

30 action words for resumés

To stand out in your job hunt, you need a resumé that highlights all your most impressive achievements. Action words for resumés can help you do this, by conveying your skills and experience in a concise and compelling way.

Action words are verbs that convey movement, power and impact. They can help portray you as someone who's motivated and gets things done; a person who achieves results and takes on challenges. Here's how different action verbs on your resumé can help you get a hiring manager's attention.

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What are action verbs?

Generally speaking, action words are verbs – words for things you do. In the context of your resumé, action words are 'power' verbs that convey energy and impact. They can help you frame your skills and achievements in a strong and convincing way.

For example, the action verb 'strategised' expresses an ability to proactively turn observations into clever solutions. In contrast, passive phrasing like 'was responsible for' makes it seem like you weren't really actively engaged in your duties.

Using resumé action verbs can help you [engage and impress hiring managers](#). Strong verbs can accurately sum up why you're a good fit for the role. They can also make your resumé more concise and dynamic.

For example, you could use the action verb 'implemented' to show your ability to put plans into action. This demonstrates your proactive approach to problem solving. Action verbs transform general resumés into interesting stories, which are more likely to

compell hiring managers to shortlist your application.

How to use action words in your resumé

To use action words to their greatest potential, you have to know how to use them. These two steps will help you add resumé ‘power’ words effectively.

1. Consider where to incorporate action verbs in your resumé

To create a compelling resumé, use action verbs throughout different sections where you’re highlighting your achievements and competencies. When discussing your work experience, you can use action verbs at the start of bullet points that outline your duties and accomplishments in more descriptive and accurate detail.

For example, a bullet point might read, *Streamlined production processes to increase daily output by 10%*. The action verb is ‘streamlined’. It highlights your ability to identify inefficiencies and make improvements that benefit your employer.

Another area of your resumé where you can integrate action verbs is the [skills section](#). Using action verbs rather than just listing the skills can make you seem more competent. For example, instead of listing ‘management’ as a skill, you might describe your [management capabilities](#) by writing *Managed a team of six* or *Led company-wide collaboration*. These resumé action verbs convey specific qualities and experiences. They can make your resumé more engaging to read, compared to a list of skills.

2. Choose the right action words for your resumé

Use action words that match the specific industry or job role relevant to your application, to make your resumé more impactful. This not only shows that you know the field, but also makes a stronger impression on hiring managers.

For example, say you’re applying for a technical job. Words such as ‘programmed’, ‘debugged’, and ‘optimised’ show off your technical skills. And if you’re applying for a sales job, words such as ‘negotiated’, ‘sold’, and ‘increased’ highlight your ability to make revenue for your employer. By carefully picking the right action words for your resumé, you can highlight your skills and get employers’ attention.

It can be challenging to choose the right action words. You may not know which ones are best for the industry and job you’re applying for. One way to check for relevance is

to carefully [review the job description and job duties](#) of the vacant role. You can identify the key action verbs the employer uses and include those words in your resumé. You can also research common action words within [your chosen industry](#) for an idea on which to use.

Examples of action verbs you can use to make your resumé stand out

There are countless verbs you can use in a resumé to make your achievements and experience more concise and dynamic. Here's a list of resumé action verbs to consider, along with examples of how to use them.

5 action words to demonstrate work ethic

These action words can help you showcase your reliability, efficiency, and dedication in your job responsibilities.

- **Enacted**
Definition: implemented or executed a plan, idea, or strategy with diligence and precision.
Example: *Enacted strategies to increase follower engagement.*
- **Established**
Definition: Founded or set up a system, practice, or standard with consistency and thoroughness.
Example: *Established procedures that streamlined production.*
- **Exceeded**
Definition: Surpassed or went beyond expectations, standards, or goals consistently.
Example: *Exceeded OKRs consistently for three years.*
- **Achieved**
Definition: Successfully brought about
Example: *Achieved 'Employee of the Month' five times in three years.*
- **Motivated**
Definition: gave someone a reason for doing something.
Example: *Motivated teammates daily to reach floor sales targets.*

5 action words to demonstrate impact

Use these words to emphasise your ability to drive results and make a difference in the workplace.

- **Accelerated**

Definition: Sped up the progress or development of a process or task.

Example: *Accelerated the rollout of new marketing strategies.*

- **Amplified**

Definition: Increased the intensity, strength, or effectiveness of something.

Example: *Amplified brand awareness through targeted social media campaigns.*

- **Increased**

Definition: Made greater in size or amount

Example: *Increased employee morale through Friday lunch program.*

- **Transformed**

Definition: Made a considerable change in the form, appearance, or character of something.

Example: *Transformed outdated workflows into streamlined processes.*

- **Revitalised**

Definition: Restored energy, vitality, or enthusiasm to something that had become tired or inactive.

Example: *Revitalised underperforming campaigns by updating content.*

5 action words to show creativity

Show hiring managers you can be innovative and creative with these power verbs.

