FEMA Resume Writing Tips

An effective federal resume is a critical part of your application package to a FEMA position. This guide will help you to prepare your resume to highlight your talents, skills, and examples of your past work accomplishments.

Getting Started

A federal resume typically requires more documented details than private-sector resumes. It's a good idea to think of your resume (application) as a "paper interview" that gives hiring managers a detailed vision of your talents, skills, and concrete examples of your past work and accomplishments.

When applying to positions, each job opportunity announcement provides critical information regarding the position being filled.   Review the summary, duties, and qualifications section to determine if the position is a right fit for you. As you begin to develop your resume, reflect on what experience you have and how it meets the requirements.

Resume Content

To ensure essential information is in your resume, we encourage you to use the USAJOBS online Resume Builder. If you choose to use your own resume, it must contain the following information:

1. Contact Information – Including your full name and up-to-date contact information.

2. Details of your work history, organized by experience, position, or FEMA deployment, including:

   - Job title
   - Name of employer
   - Start and end dates of each period of employment (from MM/DD/YY to MM/DD/YY).
   - Hours worked per week (part-time employment will be prorated in crediting experience).
   - Federal experience/positions must also include the occupational series, grade level, and dates in which you held each grade level.
   - Detailed description of duties performed, accomplishments, and related skills.

Describing your Experience

   - In your own words, use bullet points to document your relevant experience. Provide enough detail to show *how you meet the qualifications listed for the position*. We can't assume anything about your experience. Give enough background/information to describe the complexity and scope of your work.

- Provide organizational context to your role – did you work on your own? As a part of a team? As a supervisor? Did you assist with functions? Did you manage supervisors?

- Go beyond listing your job responsibilities by using accomplishments to highlight the results of your work experience. Use quantifiable (measurable) information whenever possible, such as numbers, percentages, dollars, or other data points to illustrate success.

- Utilize the 'STAR' Method when writing your accomplishments.

    Situation: define the problem or situation

    Task: define your objective or task

    Action: describe the steps you took to achieve your objective

    Result: measure your effectiveness, impact, and results

- Relate your experience and accomplishments back to the requirements for the position you're applying to. Expand on your experience and accomplishments that clearly demonstrate how you have performed the specialized experience requirements for the position.

- When considering how far back to go with your work history, go as far back as you need to make your experience applicable.

Resume Writing Tips:

- **Organize Information.** Information within the summary/background section cannot be used as qualifying experience, unless accompanied by dates of employment. Use bullet points to provide important work-related details within your work experience for each position, so you receive the appropriate credit based on the minimum experience requirements.

- **Tailor your resume**. Include information relevant to the specific position you are applying to. Education and work experience that is indirectly related can be excluded if the resume begins to grow too long. Many federal postings have resume page limits. Check the posting you're applying to for any page-limit restrictions.

- **Start bullets with an action verb**. Don't use personal programs (I, my, me) to begin your descriptions. Instead use accomplishment-oriented phrases that can set you apart from the competition.

- **Use your own words**. Do not copy and paste the duties, specialized experience, or occupational assessment questionnaire from the announcement into your resume. Copied statements will not be considered a demonstration of your qualifications for the position.

- **Ensure correct grammar and no spelling errors**. Your resume is your first impression – make it a good one!

- **Be honest, not modest.** Don't make things up or inflate your accomplishments, level of responsibilities or skills. Ensure that you are able to speak to all of the details on your resume, if asked during an interview.

- **Don't overshare**. Do not include any photos, personally identifying information (PII), including birthday and social security numbers, or personal information like marital status, age, health information, etc.

- **Spell out Acronyms.**

Documenting Intermittent FEMA Experience

There are several ways of effectively communicating your intermittent experience as a FEMA Reservist. At a minimum, you should include your deployment title, dates of deployment (from mm/dd/yy to mm/dd/yy), and the duties you performed. Here are two examples:

Example 1:

This format is useful when your deployment duties vary based upon the deployment.

Experience

Deployment Title | FEMA | Dates of Deployment – MM/DD/YY – MM/DD/YY

- List Major Experience/Accomplishments. This is the information we will use to qualify you against the requirements for the position.

Deployment Title | FEMA | Dates of Deployment – MM/DD/YY – MM/DD/YY

- List Major Experience/Accomplishments. This is the information we will use to qualify you against the requirements for the position.

Example 2:

This format is useful when your deployment duties are the same/similar at every deployment.

Experience

Deployment Title | FEMA

Deployments in this title include:

DR- XXXX – Dates of Deployment - MM/DD/YY – MM/DD/YY

DR- XXXX – Dates of Deployment - MM/DD/YY – MM/DD/YY

DR- XXXX – Dates of Deployment - MM/DD/YY – MM/DD/YY

Experience at deployments include:

- List Major Experience/Accomplishments. This is the information we will use to qualify you against the requirements for the position.

Examples of action verbs that can be used in developing resumes:

Management Skills	Communication Skills	Research Skills	Technical Skills	Teaching Skills	Financial Skills	Creative Skills	Clerical Skills	Others
Administered	Addressed	Clarified	Assembled	Adapted	Administered	Acted	Approved	Achieved
Analyzed	Arranged	Collected	Built	Advised	Allocated	Created	Arranged	Expanded
Assigned	Authored	Critiqued	Calculated	Clarified	Analyzed	Customized	Catalogued	Improved
Attained	Collaborated	Diagnosed	Computed	Coached	Appraised	Designed	Classified	Pioneered
Consolidated	Corresponded	Evaluated	Designed	Communicated	Audited	Developed	Collected	Reduced
Coordinated	Developed	Examined	Devised	Coordinated	Balanced	Directed	Compiled	Resolved
Developed	Drafted	Identified	Engineered	Developed	Budgeted	Established	Executed	Restored
Directed	Edited	Inspected	Fabricated	Enabled	Calculated	Fashioned	Generated	Transformed
Evaluated	Formulated	Interpreted	Maintained	Encouraged	Computed	Founded	Implemented	Assessed
Executed	Influenced	Interviewed	Operated	Evaluated	Developed	Illustrated	Inspected	Assisted
Improved	Interpreted	Investigated	Overhauled	Explained	Forecasted	Initiated	Monitored	Clarified
Increased	Lectured	Organized	Programmed	Facilitated	Managed	Instituted	Operated	Coached
Organized	Moderated	Reviewed	Remodeled	Guided	Marketed	Integrated	Organized	Counseled
Oversaw	Negotiated	Summarized	Repaired	Informed	Planned	Introduced	Prepared	Demonstrated
Planned	Persuaded	Surveyed	Solved	Instructed	Projected	Originated	Processed	Diagnosed
Produced	Promoted		Upgraded	Persuaded	Researched	Performed	Purchased	Educated
Recommended	Publicized			Set goals		Planned	Recorded	Facilitated
Reviewed	Reconciled			Stimulated		Revitalized	Screened	Familiarized
Scheduled	Recruited			Trained		Shaped	Specified	Guided
Strengthened	Spoke						Tabulated	Motivated
Supervised	Translated						Validated	Represented
	Wrote							

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