

# Excepted Service Resume Formatting Tips

## Not Your Standard Resume

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### No fancy formatting or graphics

Excepted service resumes follow a very simple format, and do not include any graphics, colors, or images. See the [Frank Federal](#) resume as an example, but feel free to use a different clear, easy-to-read template or create your own if you prefer.

### Full, descriptive sentences

Bullet points are great for standard resumes because they give a quick, impactful overview of your skills and experience. However, government resumes tend to include longer, descriptive sentences that go into more depth about the tasks you completed and demonstrate the results of your work.

### Longer and more detailed

Excepted service government employers want to see the full range of your relevant skills, abilities, and experiences. You should never take a job, internship, or other experience off your resume to save space, and feel free to include relevant experiences from high school. This means that, compared to a single-page standard resume, state and local government resumes are longer (usually 2-3 pages) and more detailed.

## Match the Qualifications

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### Check the requirements!

When you're applying for a government job, the first thing you have to confirm is that you meet **all** of the job requirements. If you can't clearly and completely show on your resume that you meet all the qualifications that are listed, you won't be considered for the job. Read the posting in its entirety, and then read it again. Make sure you also check any embedded links and expand any sections that could have more information.

### Find the KSAs

While you're reading the job description, pick out key words that tell you what knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) you need to demonstrate to be considered a strong candidate. Even when KSAs aren't included as requirements, the agency will tell you what they're looking for in an employee somewhere on their website. Make sure these qualities and attributes are clear in your resume!

### Ability over experience

Many excepted service employers prioritize a candidate's abilities over their experience. Showing that you have the skills, character, and dedication to excel in the role is often more important than your past jobs and internships. Include volunteer service, personal projects, course projects, and student org work on your resume to help show what motivates you, and why you're interested in this career path.

### Highlight accomplishments

When describing your experiences, you'll want to make sure that you highlight any accomplishments that are associated with that role. These can be awards you won or recognition you received from your supervisor, but also any notable successes in your professional projects. These details demonstrate that you not only did the work, but you did it exceptionally well.

## Get Some Feedback

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Once you have a draft of your resume, it's important that you get some feedback! This helps to make sure that you haven't missed anything and that you're representing yourself in the best way possible. If you're an L&S student or recent grad, [set up an appointment](#) with the Career and Internship Specialist for Government, Policy, International Affairs, and Law with SuccessWorks!