

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.

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