

Essential Skills for Leadership



You consider yourself a leader. After all, you've spent most of your career managing employees and overseeing large teams of people. Sure, you've made some bad hires and dealt with difficult situations just like everyone else, but you have a track record of success. Maybe you've always been a leader, or you developed the skills to become one in recent years. Whatever the case may be, the time has come for you to pursue a new leadership opportunity. You've dusted off your resume, started hunting for jobs and even landed a couple of interviews. If you hope to find the opportunity you're looking for however, you'd best be sure some of the skills mentioned below are polished.

Communication

There's been no shortage of articles written about the [importance of communication](#) but that's for good reason. It's a vital skill for any leader. We've all had that boss at some point that is more of a dictator than a leader. You constantly find yourself second-guessing the job you're doing and wondering if your performance is above board or lacking. Working for this kind of superior is no fun and now you make it a point to communicate with those around you in every sense of the word.

It's also important to remember that not all communication is verbal. When you're interviewing for a new job, the hiring manager is going to scour your resume for grammar and word choice. During the interview they will also pay attention to non-verbal communication cues like body language, how you shook their hand and how actively you listen with your eyes as well as your ears.

Vision

In order to be successful, companies are always looking for ways to increase the bottom line, save money and make their processes more efficient. They know you can't do business the same way forever. For this reason, you'd better be armed with some real-life examples of how your vision improved a company's prospects in the past. Did you implement a new marketing campaign because the old one wasn't working? Maybe you re-wrote the policies and procedures manual because the one from 2002 was no longer relevant.

Assertiveness

Anyone in a position of leadership is going to be forced to make decisions at some point. There's no avoiding it. Hiring managers will want to see evidence of this skill too. They will surely ask you about important decisions you made in the past. Not only that, they are going to want to know how you arrived at the decision and what the outcome was. Your ability to highlight your decision-making skills in a favorable light could be the deciding difference in whether you get the job or not.

Ability to Adapt

Even if your resume screams that you're the most qualified candidate for the job, you have to be able to adapt. After all, you're applying for a job at a new company where chances are the culture, values, and ways of doing things aren't what they were in your previous post. If your plan is to come in, clean house, and do things the way you've always done them, chances are you won't get the job. On the other hand, if you can demonstrate that you're eager to learn, listen, implement necessary changes and receive input from all sides, you'll quickly set yourself apart from other candidates.

Influence

When the word influence comes to mind, you probably think about the ability to get others to do what you want. While this is certainly a large part of it, how you go about influencing others is important too. Sure, you can influence people through fear, intimidation and barking orders, but it probably won't last long as

people will quit or fail to respect your authority. Conversely, if you're able to lead by example, portray confidence, keep a level-head and meet your subordinates on their level, your chances of being a successful leader are much greater.

[Effective leadership](#) is more important now than ever in the workplace. Without the right people in place to make decisions, the chances of an organization succeeding are slim to none. That's why hiring managers spare no expense in finding the perfect fit for each and every position of leadership. Even if you consider yourself a seasoned leader and have the track record to back it up, you're going to have to demonstrate all the necessary skills to do the job effectively. Before you step into that next interview, take a moment to give some of the qualities above some serious thought. Doing so will provide honest insight and just might be what puts you over the top.

If you are an experienced leader looking for a job in the [Life Sciences industries in the Bay Area](#), or an employer seeking a high-quality employee to fill a leadership position, contact me Jeff King at (541) 639-3501. I serve the [pharmaceutical, biotech, and medical device fields](#).

How To Save Time and Get More Done at Work



Now more than ever it's easy to get distracted at work. Between emails, people coming and going, [LinkedIn](#) and Facebook alerts and of course the phone, it's

little wonder that you struggle to accomplish everything you have set out for the day. Sure, you tell your spouse, friends and family that you have no choice but to go in early, stay late and work on weekends. But are you really making the best use of every minute of the day? How much time do you honestly spend in the mental twilight zone looking at your ex-colleagues LinkedIn profile or checking your fantasy football lineup? You might not want to admit it, but there are some small steps you can take to be more efficient with your time and get more done.

Mindfulness

It might be hard to see the correlation, but studies have proven that incorporating the practice of [mindfulness](#) into your daily routine helps you stay focused and be more productive. So, what exactly is mindfulness? It can be anything from breathing exercises to a meditation routine to keeping a gratitude journal. The good thing about practicing mindfulness is that it doesn't take a lot of time. Even just a few minutes practiced on a daily basis can do wonders.

