

# **Topic: Federal Employment Instructor Lesson Plan**

**Time Required: 2 hours**

Instructors are encouraged to provide VR&E Service with appropriate comments on this lesson plan and the other training materials via the VR&E Comments Webform so that we can continually refine and improve our training.

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## ADVANCE PREPARATION

### Check Training Materials

**Instructor's Lesson Plan** (this document)—includes:

- Guide to presenting the topic (this comes in the form of an outline as well as script for you to read).
- Additional references on subject matter for you to review, as needed.

### Make Arrangements and Duplicate Materials

- Coordinate with the training site to duplicate the Trainee Handouts.
- Reserve the training room.
- Arrange for equipment such as flip charts, an overhead projector, and any other equipment (**as needed**).

## INSTRUCTOR'S PREPARATION

### Review Content and References

Become familiar with all instructor and trainee training materials. It is recommended that you read this Instructor Lesson Plan and the corresponding PowerPoint slides at the same time so you can see how they fit together. Also at least glance over the Trainee Handouts just to become familiar with what type of content is contained therein.

### Customize Training

You may make appropriate adjustments in order to accommodate the experience level and the size of your audience; however, care must be taken so as **not to reduce the instructional effectiveness of the training**.

- Note on the training outline in the next sections of this document where you might interject your personal experience regarding this topic.
- Make a list of the people in your office who are most familiar with this topic and how you might call on them to share their experiences during the presentation. Note this on your outline.
- Highlight headings and key phrases and add any guidance notes to yourself in the margins to personalize this Lesson Plan.
- Throughout the remainder of this Lesson Plan specific recommendations for items to say to the class are included in this

**type of font**—as long as you do not change the meaning or take away from the lesson, do not feel that you have to say each of the items word for word. More experienced instructors may feel more comfortable changing the wording, while newer instructors may want to follow the wording more closely. For all other material in outline format, feel free to paraphrase the information to suit your teaching style.

- Items you should say to the class are also included—these are noted with the word **Say** in front of them.

## **Rehearse the Presentation**

Practice is the best guarantee of providing a quality presentation. At a minimum, do a complete walkthrough of the presentation to practice coordination between this Instructor Lesson Plan, the Trainee Handouts, and the PowerPoint slides. This Lesson Plan contains icons as references (see page iv below).

## **Check Arrangements**

- Ensure completion of arrangements (room, equipment, duplication of materials, etc.).
- Ensure you have enough copies of the Trainee Handout packets.



## DAY OF CLASS PREPARATION

### Before trainees arrive

- Establish a “Parking Lot Area”

**Note:** The Parking Lot Area can be a whiteboard, a paper tablet, notepad, or a flipchart attached to a wall near the front of the class, etc. This area is where issues or questions are “parked” that cannot be readily addressed during the presentation.

Please forward these issues to the developer and other designated officials in order to develop a response for the trainee before the end of training and, if necessary, so that they can be incorporated into the materials and addressed in future presentations.

- Check that you have in the classroom all the instructor materials and copies of the trainee handouts.
- Test the computer and LCD projector to ensure they are working properly (in order for the PowerPoint to be presented). If using a flipchart, make sure that you have markers with plenty of ink left in them.
- Pull up the first slide of the PowerPoint, in preparation for the training.

### At the Beginning of Class

Make sure each trainee has:

- A set of Trainee Handouts.
- Signed the class roster.

## Conventions Used in This Lesson Plan

**Slide #**

This convention is used to show you on which slide of the corresponding PowerPoint presentation the information can be found. Use these notes to help guide your presentation.



Individual Activity



Handouts

**Note:** Instructor "Notes" contain direction for your presentation of the material.

The Instructor's Notes will appear in a box such as this to provide an easy differentiation between Instructor's Notes and script.

**Slide 1****INTRODUCTION (10 minutes) – First Title Slide****Slide 2**

- Introduce yourself.
- Ask trainees to make sure they have signed the class roster.
- Tell trainees they should all have a Trainee Handout packet and to let you know now if they do not have one.