- **Created**

Definition: Brought something into existence.

Example: *Created a new system for reporting machine malfunctions.*

- **Conceptualised**

Definition: Formed an idea or plan for an object or process that doesn't exist yet.

Example: *Conceptualised new product designs.*

- **Innovated**

Definition: Introduced new methods, ideas, or products to bring about unique change.

Example: *Innovated a cost-effective solution to disposing of paper waste.*

- **Devised**

Definition: planned or invented through careful thought

Example: *Devised ways to repurpose unused templates.*

- **Designed**

Definition: Planned and created the structure or form of something, often with a specific purpose or intention.

Example: *Designed an accessible mental health program for onsite workers.*

5 action words for technical positions

You can use the following action verbs to demonstrate your technical expertise and proficiency.

- **Programmed**

Definition: Wrote code or instructions for a computer program to perform specific tasks or functions.

Example: *Programmed original software applications using Python and Java.*

- **Developed**

Definition: Created, designed, or improved something, such as software, systems, or products.

Example: *Developed a mobile app from concept to deployment.*

- **Automated**

Definition: Implemented processes or systems that operate automatically or without human interaction.

Example: *Automated tasks across the company using scripts.*

- **Engineered**

Definition: Designed, built, or optimised complex systems or structures.

Example: *Engineered scalable solutions to support growing infrastructure needs.*

- **Debugged**

Definition: Identified and fixed errors, glitches, or bugs in software systems.

Example: *Debugged new apps during the pre-launch phase*

5 action words for sales positions

These action words can help sell your skills to hiring managers by persuading them that you know how to close a sale.

- **Persuaded**

Definition: Convinced or influenced someone to do or believe something through reasoning or debate.

Example: *Persuaded key stakeholders to switch to a new POS system.*

- **Negotiated**

Definition: Discussed terms or conditions to reach an agreement or settlement.

Example: *Negotiated contracts with vendors to reduce overheads.*

- **Closed**

Definition: Brought a transaction or deal to a successful end.

Example: *Closed multiple high-value sales with international buyers.*

- **Engaged**

Definition: Occupy or attracts someone's attention.

Example: *Engaged ultra high net worth individuals in private auctions.*

- **Influenced**

Definition: Affected the decisions, actions, or opinions of others.

Example: *Influenced the CEO to introduce a new incentives program.*

5 action words for finance positions

Consider some of the following action words when highlighting your finance skills and your ability to analyse and strategise.

- **Audited**

Definition: Examined, verified, and evaluated financial records or processes to ensure accuracy and compliance with regulations.

Example: *Audited departmental budgets to identify areas for cuts.*

- **Investigated**

Definition: Conducted a thorough check of statistical discrepancies or potential fraud.

Example: *Investigated discrepancies in daily accounts.*

- **Reconciled**

Definition: Make one account consistent with another.

Example: *Reconciled company accounts to bank statements.*

- **Lowered**

Definition: Reduced costs, expenses, or liabilities to improve financial performance or efficiency.

Example: *Lowered expenses by renegotiating vendor contracts.*

- **Minimised**

Definition: Decreased or mitigated risks, losses, or costs, typically to protect financial assets.

Example: *Minimised credit risk by introducing stricter company policies.*

Action words play an important part in turning your resumé into an appealing and accurate picture of your abilities and potential. As you [refine your resumé](#), remember to incorporate action words thoughtfully and creatively. Make sure they frame your skills and experiences in the strongest and most relevant way.

FAQs

What are good action words for a resumé?

Any action verbs that convey a more concise and dynamic description of your physical or mental actions and achievements can be beneficial to include on your resumé. It's important to ensure the words you use relate to the industry and job you're applying for.

What are power words in a resumé?

‘Power’ words are essentially action verbs that convey confidence, competence, and achievements. Power words usually demonstrate your skills and achievements in a more favourable light than weak or passive language.

How do you use action verbs in a CV?

One of the most effective ways to apply resumé action words is to include them in the job description of your experience section, as outlined above. Another is to use them when describing your skills.

How many action words should I use in a resumé?

There’s no specific limit to action verbs on your resumé, but you should avoid using the same action word too many times. For example, when discussing your work experience, try to use unique action verbs for every bullet point.

Can overusing action words have a negative impact?

Yes. Overusing powerful resumé words can lessen their impact on the hiring manager. They can also have a negative impact if you use them incorrectly or if they sound awkward.

How do action words differ for entry-level vs executive resumé?

Action words for [entry-level resumé](#)s may focus more on demonstrating potential and willingness to learn. In contrast, action words for executive resumé often emphasise leadership, strategic thinking, and results-driven achievements.

How often should I update the action words in my resumé?

Consider reviewing and potentially changing action verbs on your resumé every six to 12 months. It’s not strictly necessary, but keeping your resumé fresh and updated is always good practice.