Time Blocking

Maybe you're good about time blocking. You set aside time throughout the week to check and send email, engage new prospects and get necessary tasks done. But how often are you interrupted? Either by someone else or of your own volition? In short, you know the importance of time blocking, but it often becomes difficult to stick to. Someone walks in your door, the phone rings or you see the email with the big red ! that says it just can't wait. Which leads us too... Plan your time blocks with a purpose. What do you want to get accomplished during that time block? Having a goal for the time block will help you stay on track.

Setting Professional Boundaries

If you're in any kind of position of leadership or you manage a team of people, you have to set professional boundaries. Of course, you have to have an open door, make sure everyone has the proper training and resources to do their job and meet the objectives set by your superiors. But what about you? Don't you need time to do your job instead of everyone else's? This is why it's important to make clear to everyone involved that you too need time to get things done. Whether

that means locking your door for an hour after lunch or not being available on Wednesdays after 11:00 am, you need to make it clear to everyone that while you're there to support them, you too need time to do your job.

Define Happy Hour on Your Terms

Who doesn't love a break for some interoffice levity and time to shoot the breeze? It's healthy, no one will question that. But when that two-minute check-in about Sunday's game turns into a 45-minute conversation about more than running backs, you're wasting time. The last thing you want to do is kill collegiality and morale, but you still need to get work done. If you want to be at the top of your game, define what and when happy hour is. It's important but, should be dictated on your terms.

Smart Phones Make You Dumb

It's a bit worrisome to think about how much smartphones dictate your every move. Yes, they are a convenience that allows you to work remotely and always be on call. But have you ever stopped to think about how they affect your productivity? That new Instagram like or Facebook post. Mindless notifications populate your screen constantly and at the end of the day don't matter. They only serve as a time suck to make you jealous. After 30 minutes in fantasy land, you look at the clock and it's 3:30 and you wonder where you left off.

If you want to be more productive and efficient with your time, set aside periods of time when your phone is off and tucked away in your drawer. That text will be there in an hour. In the meantime, do yourself and everyone else a favor and get some important work done.

Know When You're at Your Best

There are certain times of the day when you're more productive than others. For some it's before the sun comes up and for others it's late in the day. Knowing when you're the most productive is vital to your success. If you're someone that likes to sleep in until 7:30, read the paper and have a leisurely morning until 10:00 then more power to you. On the other hand, if you like waking up early and getting a pile of work done before most people wake up, all the better. The key is

to find the time of day when you're most productive and structure everything else around that.

The workplace demands a lot from you. There's the pressure of managing those under you and meeting the expectations of those above. Balancing everything is a full-time job to say the least. There's a reason divorce rates are on the rise and mental and physical health are gaining traction in the national conversation. If you want to [increase your productivity](#), reduce [stress](#) and get the most out of each and every day, try implementing some of the strategies above. You might just find yourself excelling in your job and getting home in time for dinner with those that really matter.

Balancing Work and Parenting Stress



Maybe you're already there. You're married with a stable household income and a couple of kids you take to little league and swim lessons. Heck, maybe you or your spouse find an hour a week to volunteer in their classroom. Good on you! But how much of your time do you spend at work? Answering calls from clients that aren't happy or need to be resupplied? Or maybe you're not in sales and your boss needs you to meet that product release deadline so he can give a presentation to the marketing team. There's no doubt, the demands placed upon you in the 21st century workplace mean that you're always at work, even when you're not.

It's all too easy to become so consumed by your work that you neglect those that

you're providing for. Have you said no to attending your son's flag football game or your daughter's acting recital because work got in the way? If so, it's a sign that your work-spouse-family balance might be out of order.

Have a Vision

It's all too easy to toil away your time for dollars in the hope that it will make the lives around you better. It very well could, but only financially speaking. But what about you? What about your role for you, your spouse and the children you created together? Don't they deserve the best you have to offer as a human and not just an ATM?

It's easy to fall into the trap of providing so much that you forget about sharing your time - your most precious commodity. The demands of work will always be there. However, your health, time with your kids and prime years with your loved ones go by quick. Now. Now is the time to evaluate what is most important in your life. Ask yourself some tough questions about what is most important to you... You might very well find that the relationships with those you love are more important than your bank account balance.

Develop a Game Plan

You do this every day at work. Sales meeting at 9:00, new employee orientation handshakes at 10:30 and budget overview at 2:30. The rest of the day is filled with unanswered emails and voicemails, not to mention the tasks that you set out to accomplish in the first place. So, what can you do to get off the hamster wheel?

Time Block

It's been well documented that the most successful business people structure their day according to what's important, what needs to be done and what their family needs.

