



SERVING
CAREER-MINDED
MILITARY SPOUSES

BREAKING INTO A GOVERNMENT JOB AT THE PROFESSIONAL LEVEL

Agenda

- ◎ Part 1: Why Government?
- ◎ Part 2: Applying
- ◎ Part 3: **in****gear** Career Assistance

Overview of the GS system

- ◎ Over 1.7 million Federal jobs and 400 occupational specialties
- ◎ Over 100 agencies and bureaus
- ◎ All Government job openings are posted on www.usajobs.com
 - Also check service-specific or agency-specific job sites
- ◎ Most GS jobs are “appropriated funds” positions (versus NAF or “non-appropriated funds” positions)
 - NAF jobs tend to be more traditionally “pink collar”

Benefits of Government service

- ⦿ Idealistic work -- “Fighting the good fight”
- ⦿ Health insurance options
- ⦿ Retirement and other benefits
- ⦿ Competitive salary
- ⦿ Enjoy work/life balance
- ⦿ Job security
- ⦿ Fairly strong promotion potential
- ⦿ Portability, especially within military lifestyle

Drawbacks to Government Positions

- ◉ Difficult to break in to the system
- ◉ Bureaucracy can lead to frustration
- ◉ Good performance not always effectively rewarded; poor performance not always effectively redressed
- ◉ Difficult to obtain experience at the appropriate job level except at entry levels
- ◉ Difficult to overcome military spouse stereotypes (i.e. pink collar workers, stay-at-home moms looking for a little pocket money)

Federal pay and advancement

- General Schedule (GS) is the pay scale for many Federal jobs from 1-15.
- Pay varies by geographic location
- Each GRADE has 10 steps, allowing for a range of salaries
- Within a few years, you can progress through several grades. For example, you can advance from GS-7 to GS-11 in two years, which is nearly a 50 percent increase in salary.

General Schedule (GS) grade criteria

Grade	Qualifying education
GS-5	4 academic years above high school leading to a bachelor's degree OR a bachelor's degree
GS-7	Bachelor's degree with one of the following: • Class standing (upper third of class) • 3.0 or higher GPA; 3.5 or higher GPA in major • Honor society membership
GS-9	Master's degree (or equivalent)
GS-11	Doctorate degree

Source: opm.gov/qualifications/SEC-II/s2-e5.asp



GS-5 and GS-7 are considered “entry level”

Selected 2011 starting salaries

City	GS-5	GS-7	GS-9
Atlanta	\$32,039	\$39,687	\$49,581
Chicago	\$34,316	\$42,508	\$51,995
Dallas	\$33,101	\$41,002	\$50,154
New York City	\$35,309	\$43,738	\$53,500
San Francisco	\$37,073	\$45,923	\$56,172
Washington, D.C.	\$34,075	\$42,209	\$51,630

Source:<http://opm.gov/oca/09tables/indexGS.asp>

Part 2: Applying

Basics of the GS Hiring Process

- All active resumes screened by online system for keyword matches
- HRO screens matching resumes
 - Sorted by groups
 - Identification of all minimally qualified candidates based on Position Description
- Certified list of qualified submitted to hiring official
 - Those on the list are said to “make the cert”
 - In some circumstances, at least one qualified candidate in a specific group will “trump” all others; only those in that group can make the cert
- Hiring official can interview top candidates using very structured process
- Ranking by hiring official and “scoring”
- Top score provided formal offer by HRO

Overview of the online application process

After selecting the job to which you'd like to apply, there are usually several steps in the online application process:

1. Create your federal resume
2. Answer the questions posed online
3. Submit the complete application package by the stated deadline
4. Follow up with the appropriate agency contact to inquire about progress in hiring for the position

Building a federal resume online

Candidate Information ?

Note: If your resume is **confidential**, this information will not be visible to recruiters performing resume searches. [Learn more.](#)

* **Name Your Resume** [What is this?](#)

* **First Name**

Middle Name

* **Last Name**

* **Social Security Number** [Edit Social Security Number](#)

* **Home Address**

Home Address 2

* **City/Town**

* **State/Province** ▼

* **Postal/ZIP Code**

* **Country** ▼

* **Email**

* **Day Phone** ▼

--- Select --- ▼

--- Select --- ▼

* **Are you a U.S. Citizen?** ☒ Yes ☐ No

* **Do you claim veterans' preference?** ☐ Yes ☒ No [Does this apply to me?](#)

Selective Service

☒ Check this box if you are an adult male born on or after January 1st 1960, and you registered for Selective Service between the ages of 18 through 25.

