

CSR Job Application Tips

If you are planning to apply for a CSR position, please read through the below set of helpful hints that OHR provided. They arise directly from recent experience with CSR openings and will give you the best possible chance to qualify and be referred for NIH positions. Please note that if you don't follow these, you may be found ineligible, even for a job you currently perform.

1. Make sure your USAJobs account is active. Log in regularly.
2. Update your resume regularly. Announcements are only open for five days, so it's important to have most of the information already in your resume.
3. Review the assessment and qualifications questions carefully. You will be disqualified if you answer a question about your employment status incorrectly. (If you are a federal employee, make sure that you say you are).
4. Tailor your resume to address the "minimum qualifications." The minimum qualifications are usually listed under "qualifications" in the announcement, and are also the statement at the beginning of the assessment questions that starts with "I qualify for this position at the GS-XX level because I have 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-XX level in the Federal service obtained in either the private or public sector, performing the following types of tasks: [long list of sample experience]." Your resume will be checked against this sample experience. If you do not show relevant experience, you will be disqualified. Jobs requiring a degree will also list the degree requirements. Both the educational and experience qualifications must be met when both are included.
5. Consider including a cover letter that summarizes the strengths you'd bring to the job.
6. Apply at least one day before the deadline and then call the HR Specialist listed in the announcement to make sure that all your documents were successfully uploaded.
7. Resumes must have dates of employment associated with the position title and duties. If this information is not included, HR has no way to determine if you have performed qualifying duties for at least a year.
8. Resumes should contain lots of detail, both to explain the duties you have performed and highlight the experience you have. For example, if you are applying for a position that lists 'Extramural Environment' 1 year specialized experience, please ensure your resume includes this qualifying experience (e.g., conducting scientific review and verbiage referring to work supporting grant applications). This is very important; we often come across names of people we know are qualified for the position – but their resume doesn't show the duties in any detail. Without the resume details, they can't be considered qualified under HR rules.
9. For scientific positions, remember to list publications.
10. All General Schedule (GS) CSR employees are permanent Title 5 NIH employees. Title 42 employees are not Title 5 employees.

(updated 6/9/2022)