In that light, if you make a point to set time aside to answer emails for an hour in the morning (that's when people are most likely to respond), engage the needs of your boss and colleagues in the late morning and early afternoon, and the remaining hours to whatever else needs to be done, you might very well find

yourself leaving at closing time with the day's tasks accomplished and excited to catch the last 30 minutes of your child's sports practice.

Delegate

No one is going to question the job you do. Heck, they probably encourage you to take more time for yourself and family away from the office, but you refuse. The bottom line is that as your responsibilities grow, you have less time to get everything done. There comes a point that [you can't do it all on your own](#).

This is when hiring well-qualified help can become your greatest asset. Sure, there is the overhead of hourly wages, additional technology and equipment. But with the right training, this individual can afford you normal hours, quality time with your family and a restful night's sleep. If done right, your bottom line should grow and you'll find yourself with much less chance of an early stress-induced health scare.

Think Long-Term

It sounds redundant but the fact is that most of the workforce trades hours for dollars at the end of the month and repeats the process until it's the end - whatever that may be. Even if you're not raking in the big checks like your boss, there are still things you can do that matter long-term.

The Commodity of Time

This is something the younger generation of the workforce understands. Sure, millennials get a bad wrap for being entitled and lazy but, those that understand the value of hard work understand that Time is also as an asset that has an expiration date. While it couldn't be more important to care for your family's financial well-being, time is truly priceless. Ask yourself the question of how you can best spend your time with your family while you still have it. The paycheck will always be there.

Whether you're where you want to be in your career or starting at the bottom and working your way up, you have people that depend on you. Your spouse or significant other, your kids and most importantly **YOU**. No one will ever downplay

the importance of providing and being responsible so that you and those closest to you can be secure in the future. But there comes a point when you have to evaluate what is most important to you and your loved ones. If you answer some honest questions and set necessary boundaries, your work and life will thank you for it.

If you are working in a job in the [Life Sciences industries in the Bay Area](#), where you are unable to balance parenting with work, [contact me, Jeff King](#). I am a recruiter for the [pharmaceutical, biotech, and medical device industries](#). I can help find you an employer that gives you the scheduling that you need to find time with your family.

How-To Know It's Time to Make a Career Change



If there's one thing that's constant in this day and age, it's change. And it's something that most people have a hard time with. The crazy thing is that it inevitably happens to all of us, yet we resist it. Our brains are hard-wired to tell us that there is safety found in predictability and routine. The unfortunate part is that if you refuse to change, you end up stagnating, get bored and your [productivity suffers](#). This is especially true in the workplace. The bottom line is, change can be good a thing if you're no longer happy in your current post.

It's Time for a Change if You're Bored to Tears or Overwhelmed

In order to be your most productive at work, you need to be challenged in the

best ways possible. When you're bored, you aren't being challenged enough and conversely, if you find yourself overwhelmed, you either have too much on your plate or the job you're expected to do might not be something that fits your skillset. Pay close attention to symptoms of both stress and boredom. If they show themselves on a regular basis, it's probably time to look for something different.

If Your Mind Wonders, It's Time to Move On

Do you ever find yourself sitting at your desk staring off into space and thinking about what it would be like to be anywhere but where you are? This is an obvious sign that you're no longer happy with your current situation. If this goes on long enough, you might even start to complain to family, friends and even colleagues about what's missing. If this is the case, you'd best take decisive action, or someone else might make the choice for you.

No One Wants to Feel Underappreciated

When you started your current job, you were eager to share your thoughts and ideas with your colleagues and superiors. They even asked for your input on important decisions. But now you feel like everything you have to say falls on deaf ears. And what about that overtime you put in to meet a critical deadline? No one acknowledged your efforts or thanked you for all your hard work. It sucks when this happens. Whether you're simply not a good fit for the culture or you actually are being walked on, take it as a sign that there are greener pastures somewhere else.

If You're Constantly Being Told to Work on Your Weaknesses, Adios

Individual reviews are the norm in the workplace these days. We all dread them, but our hope is that they go well. That's not always the case unfortunately. If you're consistently being told that you need to strengthen this, that or other thing, it might not be worth beating yourself up or feeling inadequate just to make other people happy. Of course, constructive criticism can be useful, but if it's to the point where you feel like your efforts aren't good enough or you're just being berated, probably time to head for the door and find a better fit.

You're Unhappy

It's a simple fact that if you don't enjoy what you're doing, you probably don't do

your best work. People that love their jobs derive happiness from the process of completing projects and accomplishing goals. Sure, they might be motivated by a promotion or a bonus, but they truly enjoy the journey of getting there. If you find the work you're currently doing to be laborious and dreadful, what the heck are you still doing there? It's time to consider some other options.

