Words that can weaken your resume

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How you communicate your accomplishments matters. A strong resume gives potential employers a concise, clear picture of your skills and experience. It's the crucial first step in securing an interview and hopefully a job offer.

For maximum impact, keep your resume as concise as you can. You need to include all your achievements, so don't waste space on meaningless words. Plus, an employer doesn't want to spend time trying to understand vague phrases or decipher confusing jargon.

'Assist' 'Contribute' and 'Support'

An employer won't know what you did if the wording on your resume is too vague. Words like "assist," "contribute" and "support" all say (or don't say) the same thing. They say you helped, but they don't say how. They beg the question: exactly how did you assist, contribute or support a person or project?

Use these words sparingly and always follow them with a description of your role and responsibilities. Let an employer know the part you played and how you affected the outcome.

'Successfully'

Of course you want to show all that you've accomplished on your resume. Your achievements will be more impressive if you give concrete examples of what you've done and how you've been successful.

You don't need to use words like "successfully" or "effectively" to show an employer that you're a good worker; your experience should speak for itself. Instead of explicitly saying that a project was successful, state your achievements clearly and factually. Then give examples of how or why the project was a success.

'Responsible For'

The phrase "responsible for" can make your resume feel like a laundry list. Instead of just listing your responsibilities, try to stress your accomplishments.

Your resume will also have more of an impact if you quantify your accomplishments. Use figures to show how you affected growth, reduced costs or streamlined a process. Provide the number of people you managed, the amount of the budget you oversaw or the revenue you saved the company.

'Interface' and Other Buzzwords

By trying to sound intelligent or qualified, you may end up annoying or confusing your reader. You don't want an employer to need a dictionary to discover what you really did at your last job.

Avoid buzzwords that have become cliche and words that are unnecessarily sophisticated. "Synergy" and "liaise" are examples of

buzzwords that have been overused and abused.

Say what you mean plainly and simply. For example, instead of "interface," say "work." Instead of "impact," say "affect." Instead of "utilize," say "use."

Here is what you SHOULD always include in your resume: keywords. Recruiters and employers use keywords to search for resumes. So choose some of the basic, important keywords in your field and pepper them throughout your resume.