

Current NMHU students have free access to **OptimalRésumé**, a secured web-based résumé building system available 24/7 on our webpage [www.nmhu.edu/careerservices](http://www.nmhu.edu/careerservices). To learn how to use this system, please view the *Résumé Builder Tutorial* and the *Styling Résumé* videos by clicking on the “Recorded Trainings” located at the bottom of the OptimalRésumé homepage. To help you get started in developing your résumé, this **Checklist** will provide you with ideas to include in your résumé as well as detailed instructions on completing each section. Once you have completed your résumé draft in the OptimalRésumé system, click on the “**Review Center**” tab to receive online feedback from our office. Before you submit your résumé for feedback, make sure to follow the Checklist instructions and additional tips below.

## **Your Contact Information**

- Name:** first and last name only. No need to use your middle initial.
- Mailing address:** use the most current and reliable mailing address. Consider listing both campus mailing address and permanent address, if needed.
- Phone number:** use this format: (505) 123-4567. Be sure your voice mail message sounds professional.
- E-mail address:** use your student or professional email ([yourname@live.nmhu.edu](mailto:yourname@live.nmhu.edu)). Avoid using "cute" or inappropriate e-mail usernames.

## **OBJECTIVE**

- Keep your objective **simple and concise** by stating the industry and/or job title and the company name (for example, "Summer internship in accounting with Goldman Sachs." "Peer Resource Leader with the New Mexico Highlands University Outdoor Recreation Department"). **Eliminate personal pronouns** such as "I" and "my" from your objective.
- After your objective statement, consider including a **summary of your qualifications** only when applying for a specific job. Provide 3 to 5 bulleted statements addressing how your qualifications/skills match the job's key requirements.

## **EDUCATION**

- List your current college name, and the City and State (**New Mexico Highlands University, Las Vegas, NM**) on the first line, followed by the degree and major and graduation date—month and year (example: **Bachelor of Science in Biology**, expected May 2019") on the second line. Do not simply list dates of attendance.
- Only list other institutions where you earned a degree or other relevant credentials. List the colleges in the order of most recent (reverse chronological order). Only list your high school if you are a recent high school graduate.
- Emphasize your **degree and major** by placing it in **bold**. Do not bold your college names.
- Include GPA if it is a 3.0 or above. Round the number off (3.2) and indicate the scale (GPA = 3.2/4.0).
- If you have completed a study abroad experience, include the school/program name, date completed, and a brief description of what you studied.

## ***Other section headings to consider listing after the Education section***

- RELEVANT COURSEWORK:** list 6 to 8 of the most advanced courses, currently enrolled and/or completed that may demonstrate your knowledge background to the job you are applying. Only list the highest sequence courses (ex. Biology II, instead of Biology I).
- EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/LEADERSHIP:** list campus clubs/organizations, your title (only if you hold a leadership position), dates, and 1 to 3 bulleted statements that describe your role and accomplishments.
- COURSE PROJECTS/RESEARCH PAPERS:** list 2 to 3 of your most impressive class projects that demonstrate your knowledge/expertise background. *Include the thesis statement, purpose or results into the title.*
- LAB/TECHNICAL/FIELD SKILLS:** list specific lab equipment and techniques, hardware, programming languages, and software.
- HONORS/AWARDS:** list the exact title of scholarships/academic awards, sponsoring organization, and date received.

## **EXPERIENCE**

- Include full and part-time jobs, paid or unpaid internships, and volunteer work related to your desired job. Consider having separate sections such as “Relevant Experience” and “Additional Experience.”
- Starting with the most recent position, list the exact Employer/Organization name, location (City and State only, do not include the mailing address) on the first line.
- On the second line, list the Job Title and the starting and ending dates, month and year only (ex. August 2016 to January 2017). **Bold only the Job Title**, not the employer/organization name.