Have the Courage to Make a Change

Maybe you can identify with some of the symptoms above and know in your gut that it's time to do something else. That's only the first step though. Having the courage to act decisively and follow through is another story. Because of the way we are wired to think, most people are hesitant to take a drastic step because doing so involves uncertainty and going outside their comfort zone. That's ok, no one ever said change was easy. But you have to ask yourself the question, "can I really expect different results if I keep doing the same thing?"

As much as you might not like it, change is something you're going to have to deal with. Sometimes your hand is forced and you don't have a choice except to change. But what about being your own instigator for change? Scary? Sure. Dealing with unknown? Ditto. Just ask any successful person you know and they will tell you that at some point in their life, they took a risk that allowed them to become who they are today. In fact, they probably failed many times along the way. But in the end, failure isn't the opposite of success, it's part of it. So, if you notice any of the signs discussed above, take a leap and make a change. It doesn't even have to be a big step to start. Just be open to learning of other opportunities to see what your options might be. Things will start coming your way then and you can figure out the next step. Even if it doesn't work out right away, you'll set yourself on a trajectory to achieve the things you really want.

I am a [Regulatory and Quality Recruiter](#) that helps people make career changes in the Bay Area. If you are interested in making a change in the [Life Sciences industries](#), contact me, Jeff King at (541) 639-3501.

How-To Shift Your Mindset to Be Happier at Work



You've most certainly been there at some point. You become so involved in your job that it starts to affect the rest of your life. Before you know it, you look back at the past year and you haven't done anything but work. Your relationships have suffered, you no longer have any hobbies and your definition of happiness is defined by spread sheets and project goals. No one can blame you for being so dedicated but continuing down this stressful path is a recipe for poor health, failed relationships and unhappiness. It's time to make a change.

This mindset begs the question, what makes you happy? Is it getting a raise or promotion? Is it crushing a project goal and winning that free trip to Hawaii? If your answer is yes to any of these questions, it's a sign that your deriving happiness from external factors instead of from within. If this is the mindset you're in, what happens when you don't get that promotion or you barely miss that goal? Do you become unmotivated and withdrawn? Does your productivity suffer? Does work become the last place you want to be?

In a culture that is so results oriented, it's easy to see how people can fall into the trap of deriving happiness from achievements and material things. Think about your neighbor with the Rolex watch, brand new sports car and membership at the fancy country club. Sure, there's nothing wrong with liking nice things, but are they truly what make someone happy?

If you find yourself in the mindset of measuring your worth and enjoyment in life from what you accomplish, you may want to consider making a change. It's pretty simple. Instead of focusing on the outcome, immerse yourself in the process of doing your job well.

A good place to start is with four simple questions.

Are you enjoying the problems you're solving at work?

What kinds of problem solving challenges you in a positive way?

How many goals have you achieved?

Did achieving goals feel make you more excited than the work it took to get the job done?

When you answer these questions honestly, you should gain a keen sense of whether you're actually enjoying the work you're doing or not. If such is not the case, it's a good idea to look at what is causing you to be disheartened. Is it the physical space in which you work? Is it an over-bearing boss that is quick to hand out criticism yet hardly ever praises a job well done? Do you feel stuck by the proverbial glass ceiling? Or is the work itself just something you simply don't enjoy?

Once you've identified some factors that are keeping you from being your most productive and squelching your happiness, it's time to formulate a plan to improve the situation. The solution might be as simple as getting a standing desk, finding an office with more natural light or making time on your lunch hour to get some fresh air and light exercise.

If making some small environmental changes doesn't seem to be enough, you might want to consider some more significant changes like a different employer or maybe even a different career altogether. If you get to this point, the first thing you should do is identify what types of work will allow you to enjoy the process. Are you a people person that likes a lot of face time? Or are you sick of people and prefer to be left alone to do your job? Is working from home something you've always wanted to do but never had the chance? Or do you thrive in a fast-paced collaborative environment? Whatever you decide, make sure you do plenty of research and ask questions. After all, the reason you're leaving your current job is to be happier somewhere else.

It's a shame that so many people in the modern workforce trade days for dollars in jobs they don't particularly care for. They toil away for years on end always focused on the results of their work without enjoying the process of getting there. If you find yourself in this position, take a step back and look at the situation as objectively as you can. If you come to the conclusion that your happiness is

derived solely from the results of your work, it might be time to make some changes, big or small, to increase your productivity, happiness and health.

