



# Applying for a Federal Job

## *Tips and Hints*



Applicants



### *Helpful Tips*

### *Qualifications*

The Government hires people with nearly every level of education and experience—from high school students with no experience to Ph.D.'s with established careers. Jobs in some occupations require that workers have a bachelor's or graduate degree and credit for specific college classes. Other occupations require experience, education, or a combination of both.

After gaining work experience, people often qualify for higher GS levels. In general, 1 year of experience related to the job could raise your grade by one GS level in most clerical and technician positions.

### *Applying for a Job*

The application you submit will go through many levels of review. First, Human Resources Specialists will screen it to see if you meet the basic requirements for the position. Then, the specialists or a panel of experts will rate your application according to the qualifications listed on the vacancy announcement. If your application rates among the best, it will be forwarded to the hiring manager, who will choose the best candidate.

The USAJOBS website, [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov), allows visitors to sort openings by occupation, location, occupational group, keyword, grade level, salary, and Government agency. The advanced option allows visitors to search by any or all of these factors simultaneously.

Thoroughly read the job announcement and include all required documentation. Your résumé reflects your experience with the required skills and knowledge. Research the agency you are submitting the résumé to and create a specialized résumé for each job, highlighting the reasons you are a good fit for the job, the mission, or vision of the organization. Ensure the position's required specialized skills are addressed in your resume in each applicable position you've held.

Prepare a cover letter to accompany your résumé. Recruiters receive many résumés and a cover letter is a great way to make yourself memorable. Letters can be sent electronically through the 'Additional Information' field in the USAJOBS résumé.

Include salary information on your résumé. This information can be pertinent to help determine current salary requirements. Ensure you list the dates of employment and number of hours worked per week.

Have up-to-date contact information so the Human Resources Specialist can contact you at any point in the application process.

Federal résumés require up-to-date employer information (addresses, phone numbers, and supervisor names). The Human Resources Specialists use this information to verify references and for a background investigation, if necessary for the position.

List all dated information (e.g., work experience and education) in chronological order, except when it is more appropriate to list the most relevant work experience first.

Many résumés need SSNs for identification purposes; however, it is advisable for applicants not to include their SSN on paper résumés or in the body of an electronic résumé.

If you are a current or prior government employee, submit a copy of your SF-50 and the most recent copy of your performance appraisal. If you haven't received an appraisal, submit a letter indicating you didn't receive a rating and the actual timeframe of when you received your last performance rating.