



How to Get *BEST QUALIFIED* **When Applying for Federal Jobs:** **5 Tips & Tricks for Experienced Job-Seekers**

Presentation by Emily Troutman, MPP

The Resume Place

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NIH

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Time displayed is Eastern Time, Washington DC Local



Tip #1: Understand How Your Resume is Rated and Ranked

- A. Eligibility— Are you eligible for the job? Are you willing to travel? Double-check your profile.
- B. The Questionnaire— Do your answers score high enough to get your resume to HR's desk?
- C. Category Rating— What bucket are you in?



If you don't get all 3 right, the supervisor won't see your resume

Eligibility



Questionnaire score



Resume ranking



Eligibility– Answer carefully!

USAJOBS
WORKING FOR AMERICA

Keyword: _____ Location: _____ Search
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The following questions are optional and can be used by Agency officials to identify applicants with skill sets and preferences appropriate for their job or work environment. Including this information will provide recruiters with additional detail on the type of position you are seeking. It will not exclude your resume from consideration. Your responses will also be used to help increase the relevance of your search results.

1. Are you willing to travel?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what percentage of duty time will you travel?

2. What type of work are you willing to accept?

- All
- Permanent
- Temporary
- Term
- Detail
- Presidential Management Fellows
- Recent Graduates
- Internships
- Telework
- Seasonal
- Summer
- Multiple Appointment Types
- Intermittent

3. What type of work schedule are you willing to accept?

- All
- Full Time
- Part Time
- Shift Work

Eligibility– Answer carefully!

Job Title: Supervisory Librarian - NLM - DE

Announcement Number: NIH-NLM-DE-14-1110718 USAJOBS Control Number: 369887300

Applicant Name: EMILY K TROUTMAN

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* Required information

Section 1

Total Questions in this Assessment: 2

Thank you for your interest in the Supervisory Librarian (GS-1410-14) position at our Agency. We will evaluate your resume and your responses to this Assessment Questionnaire to determine if you are among the best qualified for this position. Your responses are subject to verification. Please review your responses for accuracy before you submit this questionnaire.

1. Choose the one answer that best describes how you meet the minimum qualifications requirements for the Professional Librarian Series.

- A I have successfully completed at least 1 full academic year of graduate study in library science in an accredited college or university, in addition to completion of all work required for a bachelor's degree in any field.
- B I have a total of at least 5 years of combined college-level education, training, and experience. This education, training, and experience provided me with a knowledge and understanding of the theories, principles, and techniques of professional librarianship; knowledge of literature resources; and the knowledge and abilities essential for providing effective library and information services.
- C My experience and/or education do not match the choices above.

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Questionnaire– Do you score high enough?

- Agencies typically have a cutoff score > 90
- If the questionnaire is 20 questions, imagine each question is worth 5 maximum points.

A – 1 point

B – 2 points

C – 3 points

D – 4 points

E – 5 points



Questionnaire– 3 ways to be an E

2. Identify and implement changes in work processes to make them more effective or efficient.

A I have not had education, training or experience in performing this task.

B I have had education or training in performing the task, but have not yet performed it on the job.

C I have performed this task on the job. My work on this task was monitored closely by a supervisor or senior employee to ensure compliance with proper procedures.

D I have performed this task as a regular part of a job. I have performed it independently and normally without review by a supervisor or senior employee.

E I am considered an expert in performing this task. I have supervised performance of this task or am normally the person who is consulted by other workers to assist them in doing this task because of my expertise.

Questionnaire– Do you score high enough?

- Agencies typically have a cutoff score > 90
- If the questionnaire is 20 questions, imagine each question is worth 5 maximum points.