Why You Need to Have Hobbies If You Want to Be Successful



While there's no denying that the demands of the modern workplace are higher than ever before, there's been a significant amount of research to suggest that achieving a proper work-life balance not only allows you to be more productive, but be healthier and live longer too. You can't be in work mode all of the time. You need a break both mentally and physically to something unrelated to work to recharge and keep a healthy perspective. If you've ever wondered what the hobbies of some of the most successful people are, read on.

Sailing

Just like running a successful business, sailing involves plotting a course and optimizing your strategy to get from point A to point B. Becoming an accomplished sailor takes time and is full of ups and downs depending on factors that are often out of your control. Many of the skills necessary to be successful in business are paralleled with sailing.

Yoga

Yoga can be a difficult activity to start but once you realize how beneficial it can be for your physical, mental and emotional health, you'll have a hard time stopping. Yoga is widely touted as an activity that brings about balance and the mindset you need to perform at your best both at and away from the office.

Running

You've probably heard people describe runner's high. What they are talking about is the euphoric feeling they get during a run when endorphins are released to the brain. Like sailing, running is also a pursuit that requires discipline, self-motivation, determination and mental toughness. Just as is true in business, running requires skills that almost all successful people possess.

Golf (my favorite)

It's not a coincidence that some of the brightest names in business are avid golfers as well. Not only is golf one of the most mentally challenging games in the world, it's a great venue to network, cultivate relationships and close deals. While there's all sorts of sayings like "you should never beat your boss" and "golf is your grandfather's game," it's a pursuit that affords you opportunity to recreate and do business at the same time.

Songwriting

You probably won't be selling out large venues anytime soon, but songwriting is a wonderful creative outlet. The patience, dedication and creativity it takes to match the right lyrics and melodies are all similar to the skills it takes to run a business. And the best part about songwriting, no one ever said you have to perform in front of someone else to enjoy it.

Chess

It should come as little surprise that the game of chess is a favorite past time for successful people. You could make the argument that you're playing a game of

chess every day when you run your business. You're constantly having to think multiple steps ahead, make decisions based on partial information and adapt on the fly when unexpected challenges present themselves.

Reading

The most successful people know that if you're not always learning and trying to improve, you're getting lapped. Reading is one of the ways successful people wind down at the end of a long day but also keep their minds active and open to new ideas. The libraries of the best and the brightest aren't filled with the *Twilight Series* or *College Humor*. Instead, you'll probably find books from thinkers, philosophers and industry leaders.

Volunteering

Even if you don't have a lot of money to give to your favorite charity, there are countless ways you can help make your community a better place. Whether you volunteer at a local soup kitchen or coach your son's little league, the simple act of helping others is proven to make you feel better mentally and physically as well.

No one's going to question the importance of making money. You have bills to pay, groceries to buy and college funds and retirement plans to save for. If you want to be at your best at work and at home however, maintaining a healthy [work-life balance](#) is a must. If you make it a point to incorporate some hobbies that get you outside, involve physical activity and keep your mind active, you'll be setting yourself up to be more productive and live a longer, happier, healthier life.

My name is Jeff King and I am a [Life Sciences Recruiter in the Bay Area](#). Contact me today if you are interested in finding a job or hiring in the [pharmaceutical, biotech, or medical device industries](#).

Why You Should Hire People that Are Smarter than You



At some point in your career you've probably worked for a boss that wasn't your favorite person in the world. Whoever it was, they probably had an ego, talked down to employees and thought they were the smartest person in the room. Praise for a job well done was hard to come by but criticism was around every corner. Going to work every day was anything but enjoyable. Everyone complained about this person and staff morale suffered.

Since then, maybe you've moved up and now you're in a position where you not only manage people, but are in charge of hiring and firing as well. You've probably become skillful at hiring quality folks and your employees probably look up to you as a manager. But maybe you're still a little reluctant to hire people that are smarter or more adept at a certain part of the job than you. Whatever the reason might be, most hiring managers shy away from hiring these types of individuals and they shouldn't be. Below we discuss why hiring people that are smarter than you can be beneficial for your team and the entire company.

Check Your Ego at the Door

If you're going to find the best people for the job, you have no choice but to check your ego at the door. While it's understandable that you might be intimidated by candidates whose qualifications or experience exceed your own, you should only be concerned about finding the candidates that allow your company to grow. In all reality, the likelihood of someone you hire taking your job is pretty insignificant. Much to the contrary, you'll likely be lauded for making such a great

hire.

You Get to Learn

Most [hiring managers](#) do a great job finding the candidates with the most experience and best qualifications, but few take the extra step and ask what they might be able to learn from a potential hire. When you find someone that has the capacity to contribute fresh ideas and new ways of thinking, they are certainly worth considering. Not only can these candidates be a great asset for your organization, they can be a tremendous resource for you to learn and grow as well.

