USDA ARS Agricultural Research Service

www.ars.usda.gov

APPLICANT GUIDE

Applying for Positions with the Agricultural Research Service and other Federal Agencies

Introduction

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is the principal agricultural research agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) with research laboratories at about 100 locations across the U.S. and in several foreign countries. Typical positions filled in ARS include those in the life, physical, and engineering sciences (such as biologists, chemists, agricultural engineers, molecular biologists, animal scientists, etc.), as well as positions in various professional, technical, administrative, secretarial/clerical, and trades and crafts occupations.

To assist you in your efforts to obtain employment with ARS or in other Federal agencies, the information in this booklet will:

- Provide information on finding jobs to apply for in ARS and in other Federal agencies;
- Help you understand the vacancy announcements used to advertise ARS and other Federal positions;
- Give you an awareness of the qualification requirements used;
- Help you prepare a résumé for ARS and other Federal positions;
- Explain what KSAs (knowledge, skills, and abilities) are;
- Provide guidance on submitting your application; and
- Help you understand what happens after you submit your application.

We hope you find this information useful as you pursue employment with ARS and the Federal government.

Finding Federal Job Opportunities

In your pursuit of Federal employment, you should understand that all competitive service, temporary and permanent, positions must be advertised. To be considered for these positions, you must submit an application through the competitive process. What this means is that the positions are advertised and posted on the USAJOBS < www.usajobs.opm.gov> website, and any interested candidate who meets the outlined criteria can submit an application for a position. The competitive hiring process in the Federal government works to ensure that all candidates are given equal access and opportunity to apply and compete for Federal employment.

At a minimum, Federal agencies must post their competitive service positions on the USAJOBS website. This should be your first source for finding Federal jobs that are open for competition. Most Federal agencies will also post their vacancy announcements on their own websites. In ARS, you can view our list of current vacancies from the ARS Careers website < www.ars.usda.gov/careers>.

Using the search mechanism on the USAJOBS website, you will get a list of all current job opportunities available that meet your search request including jobs with ARS. If you are only interested in working for a few Federal agencies, you might want to conduct your employment search directly from those agencies websites.

Other positions that might be available include those that are covered by Excepted Service appointing authorities (for example, student and summer positions). Agencies often post these positions though they don't have to. In ARS, field offices typically fill these positions locally without a job announcement. If you are interested in student or summer positions, you should contact the person listed for the State where you're interested in working. You

can find a list of contacts for student and summer positions with ARS on the ARS Careers website < http://www.ars.usda.gov/careers/>.

Understanding the Vacancy Announcement

Vacancy announcements provide information to potential applicants about positions being advertised. While they might look different from Federal agency to Federal agency, the content should be similar.

The following types of information will be included in the vacancy announcements:

- **_Position Title_** – provides the official position title for the position being advertised. Some jobs being advertised may show more than one position title. These jobs are what we consider to be interdisciplinary in nature. For example, if the position title is shown as Agricultural/Mechanical Engineer, we are seeking candidates from either of these occupational fields. Sometimes similar positions can have different position titles so it's important that you also read the duty statements and qualification requirements in vacancy announcements.

- **_Series and Grade_** – provides information on the occupational series used in the Federal Government for positions and the grade level that has been assigned to the position. All positions in the Federal Government have a position title and a four-digit occupational series number. All similar positions are grouped according to their occupational series. For example, all secretary positions are in the 0318 occupational series, all chemist positions are in the 1320 occupational series. Therefore, as you start looking for possible positions in the Federal Government you should pay close attention to the position title and occupational series of positions you are interested in and look for other positions in that occupational series.

- **_Salary Range_** – provides the range of salaries for the grades of the position being advertised. For example, if the position is announced as GS-11/12, you will see the salary range for both the GS-11 and GS-12 grade level.

- **_Promotion Potential_** – indicates the highest-grade level for the position being advertised. Employees competing for jobs with promotion potential may be promoted to the higher levels without having to compete for promotions. Promotions are not entitlements; employees must be performing at the next higher grade level to earn a promotion to that level.

- **_Type of Appointment_** – indicates whether the position is permanent or temporary and whether it is full-time or part-time.

- **_Location of Position_** – provides the name of the location, the city and state where the position is located.

- **_Announcement Number_** – provides the announcement number for the position being advertised. Each position has a different announcement number. You should always indicate the announcement number on the application you are submitting and on any documents submitted separately from your application so that the documents can be matched to the correct case file.

