action Verbs

Administer	Develop	Motivate	Research
Analyze	Devise	Negotiate	Sponsor
Coach	Edit	Operate	Supervise
Conduct	Establish	Organize	Support
Consult	Evaluate	Present	Test
Contact	Expand	Produce	Train
Counsel	Improve	Publish	
Design	Manage	Recommend	
Design	Monitor	Reorganize	

Specific Nouns

Accounts	Facilities	Needs	Records
Analysis	Findings	Performance	Reports
Budget	Goals	Plans	Requirements
Campaigns	Guidance	Policies	Specification
Colleagues	Institutions	Procedures	Study
Courses	Litigation	Projects	Surveys
Criteria	Members	Prototypes	
Document	Morale	Publications	

Descriptors

Accurate	Definitive	Legal	Profitable
Adept	Diverse	Long-range	Qualitative
Analytical	Federal	Monthly	Quantitative
Annual	Fiscal	National	Resourceful
Collaborative	Functional	Numerous	Scientific
Competent	Implementation	Pioneering	Statistical
Congressional	International	Potential	Strategic
Customers	Leading	Professional	Successful

Results

Additional	Enlarged	Growth	Quicker
Decreased	Expanded	Improved	Reduced
Enhanced	Faster	Increased	

Frequently Asked Questions

Which should go first on my resume, education or experience?

The answer to this question depends on whether your education or your experience is your best selling point and/or meets the qualifications of the position you are applying to. Generally, new graduates list education first, while job-seekers with a few years or more of work history list experience first. However, when using the USAJobs Resume Builder, experience is always listed first.

Should I include all my previous positions on my resume? How far back should I go?

The most important thing is to include your most relevant experience. When considering how far back to go with your work history, go as far back as you need to in order to make your experience applicable. In other words, make sure you highlight your accomplishments of previous jobs that are most recent and relevant to the position you are seeking.

If you find that this method results in the appearance of gaps in your employment history, you can either list those positions under an “Additional Information” section or list the position in order with a brief sentence describing the work you performed.

What is the best way to showcase my ability to be successful in the position for which I am applying?

The best way to showcase your abilities for a particular job is to ensure that your resume reflects your knowledge, experience and/or education required of the position for which you are applying. Review the “Qualifications & Evaluations” tab carefully to ensure that you fully understand how your application will be evaluated.

How long should my resume be?

While the length of your Federal resume is a personal choice, the general rule of thumb is one – three pages depending upon your level of experience. However, if you are building your resume in USAJobs, the average length is four to five pages. Resumes that extend beyond one page should be numbered accordingly (e.g., X of Y), so that if lost or shuffled an employer can easily identify if there are missing pages or if there are additional pages and in what order they belong. Regardless of the length, your resume should best reflect your qualifications for the position to which you are applying as concisely as possible.

In addition to my resume, what other documents will I need to submit?

If you are applying for a Federal job, read the vacancy announcement carefully and follow all instructions. At minimum, many agencies, including Export-Import Bank, require applicants to submit a resume and an online self-assessment questionnaire. In many instances, additional documentation (e.g.,

Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (Form DD-214), most recent performance appraisal, transcripts, etc.) will be required. Failure to submit all required documents will result in your application being rejected for consideration.

What are minimum qualifications?

Minimum qualifications are standards set by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to help ensure that Federal employees are qualified for employment. You must meet these minimum qualifications to be considered for employment. Minimum qualifications are stated in terms of general or specialized experience.

- General experience is progressively responsible clerical, office, or other type of experience that shows you have the ability to perform the duties of the job being filled.
- Specialized experience is usually obtained from having worked in a position similar to the job being filled.

For some jobs, you can qualify based solely on education instead of experience. For other jobs, both education and experience are required to qualify; and for yet other jobs, you can qualify based on a combination of your experience and education. These requirements will be described in the vacancy announcement.

What is the occupational assessment questionnaire or assessment?

The questionnaire is a list of questions designed to solicit information about how well your knowledge and skills match the experience required for the job. The questionnaire is a self-assessment tool. Generally, you can preview questions by clicking on the “How to Apply” section/tab within the job announcement and scrolling down to the “How You Will Be Evaluated” section. Many agencies offer a “View Occupational Questionnaire” link to view the questions in advance of applying.

There are no “right” or “wrong” answers to the occupational questionnaire. You should respond honestly to all questions. You should also give yourself credit when deserved. While you should be careful not to inflate your self-ratings, you want to take credit for your accomplishments. Once you complete the questionnaire, a score will be assigned to your application. That score will determine whether or not you will move on for further consideration in the selection process. In addition, most agencies do state in their policy that your score may be adjusted and/or you may not be further considered for the position, if your resume and supporting document do not support your self-rating.

What types of questions are generally asked on the self-assessment questionnaire?

Generally, questionnaires are custom developed because of the different requirements of each position; however, most occupational questionnaires require you to provide responses to questions that will evaluate if you meet the minimum qualifications of the position, as well as other job specific assessment questions, that are either task or competency based.