Diversity Is Essential

While logic might dictate that hiring a team of people that perfectly execute their respective job descriptions is ideal, such thinking is limiting. Sure, all of your employees need to be able to fulfill their minimum responsibilities, but finding people that can go above and beyond is key. As an example, some individuals might crush it on the technical side, but they might lack the skills necessary to clearly write a procedure to keep systems running at their best. When you hire people with diversified skillsets, you allow them to stay in their lane and maximize their capabilities. Instead of having a group of individuals who perform a number of functions adequately, your goal should be to create a team of rock stars that all contribute to your company's success in their own way.

Reorganization Isn't Always a Bad Thing

The term reorganization is often dreaded in the workplace. We are all familiar with reorganizations that happen when companies are sold or merged and there's no doubting that cleaning house is something that happens on a regular basis. Reorganization within a company isn't always a bad thing though. When you come across a candidate that possesses the skills to make a real impact, it can often be beneficial and cost-efficient to create a position just for them. Doing so might mean that other members of your team have to take on new roles or be reassigned to other departments entirely. As long as it's properly communicated to everyone involved that they aren't being demoted and are still a valuable part

of the team, most employees understand that sometimes change is necessary and can be a good thing.

There's no questioning the fact that depth of talent in the workforce today is unlike anything we've ever seen. Industries across the board are more competitive than they've ever been and if your company isn't constantly seeking ways to improve, they are falling behind. For these reasons, attracting and hiring the best talent available is paramount. Even though it can be difficult to hire people that are smarter than you, doing so can not only increase your bottom line, but give you a chance to learn and grow as well.

If you need help hiring a top employee in the [life sciences industry](#), contact me, Jeff King. I help business owner and employees in the [Bay Area](#).

Words to Include in Your Resume



We've all been there. Whether you're still employed and looking for another opportunity or switching careers entirely, updating and customizing your resume is the first step when beginning the [job hunt](#). You've probably downloaded a template from the Internet and filled it out in chronological order with places of employment, title, lists of your duties and a section at the end that highlights your skills and other interests. Maybe you've even spent hours going over it with a fine-tooth comb to sure it's squeaky clean. This is all good and well, but have you thought carefully about the words you choose? Sadly, the resumes most people submit to prospective employers use language that is either too basic and

antiquated or too sophisticated and over the top. To help you out next time someone asks for resume, we've come up with a list of the most impactful words to include.

Numbers

No, we don't mean the actual word "numbers." We're talking about metrics like revenue you generated, money or time you saved, people you managed, etc. It doesn't mean much when you say that "you reduce the time required to X." Your employer is going to want to know by how much. A better way to put it would be "reduced processing time by 40%.", or "cleared out a backlog in 7 months" Bottom line, if there is anything you did in a previous job that can be expressed in numbers, it better be on your resume.

Modernized

Maybe a responsibility you had in your last job was to improve existing systems or come up with new ways of doing things entirely. While you might be tempted to write "updated policies and procedures manual" on your resume, simply exchanging the word "modernized" for "updated" is like a switch to the hiring manager. In their eyes, anyone can update a simple document, but to modernize or streamline it? That's powerful stuff.

Value

When companies are looking to hire someone for a position, they want a person who will add value to the organization. If you make it known on your resume that you're hard-working, that only goes so far. Sure, hard work is commendable, but it doesn't always achieve results. By using the words value or valuable, you make it known that you think about the work you do in terms of how it will improve the company at large.

Action Verbs

Action verbs are words like supervised, authorized, guided, managed, unified, initiated and designed, to name a few. These words show your ability to succeed.

Moreover, they tell a hiring manager that you have been trusted with significant responsibility in the past. When choosing which action verbs to use, it might be a good idea to create an extensive list and carefully choose the ones that best communicate the message you're trying to get across.

Orchestrated

Anyone can say that they've led a team or organized a charity event. Sure, those are qualities that are favorable to an employer but if you use the word orchestrated instead, you communicate that you were the one in charge.

Spearheaded

The last place you want to appear modest is on your resume. Much like the word orchestrated, spearheaded emphasizes your level of involvement. For example, instead of saying you "created a new submission procedure," telling the employer that you "spearheaded the modernization of the submission process" is much more specific and conveys confidence in your abilities.

Committed

Simply put, employers want to see that you're committed to your work and to your employer from the beginning to the end. While it's great if you can use this word specifically, using any type of language that evokes loyalty and dedication places you ahead those that don't.

