



Including holiday seasonal work on your resume

By The N.M. Department of Workforce Solutions

For the Journal

The holidays can be a great opportunity for seasonal work whether you are new to the workforce, between jobs, need additional income, or recently moved to a new city. After the job has come to an end or if you have had several seasonal positions in the past, you may be hesitant to include these on your resume because your employment history looks choppy or you are concerned that you will be seen as a “job hopper.” However, it is far more important to include the skills and experience you have gained from seasonal work and to fill in the gaps in your resume than to leave it off completely.

When developing or updating your resume with seasonal work experience, always keep in mind the employer’s needs. Review the job advertisement and compare it to the skills you possess or have recently gained. Employers will scan your resume for your qualifications and experience, so make sure that your resume clearly communicates these points. Note if you have acquired any of the skills that are often associated with holiday seasonal jobs, such as customer service and communication skills. Spend the time to craft a well organized, strong resume. This will raise your chances of being selected for an interview.

There are many different ways to list seasonal work and make it a selling point on your resume. You need to note if the job was seasonal in the job title or the description. For example, list the job title and then note “Seasonal Position” or “Seasonal Work” either in parenthesis or separated by a hyphen.

If you have held the same type of seasonal position for various companies or had many short-term jobs, listing more than three or four is not effective on your resume. Review all the positions you have held, and then group them together either by the company you worked for or by common skills. For example, if all the positions required customer service skills and administrative functions, briefly describe the skills set and then list the most applicable temporary or seasonal jobs. This approach works best in a functional resume format, so be sure your resume is consistent throughout. If you held multiple seasonal jobs over the last year, include a description of your range of experience, and note that you adapt to new situations easily and learn quickly.

After updating your resume, be sure to highlight seasonal job experience in your cover letter. This is your chance to explain to a prospective employer that you have held seasonal positions where you gained skills and work experience. You may have had to learn the job quickly, been required to be very flexible with schedules and training during the busy holiday season, or worked with a high volume of customers or orders. Include these achievements as you tailor cover letters to each prospective employer.

Use your resume and cover letter to highlight your diverse experiences and then use these points to market yourself during an interview. Focus on your accomplishments during your seasonal jobs rather than concentrating on the temporary nature of the work. Keep in mind that seasonal work can not only help fill in employment gaps or be a chance to earn extra money, but could lead to future opportunities. You may leave with an excellent letter of recommendation from your manager or supervisor, or your seasonal job could turn into a potential permanent position with the company.

This is a regular column written by the N.M. Department of Workforce Solutions. For more information, go to www.dws.state.nm.us.

Published November 29, 2015.

The NMDWS column can be found in the Albuquerque Journal’s Classifieds section featuring Real Estate, Automotive, and Careers every Sunday.