



## Resume basics and helpful tips

By The N.M. Department of Workforce Solutions

For the Journal

*This is a three-part series covering the different resume sections, formats, and tips for success.*

Your resume, cover letter, and job application are important tools in your job search and may often be the first contact you have with an employer. The sole purpose of sending the resume and a cover letter or completing a job application is to land an interview and good first impressions are important. Your resume should present your skills, experience, education, and achievements in a manner that captures the employer's attention and makes you stand out from the crowd. While there is no guarantee that a good resume will get you a job, a bad one is likely to eliminate you from consideration. A poorly completed job application may omit skills or experience that an employer seeks.

No single resume layout will suit every jobseeker, but here are some standard resume categories to help you start:

**Personal Information:** Your resume must include your name, address, telephone number(s) and e-mail address if you have one. This information should be listed at the top of your resume and presented in a professional manner that excludes the use of nicknames and abbreviations (such as "St." for Street"). Be sure to include an alternate or "message" telephone number if your home telephone is not connected to an answering machine.

**Job/Career Objective:** An effective objective is one that identifies the type of job you are seeking and the skills you can offer a prospective employer. Your objective should be brief and specific to enable the employer to immediately see how you would contribute to the organization's future success. The objective is an optional component of your resume and is most relevant if you are applying for a specific job or have a clear career in mind. If the objective seems too targeted and you want to emphasize a broader range of accomplishments, you may consider using a summary of qualifications instead.

**Summary of Qualifications:** Employers and recruiters typically spend less than ten seconds initially screening a resume, so highlighting your qualifications early on the page can greatly improve your chances of consideration. A summary of qualifications is a list of short phrases that amplify the most important parts of your overall resume and focus attention on key accomplishments.

**Body of Resume:** The education section of your resume does not need to be excessively detailed but should include any credentials that are required for the position you are seeking. You may consider excluding the education section if it does not support your job objective or if you lack the required educational credentials. If you are assembling a chronological resume, your work experience comes next with employment listed in reverse order (most recent first). Your resume should highlight the job skills your enjoy using and would want to use in your next job. Try to showcase your achievements rather than simply listing descriptions of the jobs you've held. Using a functional format requires that relevant skill category summaries be listed next, while the combination format includes both chronological listings and skill category summaries.

Watch for part two of this three-part series next week. Also, the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions' Pocket Resume is great to take to job fairs or have when filling out multiple applications. The Pocket Resume is available to download and print at <http://www.dws.state.nm.us/JobSeeker/Publications/JobHuntingPublications>.

This is a regular column written by the N.M. Department of Workforce Solutions. For more information, go to [www.dws.state.nm.us](http://www.dws.state.nm.us).

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