**Note:** Orient trainees to the facilities. Point out such things as where the restrooms and breakroom are located.

- Inform trainees that they are going to learn about how to use the USAJOBS website to seek federal employment. They will also be able to sign in or create an account in order to build a resume.

**Prerequisite Training**

- There is no required Prerequisite Training, although the Resume Writing course would be helpful to understand how to use key words when writing a resume.

**Attention Getter/Motivator**

**Note:** If you have an applicable real-life *Federal Employment* experience that will motivate trainees and help them understand the importance of this topic you may include it in this section, instead of using the below example.

When applying for jobs, even if you are looking for federal employment, the market is extremely competitive. Even as a Veteran you are not guaranteed a job so you still have to know how to apply for jobs. This class will help you gain an advantage over others by informing you about how to apply for federal employment.

**Slide 3****Topic Objectives**

**Say:** At the end of this topic, with the aid of your handouts, you will be able to:

1. Describe how to perform a job search.
2. Recall what kind of information each Federal Advertised Job contains.
3. Create and sign into your USAJOBS account.
4. Build or edit your federal resume.
5. Provide appropriate required forms for Federal Employment.
6. Recognize the different Veterans Hiring Authorities.

## CORE PRESENTATION (100 minutes)

**Note:** This time includes five topics. Each of the following sections will list the recommended amount of time for you to spend on each topic.

### Slide 4

Let trainees know the following:

- Looking for federal employment, especially with their military background could prove to be a wise decision.
- They should not take it for granted that they will automatically get a job just because they are a Veteran.
- The market is extremely competitive because:
  - the pay is usually higher
  - their military time counts toward federal time

### Slide 5

#### I. Search Jobs (20 minutes)

- All Federal jobs are advertised through USAJOBS. To get to the site, go to the following location: <http://www.usajobs.gov/>
- According to the website, "USAJOBS is the Federal Government's official one-stop source for Federal jobs and employment information."

**Say:** Remember that you should never pay for a service that claims to have a federal job listing that only you can have access to.

##### A. You can do multiple things from the home page:

1. Browse jobs. After clicking on this link you can browse jobs by: Keywords or Location.
2. You can also perform an Advanced or international search. After clicking on this link you can browse jobs using: keywords, job titles, locations, and compensation, just to name a few.
3. Search jobs using the text boxes.

**Say:** For this course we will focus on using these text boxes, but at home, if you are interested, I encourage you to look more closely at browsing jobs and performing advanced or international searches.

##### B. To narrow down your search:

1. Enter the area in which you are searching for a job (include your city, state and/or zip code) or

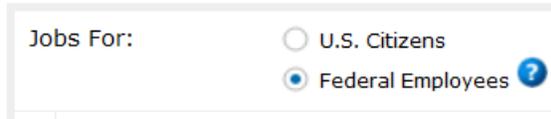
2. Enter keywords about the kind of job you are looking for. Since job titles in the government are not the same as in civilian jobs this type of search does not always give you jobs that you are qualified for.
3. Follow these steps to help you get the maximum return rate:
  - a) Type in your keyword(s) or location and click on the “Search” button.
  - b) Click on any ***Refine Your Results*** category (e.g. – Click on Posting Date and just search jobs posted within the last 7 days)

### Refine Your Results

Jobs For:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> U.S. Citizens
	<input type="radio"/> Federal Employees <a href="#">?</a>
+ Agency	
+ Grade	<a href="#">?</a>
+ Job Categories	
+ Salary	
+ Work Schedule	
+ Work Type	
+ Exclude These	
+ Posting Date	

**Slide 6**

**Note:** Be sure to review the "Magic Button" with the trainees:  
**Always Select Federal Employees**

**Refine Your Results**

Jobs For:  U.S. Citizens  
 Federal Employees [?](#)

**Say:** This allows you to see jobs that you will qualify for based on your Veteran status. Some of these jobs are not open to the public, but you may qualify. We will review Veterans Hiring Authorities later in this presentation.

