

How do I write a resume for a federal job?

Federal agencies such as the Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM) only accept resumes up to two pages in length to comply with the [Merit Hiring Plan](#). If you have previously applied using a longer resume of more than two pages, you will need to remove the old version of your resume and apply to future jobs using a new resume of no more than two pages.

The following sections will provide more information on resume writing for federal employment:

1. What do I do before I write my resume?
2. What do I have to include on my resume?
3. What do I leave out of my resume?
4. What file types are accepted?
5. What are the formatting guidelines?

What do I do before I write my resume?

Before you write your resume, read the job announcement closely. Some sections will tell you whether you qualify for the job and what to include in your resume.

- **Duties** describe the job's daily activities and responsibilities.
- **Requirements** include the **Qualifications**, **Specialized experience** and **Education**.
- **How to apply** may include a link to a preview of an assessment questionnaire, if that is required.
- **How you will be evaluated** may include criteria, like submitting a writing sample or completing a job assessment.
- **Required documents** help you understand what other documents you may need to provide.

What do I have to include on my resume?

Your resume is how you communicate your education, skills and experience. You must show how you meet the qualifications and requirements in the job announcement.

There are several things to consider when creating your resume for a federal job.

- Your resume must be two pages or less and explain why you are qualified for the job.
- Use plain language. Avoid using acronyms and terms that are not easily understood. The hiring agency will not make assumptions about what's in your resume.
- Make sure your work experience addresses the requirements and qualifications in the job announcement.

- You should tailor your resume to include experience relevant to each job you want to apply for.

Include important contact information at the top

Include current contact information. Most job applications require this information:

- Full name
- Your email address
- Your phone number

Read the job announcement carefully to make sure you have included all required contact information.

Add relevant work experience.

For each relevant work experience, make sure you include:

- Employer name
- Job title
- Start and end dates (include the month and year).
- The number of hours you worked per week.
- Brief descriptions that show you can perform the tasks at the required level listed in the job announcement.
- Series and grade for federal jobs only.

Example:

Program Analyst GS-343-11
January 2009–present
40 Hours/week

Describe your experience that shows you can perform any tasks listed in the job announcement.

- "Accomplished [X] as measured by [Y], by doing [Z]."
- "Accomplished [X] as measured by [Y], by doing [Z]."
- "Accomplished [X] as measured by [Y], by doing [Z]."

Add your education, certificates or licensures if required

When the job announcement requires position-specific education, license or certification information, make sure you include them in your resume and provide any required documents like transcripts, certifications or licenses.

Education information should include:

- Name of school/institution
- Completion date
- Degree type
- Grade point average (GPA)

Tips when writing about your work experience

1. Use concise, results-focused language. Use numbers, percentages, dollars or descriptions to highlight your accomplishments.
2. Focus on the work experience that is most relevant to the job you're applying for.
3. Include relevant volunteer work and roles in community organizations that demonstrate how you qualify for the job.
4. Use similar terms and address every required qualification. For example, if the qualifications section says you need experience with MS Project, you need to use the words MS Project in your resume.
5. Remove or deprioritize outdated or unrelated work experience.

What do I leave out of my resume?

Do not include the following types of information in your profile or resume:

- Classified or government sensitive information
- Social Security Number (SSN)
- Photos of yourself
- Personal information, such as age, sex, religious affiliation, etc.
- Encrypted and digitally signed documents

What file type should I use?

We accept PDF, RTF, TXT, or Word (DOC or DOCX). We do not accept PDF portfolio files. Use a standard 8.5x11-inch size for your document.

What are the formatting guidelines?

Select a professional, standard font. Avoid ornate, highly-stylized, and bold/italic fonts. Make your page margins 0.5 inches. Consider using 12-14-point size font for titles and 10-point for the main text in your resume.

Review your resume before you apply

Hiring agencies often receive dozens or even hundreds of resumes for certain positions. After applying, the hiring agency uses the information in your resume to confirm if you have the required qualifications listed in the job announcement. Look at your resume and ask:

1. Can a hiring agency see my main credentials within 10 to 15 seconds?
2. Does critical information jump off the page?
3. Do I effectively sell myself on the top quarter of the first page?
4. Are there any spelling or grammatical errors?
5. Have I addressed all the qualifications listed on the job announcement?

Finally, have someone else, with a good eye for detail, review your resume.