

Applying for a WI State job

Tips on preparing your Resume, Interview, and Cover Letter

RESUMES:

- ✓ Your resume is a critical component of the civil service application and will be reviewed as part of the assessment process. Prepare your documents in a Word file. Copy to Wisc.jobs.
- ✓ Build your resume on the tasks listed within the PD and qualifications. Your experience may not be on target, but you may have comparable skills.
- ✓ Follow the directions listed in the job announcement. You are not being scored on grammar and writing skills but rather on your demonstrated knowledge, skills and abilities. Keep it organized and professional.
- ✓ Include key verbs and words from the position description and incorporate into your resume. If the PD states “Perform, Coordinate, and compose...” then your resume should state “Performed, Coordinated and Composed.”
- ✓ Omit graphics. Resumes should look business professional.
- ✓ Include your name and page number on all pages of your resume.
- ✓ Limit resume to exactly what is requested. Typically only two pages of pertinent data. **DO NOT include** awards, letters of recommendations or other non-requested materials.
- ✓ Be careful with translation of military jargon, acronyms and abbreviations. Spell out acronyms and abbreviations.

*****REMEMBER to proof read and read again! Have another person review. It is easier to be an editor than creator! *****

INTERVIEWS:

- ✓ You will be invited by phone or email to interview. The HR contact will provide information on how to request a reasonable accommodation and other documentation such as the request to bring a list of 3-5 professional references. If you need a reasonable accommodation, ask for it.
- ✓ If you don't know or are unsure, ask about parking.
- ✓ Follow the interview instructions. Allow yourself time to park, especially if your interview is downtown.
- ✓ Bring what is requested of you to the interview and nothing more.
- ✓ Dress professionally and appropriately for the job you are interviewing for.
- ✓ Typically when you arrive and check in, you will receive a copy of the questions before the interview, allowing 15 minutes to review and prepare for the interview. However, this may not be the case in all instances.
- ✓ Typically, you will be taken to an area to review the questions. Write notes under the questions. You can take this into the interview with you.
- ✓ The interview panel typically consists of three members who will be facing you and taking notes as you speak. Do not worry if the panel members do not make eye contact.
- ✓ Remember, the people who reviewed your cover letter and resume are not the same as the people serving on the interview panel. You will have to articulate your skills to the panel! Never assume they read your cover letter or resume before interviewing you. Remember sometimes the questions are multi-faceted questions. If you need the panel member to re-read a part of the question that is fine. It is important you understand what is being asked of you and to respond to everything asked of you.
- ✓ You may be asked by the panel if you have questions, prepare 1-2 job related questions for the panel.
- ✓ Follow up with a thank you email to the panel.

COVER LETTER: (If required)

- ✓ Your cover letter is a critical component of the civil service application and will be reviewed as part of the assessment process. Prepare your documents in a Word file. Copy to Wisc.jobs.
- ✓ Do not write “see resume” on the cover letter. Each document is a part of the assessment and will be evaluated separately.
- ✓ Prepare before writing: obtain a copy of the job announcement, position description (PD), and a preview of the assessment as listed in the job announcement.
- ✓ If the PD is not linked to the job announcement, call or e-mail the Human Resources contact listed in the top section of the job announcement.
- ✓ Build your cover letter on the qualifications of the position as listed in the job announcement and position description. **This is key!** Your experience may not be on target, but you may have comparable skills.
- ✓ Highlight the important minimum and maximum qualifications listed in the “Qualifications” section of the state of Wisconsin job announcement before you start your cover letter. Ask yourself “do I meet at least the “minimum qualified” and possibly the “well-qualified” criteria. If minimum and well qualified applicant criteria are not listed, ask yourself “do I meet the qualifications of the position” as stated in the job announcement.
- ✓ Pay attention to the response limitation including font size: the cover letter in most state positions should be limited to a maximum of two (2) typed written pages.
- ✓ You are not rated on grammar and punctuation, but rather on your demonstrated knowledge, skills and abilities. Keep it organized and professional.
- ✓ Pay attention to “deadline to apply”. Late applications are not accepted.
- ✓ Remember the cover letter should:
 - Serve as your personal representative in your absence.
 - Focus on how your areas of expertise reflect the requirements of the job.
 - Tie your experience with what is asked in the position description.
 - Give specific examples of how you have the skills and abilities to do the job by tying your skills into the minimum and well-qualified qualifications listed on the job announcement
 - Prepare your document as instructed. It is very important to follow the directions.

TIPS FOR VETERANS:

- When translating military skills, understand two vital points: Your job = Proficiency, Your rank = Level of responsibility.

Sample non translated bullet point 11B (Infantry):

Hand selected by the First Sergeant to cross-train 25 Combat Support Soldiers on infantry tactics for an upcoming deployment

Sample translated bullet point:

Selected over peers by senior management to supervise, train, and lead 25 personnel on specific job related training that was imperative to success while conducting business overseas

- ALWAYS proofread your resume and cover letter! Run spell check, print document, read the document out loud, and/or have someone else review your work.
- The people who review resumes and cover letters are **NOT** the people on the Interview panel.
- A common misconception when writing resumes is that people focus on what they think is important and not what the employer is looking for. Sadly no one can assume you can do the job because you held that title in your work career. If you do not articulate your skills in the cover letter, resume, and interview, you may be passed over.
- Remember that the job interview is to sell yourself. Being nervous is typical of many people. If you are well prepared, stay positive and you will do great. AND most important, remember to stay focused and answer the question, not what you think the panel wants to hear.
- NOTE: with some jobs, the applicant will be asked to answer 3-5 questions on their knowledge, experience, skills, and abilities. The same systematic approach may be used as was in developing a cover letter and resume.

- <https://www.scwijobs.com/> - Visit to select job center, events, job fairs and Workshop schedule in the South Central region.

Good Luck!