- **_Opening and Closing Dates_** – provides the opening and closing dates for the announcement. The vacancy announcement will indicate whether the application must be to the contact person by the closing date or if postmarked applications will be accepted. You should pay close attention to the closing date – if your application is late you will probably be excluded from consideration.

- **_Area of Consideration_** – indicates the area from which applications will be accepted. For example, if the area of consideration is:
  - "_All U.S. Citizens_" – all U.S. citizens are eligible to apply.
  - "_All U.S. Citizens in the Local Commuting Area_" – only those U.S. citizens within the particular commuting area would be considered.
  - "_Status Applicants Only_ (in the local commuting area or nationwide)" – only current Federal employees (in the local commuting area or nationwide) may apply.
  - "_ARS Employees Only_" – only current ARS employees may apply.
- **_Duties_** – describes the main duties and responsibilities for the position being advertised.
- **_Qualifications_** – describes the main qualification requirements for the position being advertised. In this section you'll find information about education and experience requirements. You will see KSAs (knowledge, skills, and abilities) expressed in this section in terms of "Specialized Experience" and in some instances as "Selective Factors."
- **_Application Information_** – lists what must be included in your application package for you to be eligible for consideration. Failure to submit required information may result in your not being considered for a position.
- **_Other Important Information_** – provides other information related to the application process and Federal hiring rules and regulations.
- **_Contact Information_** – provides information on where and how your application can be submitted. Also provides contact information that can be used if you have a question about the position or your application.

Qualification Requirements

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is responsible for establishing basic qualification requirements for every occupation in the Federal Government. Your experience and education are evaluated against the qualification standards to determine whether you are qualified for positions. The qualification standards identify the level of education and/or experience required for an applicant to meet the minimum qualification requirements of the occupation. Some qualification standards have a "positive education" requirement, which are shown in a degree required or a specified number of course hours, that must be met.

Your experience and education are evaluated to determine whether you are "_basically qualified_," "_highly qualified_," or "_not qualified_" for a position or occupation.

ARS vacancy announcements describe:

- The minimum qualifications and specialized experience requirements for each position.
- Any other qualifications, called "selective factors," that candidates must have to be considered eligible for each position.

Specialized experience and selective factor requirements will typically be listed in the vacancy announcement as KSAs (knowledge, skills, and abilities).

Before you submit an application for a vacancy, you should completely review the vacancy announcement for each position. Don't apply for a position if you don't meet both the required minimum qualifications and any selective factors described in the vacancy announcement. If you have reviewed the vacancy announcement and believe that you can

meet both the minimum qualifications and selective factors, you should document your experience and education in your résumé and in the required response to the KSAs listed in the vacancy announcement.

Preparing Your Application

When applying for ARS and other Federal positions, you can submit a résumé, curriculum vitae, or Optional Application for Federal Employment (OF-612). The format you choose for your application is up to you, but it must include some specific information for you to receive proper consideration. The following information is required to evaluate applicant qualifications and to determine whether applicants meet legal requirements for Federal employment:

Job Information
- Announcement number and title and grade(s) of the job you are applying for.

Personal Information
- Full name, mailing address (with ZIP Code) and day and evening phone numbers (with area code)
- Social Security Number
- Country of Citizenship (Most Federal jobs require U.S. citizenship)
- Veterans' Preference (A DD-214 is required)
- Reinstatement Eligibility (if requested, attach SF-50 proof of your career or career-conditional status)
- Highest Federal civilian grade held (also give job series and dates held)

Education
- High School (include name, city, and state and date of diploma or GED)
- College or University (include name, city, and state; majors, type and year of any degrees received)
- Send a copy of your college transcript only if the job vacancy announcement requests it

Work Experience
- Provide the following information for your paid and nonpaid work experience related to the job you are applying for: job title (include series and grade if Federal job); duties and accomplishments; employer's name and address; supervisor's name and phone number; starting and ending dates (month and year); hours per week; and salary
- Indicate whether your current supervisor can be contacted

Other Qualifications
- Job-related training courses (title and year)
- Job-related skills, for example, other languages, computer software/hardware, tools, machinery, typing speed
- Job-related certificates and licenses (current only)
- Job-related honors, awards, and special accomplishments, for example, publications, memberships in professional or honor societies, leadership activities, public speaking, and performance awards (give dates, but do not send documents unless requested)

Since traditional résumés do not provide all the information needed to determine your qualifications for Federal positions, you should create a more detailed résumé to use when applying for Federal positions.

