

ACTION WORDS

for your resume and cover letter

The most effective resumes and cover letters illustrate transferable skills and experiences described in words chosen to convey action. Action words enable the potential employer to better picture your experience, envision its context, and see the benefits of what you have to offer. Avoid using the same action word more than once per document. Below are some examples separated by category:

LEADERSHIP

Administered
Advised
Allocated
Allowed
Appointed
Approved
Assigned
Authorized
Chaired
Delegated
Designated
Educated
Elicited
Employed
Empowered
Enabled
Encouraged
Endorsed
Enforced
Enhanced
Established
Evaluated
Executed
Facilitated

Fostered
Guided
Headed
Hired
Improved
Incorporated
Increased
Influenced
Instructed
Instituted
Judged
Led
Managed
Moderated
Motivated
Oversaw
Presided
Recommended
Recruited
Sanctioned
Scheduled
Strengthened
Supervised
Trained

CREATIVITY

Acted
Brainstormed
Designed
Drew
Engineered
Entertained
Envisioned

Fashioned
Illustrated
Modeled
Performed
Produced
Shaped
Visualized

COMMUNICATION

Addressed
Advertised
Appraised
Arbitrated
Attested
Authored
Clarified
Communicated
Composed
Condensed
Contacted
Convinced
Corresponded
Counseled
Defined
Drafted
Edited
Explained
Expressed
Informed
Interpreted
Interviewed

Lectured
Marketed
Mediated
Negotiated
Officiated
Persuaded
Presented
Promoted
Publicized
Queried
Recommended
Reconciled
Referred
Reported
Responded
Spoke
Suggested
Summarized
Synthesized
Translated
Wrote

TECHNICAL

Assembled
Built
Computed
Conserved
Constructed
Developed

Installed
Operated
Programmed
Specialized
Upgraded

FINANCIAL

Appraised
Audited
Balanced
Budgeted
Calculated
Computed

Estimated
Marketed
Purchased
Projected
Reduced

ORGANIZATION

Arranged
Catalogued
Categorized
Centralized
Charted
Classified
Coded
Compiled
Correlated
Distributed
Filed
Generated
Indexed
Linked
Maintained
Orchestrated

Organized
Oriented
Planned
Prepared
Prioritized
Processed
Provided
Recorded
Regulated
Reviewed
Scheduled
Sorted
Submitted
Standardized
Tabulated
Updated

RESEARCH

Analyzed
Ascertained
Assessed
Collected
Compared
Computed
Conceptualized
Concluded
Conducted
Confirmed
Critiqued
Deciphered
Deliberated
Determined
Devised
Diagnosed
Estimated
Evaluated
Examined
Extracted
Forecasted
Formulated

Gathered
Identified
Integrated
Invented
Investigated
Justified
Located
Measured
Prescribed
Prioritized
Projected
Rated
Researched
Reviewed
Scrutinized
Solved
Studied
Substantiated
Surveyed
Systemized
Tested
Validated

TEAMWORK

Accommodated
Adapted
Adjusted
Aided
Altered
Amended
Assisted
Collaborated
Contributed
Cooperated
Fostered

Improved
Instructed
Mediated
Motivated
Participated
Partnered
Stimulated
Supported
Tailored
Unified

PROBLEM-SOLVING

Alleviated
Ameliorated
Augmented
Customized
Debugged
Eased
Elevated
Enlarged
Extended
Extracted
Finalized
Fulfilled
Generated
Implemented
Interceded
Lightened
Polished
Procured
Rectified
Reduced

Refined
Reformed
Rehabilitated
Reinforced
Rejuvenated
Relieved
Remedied
Remodeled
Repaired
Restored
Retrieved
Revitalized
Revived
Settled
Solicited
Streamlined
Strengthened
Supplemented
Transformed



The Career Center

University of Illinois
at Urbana-Champaign

Student Services Arcade Bldg.
MC-383
715 South Wright Street
Champaign, IL 61820

(217) 333-0395

Action words are integral in creating effective resumes and cover letters. While this handout is certainly not an exhaustive list of all words to describe your skills and experiences, many students have found it to be a helpful starting point. Consider discussing the descriptions of your experiences during a resume critique at The Career Center. The Career Center's staff will be happy to assist you.