Before we take a closer look at how each job advertisement is organized, are there any questions about USAJOBS and about how to search for the jobs you want?

**Slide 7****II. Anatomy of Federal Advertised Job (20 minutes)**

Let the trainees know that:

- After they click on a job that they are interested in, at the top of each job advertisement, there are multiple tabs which you will now cover in more depth.
- No matter which tab they select, the information on the right side of the screen will remain the same.
- They can:
  - choose which section of the advertisement to jump to,
  - apply online,
  - preview the advertisement in a printing-friendly format, and
  - save/share the job.
- They will also:
  - have the agency information,
  - know where you should direct questions about the job, and
  - know the job announcement and control numbers.

**Slides  
8 & 9****A. Overview**

**Note:** Show trainees the example of the Overview Tab on PowerPoint Slide #8.

Let trainees know the following information about the Job Overview:

1. Position Information

Temporary is less than one year

Term is one to three years

Permanent

Job Status: Full-Time, Part-Time, or Intermittent (as needed).

2. Look at the Open Period:

A week to three weeks is good; any other time limit is an outlier.

If it is under a few days the employer already has a candidate in mind to fill the position.

If it is over three weeks do a broader search because the job is harder to fill.

3. **Salary Range:** in line with *GS* plan (start at basic level for a particular job). (e.g. - A Veteran with a Bachelor's Degree and entry-level experience should not apply for a *GS* 13 position).

**Note:** Click to Slide #9 and review the below information.

1. This tab provides you with general information, such as the job title, department, agency, and job announcement number.
2. Provides a summary of the job, including the salary range, the open period of the announcement, series & grade, position information, promotional potential, duty locations, who may be considered for the job, and key requirements.

## Slide 10

### B. Duties

1. This tab “jumps” you down the page where you will be able to learn about the specific duties of the position.

## Slide 11

2. Each resume should be tailored to the specific job you are applying for. How do you do that? The “Duties” section of the announcement tells you what they want in a candidate, so make sure your federal resume/application for the job addresses the information in this section.
3. When applying for a federal job online, your resume is typically first screened by a computer. When you click the “Apply Online” button, your resume is sent into cyber space. The employer “programs in” certain keywords and phrases to screen your resume in or out. Those keywords and phrases are the same ones used in the “Duties” section of the job announcement. Someone in Human Resources will typically screen your resume after the computer to make sure that the computer got it right.
4. Sometimes the Human Resource Professional will review your resume without the computer screening it. In large federal organizations, Human Resource Offices are often centralized and the HR Professional may have no idea what the job entails other than what is written in the job description. Again, you have to make sure that your resume is the right fit for the job and this “Duties” section is critical to making that happen.

**Say:** the following real life story illustrates why key words are CRITICAL:

An Employment Coordinator was working with a Veteran who was employed with a local school system in their Print Shop. A very similar job came open with the Department of Defense in their Print Shop Department. The Veteran applied for the job and got the score of 68 (out of a possible 110 score - perfect score is 100 + 10 point preference). The Veteran was very upset and couldn't understand why.

A month later, the same position was advertised. This time the Veteran asked the EC for assistance. The Veteran brought the job announcement and his federal resume into the EC for review. The EC noticed that the job announcement used the words: "reproduce" and "duplicate." The Veteran had used the words "copy" and "print" in his resume. The EC simply replaced the two words that the Veteran had used with the two words that the announcement had used, throughout Veteran's application. When the Veteran applied for the job the second time, he received a score of 88! This score, plus his 10-point preference, gave him a final score of 98. He got the job!

Just using the keywords that the announcement called for, versus what the Veteran had called the tasks (even though they meant the same thing) improved his score by 20 points!



Handouts

**Note:** Have trainees turn to page 10 of the Student Handout (*Key Words*) to view samples. Remind them that they should use the words reflected in the job announcement. For example, if the announcement says "*experience in Human Resources*", do not say "*experience in Personnel*", use their term, Human Resources.