A – 1 point

B – 2 points

C – 3 points

D – 4 points

E – 5 points



20 questions, you answer E on 10 questions, D on 5 questions, C on 5 questions

Score $(5*10) + (4*5) + (3*5)$
= 85

Category Rating– Based on the resume

Applicants who meet basic qualification requirements are ranked by being placed into one of three pre-defined quality categories

- Gold (Highly Qualified, i.e., 95-100)
- Silver (Well Qualified, 85-94.9)
- Bronze (Qualified, 70-84.9)

RESUME
Jill Thompson
New York, NY 10018
Tel: 212-555-1234
Email: jill.thompson@gmail.com

EDUCATION
Bachelor's Degree
New York University, New York, NY 10003, May 2005

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
Senior Account Executive
ABC Company, New York, NY 10018
2008-2012

SKILLS
Sales, Marketing, Client Relations, Negotiation, Project Management

Category Rating– Your resume is examined next to the announcement

ACCOUNTANT
501 Chestnut St.
New York, NY 10013

See Photo: [see me apply](#)
Contact Photo: [see me apply](#)
Email: ama18@gmail.com

501 see me apply
United States Citizen
Veteran's Preference: Not
Federal Job Announcement System Grade: GS-6000-01, Step 3

THE CANDIDATE IS QUALIFIED FOR GRADE GS-6000-01, Step 3, AND GRADE GS-6000-01, Step 4.
Accountant (former)
New York, NY 10013
Annual Salary: \$45,377 (plus per diem \$0)
Supervisor: Bob Smith, see me apply, permission to contact, see

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE: The Accounting Technician, GS-0202-02, GS-0202-03 to Present,
General Tax Examining Technician, GS-05 and GS-0505, GS-0505-02, GS-0505-04 to Present, and Customer
Service Representative, GS-04-03, GS-0505-01 to GS-0505-02

THE YEARS OF PROGRESSIVE EXPERIENCE WITH THE IRS providing technical assistance and assistance
to the IRS and regulations and the accounting to internal and external customers. Scope of experience
includes preparing confidential taxpayer returns and financial condition, advising on tax matters,
researching and interpreting complex tax law and regulations in the Internal Revenue Manual (IRM), and
setting up financial agreements for taxpayers.

RESEARCH AND RESOLVE THE ACCOUNTANT ISSUES. As Tax Examining Technician in the Compliance
Services Customer Operations Division (CSD), respond to and resolve taxpayer on a wide range of the
account issues, including delinquency and account adjustments. Provide taxpayers with information and
guidance about general service procedures on all types of individual and business accounts for both
current and prior year tax rates, regulations and procedures. Utilize strong organization skills to manage
multiple issues to ensure the most expeditious handling of assigned issues. Utilize strong analytical and
research skills.

COMMUNICATE CLEARLY. Communicate effectively with taxpayers from a wide range of educational,
professional, and ethnic backgrounds. Utilize interview techniques to obtain and gather information
relevant to and prepare taxpayer correspondence. Leverage strong interpersonal skills to
communicate clearly and effectively with taxpayers about tax return preparation, related schedule and
documentations. Meet taxpayer in IRM guidelines.

ORDER THE ACCOUNTING, FINANCIAL, AND BUSINESS INFORMATION TO OBTAIN AND CLARIFY
information, prepare forms and resolve tax accounting problems. Analyze financial statements to
determine the taxpayer's ability to pay. Call taxpayers to gather additional information or discuss
available payment options.

The screenshot shows a USAJOBS job listing page. The job title is "Accounting Technician" and the position is located in New York, NY. The page includes a search bar, a "Find a Job" button, and a "Create Account" button. The job details section includes the following information:

- Job Title:** Accounting Technician
- Location:** New York, NY
- Salary Range:** \$45,377 - \$60,450
- Grade:** GS-0505-02
- Posting Date:** 10/22/2013
- Closing Date:** 11/15/2013
- Agency:** Internal Revenue Service
- Job ID:** 4572
- Job Family:** 0000
- Job Series:** 0505
- Job Grade:** GS-0505-02

The page also includes a "Job Description" section and a "How to Apply" section.

Category Rating– Which bucket are you in?

Gold
(Highly
Qualified,
i.e., 95-100)



Silver
(Well
Qualified,
85-94.9)



Bronze
(Qualified,
70-84.9)



Category Rating– Which bucket are you in?

Gold
(Highly
Qualified,
i.e., 95-100)





Tip #2: Accomplishments

- The Federal hiring process is accomplishment-based.
- From the questionnaire to the interview, applications with accomplishments score higher!
- Your resume must match the questionnaire

Exercise: What is something you have accomplished at work?