What does “time-in-grade” mean?

Time-in-grade is a requirement that applies to the promotion of current and former Federal employees. Generally, employees must serve one year at the next lower grade level. Time-in-grade restrictions do not apply to former federal employees who have had a break in service of more than one year, current Federal employees on temporary appointments, or current Federal employees not holding a General Schedule (GS) position. Time-In-Grade also does not apply to applicants who have no Federal work experience.

Is there anything I should do before I submit my application?

As a final step before submitting your application package, take a moment to review these basic, yet very important guidelines when applying for a career at Export-Import Bank or other Federal agencies.

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantify whenever possible – use numbers and data points to illustrate success. • Check your application package for misspellings and typographical errors. • Use active verbs to describe actual work performed. Be specific. • Use your own words when writing a resume. • Be concise. • Edit your resume to reduce fluff and make every word count. Set your resume aside for a few days and then come back to it again with a fresh perspective. • Review your application package to ensure that it contains all of the required information listed under the “How to Apply” section of the vacancy announcement. • Submit your application in a timely manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make things up or inflate your accomplishments, level of responsibility, or skills. • Use personal pronouns (I, my, me) in a resume. • Be humble. • Use acronyms, unless you are certain everyone knows what the acronym means. • Use job description expressions like “duties included” or “responsibilities:” – instead use accomplishment oriented phrases that sell you. • Include personal information on your resume, other than contact information (e.g. height, weight, age, date of birth, place of birth, marital status, ethnicity, health, reason for leaving previous jobs, etc.) • Use the same resume for every job – take the time to tailor your resume for each position.

I’ve submitted my application, what happens next?

Once you submit your application, a Human Resources (HR) Specialist will review your package for completion, ensure that you meet the basic qualification requirements, verify your self-assessment ratings against the information you provided in your resume and notify you via email of your results. The hiring manager will be provided with the applicants and may interview best-qualified applicants.

To determine the status of your application, activate the notification option from your USAJOBS profile and you will receive automatic alerts when there are status changes.

Example Resume

Ellen J. Jobseeker

579 Lake Center Drive
Upper Marlboro, MD 20773
(301)987-6543 ejobseeker@email.com

Summary

Accomplished, Senior Executive with progressive experience in Fortune 100 environments, concentrating on global credit management, structured trade finance, and corporate finance. Proven history and ability to influence change across organizations, with a demonstrated track record in financial services. Successfully managed and worked with internal and external stakeholders to strengthen business operations and financial potential, while supervising risk in order to deliver successful financial solutions.

Professional Experience

Cell Phones Inc., New York, NY

8/2003 – Present

Chief Credit Officer

Salary: \$125,000

Established a centralized corporate credit organization to standardize and facilitate credit functions across the corporation. Managed customer credit and supervised approval of appropriate credit limits, risk ratings, supplier health analysis, compliance, and risk mitigation.

Selected Accomplishments

Risk Management – Developed a proactive risk management process focused on assessing and managing exposure primarily in the wireless communication industry.

Credit Policy – Created and implemented a new credit policy and procedure to facilitate an annual review and self-audit for compliance.

Education

University of New York,
New York, NY

Bachelor of Science, International Business
GPA: 3.6/4.0

Skills/Activities

Fluent in English and Spanish

Association for Financial Professionals, Member

MS Office (PowerPoint, Excel, Access, Word)

References

Available upon request.

Example Resume in Detail

Ellen J. Jobseeker

579 Lake Center Drive
Upper Marlboro, MD 20773
(301)987-6543 ejobseeker@email.com

Basic personal information should be included at the beginning of the resume.

Summary

Accomplished, Senior Executive with progressive experience in Fortune 100 environments, concentrating on global credit management, structured trade finance, and corporate finance. Proven history and ability to influence change across organizations, with a demonstrated track record in financial services. Successfully managed and worked with internal and external stakeholders to strengthen business operations and financial potential, while supervising risk in order to deliver successful financial solutions.

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Salary: \$125,000

Established a centralized corporate credit organization to standardize and facilitate credit operations across the corporation. Managed customer credit and supervised approval of corporate credit limits, risk ratings, supplier health analysis, compliance, and risk mitigation.

A similar formatting should be used for each of your previous jobs, highlighting relevant work

Each professional experience should include employer, title, salary, and dates (including month) worked.

Accomplishments

Risk Management – Developed a proactive risk management process focused on assessing credit exposure primarily in the wireless communication industry.

Credit Policy – Created and implemented a new credit policy and procedure to facilitate an annual review and self-audit for compliance.

Education

University of New York,
New York, NY

Bachelor of Science, International Business
GPA: 3.6/4.0

Skills/Activities

Fluent in English and Spanish
Association for Financial Professionals, Member
MS Office (PowerPoint, Excel, Access, Word)

Education should be located near the front for recent graduates, but can be moved later in the document for experienced professionals.

Include important skills not conveyed by information included in professional experience.

References

on request.