**Slides 12  
& 13****C. Qualifications & Evaluations**

1. This tab “jumps” you down the page where you will learn about the qualification requirements for the job and how you will be evaluated for the job.

**Note:** Show trainees the example of the Qualifications & Evaluations tabs on PowerPoint slides #12 & #13.

**Slide 14**

2. In this section is where you might find KSAs (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities). KSAs are no longer essays. You should however be sure to address the KSAs in your federal resume. This can be done under your Work Experience in your Resume.

3. Occupational Questionnaires are fairly new, but VERY critical to applying for positions. Your resume MUST support the answers to your Occupational Questionnaire answers.

**Helpful Tip:**

**Say: Read the Occupational Questionnaire first. Then, develop your resume based on the Occupational Questionnaire questions!**

4. Other information in this section:
  - a) You MUST have the Required Qualifications, or you can not apply (because even if you did, you will not be rated eligible).
  - b) Do not leave anything out, or you will be rated ineligible.
  - c) Be honest on your resume. They will verify the information that you provide.
5. Your application will be scored like a test. The highest possible score on an application is 110.
  - a) Disabled Veterans with a perfect Score of 100 + 10 Point Preference = 110
  - b) Non-Disabled Veterans with a perfect Score of 100 + 5 Point Preference = 105
  - c) All others, perfect = 100
  - d) The idea is to get the highest score possible.

**Slides 15  
& 16****D. Benefits & Other Info**

**Note:** Show trainees the example of the Benefits & Other Info tab on PowerPoint slides #15.

1. This tab “jumps” you down the page where you will learn about what kind of benefits the job offers (such as Flexible Spending Accounts, leave, life insurance, and more).

**Note:** Show trainees slide #16.

2. Benefits are generally standard in most federal agencies. Many Veterans ask about relocation expenses. It is a “benefit”, but when it is offered as a benefit, it is typically for positions that are GS 13 or higher.
3. Make sure to read “Other Info”, because this is where golden nuggets of information can be “hidden.”

**Slides 17  
& 18****E. How to Apply**

**Note:** Show trainees slide #17.

1. This tab “jumps” you to the bottom of the page where you will learn how to apply for the job, what documentation is required, the agency contact information, and what to expect after you submit your application package.

**Note:** Show trainees slide #18.

2. This is quite possibly one of the MOST IMPORTANT sections of the entire federal announcement. EVERY ANNOUNCEMENT will have a different application method!
3. First, ALWAYS print the announcement (because the day the job closes, it will disappear at midnight and you will not be able to access it again).
4. Use the “How To Apply” printout like a checklist to make sure you have not forgotten anything.
5. You must submit your application so that it will be received by the close of business on the closing date of the announcement.
6. View the Occupational Questionnaire first, then write or update your resume to support your answers to the Occupational Questionnaire.

## Slides 19 & 20

### F. What to Expect Next

**Note:** Show trainees slide #19

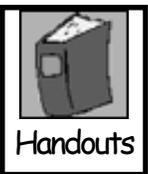
- Each USAJOBS announcement has its own application process. This will tell you what to expect next in the review of your application.

**Note:** Show trainees slide #20.

- The name of the game is to get rated “Best Qualified” by Human resources.
- If rated BQ you will be referred to the hiring manager. That’s the person who makes the hiring decision.
- The hiring manager may or may not interview you. Sometimes they just select the BQ from the list, other times they will interview.
- Check your USAJOBS account for updates, application status and alerts.

**Say:** Are there any questions about what we have covered so far?

## Slide 21



### III. Required Documents (20 minutes)

- Let trainees know that you will now go over the documents that are required for Federal Employment.