Accomplishment Freewriting:

Examples of Accomplishments

Negotiated a contract

Trained a new employee

Installed equipment

Improved performance

Answered customer
requests

Supervised others

Presented briefing

Wrote report

Team member

Dealt with difficult problem

Launched program

Improved filing system

Calculated budget

Collaborated with different
agency/company

Mentored others

Lowered costs

Purchased supplies

Monitored programs



Why Are Accomplishments So Important in Your Resume and Your Interview?

- Help you get the job
- Set you apart from your competition
- Boost your rating
- Gain confidence (*Whoa, I've done all those?!....*)
- Help you get Best Qualified and Referred to a Supervisor!

Most importantly, they're the basis for selection



Tip #3: The Outline Format Resume

- The Outline Format Resume is easy to read
- Use **small paragraphs** for readability.
- **ALL CAPS keywords** should match the keywords in the announcement.
- Add **accomplishments**
- **Copies and pastes into USAJOBS**



Best Format: Outline Format

Easy to Read; Shows Critical Skills & Accomplishments

TAX EXAMINING TECHNICIAN, GS-0592-07, Step 3, 04/2009 to Present
Internal Revenue Service
Sioux Falls, IA 34578
Annual Salary: \$41,377; Hours per week: 40
Supervisor: Bob Mills, xxx-xxx-xxxx, permission to contact, yes

OVERVIEW OF IRS EXPERIENCE: Tax Examining Technician, CSCO Division, 0592-07, 4/2009 to Present;
Seasonal Tax Examining Technician, Code and Edit Division, 0592-05, 2/2009 to 4/2009; and Customer
Service Representative, 0962-05, 10/2007 to 03/2008.

FIVE YEARS OF PROGRESSIVE EXPERIENCE WITH THE IRS providing technical advisement and assistance on tax law and regulations and tax accounting to internal and external customers. Scope of experience includes analyzing confidential taxpayer records and financial condition, advising on tax liability, researching and interpreting complex tax law and regulations in the Internal Revenue Manual (IRM), and setting up financial agreements for taxpayers.

RESEARCH AND RESOLVE TAX ACCOUNT ISSUES: As Tax Examining Technician in the Compliance Services Collection Operations Division (CSCO), respond to and resolve inquiries on a wide range of tax account issues, including delinquency and account adjustments. Provide taxpayers with information and guidance about general service procedures on all types of individual and business accounts for both current and prior year tax rules, regulations and procedures. Utilize strong organization skills to manage workflow to ensure the most expeditious handling of assigned cases. Utilize SERP extensively for research.



Before Federal Resume

Big Block – What's wrong with this format?

During 2-year assignment to USS Carl Vinson, completely revitalized Quality Assurance Program. ANALYZED AND ADMINISTERED SUPPLY OPERATIONS to meet changing customer requirements: Hand-picked to fill Lead Chief role in Quality Assurance Division and direct day-to-day operations during 9.5 month Western Pacific deployment. Demonstrated expertise in analyzing the systems for procurement, automatic data processing, warehouse management, distribution and quality assurance. Managed and prepared for major supply management inspection. Supervised 6 quality assurance auditors and analyzed 14 supply divisions and their working relationship with supply and maintenance management tools, i.e., Relational Supply (RSUPPLY), Integrated Barcode System (IBS) and Naval Aviation Logistics Command Information Systems (NALCOMIS). Gave presentations and briefings on the new supply systems. Directed and trained 71 supply personnel. Trained in customer services supply policies and procedures. Interpreted and implemented policies and directives for requisition processing; weapon system and acquisition management; weapon systems life-cycle management; project management; and budget estimate and execution. Reviewed and improved marketing of supply services to customers. To improve inventory management, conducted supply operations audits to determine application of improved methods. Collected, reviewed and collated supply metric reports from 14 managers. Tracked and maintained complex spreadsheets for financial reports, inventory and location audit process. Developed, presented and critiqued firefighting training and informational sessions. Trained and qualified 55 personnel in firefighting procedures. Planned, managed and critiqued 95 ship-wide firefighting drills. Served as Damage Control Training Team member; responded to alarms and major emergencies. Performed full range of firefighting tasks, including combating fires involving structures, equipment, facilities, as well as fuel and chemical fires, controlling and extinguishing fires while performing rescues. Operated fire extinguishing agents, including 45-pound CO2, PKP and AFFF.



