



Resumes, Cover Letters & Interview Tips

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Career Development

NAU LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT



Our Land Acknowledgement recognizes the unique and enduring relationship existing between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories:

Northern Arizona University sits at the base of the San Francisco Peaks, on homelands sacred to Native Americans throughout the region. We honor their past, present, and future generations, who have lived here for millennia and will forever call this place home.

BY THE END OF THIS WORKSHOP, YOU WILL LEARN:

 What are the main parts of a resume & how to optimize your structure

 How to develop impactful accomplishment statements

 What the main breakdown of a cover letter is & what to include

 Tips for effectively answering common interview questions

 How Career Development can support you throughout your search

A dark blue background featuring a faint, stylized world map. The map is centered and shows the outlines of continents in a slightly lighter shade of blue. The overall aesthetic is professional and academic.

Resumes

THE MAIN PARTS OF A RESUME



Contact Information: Name, Phone, Email



Summary of Qualifications/Skills Summary



Education/Previous Institutions/Degrees



Experience: Work experience & other experiences



Additional Sections: To help you stand out

Fonts & Formatting

FONTS

- Be consistent across all resume sections (header, content, etc.)
- Choose a font with serifs, such as Cambria, Book Antiqua, or Times New Roman
- Use **bold**, *italics*, or underlining to highlight important information, such as the title of your degree or positions you've held
- Use black text only
- Make sure your font is readable, usually at least 10pt but this depends on the font

FORMATTING

- Align key information along the right and left margins to make the resume easy to scan and digest
- Use bullet points, rather than paragraphs, to describe your experience
- Edit for extra spaces and indentations, dangling bullet points, and consistent use of periods
- Be consistent in your format: **5/2021 or May 2021**
- Consider including horizontal lines to distinguish each section and/or add a border.

CAMPUS & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Service Committee Member, Kayettes, *Northern Arizona University*

February 2021 – Present

Mentor, Peer Jacks Mentoring, *Northern Arizona University*

August 2019 – Present

Member, Model United Nations, *Northern Arizona University*

August 2018 – March 2020

Treasurer, German Club, *Northern Arizona University*

January 2019 – January 2020

CONTACT INFORMATION

What to Include:

- Name and/or Preferred Name
- Phone Number
- Email Address
- LinkedIn URL

What Not to Include:

- Date of Birth/Age
- Address/Residence
- Race/Ethnicity
- Nationality

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SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

What to Include:

- 3-5 bullet points that highlights them as the best candidate for the role
 - These are targeted or specific to the experience they are applying for
 - Look at the minimum and preferred qualifications sections on the job description and make sure those are reflected in this section

What Not to Include:

- Objective or paragraph summary of their experience

Summary of Qualifications

- 5+ years of work experience in industries including food retail, outdoor recreation, and higher education.
- 2+ years of leadership experience through involvement in mentoring, volunteering, and intramural sports.
- Strengths include communication, building rapport, time management, and interpersonal skills.
- Software Experience: Microsoft Office Suite, Salesforce, BBLearn, Canva, and Zoom.

The Hiring Matrix

	Minimum Qualifications		Preferred Qualifications				
	Bachelor's Degree	2-4 years of relevant experience	Supervision and/or training experience	Experience collecting and analyzing data	Effective verbal and written communication skills	Software Experience: Microsoft Office Suite, etc.	Project management experience
Weight	Y-or-N	Y-or-N	10	10	5	5	15

- With some organizations, if you do not clearly meet the minimum qualifications, they will not consider you further
- Matrixing resumes = Grading your resume
 - ‘Grading Rubric’ is based off the job description, specifically:
 - Minimum qualifications
 - Preferred qualifications
 - Knowledge, skills, & abilities



Accomplishment Statements

WRITING ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENTS

1. Action Verb (WHAT):

- **Check out our Action Verbs sheet to help you get started crafting articulate and focused bullet points.**
 - *Created art-based lessons...*