A sample résumé is included at the end of this guide.

Addressing the KSAs

What Are KSAs?

KSAs are knowledge, skills, and abilities that are needed to perform a job and are demonstrated through qualifying experience, education, or training. KSAs are defined as:

Knowledge – an organized body of information, usually factual or procedural in nature. For example, "Knowledge of human resources rules and regulations" could be used as a KSA for a Human Resources Specialist position.

To respond to this KSA, you should indicate what human resources rules and regulations you are familiar with, discuss how you applied these rules and regulations in the work environment, and describe other significant situations you were involved in where you applied these rules and regulations.

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Skill – the proficient manual, verbal, or mental manipulation of data or things. For example, "Skill in Operating Personal Computers" could be used as a KSA for an Office Automation position.

To respond to this KSA, you should indicate what type of personal computers you have operated, discuss the various types of software programs you have used, and describe how these programs were used in your work environment.

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Ability – the power or capacity to perform an activity or task. For example, "Ability to use a variety of laboratory instruments" could be used for a Biological Science Laboratory Technician position.

To respond, you should describe the types of laboratory instruments you have used, discuss the types of assignments you completed using the laboratory equipment, and describe the impact using the laboratory equipment had on your work environment.

Importance of KSAs

KSAs are an important part of the recruitment and hiring process. *They are used to distinguish the "qualified candidates" from the "unqualified candidates"   for a position* .

Each vacancy announcement will list the KSAs in terms of "specialized experience" requirements. Your education and experience will be evaluated against each KSA in order to determine if you qualify for the position. You must demonstrate either the relevant education requirements or one year of experience that demonstrates the KSA requirements. Some positions might also require additional KSAs listed as "selective factors." Selective

factors are KSAs that are unique requirements for a specific position. If there are selective factors listed on the vacancy announcement, you should address your experience that is relevant for each selective factor requirement. If you do not, you will not receive further consideration in the evaluation process.

A résumé is an important component of the job application process since it conveys your general experience, education, activities, and other accomplishments. Addressing the KSAs listed in the job opening is also an important part of the process, because the *KSAs provide you with an opportunity to draw attention to and expand on the specific factors the agency is looking for and provides an opportunity for you to spell out why you are the best qualified candidate for the job.*

If you choose to rely on your basic application rather than write separate responses to the KSAs, you should be sure that your basic application covers all the KSAs so that the reviewers don't have to read between the lines to connect your basic application to the KSAs. As an applicant, it is your responsibility to show how your education and experience meet the requirements for positions. Reviewers cannot give you credit for experience or education that is not documented in your application package.

Writing Your KSA Responses

To prepare responses to KSAs, you should:

- Read the vacancy announcement thoroughly, highlighting key words or phrases describing the position responsibilities so you remember to address these points in your KSA responses.
- Review your résumé and outline a list of possible experiences you have that address each KSA. Review each list and select items that best illustrate a link between your experience and each KSA.
- Add information relevant to each KSA that may not be included in your resume – such as any specialized training, publications, leadership roles, student activities, or awards. Make sure you take credit for your whole range of experiences, including volunteer work, internships, school projects, and extracurricular activities.
- Link all of these different examples explicitly to the KSAs. Whether you've worked as a waitress or cashier, served as a student club officer, or volunteered at a nursing home, the key is to tie these experiences back to the KSAs in a way that demonstrates you are the best candidate for the job being advertised.
- Write your KSAs in the first person and use concrete examples to illustrate your skills. This is your opportunity to more fully elaborate on skills and responsibilities outlined in your resume. Examples are much more descriptive and memorable than an assertion that you have certain knowledge, skills, or abilities. Be sure to include examples that demonstrate your ability to take initiative.
- Focus on any outcomes to which you directly contributed, citing quantitative data where possible. For example, use data that measures how much (like how much money or time you generated or saved), or how many (like how many people attended, how many units you produced), and point to positive change (percentage growth or savings) when possible.
- Make sure your answers reflect your level of responsibility. Similarly, clearly identify who you interacted with and how, such as providing key information to a manager, working with a group of peers, or supervising a team.