Results

While stating what you do and what you are responsible for is good, listing what you accomplished while in your role paints a much clearer picture of what you can do for your employer and the impact you can have.

Skimmable

Again, we aren't talking about using this word specifically. Your resume needs to be skimmable when someone reads it. Interviewers are going to look over

anywhere from dozens to hundreds of resumes so you want yours to not only stand out from the rest, but be easy to read as well. Avoid excessively long sentences and exclude any information that isn't relevant. Remember, your resume is your personal highlight reel and nothing more.

Edit

We can't emphasize this enough. Your resume is your first impression so you need to make it count. If you have any grammar or spelling mistakes, you might as well kiss the job goodbye. Even though it might be tedious, take the time to edit your resume so it's perfect. When you think you're done, give it to a trusted friend to review.

Ask any interviewer and they will tell you that the number of bad resumes they receive is astounding. While some are just flat out awful because they're riddled with bad spelling and grammar, others just don't seem that exciting because the language is simple, vague and boring. Even if someone else is more qualified than you, the words you use in your resume can paint you in a favorable light and put you ahead of the competition. Next time you have to go polish it up, try using some of the words above to emphasize your accomplishments and abilities. Doing so just might be what it takes to get you the job.

As a [Regulatory and Quality Assurance Recruiter](#), I can help you refine your resume. I help employees find jobs that fit in the [pharmaceutical, biotech, and medical device industries](#).

Communication Skills in the Modern Workplace



In a day and age where our communications include everything from Zooming, to texting, to talking on speaker phone while driving down the road, there is no doubting that communicating in the workplace and in our homes has become a lost skill. Less and less our communication involves sitting across from someone, making eye contact and having a human conversation. As a result, studies have shown that information quickly gets lost or is forgotten due to our lack of engagement in how we communicate with each other. This can prove disastrous in the workplace as missing even the smallest detail can end up derailing an entire project or task. For this reason, it's important to realize what [effective communication](#) in the information age looks like and some steps you can take to become more effective.

Active Listening

Even though much of our communication is electronic, you're still going to have to engage directly with your colleagues and employees from time to time. Think about the feeling you have when someone continuously interrupts you, has their nose in their phone, or doesn't seem at all interested in what you have to say. Active listeners avoid all these pitfalls and make it a point to let you know their listening through non-verbal behavior like nodding their head and making eye contact. They also reiterate key points using phrases and questions like "Just so I understand..." or "To make sure we are on the same page..."

Positive Body Language

Something that is easy to overlook but makes a huge difference when you're talking with someone is your body language. When you're talking with someone, do you tend to slouch back in your seat, cross your arms and avoid eye contact? This type of body language subconsciously tells the other person that you aren't

interested in what they have to say. On the other hand, if you sit tall, open your body toward the person you're engaging and make regular eye contact, you come across as welcoming, non-threatening, and you let the other person know that you value what they are saying.

Show Respect

Although this one seems obvious, it's remarkable how many people don't convey respect when communicating with others. This is true for both live conversation and electronic communication. If you avoid talking down to others, take time to acknowledge their perspective and ask questions, you show them that they are worth your time and you genuinely want to hear what they have to say.

Email Etiquette

The vast majority of our communication today is via email or some other electronic platform. While it might seem less personal than talking face-to-face, email is designed for information to be exchanged concisely and quickly. Therefore, you should master the skill of breaking up your emails into bullet points or short paragraphs that are easy to read and understand. If you send long-winded messages that are full of unnecessary filler language and unneeded details, people are not only less likely to read your note, they may find themselves confused with so much information.

Your emails need to also convey respect and the utmost professionalism including a short subject line, the proper salutation and goodbye.

Be Open-Minded

This is especially true if you're new to a company. If you're going to be successful, this is the time to listen, learn, ask questions, and be open to new ways of doing things. You're going to make mistakes. The key is to be open to constructive feedback and learn from the process. If your employer sees that you're open-minded and willing to learn, you'll quickly be seen in a favorable light and your chances of moving up quickly become much greater.

Be Willing to Give Feedback

Even if you're the type of person that prefers to put your head down and go, you're going to be asked to give feedback at some point during your career. Whether it's regarding an upcoming project or re-writing the entire policies and procedures manual, being able to give valuable feedback is something many people struggle with. If you're able to provide constructive feedback in a professional manner, you will likely play an integral role in improving your team or organization.

Communication is vital to the success of any organization. Without it, teams fail to work cohesively, production suffers and ideas aren't shared. In short, you have a bunch of individuals doing their own job under the same roof. The way we communicate has changed in the modern workplace. Gone are the days of three martini lunches and sales meetings where everyone meets under one roof. With that being said, it's still important to remember that how you listen, respond and talk with others can be a make or break difference in your success as an individual and for the company.