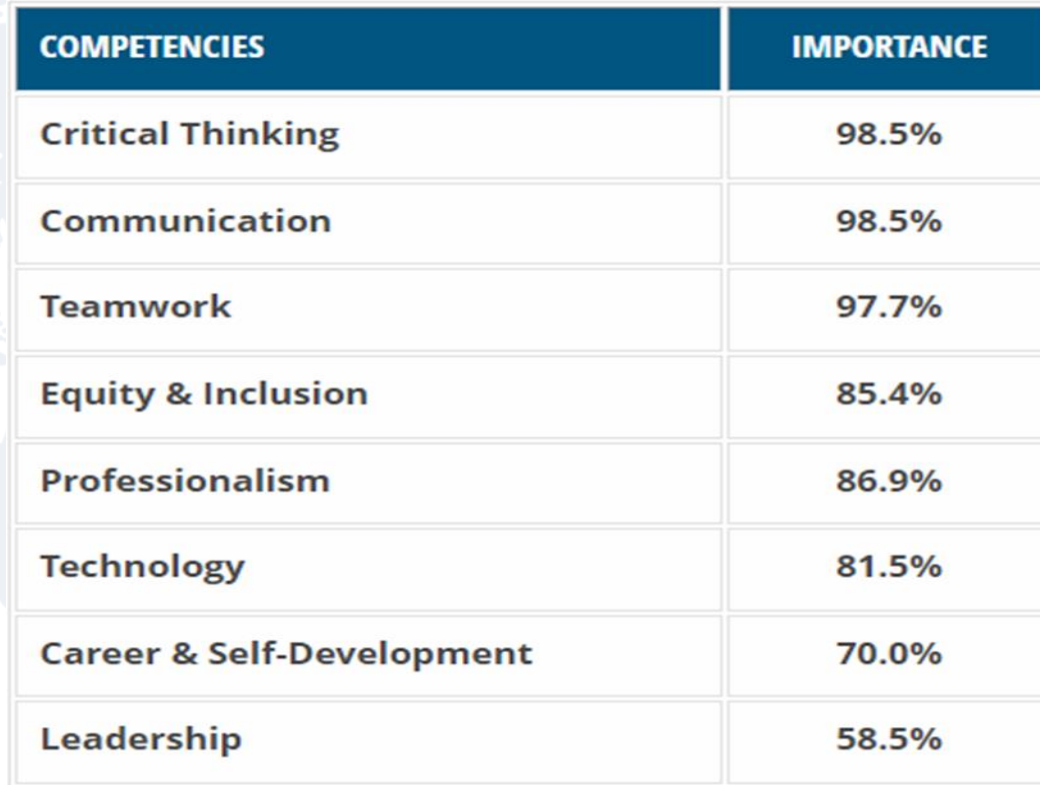
2. Specify/Quantify (HOW):

- **Quantifying and specifying your experience answers the “how” questions – how many, how long, how much, etc.**
 - *Created a 3-week unit of art-based lessons for 25 first graders...*

3. Result/Outcome (WHY):

- **The results and outcomes help make a clear connection between your experiences and your career profile/application.**
 - *Created a 3-week unit of art-based lessons for 25 first graders to introduce the different art mediums and to build their confidence utilizing art materials*

NACE CAREER COMPETENCIES



COMPETENCIES	IMPORTANCE
Critical Thinking	98.5%
Communication	98.5%
Teamwork	97.7%
Equity & Inclusion	85.4%
Professionalism	86.9%
Technology	81.5%
Career & Self-Development	70.0%
Leadership	58.5%

EDUCATION

What to Include:

- Name of Institution, Location
- ✓ We recommend only including college & beyond
- ✓ If you have technical school that aligns with their current degree or future goals, include it
- Degree: Type, Major, Minor
- Month & Year Completed
- Scholarships
- GPAs



Education

Northern Arizona University – Flagstaff, AZ
Bachelor of Arts, Psychological Sciences
Spanish Minor

Expected Dec. 2020

Universidad Rey Juan Carlos – Vicálvaro, Madrid, Spain
Cultural immersion and test of adaptability through study abroad
Fluent in Spanish speaking and writing

Summer 2019

EXPERIENCE

Helpful Tips for Resume Experience: Instead of Work Experience, they can breakdown your experiences.

- Relevant Experience
- Leadership Experience
- Medical Experience
- Lab Experience
- Internship Experience
- International Experience
- Additional Work Experience

Healthcare Experience

Certified Nursing Assistant, Beehive Assisted Living Homes, *Bosque Farms, NM* June 2018 – January 2019

- Assisted 15 patients with activities of daily living (ADLs) while closely monitoring resident health.
- Took vitals and administered prescribed medications both orally and through injections.
- Prepped and provided nutritionally well-rounded meals and snacks for residents.
- Properly lifted and transported residents throughout ADLs to ensure safety.

Leadership Experience

Peer Jacks Mentor, Northern Arizona University, *Flagstaff, AZ* August 2021 – Present

- Mentor 15+ first year students through their transition to college by serving as a role model, providing bi-weekly one-on-one meetings, making connections, and building a sense of community.
- Connect students who are struggling with mental health, academics, and finances to campus departments including Counseling Services, Academic Success Center, and the Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid.
- Document 30+ student meetings through Salesforce to inform campus stakeholders of student progress.
- Assist students with navigating campus resources and applying for housing, classes, and meal plans.

When they breakdown their experience, they show employers how diverse their experiences are.