- Target each KSA answer to read between half a page and a page in length. Remember that several individuals will be reviewing your application, so it is important to find the right balance between providing the most important information versus too much information.
- Review your answers to ensure they are clear and easy to read. Always use plain language and don't use acronyms! Focus on content and don't forget to proofread!
- Ask a friend who knows you well to read over your finished answers. Your reader should make sure that you have included all of your relevant experiences, that your responses flow well, and that the answers don't contain any typographical or grammatical errors.

To reinforce the idea of organizing your thoughts when responding to KSAs, *ask yourself these six questions regarding individual tasks you performed.*

1. What action was performed?
2. Why was the action performed?
3. For whom was the action performed?
4. What were the accomplishments?
5. Did the action produce a significant impact on others or the work environment?
6. Do I have any special skills or have I received any special recognition that helped me meet this requirement?

Sample KSA responses are provided at the end of this brochure.

Additional Information About KSAs

***Give examples that show** :*

- **Initiative:** you saw a problem and resolved it
- **Innovation:** you developed a new system; used software for a new purpose
- **Leadership:** you mentored less experienced employees
- **Complexity:** you experienced challenging times on the job
- **Scope:** you were involved in a variety of work that covered many functional areas (e.g., personnel, budget, information technology, etc.)
- **Teamwork:** you were part of a team activity whose members possessed different skills and abilities, shared a common purpose, and worked together to achieve clearly identifiable goals (remember when showing team activity to identify YOUR role in the team, not the role of the team)

Submitting Your Application

Once you have completed your application you will need to submit it to the "contact person" listed in the vacancy announcement for which you are applying. Before you seal the envelope, send the fax, or hit send on your e-mail, take a few moments to be sure that your application is complete. Read it over one last time, checking for spelling and grammatical errors. Make sure that you have included all requested information and documents (DD-214 if you are claiming veterans' preference; college transcripts if the job requires them).

For ARS jobs, you can submit your application package by postal mail, fax, or through e-mail. This information is provided in each vacancy announcement. Keep in mind if you are

using e-mail, you will still need to submit any requested documents so that they can be matched up with your application. For example, if you need to send a transcript and you don't have a copy that can be attached to your e-mail, you will have to either fax or send via postal mail so that it can be attached to your application. If you are sending documents via postal mail separate from your application, make sure to indicate on the documents the vacancy announcement number, the position title and the location of the position so that your documents can be matched up.

There is no need to rush to get your application in – applications postmarked by the closing date are typically accepted. It will tell you in the vacancy announcement whether your application must be in by the closing date or if postmarked applications will be accepted. Therefore, sending your application via e-mail and following up with required documents is not necessary. If you are going to have to mail some items anyway, you may as well mail the entire application. **Getting your application in prior to the closing date will not help you in the qualifications review process – a complete application package will**.

The Waiting Game

We've all heard the horror stories – it takes too long to get a job in the Federal government. Because Federal jobs are filled using a competitive process, understanding the timing of the process will better prepare you for the wait after you submit your application.

When positions are announced, they will include both an opening date and a closing date. Some job announcements are opened for one or two weeks, while others may be open for longer periods of time. Once the closing date passes, Federal agencies must wait a period of time (typically, 7-10 days) for receipt of postmarked applications. During this time period, the Human Resources Specialist will begin reviewing the applications received to determine if the applicants meet the qualification requirements outlined. Those candidates who do meet the minimum qualifications will then be reviewed to determine if they are among the "qualified" or "best qualified" candidates. Sometimes this can take a few days, or a few weeks, depending on the number of applications received. Once the "best qualified" candidates are identified, a "certificate of eligibles" is prepared and sent to the supervisor (or selecting official) for the position. The supervisor will then review the applications and determine who among the "best qualified" will be interviewed. Interviews are scheduled and conducted, reference checks are completed, and a final selection is made.

The recruitment and selection process may take several weeks from the time a position is advertised to when a selection is made. Don't be deterred by this. Ask questions and keep in touch during the application process.

You should *always print and keep a copy of vacancy announcements for which you apply   *. The vacancy announcement will have the contact information for the position, which you can use to call to check further on the status of your application. Don't hesitate to ask the status. Just keep in mind that the Federal hiring process does take time. Calling the Human Resources office daily will not speed up the process. Rather, you might wait a few weeks or a month and then call. In most cases, you will be sent a notice acknowledging the receipt of your application. You will also be notified once a final selection has been made.

