

SUBPART H - APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

WV408.70(b) (2)

WV408.70 Description of documents.

(b) An up-to-date Standard Form 171, Personal Qualifications Statement.

(1) The Personal Qualifications Statement, Standard Form 171 (SF-171) is one of the most important keys to career development. It is the brief, factual, written record of what a job applicant has done. It should effectively summarize a person's experience and skills, education, training and development, awards, and outside activities. An SF-171 should be neat and up-to-date. Photo copies are acceptable. Photocopied signatures are not. Sign and date each copy of the SF-171 as you use it.

(2) Following are some helpful hints for preparing a Standard Form 171.

DO'S

Read carefully the vacancy announcement or the examination announcement for the position for which you are applying. Underline the skills required by the position.

Describe your experience so that you emphasize the work that used the skills required by the vacant position.

Use active verbs to describe what work you actually did. Be specific.

Keep your experience descriptions brief.

Write everything on the 171 itself--cut and splice a 171 with continuation forms if necessary. Eliminate blank lines.

DONT'S

Don't use the same 171 for jobs in non-related fields.

Don't exaggerate.
Don't be humble.

Don't describe the work of the organization generally or the work of others.

Don't use attachments.

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Use your own words in filling out the experience blanks.

Don't ever use position descriptions.

Include all experience, whether paid or volunteer

Don't omit church, community, or club work.

Arrange your experience in chronological order.

Choose references who can remember you, and know how you perform in a work (paid or unpaid) situation.

Don't use general character references; they usually won't commit themselves on such matters as dependability, initiative, etc.

Have your 171 neatly and accurately typed or write so that each word is legible.

Don't submit a 171 that is messy, hard to read, or confusing to follow.

If your 171 is reproduced, be sure every page is easily readable. Make certain the pages are in the correct order.

Don't make your 171 a "challenge" to the reader. Hard-to-read applications go in the "out" file first.

(3) Describing your experience. Your experience should be described with strong verbs. The following list may be helpful. Especially important verbs are underlined.

accomplished	<u>advised</u>	assessed	brought
achieved	<u>analyzed</u>	assisted	budgeted
acquired	applied	assured	cataloged
adjusted	appraised	bought	changed
<u>administered</u>	arranged	briefed	chaired
classified	conceived	controlled	<u>dealt</u>
closed	concluded	coordinated	<u>decided</u>
communicated	conducted	corrected	<u>defined</u>
compared	continued	counseled	delegated
completed	contracted	critiqued	delivered
demonstrated	directed	<u>established</u>	explained
designed	drafted	estimated	financed
determined	<u>edited</u>	evaluated	forecast
<u>developed</u>	enlisted	expanded	<u>formulated</u>
devised	ensured	expedited	gathered

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graded	<u>initiated</u>	interviewed	led
guided	inspected	<u>introduced</u>	licensed
handled	instructed	investigated	maintained
<u>implemented</u>	insured	joined	<u>managed</u>
improved	interpreted	kept	modified
monitored	<u>organized</u>	<u>planned</u>	prohibited
named	participated	prepared	projected
<u>negotiated</u>	perceived	presented	promoted
observed	performed	processed	purchased
ordered	<u>persuaded</u>	programmed	qualified
rated	reviewed	sought	summarized
<u>recommended</u>	revised	specified	<u>supervised</u>
related	selected	spoke	targeted
reported	set	studied	taught
researched	solved	suggested	tested
trained			
translated			
treated			
updated			
<u>wrote</u>			

(c) Knowledges, Skills, Abilities, and Other Characteristics (KSA's)

(1) Here is something to keep in mind when applying for a position. The "Selecting Official" for a position lists in the vacancy announcement those Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities (KSA's) which are important for success on the job to be filled.

The KSA's submitted by an applicant are an important part of evaluating a candidate for a position.

Great care must be taken by the applicant in addressing the KSA's. The narrative response to each KSA must be neat and concise. The comments should reflect why the applicant believes that personal work experience, educational background, training details, and other information directly apply to the identified KSA's and makes known his/her qualifications for the announced position.

(2) Tips for KSA's:

Don't be modest. If you don't tell them, who will?

Be clear and concise. (Some excerpts from recently received KSA's: "I always classify myself and then check my classification" or "I am skilled in handling myself...").

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Express accomplishments in specific terms. Use numbers or kinds. For example, "installed 70,000 feet of tile," wrote a monthly column for two newspapers."

Don't be afraid to use the word "I". Avoiding the use of the first person leaves the reviewer wondering who really did the work. "Sixty conservation plans were prepared," is an example. By whom--you, the whole office, the janitor? Don't beat around the bush. If you did it, say so.

Don't assume that because the raters know you, they know what a good job you do. The raters may be more impressed by someone who took the time to tell them.

List actions and results. So what if you held a no-till field day. Did the practice increase in the county as a result? So you reorganized the filing system. How much time has it saved your supervisor?

Show increases in production over previous years. Employers like to see progress.

Address each KSA on a separate page.

KSA's should stand on their own. Don't refer the rater from the KSA back to the SF-171 or to attachments. It's a sign of laziness.

Don't "snow" the rater by trying to pass off philosophy for knowledge or experience.

If you lack certain experience, say so, but add that you'd like the chance to try. Mention training you've received if you don't have actual experience. Address the KSA directly, explaining how your experience and training relate.

Use strong verbs, active voice. Raters are more likely to be impressed by direct language than by vague, flowery prose. Following are some action verbs:

I conducted	work closely	served	gained
prepare	utilized	chaired	deal
provide	made certain	coordinate	anticipate
assist	took over	enjoy	applied
represent	have supervised	develop	

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(360-GM, Amend. WV-34, Sept. 1986)