OTHER THINGS TO INCLUDE ON A RESUME

Below are examples of sections to add:

- Software Experience
- Language Competencies
- Campus & Community Involvement
- Professional Affiliations
- Certifications & Trainings
- Technical Skills
- Lab Techniques
- Transferable Skills
- Honors & Awards
- Presentations & Conferences

FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS

- Arabic (Intermediate-low proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing)
- Spanish (High proficiency in speaking and intermediate-high proficiency in reading and writing)

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TRAININGS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Safe Zone, TRANSparency Zone, Inclusion Zone, Unconscious Bias Zone, Conflict Resolution, Preventing Harassment & Sexual Violence, Managing Bias, FERPA, Safe Jacks Suicide Prevention, and Risk Management



ATS Resumes

WHAT IS ATS?

Applicant Tracking Systems:

- Computer software programs that manage and automate recruiting and hiring processes.
- Organize information of applicants and makes it searchable to recruiters.
- Used to cull applicants and recommend qualified candidates.
- Helps with scheduling interviews and sending automated emails and notifications.
- Usually provides a consistent and positive user-friendly application process.
- Automates and streamlines the hiring process for recruiters and hiring managers.

WHO IS USING ATS PROGRAMS?



Enterprise Level Companies:

- 99% of Fortune 500 companies
- 70% of Larger Companies

Recruiting Agencies:

- 74% of Recruiters

Small & Medium Businesses:

- 20% of Small and Medium Businesses

HOW TO MAKE YOUR RESUME ATS COMPLIANT

- **Avoid Using Headers and Footers – Draft your resume in a blank MS Word document.**
- **Avoid using tables, columns, textboxes, and graphics.**
- **Use Serif fonts that are easy to read: Times New Roman, Calibri etc.**
- **Utilize traditional resume section titles to be easily searchable.**

HOW TO MAKE YOUR RESUME ATS COMPLIANT

- **Save your resume in either .docx or .pdf format.**
- **For dates use either a MM/YYYY or Month YYYY format: 09/2023 or September 2023.**
- **Ensure that you are using keywords and phrases from the job description in your resume: Job titles, specific skills and emphasized**

Cover Letters

THE MAIN PARTS OF A COVER LETTER



Header: Your name and contact information



Date of submission and employer information



Greeting and intro paragraph tips/first impressions



Content: What to include and how to help develop it further



Concluding paragraph, salutation, and signature

A WELL-CRAFTED COVER LETTER:

- Makes a powerful, emotional connection with the reader
- Demonstrates your genuine interest in and understanding of the organization
- Differentiates you from the competition by modeling your:
 - **clarity of purpose**
 - **writing ability**
 - **understanding of professionalism**
- Can get you an interview!

TIP #1: PERSONALIZE

1. Address the cover letter to the individual responsible for hiring
2. In the first paragraph, demonstrate your knowledge of the organization and why you're so excited to join them
 - **What is something you like about the organization or what makes them stand out to you as a candidate?**
 - **What recent accomplishments has the organization made? Have they been in the news? Do you use their products or services?**
 - **What draws you to apply there? (Be sure you checked out their website)**
 - **How can you be of value to their mission, vision, and goals?**

Dear Sir or Madam:

I'm writing in response to your job posting for a 3rd Grade Teacher. I believe I have the skills, qualifications, and motivation to succeed in this position. I have enclosed my resume for your review and look forward to being considered for this position.

Dear Ms. Oswald:

I was pleased to learn of the 3rd Grade Teaching position at Flagstaff Elementary School and I would like to convey my sincere interest in joining your education team. As a Flagstaff resident, I have experienced firsthand the importance of the Flagstaff School district and how the education they provide supports the youth of the communities in the northern Arizona region. I would be honored to offer my educational knowledge and technical skills to a district that places great value on meeting students' needs, exceeding their expectations, and providing a high quality of education.

TIP #2: INCLUDE UNDENIABLE PROOF

1. Back up claims about your strengths, talents, and experience with specific examples. **Show, don't tell**
2. Relate your experience to the job description
3. If the job you are applying for does not directly relate to your experience, include specific examples of transferable skills
4. The resume gives the “**big picture**,” so your cover letter can focus on a few experiences in depth

I am very adaptable to new environments and situations and enjoy the challenge of working with a diverse team to accomplish common goals. Being outside of my comfort zone and finding creative ways to communicate across cultures is a skillset I am competent in, which make me a qualified candidate for the Travel Abroad Instructor Assistant position with the JetCorps program.

Living with a host family in rural Botswana for twelve weeks challenged me to adapt to an unfamiliar situation. While there, I led a team of four international volunteers to assist a local women's organization in remodeling a preschool. This first-hand experience taught me the patience necessary for communicating with a diverse team to achieve a common goal. Due to our combined efforts, the preschool is now equipped to serve 85 children. As a Jet Corps Instructional Assistant, this experience will allow me to relate to students who are traveling abroad for the first time, helping them adjust to and work within a new culture.