If you make it a habit to implement some of the practices above, you'll quickly become a more effective and respected member of your organization and the your workplace will be much happier as a result.

If you need more information, contact me, Jeff King. I am a [Life Sciences recruiter](#), working with the [pharmaceutical, biotech, and medical device industries](#).

How-To Avoid Hiring Toxic Employees



If you're a regular reader of my articles, you know how much importance I place on hiring the right people. As I've written about previously, hiring the wrong people can prove expensive, adversely affect your bottom line and the morale of everyone in the organization. While there are plenty of ways to find those diamonds in the rough, there are also ways to weed out potential toxic employees during the hiring or interview process as well.

Make Everyone Part of the Process

If you're considering bringing someone onto to your team, there is likely no better feedback than from your team itself. For this reason, it's a great idea to get everyone together for lunch or dinner or some other fun activity outside the workplace to see how the potential hire gets along with everyone. Conversely, this opportunity gives the job candidate a chance to see how they will fit in with the culture and values of your team. This simple effort will let both parties know right away if it's going to be a good fit for everyone or not, and gives you a chance to see the person's personality outside of the somewhat artificial interview atmosphere.

Ask Open-Ended Questions

Too many interviewers make the mistake of asking yes and no questions from a preset template during an interview and fail to dig deeper to find out who they are really talking to. While there is a time and place for rudimentary questions, it's also important to ask hypothetical questions like "Give me an example of how you handled (fill in the blank) situation in the past." or "What would you do if you were faced with (fill in the blank) in the future?" While most good interviewees will be able to quickly cite one example when faced with these types of questions, they may have a more difficult time providing additional anecdotes. The best ones

should be able to provide multiple examples and will give you a better idea of their depth of knowledge of the topic.

If you feel like you still need more insight, consider asking some of the following questions:

- What would you most like to improve about yourself?
- What do you think your former supervisor would say about you, positive and negative?
- What do you notice is different about yourself when you're under too much stress?
- What types of people do you work best with? How about those that you find difficult?
- Describe in detail a couple of instances where you failed in the past and how you dealt with it.

Pay Close Attention to Behaviors

As you ask the questions above, you should also take into consideration behaviors like punctuality and preparedness.

- Did the candidate show up on time for the interview with their affairs in order?
- Do they readily blame others, or do they seem to accept responsibility when things don't go as planned?
- Do they speak highly of former colleagues and employers? Or do they speak poorly of them and throw them under the bus?
- While answers to questions are important to take note of, so is the way someone behaves during an interview.

Ask Specific Questions when Checking

References

Whether it's due to lack of time or the feeling that it's not important, most interviewers don't thoroughly vet a candidate through their references. Instead of calling references when time permits and having only a brief conversation, make the effort to schedule a few minutes when you can both talk about the potential hire in some depth.

When you get the time to chat with someone's reference, it's important to have some specific questions in mind to keep the conversation on track.

Some examples might include:

- Would you rehire this person? Why or why not?
- Did the person demonstrate emotional intelligence? Were they able to read people properly and react accordingly?
- Describe the duties of the position the person is interviewing for and ask their reference, "Do you feel (applicant's name) would be a good fit for this role and why?"
- Were they a team player or did they prefer to keep to themselves and worry only about their own work?
- How did they handle authority and constructive criticism?
- Is there anything else you should know about the candidate that hasn't been discussed?
- As you're processing the answers the reference is giving you, take note of more than just their words as you would when interviewing the candidate. Did the reference's tone of voice convey admiration for the candidate? Or did they speak quickly and seem nervous about providing honest answers?

These subtle clues can give you valuable insight into who the candidate is as well.

Be Respectful

It's easy to get so wrapped up in learning about someone else and their experiences that you forget to notice your own demeanor. How's your tone of voice? Are you actively listening and making eye contact? Or is your head buried in your notepad? If you act professionally and treat each candidate you interview with respect, you will likely receive the same in return.

Regardless of whether you're hiring someone for a C-suite position or a janitor, taking adequate time to ask the right questions and really get to know them can make all the difference. While making the occasional bad hire is something that every manager is going to do at some point, knowing how to weed out potentially toxic candidates goes a long way in saving money, [maximizing productivity](#) and keeping company morale high. If you put into practice even a few of the ideas discussed above, you'll be on your way to hiring only the best people for your organization.

If you are hiring someone in the [life science industries in the Bay Area](#), I can help find a great employee that fits the position. Contact me, Jeff King, at jking@rqfocus.com or (541) 639-3501.