

# BUILDING A FEDERAL RESUME

**A career with the Forest Service means making a lasting impact by managing and caring for more than 193 million acres of the nation’s forests and grasslands.** Build a fantastic Federal resume and take the first step towards leaving your legacy for future generations.

Federal resumes are different than traditional resumes, with certain requirements and no recommended page limit. When creating your Federal resume, it is important to describe how your skills and work experience match those written in the job opening. To improve your chance of getting selected, customize your resume for each job you apply for.



Forest Service photo by Andy McMillan, Pathways2Solutions

## Federal Resume Requirements

For each job listed on your resume, you must also include:

- The start and end dates (including the month and year).
- The number of hours you worked per week.
- The level and amount of experience - for example, whether you served as project manager or a team member can help show your level of experience.
- All relevant experience and accomplishments that prove you can perform tasks at the level required for the job.

All work experience should be listed in reverse chronological order, with your most recent experience showing at the top of your resume.

It is also recommended that you include your supervisor’s name, contact information, and if they are okay to contact for reference checks. Salary information is optional, but may give the Human Resources reviewer and hiring manager a better understanding of your current and past experience.

## Length

A Federal resume requires significantly more information than a traditional resume. As a result, there is no recommended page limit. Make sure you cover your education and work experience in exhaustive detail.

## Format and Design

It is important that your resume is visually appealing and easy to read; however, there are no requirements for design or format. For example, when listing your experience, either bulleted lists or narrative paragraphs are acceptable.

## Your Experience in Numbers

When possible, show your achievements and accomplishments in numbers, percentages, and dollars. Include examples of how you saved, earned, or managed money and time. For example, describe your experience with phrases like “improved efficiency of document processing by 25 percent over the previous year” and “wrote prospect letter that has brought in more than \$25,000 in donations to date.”

## How is My Resume Used?

After you submit your application, your resume is reviewed by a Human Resources specialist to see if you qualify for the job. The Forest Service does not use any computer programs to review resumes for keywords.

## More Tips for Building a Better Resume

- Not sure where to start? Check out the **USAJOBS Resume Builder!** The website will walk through each piece of your federal resume to make sure you don't miss important information.
- Include at least 3 professional references on your resume. Choose strong references that are responsive and can speak about you professionally or academically.
- Review the job opening for keywords to include in your resume. For example, when the hiring manager sees the word "analyst" on your resume, they might assume you have experience in collecting data, evaluating effectiveness, and researching and developing new processes.
- Describe skills and experience in commonly-accepted words and phrases that can be understood in any field. Try not to use acronyms and lingo; however if you have to use them, spell them out and explain their meaning.
- If you think your education is not well-represented by your degree or certificate name, include a separate document detailing your coursework.
- Check over your resume for spelling and grammar issues.
- Volunteer work and community organizations can also be added to your resume.

## Review Your Resume

When you have finished your resume, read it over and ask yourself these questions:

- Can someone who isn't familiar with my career field understand the work I do?
- Have I included my unique experience and skills that might separate me from other job applicants?
- Do I have a full understanding of the background and skills common in my career field?
- Have I described my accomplishments fully and clearly?

## Example Resume

**Jane Doe Smith**

123 Personal Address Ln  
Albuquerque, NM 87109  
Mobile: 1112223333  
Email: janedoesmith@email.com

**Work Experience:****US Forest Service**

4000 Masthead St NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87109

**02/2015 - Present**

**Hours per week:** 40

**Series:** 1035 **Pay Plan:** GS **Grade:** 12

**Public Affairs Specialist** (This is a Federal job)

**Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:**

- Goals and accomplishments
- Goals and accomplishments

**Supervisor:** Sally Supervisor (2223334444)

**Okay to contact this Supervisor:** Contact me first

**Education:**

**University of New Mexico** Albuquerque, NM  
Bachelor's Degree 12/2014  
**Major:** Public Administration **Minor:** Forestry

**References:**

**Name:** John Smith  
**Employer:** Company Inc  
**Title:** Director  
**Phone:** 1112223333  
**Email:** johnsmith@email.com  
**Reference Type:** Professional

**Name:** May Smith  
**Employer:** Company Inc  
**Title:** Assistant Director  
**Phone:** 1112223333  
**Email:** maysmith@email.com  
**Reference Type:** Professional

**Name:** Phil Smith...

More information on Forest Service careers, benefits, and opportunities is available on [fs.usda.gov/fsjobs-events](http://fs.usda.gov/fsjobs-events). If you would like to speak directly to a Forest Service recruiter, please send an email to [SM.FS.recruiting@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.recruiting@usda.gov).