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Skills Translation Worksheet

Public Service Transition Program · November 2026

HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet to turn the records of your service into plain-language skills, backed by evidence, that an employer or client can read. Complete it before you write your résumé, and return to it whenever you tailor an application.

You can type into the Word version or print the PDF. It takes four steps: gather your records, translate each duty, add evidence, and match your skills to real postings.

Step 1. Gather your records

Veterans. Evaluation reports (NCOERs, OERs, EPRs, OPRs, or fitness reports), award citations, training records and certificates, your Joint Services Transcript or Community College of the Air Force transcript, and your Verification of Military Experience and Training (DD Form 2586) if it is available to you.

Public employees. Position descriptions, performance plans and appraisals, award write-ups, personnel actions (for federal employees, SF-50s), training records, and any work products you are permitted to share.

Step 2. Translate each duty

Rewrite each duty or accomplishment in words that someone outside government would understand. The translations below are starting points. Wherever possible, use the words that appear in your target postings.

TERM YOU MAY SEE IN YOUR RECORDS	PLAIN-LANGUAGE VERSION
NCOER, OER, EPR, OPR, FITREP	Performance review
MOS, AFSC, rating, designator	Occupational specialty (describe the work itself)
NCOIC, OIC, LPO, LCPO, section chief	Supervisor, team lead, or manager of a named function
Mission, operation, exercise	Project, program, or operation
Readiness	Operational availability or preparedness
TDY or TAD; PCS	Business travel; relocation
Briefed the commanding general	Presented to senior executives
Hand receipt holder; property book	Asset accountability; inventory management
GS-13, grade, step	Leave out, or describe the level of responsibility
Program analyst (0343 series)	Management, operations, or program analyst
Contracting officer’s representative (COR)	Contract or vendor manager
Appropriations, obligations, apportionment	Budget planning and execution

TERM YOU MAY SEE IN YOUR RECORDS	PLAIN-LANGUAGE VERSION
Congressional inquiries; constituent correspondence	High-priority requests from elected officials' offices; customer correspondence
FOIA or OPRA requests	Public records requests and disclosure compliance
Rulemaking; Federal Register notices	Regulatory drafting and public comment management
OMB Circular A-123 reviews	Internal control and risk reviews

Step 3. Add evidence

Pair each translated skill with a result. These questions will help you find one.

- How many people did you lead, train, or serve?
- How much money, equipment, or inventory were you responsible for?
- How many cases, requests, contracts, or projects did you handle?
- How much time did you save, or how much did you reduce errors, costs, or a backlog?
- What rating, score, or standard did your team meet or exceed?
- What would have gone wrong without your work?

If a figure is sensitive or classified, describe scale honestly without it, for example "a team of more than 30" or "a multimillion-dollar portfolio."

Step 4. Match your skills to real postings

Collect three to five postings for the role you want, or write a short description of your first client if you plan to work for yourself. In the last column of the worksheet, note where each skill fits. Skills that fit several postings belong in your summary and skills section.

Worksheet

List one duty or accomplishment per row, in the words of your records. Then translate it, add evidence, and note where it fits. The first two rows are examples.

AS WRITTEN IN YOUR RECORDS	PLAIN-LANGUAGE TRANSLATION	EVIDENCE	WHERE IT FITS
Example (veteran). Platoon sergeant responsible for 38 Soldiers and $4.2M in equipment; maintained 98% readiness.	Supervised a team of 38 and managed $4.2 million in equipment while sustaining 98 percent operational availability.	38 people; $4.2 million in assets; 98 percent availability	Operations supervisor; logistics manager
Example (public employee). GS-0343-13 program analyst; led A-123 internal control reviews for a $310M grant portfolio.	Led risk and internal control reviews for a $310 million grant portfolio and directed corrective actions.	$310 million portfolio; reviews completed on schedule	Risk and compliance analyst; internal audit

Your Skills Translation Summary

From the completed worksheet, choose the five rows that best match your target role or client. Use this page to draft the summary and skills you will carry into your résumé, cover letters, and interviews.

Target role or client:

Professional summary, sentence one:

Professional summary, sentence two:

SKILL	EVIDENCE	WHERE IT FITS

Where to get help

Other program materials. The Résumé and CV Guide, the interview guides, the worksheets and checklists, the Referral Guide, and the résumé and cover letter templates are available to download at library.agardresearchassociates.org/public-service-transition.

One-on-one help. If you would like one of the program's directors to read your materials and help you tailor them to the jobs you are applying for, request one-on-one help through the program page at agardresearchassociates.org/public-service-transition. Requests are reviewed on a rolling basis as volunteer time allows, and veterans are served first.

If you are in crisis or worried about someone, help is available at any hour. Veterans, service members, and their families can reach the Veterans Crisis Line by dialing 988 and pressing 1, or by texting 838255. Anyone can call or text 988 for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

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