Sections:

- Candidate information
- Work experience
- Education
- References
- Affiliations
- Desired locations

Requirements for a federal resume

- ◎ Federal resumes require more detail than standard resumes. Essentials include:
 - Personal information (social security number, desired locations)
 - Education and coursework levels
 - Work experience
 - Dates and number of hours worked per week
 - Location of position and supervisor contact information
 - Start and end dates of previous jobs
 - Other qualifications

Barriers to GS employment

- ⦿ Difficulty translating non-Federal experience
 - Hiring officials often want to see that you made “widget X” for a certain number of years
 - Sometimes they don’t understand the private sector analogue to terms they are using
- ⦿ Different standards for hiring, progress and promotion than in non-Federal jobs
- ⦿ Preference/status of other groups may trump spouse hiring status
- ⦿ Lack of jobs open to “non-status” candidates at the professional (non-entry) levels

Hiring Authorities: Spouse Hiring Executive Order

● EO 13473

- Implemented in September 2009
- Allows spouses in specific circumstances to apply under “non-competitive appointment” rules (essentially provides spouses with “status” for hiring)
 - PCSing with active duty spouse
 - Spouses of service-connected 100% disability
 - Spouses of service members killed on active duty
- Look for the following language on USA Jobs:
 - If you are a current or former permanent Federal employee, are eligible for a Veterans' Employment Opportunity Act (VEOA), or a non-competitive hiring authority as defined on the Common Hiring Program Category Definitions, apply now.

Spouse Hiring EO (continued)

- ◎ NOT a hiring preference
 - No “points” associated with it (like with vets preference)
 - Allows you to compete on an equal footing with other “status” hires in certain circumstances
- ◎ FAQs:
<http://www.fedshirevets.gov/hire/hrp/qaspouse/index.aspx>
- ◎ Different process for spouse preference overseas (OCONUS)

Tips for Applying

- **Plan ahead**

Allow plenty of time to thoroughly complete your application

- **Select carefully**

Always consider using a tailored application for each vacancy you apply

- **Prepare for a wait**

Don't assume you have been rejected if you do not hear back within weeks of submitting your application

- **Follow-up with an agency**

Contact the identified representative to learn the status of an application or find out more about a job

Tips for Federal Resume

- ◎ Federal resume looks very different from a “normal” resume
 - Include all relevant info– length of resume doesn’t matter
 - Include all possible key words
 - Pull the position description from USAJobs
 - Look at other PDs on the web
 - Helpful site: <https://acpol2.army.mil/fasclass/inbox/>
 - Keywords will directly determine whether your resume will appear as “qualified” to a hiring official.

Tips for Federal Networking

- ◎ Informational interviews with potential hiring managers
 - Discuss potential upcoming positions
 - Determine what their “key words” might be
 - Determine the Rosetta Stone of corporate-speak to government-speak in similar jobs
- ◎ Attending conferences on the subject matter of the relevant series
- ◎ Talk to everyone on base about your professional experience
 - Positive attitude– no complaining about difficulties in finding a government position

What Happens Next

- ⦿ After the closing date for applications, the agency evaluates candidate qualifications
- ⦿ From this assessment, the agency produces a list of qualified candidates
- ⦿ From the list of qualified applicants, agencies select candidates for interviews
- ⦿ At this point, agencies are like other organizations
 - They conduct interviews and select the best candidate(s) for the job
 - Some jobs require security clearance

Part 4: **in****gear** Career Assistance

Career Assistance

- ⦿ Education
- ⦿ Community
- ⦿ Ask the Mentor
- ⦿ Professional certification coordination
 - Credit hours, oversight options
- ⦿ Advocacy

- ⦿ TELL US HOW ELSE WE CAN HELP!!

Questions?

Contact Us!

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