Before Federal Resume

What is weak about this resume excerpt?

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

Supervisor: Charles Polo (444-444-4444)

Okay to contact this Supervisor: Yes

Coordinated and maintained the company-wide human resources activities in the areas of compliance, recruiting, human resources policy development, Affirmative Action Plan, compensation and benefits administration for 130 employees across ten locations. Resolved very difficult employee relations issues in support of a wide variety of controversial conduct-related issues. Assessed and provided guidance on needs of employees, such as relocation, career resource development, time management, and goal setting. Utilized written and oral communication techniques sufficient to develop and deliver briefings, project papers, status/staff reports, and correspondence to managers to foster understanding and acceptance of findings and recommendations.



After Federal Resume *Outline Format with Keywords*

INDIVIDUAL DEPLOYMENT SUPPORT SYSTEM VOLUNTEER

Military & Family Life Support Center
Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling
Washington, DC
Supervisor: Patricia Pierre (202-222-2222)
Okay to contact this Supervisor: Yes

04/2012 – present
Salary: \$0
(volunteer)
Hours per week:
8-16

ADVOCATE: Provide assistance, support, and advocacy to service members and their families in preparation for deployments.

SEPARATION COUNSELOR: Ensure families know that the Military and FAMILY SUPPORT Center (MFSC) cares about them during their separation and that MFSC is always available to them should they need assistance.

EXPERTISE providing counseling to employees concerning WORK AND FAMILY LIFE issues including information and referral to Employee Assistance Programs; providing services to military members, retirees, and family members. Assess clients' needs and concerns, such as relocation, career resource development and personal



Create Your Outline Format Resume: “How Many Hats Do You Wear at Work?”

Make a list of 5 to 7 hats you wear at work:

- Supervisor
- Instructor
- Team Leader
- Database Administrator
- Research / Analyst
- Contract Officer
- Purchasing Specialist
- Office Administrator
- Timekeeper





Tip #4: Analyze Announcements for Keywords For Your Outline Format Resume



- Stand out with keywords
- Keywords can result in referrals, selections, and interviews
- HR specialists read for keywords
- Use at least 5-7 keywords, more is better



One Year Specialized Experience

If you have applied for a federal job and were found “Not Qualified,” it is because your resume **does not** highlight the **one year specialized experience**.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

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In order to meet the minimum qualifications for this RANGE OPERATIONS SPECIALIST position, you must meet the following criteria.

GENERAL EXPERIENCE:

Experience, education, or training which provided a general knowledge of principles of organization, management, and administration. Experience using computer and automation systems.

SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE:

Must have at least 24 months experience, education or training in any position that required compiling reports, letters, memoranda, etc., and required person-to-person contacts to convey information. Applicants must have experience providing technical guidance and assistance in the type of work or in comparable work of the position to be filled. Applicants must have a thorough knowledge and understanding of administrative procedures and practices of management. Experience developing administrative procedures.

USAJOBS - Resume Builder - Preview And Finish - Windows Internet Explorer
https://www.usajobs.gov/Applicant/Resume/PreviewAndFinish/71817568

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

USAJOBS - Resume Buil... x http://www.opm.gov/poli... USAJOBS - The Federal Go...

NIH
100 Gude Rod
North Bethesda, MD 20852 United States

02/1996 - 01/2000
Hours per week: 40
Administrative Assistant
Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:
ADVISE

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

BUDGETS

MANAGEMENT

INTERPRET POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ADMINISTER TIME AND ATTENDANCE, PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND FACILITIES:

Education: **Our Lady of the Lake University** San Antonio, TX United States
Master's Degree 05/2000

Major: Social Work

Trusted sites | Protected Mode: Off 150%

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When You Create the Outline Format Resume: Keywords and Hats *Combine*



5-7 keywords



5-7 hats



INDIVIDUAL DEPLOYMENT SUPPORT SYSTEM VOLUNTEER
Military & Family Life Support Center
Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling
Washington, DC
Supervisor: Patricia Pierre (202-222-
Okay to contact this Supervisor: Yes

ADVOCATE: Provide assistance, support deployments.