TIP #3: STICK TO THE FORMAT

- A cover letter is a formal document
- Use a colon after the greeting

Dear Mr. Thompson:

- In the absence of a personal contact, use a formal generic address (e.g., Selection Committee, Hiring Professionals, Hiring Manager)
- Use a formal business letter format and your resume header

Louisa Lumberjack

Ll1899@nau.edu | 928-523-1087 | She/Her

Header

Month Day, Year

Name of Hiring Manager

Name of Organization

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Dear Hiring Committee:

It is a pleasure to submit my application for the ROLE NAME position with NAME OF ORGANIZATION. As a graduate from the Bachelor of Social Work program and an intern with ORG NAME, I have seen the impact that social work and social services has on the greater community. After reviewing this opportunity, I am eager to continue my professional journey by joining an organization that is committed to creating healthy individuals, families, and communities through delivering innovative behavioral healthcare solutions.

Middle Paragraphs: Connection to job site/responsibilities and past experiences that made you a qualified candidate for the role or have instilled your passion for this field and your future within it. Throughout my time as a social worker, I have..... which I believe has prepared me for parts of this role. Additionally, I... These opportunities encouraged me to... Due to my past and current experiences, I have... Many of my past experiences have involved...

Our responsibility in social work is to foster growth in our communities and the individuals we impact. I would be honored to contribute to an organization that aligns with my personal and professional goals of advocacy, service, and stewardship. Thank you for your time and consideration.

All the best,

Louisa Lumberjack

Louisa Lumberjack

Introductory
(Purpose)
Paragraph

Closing
Paragraph

2-3 Short Body
Paragraphs

Signature and
Typed Name

KEY COVER LETTER THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. We recommend having at least 3 paragraphs:
 - Paragraph 1: Why are you writing this letter and how did you hear about this job?
 - Paragraph 2: What is special about you? How are you right for the company/role?
 - Paragraph 3: Refers to attached documents and/or follow-up
2. Pay close attention to your grammar, punctuation, and spelling
3. Look on the page: alignment, spacing, proper business format



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Interview Tips

MOST COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why do you want to work for [insert company name]?
- Tell me about something on your resume.
- Tell me about something that is not on your resume.
- Why are you looking for a job?
 - **OR: Why are you looking for a different job?**
- Why should we hire you?
- Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten years?
- What's your greatest strength?
- What's your greatest weakness?
- Tell me about how you manage conflict or problems that arise?
- What is your greatest achievement or accomplishment?
- Do you have any questions?
- How do you handle stress and pressure?
- What are your goals for the future?
- What can you do for us that other candidates can't?

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Behavioral-based interview questions generally start with any of the following:
 - Tell me about a time when you...
 - Describe a circumstance when you were faced with a problem related to...
 - Think about an instance in which you....
 - Tell me how you approached a situation where...
 - Give me an example of a time when...
- These questions ask you for an example from your past experiences and to speak about them.



THE STAR METHOD

Situation: Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to complete. You want to be specific with this question.

- Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand.
- This situation can be from a previous experience like a job or an event.

Task: What were you working on? What were you trying to accomplish or complete?

Action: Describe the actions that you took to address the situation with an appropriate amount of detail and make sure that the focus is on what YOU did.

- What did you do? What specific steps did you take? Avoid “we” statements.

Result: Describe the outcome or the result of your actions. Take credit for your actions or the lessons that you learned from the situation.

INTERVIEW TIPS & TRICKS

- Always bring something to write on.
- Always bring something to drink.
- Bring a copy of your resume for yourself to reference.
- Prepare a “Story Cheat Sheet” based on skills.
- Practice ahead of time with a mock interview.
- Dress Appropriately.
- Avoid “We” language when talking about teams/teamwork.
- Send a Thank You email within 24 hours.

NAU CAREER DEVELOPMENT

One-on-one appointments:

Resume & Cover Letter Review
Career Exploration and Assessment
Job Search Strategies
Internship Exploration
Mock Interviews
Graduate School Prep
LinkedIn

Career Closet

Group workshops

Online resources/career steps

Workshops

Careers in the 21st Century

Getting started with LinkedIn

How to interview like a pro

How to write a stand-out resume

Leadership comes in all colors

Networking and relationship building

Search your way to success

Starting with your strengths

Career Steps

21st century workplace

Knowing yourself and others

Professional skills

Explore through experience

Developing application materials

Networking and relationship building

Internships

Job search strategies

Interview skills

The hiring process

Thriving in the workplace

For appointments call us at **(928) 523-1087**, email career@nau.edu, or schedule an appointment through [Handshake](#)

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in.nau.edu/career

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