**Note:** Have trainees turn to page 12 of the Student Handout (*Don't Disqualify Yourself!*)

- A. Your USAJOBS Resume
- B. Assessment Questionnaire
- C. DD 214 Member 4 Copy
- D. SF 15: Application for 10-point Veteran Preference
- E. Preference Letter (Not Disability Letter)
- F. OF 306: Declaration for Federal Employment
- G. SF 50 & Performance Appraisal (if ever a former federal employee)
- H. College Transcripts (if using education in whole or part to qualify for the job)

**Slides****22-26****IV. Veterans Preference and Veterans Hiring Authorities (15 minutes)**

**Note:** Show trainees slide #20.

**A. Veterans Preference**

- 1. Veterans with Disabilities receive a 10 Point Preference**
- 2. Veterans receive a 5 Point Preference**

**Note:** Show trainees slide #21.

**B. Veterans Hiring Authorities**

1. VRA – Applies to Disabled Veterans (Chapter 31 Veterans Qualify)

**Note:** Show trainees slide #22.

2. VEOA – Preference Eligible (Chapter 31 Veterans Qualify)

**Note:** Show trainees slide #23.

3. 30% or More – Disabled Veterans with a rating of 30% or more

**Note:** Show trainees slide #24.

4. Schedule A – Not specifically for Veterans but Veterans with a severe physical, psychological or intellectual disability can use this hiring authority. Veterans' counselors can provide a Schedule A letter.

**Say:** You might qualify for one, or more, or all of the hiring authorities. Make sure these are reflected in your USAJOBS profile. Hiring Authority categories are often asked in the Occupational Questionnaire. Make sure to indicate all of the hiring authorities that you qualify for.

**Say:** Are there any questions about what we have covered so far in this topic?

**Slide 27****V. Your USAJOBS Account and the Federal Resume (25 minutes)**

- Log on to <http://www.usajobs.gov/> and tell the trainees to look at the top right side of the screen.
  - Note that there is a red bar that says "Sign In or Create an Account."
  - Tell trainees that, with their account, they are able to:
    - build and store up to five distinct resumes,
    - upload required documents,
    - save and automate job searches,
    - save an apply for jobs,
    - learn how to use USAJOBS,
    - learn about the federal hiring process,
    - discover special hiring programs,
    - search by agency, occupation, and location,
    - see which jobs are in demand, and
    - apply to federal agencies.

**Say:** How many have already created an account?

**Note:** Tailor the following based upon the responses that you receive. For example, if everyone already has an account, focus primarily on demonstrating how to log in to the current account.

**A. Create a new account**

1. Click on "Create an Account" and fill out the required information
2. Build resume
3. Apply for job of interest

**B. Log in to your current account**

1. Click on "Sign In"
2. Create new resume or adjust one of your existing resumes



### C. Building your Federal Resume

- Let trainees know that you will give them about 10 minutes to either create a new account or log in to their existing account.

**Note:** Walk around the room, offering assistance to those who look like they are struggling or need help.



**Note:** Have trainees turn to pages 2-9 (*Most Effective Resumes & Letting Federal Employers Know Your Worth*) of their handout packets to learn more about how to write a good federal resume.

## CLOSING (10 minutes)

Note: This should only be a very brief summary of all the material that was just covered. Ask review questions if time permits.

### Slide 28

#### Summary

Remind trainees that, today, they have learned about the aspects of federal employment including: how to perform a job search, what kind of information each job advertisement contains, as well as how to create and sign into their USAJOBS account in order to build and edit their federal resume.

They also viewed forms for Federal Employment and can now recognize the differences between Veterans Preference and Veterans Hiring Authorities.

**Say:** Now that you have completed this lesson on Federal Employment, you should be able to:

- Describe how to perform a job search.
- Recall what kind of information each job advertisement contains.
- Create and sign into your USAJOBS account.
- Build or edit your federal resume.
- Prepare required forms for Federal Employment.
- Recognize the differences between Veterans Preference and Veterans Hiring Authorities.

### Slide 29

#### Questions

**Say:** Are there any other questions or issues regarding the material we have covered today?

#### End of Training

**Note:**

- Thank trainees for their time and attention.
- End the course by having trainees sign out.
- Document their participation in CWINRS Notes.