



NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY®

Résumé Checklist

Current NMHU students now have access to OptimalResume, www.nmhu.optimalresume.com, a secured web-based résumé building system. You may also access this system on our webpage, www.nmhu.edu/careerservices. This checklist will provide additional guidance in creating a winning résumé. The most effective résumés are those that are tailored for each job applying for. A quality résumé must be well presented (designed) and contain relevant information to your purpose/objective. If you would like feedback to your résumé, simply click on OptimalResume's Review Center and we will be glad to provide editing and suggestions.

Suggested Resume Format:

Contact Information

- ☐ **Name** – First and last only. Use a font size larger than the largest font in the résumé so it stands out. The rest of your contact information can be in the smaller font size (11 to 12 pt.).
- ☐ **Mailing address** – must be current and most reliable. It's ok to list your campus mailing address and your permanent address if needed.
- ☐ **Phone number** - Be sure your voice mail message sounds professional.
- ☐ **E-mail address** - Avoid using "cute" or inappropriate e-mail usernames.

Objective

- ☐ Keep your objective short and concise by simply stating the industry and/or job title and the company name (for example, "Summer internship in accounting with Goldman Sachs").
- ☐ Eliminate personal pronouns such as "I" and "my" from your objective.
Consider including a summary of your qualifications listed under your objective.

Education

- ☐ List your college(s) attended and degrees in reverse chronological order (most recent listed first). Only list other institutions that you earned a degree (ex. A.A) or other relevant credentials.
- ☐ Spell out degrees (i.e. "Bachelor of Science in [your major]", not "BS").
- ☐ Emphasize your degree and major by placing it in bold.
- ☐ Include the city and state after the institution name (there is no need to include the zip code).
- ☐ List the month and year of your graduation. Include "expected" or "projected" graduation to indicate when you will be graduating (i.e. expected May 2008), avoid listing dates of attendance – in most cases, this is unimportant to employers.
- ☐ Include GPA if it is a 3.0 or above, and use "GPA" (not "G.P.A."). Round the number off (i.e. 3.25).
- ☐ If you have completed a study abroad experience, include it in the education section.

Possible Subheadings to Education

- ☐ **Relevant Coursework**–List 6 to 8 courses, completed or currently enrolled in that may demonstrate your knowledge background as it pertains to your objective.
- ☐ **Certifications/Licenses**– indicate title, license #, authorizing agency, date or indicate "pending".
- ☐ **Extracurricular Activities/Leadership** – list organizations/committees, your title, date and description of your involvement, much like you would in the Experience section.
- ☐ **Course Projects/Research Papers** – list a sampling of 2 to 3 of your most impressive class projects to demonstrate your knowledge/expertise background.
- ☐ **Lab/Technical Skills** - list your lab equipment and techniques (science majors), or computer skills – hardware, programming languages, software (CS majors).
- ☐ **Honors/Awards** – list award/scholarship titles and year received.

Experience

- ☐ Include full and part-time jobs, paid or unpaid internships or practica, student teaching, and volunteer work, especially if it is related to your desired job.
- ☐ List your work experiences, starting with the most recent position (**reverse chronological order**).
- ☐ List your **job title** in bold and the company/organization name.
- ☐ Include city and state only for employer location, not the complete address.

- When listing dates, you can include: month and year (8/2008 to 12/2008) or semester and year (Fall 2008), or just the year of employment (2008). You do not need to include exact dates on a resume.
- Do not include unnecessary information such as supervisor's name, salary, type of job, etc.
- List job descriptions/duties with bullets or in paragraph form depending on the length of text.
- Use strong action words to describe what you did in your past jobs (avoid passive phrases such as "responsible for" and "duties included"). Eliminate personal pronouns (i.e. I, me, we) from your descriptions. Sentences need to be concisely written and use lots of relevant "keywords."
- Use appropriate verb tense. Use present tense action words to describe present employment experience and past tense action words to describe past employment experience.
- Include numbers to quantify experience where possible (i.e. # of employees supervised, \$ amount of budget managed, # of workshops taught/projects coordinated, \$ amount saved by your ingenuity).
- Focus on what you accomplished/your results and how you were valuable to past employers, not on your responsibilities. For example, instead of "Responsibilities included implementation of policies and procedures, training of new employees, interfacing with subordinates and vendors," try "Worked with staff and vendors to increase product turnover by 15% and sales by 23%. Trained 14 new employees, 5 of whom were rapidly promoted."

Skills

- **Computer Skills** - name the specific software programs in which you are proficient.
- **Language Skills** - include other languages and indicate the level of your proficiency i.e. basic conversation, intermediate, fluent) and modes of communication, (i.e. writing, reading, translating), if applicable. (Non-native English speakers should not include English since this is assumed.)
- **Include Transferable Skills** such as communication skills (i.e. public speaking), problem-solving/analytical skills (i.e. conflict resolution, data analysis), etc.

Additional Categories

You can include some of the following categories as applicable experience in addition to those listed above:

- **Volunteer Work/Community Service** – see same format as Experience section
- **Publications** – list title, journal, date
- **Presentations** - list title, event, date
- **Training/Conferences/Professional Development**
- **Certifications/Licenses** – list title and number, authorizing agency, date
- **Affiliations/Memberships** – list organization and dates
- **Committees** – list your role, committee name, date
- **Exhibitions** (for art and media majors) list events and year
- **Interests** – include your hobbies especially if they are relevant to your job objective.

General Résumé Guidelines

- A résumé is a marketing tool, not a complete job history. Include only the items that will help you get the job you want. Try to target your resume to a specific position/industry.
- Your resume should be one to two full pages in length, but preferably one full page.
- Your document should look organized and balanced, be pleasing to the eye, and be easy to read.
- Your resume format (bolding, italics, etc.) must be consistent throughout your document.
- The font size should be 11 to 12 point. Typical typefaces include Times, Helvetica, Arial.
- Do not use personal pronouns like "me" and "I." Use consistent and proper punctuation.
- Use high quality résumé paper - 20 to 24 lb., slight textured white, off white or solid neutral color.
- List your references (3 to 5) in separate document in the same format as your resume.
- It is optional to include a statement at the bottom of your resume that refers to the availability of your references. However, you may want to include a statement at the bottom of your resume that lets the reader know that you have a professional portfolio for review/to share.
- Enhance your résumé with educational experiences (i.e. coursework, project/papers, honors) and get involved in campus, volunteer, and community activities.
- Run a spell check AND proofread carefully. Also, have 2 people to proofread your résumé.