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- For federal government résumés include supervisor’s name and phone number, salary/pay rate, and hours worked per week. Refer to federal résumé samples in OptimalRésumé.
- List job descriptions/duties as bulleted statements or in paragraph form depending on the length of the text. Jobs that are related to your field of study or career interests should have more content (5 to 7 bulleted sentences).
- Write job descriptions using **Résumé Language**, that is, write in the first person, but omit the subject (I). Example: Instead of “I took a full course load of Honors-level courses while working part-time...” try “Combined intensive honors curriculum with employment and active participation in student organizations.”
- Avoid short/vague statements; instead write each sentence using this **résumé sentence strategy**: start with an **action verb** + **task/duty** + **explain how it was accomplished** + **what was the purpose of the task and/or the result of it**. Use the **Résumé Language Worksheet** to help you brainstorm a list of your duties/responsibilities and refine your sentences. **Result-focused sentences, which are most preferred by employers, will make your résumé stand out and more competitive.**
- Use **strong action words** (click on the **Action Verbs** button in OptimalRésumé to view a list to choose from. Avoid passive phrases such as "responsible for" and "duties included"). Avoid using personal pronouns (e.g. I, me, we).
- Use the appropriate verb tense: use **present tense** to describe current jobs and **past tense** for previous experiences.
- For best results, use lots of **keywords** (nouns) throughout your sentences that relate to the requirements and skills required for the job you are applying.
- Include numbers to **quantify** your experiences where possible (i.e. # of employees supervised, \$ amount of budget managed, # of workshops taught/projects coordinated, the \$ amount saved by your ingenuity).
- **Focus on what you accomplished (results) and how you were valuable to past employers, not simply on your responsibilities.** For example, "Partnered with 10 staff members to develop and implement an after-school tutoring program using Socratic teaching techniques that resulted in a 50% increase of grade levels."

## RELEVANT SKILLS

- **Computer Skills**: list the specific titles of the software programs in which you are proficient.
- **Language Skills**: include your native or second languages (except for English) and indicate the level of your proficiency i.e. basic conversation, intermediate, fluent) and modes of communication, (i.e. writing, reading, translating).
- Avoid listing “soft or transferable skills” such as good communicator, organized, excellent writing, hardworking, dependable unless you also provide a demonstrable example along with each skill into a bulleted sentence.

## Additional Sections

- **VOLUNTEER WORK/COMMUNITY SERVICE**: list the full organization name, dates, and a description of your duties and responsibilities using the same **résumé sentence strategy** as listed in the experience section above.
- **CERTIFICATIONS/LICENSES**: indicate the exact title, license #, authorizing agency, and date completed.
- **PUBLICATIONS**: list the exact title of the document, the official Journal/Publication title, and date completed.
- **PRESENTATIONS**: list exact title of your presentation, the name of the event it was delivered, and date completed.
- **TRAINING/CONFERENCES/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**: list the exact title of the workshop(s), conference, and date.
- **COMMITTEES**: list the name of the committee, a brief description of your role, and date completed.
- **EXHIBITIONS**: (for art and media majors) list the name of the events, a brief description of your work, and date.
- **INTERESTS**: include your hobbies especially if they are relevant to your job objective.
- **REFERENCES**: it is optional to indicate “Available upon request.” If references are required, list them on a separate page or include them in your résumé, if space permits. List 3 to 5 professionals (preferably work supervisors or faculty), including their name, job title, company/organization name, complete mailing address, phone, and email.

## Additional résumé tips:

- Our OptimalRésumé system allows you to create multiple versions of your résumé. On this system, we highly recommend that you create a “Master Résumé” version to keep an on-going log or record of all your educational, extracurricular, volunteer, and work experiences. The length of this résumé is unlimited. A master résumé can then be cloned to create a targeted résumé for each job you apply.
- A targeted résumé is a marketing tool for applying to a specific job. It is not a complete job history. It includes only the items that will help you get the job you want. The best résumés are those that are customized for the specific job position/industry.
- The number of pages for a résumé depends on the type of job or industry. Typically, a targeted résumé is 1 to 2 *full* pages. Some businesses and corporate jobs tend to prefer one page, whereas government, sciences, education, and social service industries can have multiple pages. A government résumé or *Curricula Vitae* (CVs) can be more than 2 pages.
- Use high quality résumé paper, 20 to 24 lb., using slight textured white, solid neutral light colors: cream, ivory, blue, and gray.
- Most importantly, run a **Spell Check** and carefully **proofread** for proper sentence structure, grammar, parallelism, syntax, and spelling errors.
- Career Services will help you with résumé content and proper formatting. We also encourage you to visit the **NMHU Writing Center at Douglas Hall 115, (505) 454-3537** to “**review your résumé for proper sentence structure and grammar.**” Most employers have a zero tolerance policy for spelling and grammar errors on résumés.