After The Selection Is Made

Once a selection is made for a position all applicants are notified. Feel free to contact:

- The Human Resources Specialist to request feedback on your application if you were not referred for consideration. If you were considered not qualified for the position *ask* why so that you will understand in the future.
- The Selecting Official if you were referred for consideration and not selected to determine what you might do different in the future. If you were interviewed and not selected *ask* for feedback on how your interview went.

Don't be defensive. If you are angry or upset about not being selected, you may want to wait a few days until you calm down. Remember, the purpose of asking for feedback is to:

- Learn whether there is additional experience or training that would make you a stronger candidate for future positions.
- Determine whether you need to polish your application and KSA responses.
- Determine whether you need to polish your interview skills.

Useful Web Sites

Agricultural Research Service
 http://www.ars.usda.gov

ARS Careers
 http://www.ars.usda.gov/careers

U.S. Department of Agriculture
 http://www.usda.gov

USDA Jobs
 http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/a9ag.asp

USAJOBS
 http://www.usajobs.opm.gov

Sample Federal Resume

John Doe (Sample Resume)
22 Roosevelt Drive, Apt. 814
Roanoke, VA 24001
Home: 111-222-3333
Email: johndoe@worldemailnet.com

Social Security Number: 123-45-6789
Country of Citizenship: United States of America
Veteran's Preference: No
Highest Grade: GS-0201-14, 09/1992-Present
Contact Current Supervisor: Yes

JOB INFORMATION

Announcement Number: W80043
Job Title: Personnel Management Administrator
Grade(s) Applying for: GS-00

OBJECTIVE

Pursuing opportunities to manage and provide the overall direction of a human resource program. I possess the necessary qualifications and experience to successfully meet the challenges brought about by the revolutionary changes in the field of human resources.

WORK EXPERIENCE

U.S. Office of Personnel Management   **Dates Employed: 05/1992-Present**
1900 E Street   **Grade Level: GS-14/4**
Room 888   **Hours per Week: 40**
Washington, DC 11111-1111

Personnel Management Specialist
Supervise a staff of 11 GS-4 through GS-13 clerks and specialists. Responsible for the implementation of new and highly visible Government-wide human resource initiatives marketing Federal employment opportunities to job seekers; designing, evaluating, and implementing automated systems that provide Federal employment information to job seekers; developing and evaluating regulations and policies that impact employment information; disseminating information on Government-wide human resource initiatives to Federal agencies, State and local governments, and private sector representatives; facilitating the creation of a "one-stop" employment information system for Federal employees impacted by downsizing and job seekers with Federal, State and local governments, and the private sector; negotiating with senior OPM officials and contractors on employment information issues and services; responsible for the day-to-day test administration operations in the Washington, DC, area. Team member in designing a workforce planning and diversity management automated decision-support system for multiple customers involved in human resources planning and delivery. Active member on State Department's inter-agency work group preparing for the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on the Status of Women; directing an intra-agency work group to prepare OPM's contribution for the Conference. (Supervisor's Name: Jane Doe. Phone: 456-555-9999.)

U.S. Office of Personnel Management   **Dates Employed: 06/1985 to 5/1992**
1900 E Street   **Grade Level: GS-13/1**
Room 999   **Hours per Week: 37.5**
Washington, DC 11111-1111

Personnel Management Specialist
Supervise a staff of 11 GS-4 through GS-13 clerks and specialists. Responsible for the implementation of new and highly visible Government-wide human resource initiatives marketing Federal employment opportunities to job seekers; designing, evaluating, and implementing automated systems that provide Federal employment information to job seekers; developing and evaluating regulations and policies that impact employment information; disseminating information on Government-wide human resource initiatives to Federal agencies, State and local governments, and private sector representatives; facilitating the creation of a "one-stop" employment information system for Federal employees impacted by downsizing and job seekers with Federal, State and local governments, and the private sector; negotiating with senior OPM officials and contractors on employment information issues and services; responsible for the day-to-day test administration operations in the Washington, DC, area. Team member in designing a workforce planning and diversity management automated decision-support system for multiple customers involved in human resources planning and delivery. Active member on State Department's inter-agency work group preparing for the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on the Status of Women; directing an intra-agency work group to prepare OPM's contribution for the Conference. (Supervisor's Name: John Doe. Phone: 798-444-5555.)