SEPARATION COUNSELOR: Ensure cares about them during their separation.

EXPERTISE providing counseling information and referral to Employee family members. Assess clients' need

5-7 small paragraphs



Tip #5: Improve Your Resume with the Factor Evaluation System

Resumes are graded on these criteria:

KNOWLEDGE: What knowledge do you have to help you do your job?

SUPERVISORY CONTROLS: Who are you in charge of? Are you independent?

GUIDELINES USED: What laws or regulations are you an expert in? May include Legislation, Manuals, SOP, Policies, References

COMPLEXITY: How complicated is your job?

SCOPE & EFFECT: Who do you talk to and work with? What is the scope of your work? Is it local, regional, worldwide?

PERSONAL CONTACTS AND PURPOSE OF CONTACTS: Who are your customers? Are they nearby or do you work with them through email, etc.? How many customers do you support? Local? Global?



Sample Resume That Doesn't Use the Factor Evaluation System

Administrative Assistant (40 hrs per wk) (Massachusetts Air National Guard)

Jan 08 – Present. Provide administrative support to the Chief of Staff (Massachusetts Air National Guard). Provide reports to queries on personnel matters utilizing data systems RCAS and IPERMS. Track suspense' s, Executive Summaries, correspondence, briefings, and investigations utilizing an electronic log system. Review Executive Summaries for content, format, and administrative errors. Maintain Payroll Worksheets for 35 personnel monitoring hours worked and vacations taken, and provide summary reports to supervisors and finance personnel. Manage Moral and Welfare fund requests for Massachusetts National Guard units by reviewing requests for legality, administrative correctness, submitting the paperwork to the State Military Department, and coordinating issuance of checks. Monitor the Chief of Staff' s calendar for appointments and events. Assist in developing/mentoring new personnel both enlisted and officer with office procedures.



Sample Resume – AFTER with FES

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (40 hrs per wk) (Mass. Air National Guard)

Assistant to the Chief of Staff who oversees 3,000 Mass. National Guard Soldiers. Work independently to support all administrative, personnel, correspondence and payroll administration for the director.

COMPLEX ADMINISTRATION: Highly skilled in supporting multiple battalion deployments and re-integration and readiness during and following the ending of Iraq and Afghanistan wars. **ACCOMPLISHMENT:** Improved support for deployed, emergency support for the guardsmen. Organized and coordinated efficient ceremonies and events. Managed paperwork for complex deployments.

IMPLEMENT THE NATIONAL GUARD TECHNICIAN HANDBOOK. Implement and administer “The Technician Act of 1968”, Public Law 90-486, for all support services for Reserves and Active duty personnel.

REPORTS AND DATABASE ADMINISTRATION AND COMPUTER SKILLS. Produce reports to queries on personnel matters utilizing data systems RCAS and IPERMS. Track suspenses, Executive Summaries, correspondence, briefings, and investigations utilizing an electronic log system.

CUSTOMER SERVICES FOR THE GUARD PERSONNEL: Manage Moral and Welfare fund requests for Massachusetts National Guard units by reviewing requests for legality, administrative correctness, submitting the paperwork to the State Military Department, and coordinating issuance of checks.



Summary: What did we learn today?

TIP #1: Understand how your resume is rated and ranked. Eligibility and questionnaire answers will throw you out of the running.

TIP #2: Incorporate accomplishments into your resume to score higher and get selected.

TIP #3: Use the outline format resume; small paragraphs, keywords and accomplishments, highlighting One Year of Specialized Experience.

TIP #4: Analyze announcements for keywords; integrate them into your resume to make it easier for HR to see your skills.

TIP #5: Improve your resume with the Factor Evaluation System. Demonstrating the complexity and scope of your job will lead to higher scores.