EDUCATION

Masters in Public Administration, 1993
George Mason University
Anytown, VA 11111
Major: Public Management
Minor: Communications
GPA: 4.0 out of 4.0
Honors: Summa Cum Laude

Bachelors in Political Science, 1990
George Mason University
Anytown, VA 11111
Major: Political Science
GPA: 3.8 out of 4.0

High School Diploma, 1986
Mount Vernon High School
Anytown, VA 11111
GPA: 3.5 out of 4.0

JOB-RELATED TRAINING COURSES

Seminar for New Managers; 1995
Job Analysis for the Development of Crediting Plans; 1992
Instructor Training; 1992
Basic Position Classification; 1992
Grievance Handling; 1992
Adverse and Conduct Based Actions; 1991
Basic Employee Relations; 1991
Introduction to TQM; 1991

JOB-RELATED SKILLS

Strong project management skills. Proficient in the use of microcomputers; spreadsheet, graphic, and presentation applications, and word processing applications in a stand-alone or local area network environment.

JOB-RELATED CERTIFICATES AND LICENSES

Driver's License, Commonwealth of Virginia, Expires May 1999

JOB-RELATED HONORS, AWARDS, MEMBERSHIPS, ETC.

American Society of Public Administrators
OPM Director's Award for Excellence, October 1997
OPM Director's Award for Excellence, October 1996
OPM Director's Award for Excellence, February 1995
OPM Director's Award for Excellence, September 1993

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

This is an example of where supplemental information may appear in your résumé.

REFERENCES

Provided on request.

Sample KSA Responses

Knowledge of biological and plant sciences.

While in college pursuing my Bachelor's degree in biology, I took courses in [give specific examples which show you have knowledge of biological and plant sciences]. At the same time, I gained additional knowledge of biological and plant sciences while working as a technician at [name the laboratory/organization]. In this job, I was responsible for performing tasks and assignments such as [give specific examples]. These assignments were completed for [indicate who requested] and were performed as part of a project on [list the project]. The final result of the actions I performed included [give examples] and impacted others in the work environment by [give reasons].

Indicate whether you have any special skills, received any awards for what you did in your job, or have completed any training that you can relate directly to the KSA.

Skill in collecting, analyzing, and summarizing data using computer software.

In my current position, I have used the following software packages [list examples]. Using these software packages, I have been able to complete assignments such as [give examples that show what you completed, what you did, and what the outcome was]. I completed these assignments for [indicate who requested] and performed them as part of a project on [indicate if part of a larger project]. The final result of the actions I performed included [give examples] and supported others in the work environment by [give reasons].

Indicate whether you have any special skills, received any awards for what you did in your job, or have completed any training that you can relate directly to the KSA.

Ability to use a variety of laboratory instruments.

While in college pursuing my degree in biological science, I was required to complete lab classes where I learned how to use equipment such as [give examples – spectrophotometer, gas chromatograph, etc.] to conduct analyses of biological samples. As part of my class work, I completed analyses on [give examples]. In my current position, I work with a research chemist who assigns analyses [give examples] for me to conduct as part of ongoing research projects. To perform these analyses, I use equipment such as [give examples] on a recurring basis. The results of these analyses are used to document research results and findings and affect other research projects being conducted by [give reasons].

Indicate whether you have any special skills, received any awards for what you did in your job, or have completed any training that you can relate directly to the KSA.

KSA Responses

Do's	Don'ts
▪ Carefully read the vacancy announcement and note the required qualifications and KSAs.	▪ Don't use words from your position description in writing your KSA responses.
▪ Describe your experience and emphasize the skills you used that relate to the KSAs.	▪ Don't describe work of others or that of the organization.
▪ Use action verbs and statements.	▪ Don't exaggerate. Don't be humble.
▪ Include all current experience related to the KSAs whether paid or volunteer.	▪ Don't omit church, community, or club work.
▪ Arrange all of your experience in logical order (for example, chronological).	▪ Don't cross-reference items in your KSA responses and your application.
▪ List education and training and identify title of course, hours, and relationship to the KSAs.	▪ Don't provide just course titles or degrees received.
▪ Include awards, month and year received, a brief description as to why you received the award and how it relates to the KSAs.	▪ Don't just state the kind of award and when it was received.
▪ Type all information, or write legibly so that it can be clearly understood.	▪ Don't make it challenging for the reviewer – it probably won't get full credit if it cannot be read.
▪ Tell what you do know and can do, not what you don't know and cannot do.	▪ Don't attach unsolicited material such as letters of recommendation, training certificates, copies of awards, or examples of work.