

# The Right Words to Use in Your Job Search



888/258-9966 (toll free)



www.wisconsinjobcenter.org



jobcenter@dwd.state.wi.us



Choosing the most effective words to describe your skills, actions, attitudes and accomplishments will make your job applications, resume and job interviews more dynamic. Following are two word lists. These words are “buzz words” that seem to open doors.

The first list includes action verbs — words that say what you did. These words tell prospective employers about your skills and accomplishments.

The second list includes descriptive words — words that describe you and your actions in a positive way. Often these words tell employers about your work attitudes.

Use these lists as guides to choosing the right words for your job search.

\* Starred words are especially good for indicating your accomplishments.

## Action Verbs

Accelerated *	Accepted	Accomplished *	Achieved *
Acquired	Adapted	Adjusted	Administered *
Advanced *	Advertised	Advised	Analyzed
Announced	Anticipated	Appointed	Appraised
Approved	Arbitrated	Arranged	Assembled
Assessed	Assigned	Assisted	Attained *
Audited	Authored	Authorized	Automated
Averted	<b>Balanced</b>	Bargained	Bought
Briefed	Budgeted *	Built	<b>Calculated</b>
Captured	Cared for	Carried out *	Catalogued
Centralized	Chaired	Changed	Charted
Checked	Clarified	Closed	Coached
Collaborated	Collected	Commanded	Communicated
Compared	Compiled	Completed	Composed
Compounded	Computed	Conceived	Conceptualized
Concluded	Condensed	Conducted	Confronted
Constructed	Consulted	Contacted	Contracted
Contrived	Controlled	Converted	Conveyed
Convinced	Cooperated	Coordinated *	Copied
Corrected	Correlated	Corresponded	Corroborated
Counseled	Created *	Critiqued	Cultivated
Curtailed	Cut *	Decentralized	Decided

### Other publications on resumes and applications

Personal Data Record (DWSJ-4937-P)  
Thoughts on Resumes (DWSJ-4658-P)  
Resume Writing—A Basic Guide (DWSJ-9433-P)

### Publications on related topics

**INTERVIEWING**  
Keys to Successful Interviewing (DWSJ-6951-P)  
Hidden Elements of Interviewing (DWSJ-9484-P)  
Informational Interviewing (DWSJ-9407-P)

**JOB SEARCH**  
Tips on Finding Summer Jobs (DWSJ-5641-P)  
Job Search Issues (DWSJ-8456-P)  
Where to Look for Job Opportunities (DWSJ-9467-P)

DWSJ-9463-P (R. 04/2002)

# Action verbs, continued

Decreased *	Defined	Delegated	Delivered
Demonstrated	Described	Designed	Detailed
Detected	Determined	Developed *	Devised
Diagnosed	Directed	Discovered	Dispensed
Displayed	Disproved	Dissected	Distributed
Diverted	Documented	Doubled *	Drafted
Drove	Earned	Edited	Educated
Effected	Eliminated *	Employed	Enacted
Encouraged	Enforced	Engineered	Enjoyed
Enlarged	Enlisted	Ensured	Entertained
Equipped	Established *	Estimated	Evaluated
Examined	Exceeded *	Exchanged	Executed
Exhibited	Expanded *	Expedited *	Experimented
Explained	Explored	Extracted	Fabricated
Facilitated	Familiarized	Fashioned	Figured
Filed	Financed	Fixed	Focused
Followed directions	Forecasted	Formalized	Formed
Formulated	Founded *	Furnished	Gathered
Generated *	Governed	Graded	Graduated
Grouped	Guided	Halted	Handled
Headed *	Helped	Hired	Identified
Illustrated	Implemented *	Improved *	Improvised
Increased *	Indexed	Induced	Influenced
Informed	Initiated *	Innovated *	Inspected
Inspired	Installed	Instituted	Instructed
Insured	Integrated	Intensified	Interpreted
Interviewed	Introduced *	Invented *	Inventoried

## Applying action verbs

Action verbs give your resume power and direction. Try to begin all skills statements with an action verb. Here is a sample of action verbs or different types of skills:

### Management skills

administered  
analyzed  
coordinated  
developed  
directed  
evaluated  
improved  
supervised

### Creative skills

conceptualized  
created  
designed  
established  
fashioned  
illustrated  
invented  
performed

### Technical skills

assembled  
built  
calculated  
designed  
operated  
overhauled  
remodeled  
repaired

### Financial skills

administered  
analyzed  
balanced  
budgeted  
forecast  
marketed  
planned  
projected

### Clerical skills

arranged  
catalogued  
compiled  
generated  
organized  
processed  
persuaded  
systemized

### Helping skills

assessed  
coached  
counseled  
facilitated  
represented

### Communication skills

arranged  
addressed  
authored  
drafted  
formulated

### Research skills

clarified  
evaluated  
identified  
inspected  
organized  
summarized



# Action verbs, continued

Invested	Investigated	Issued	Joined
Judged	Justified	<b>Kept</b> records	Key noted
<b>Launched</b> *	Learned	Lectured	Led *
Lifted	Liquidated	Listened	Loaded
Located	Logged	<b>Made</b>	Maintained
Managed	Manipulated	Manufactured	Marketed
Mastered	Measured	Medicated	Memorized
Merchandised	Modeled	Moderated	Modified
Monitored	Motivated	<b>Named</b>	Navigated
Negotiated	Nominated	Nursed	Nurtured
<b>Observed</b>	Obtained	Offered	Officiated
Operated	Ordered	Organized *	Originated *
Overcame *	Overhauled *	Oversaw	<b>Packed</b>
Participated	Perceived	Perfected *	Performed
Persuaded	Photographed	Piloted	Pinpointed
Placed	Planned	Predicted	Prepared
Prescribed	Presented	Presided	Printed
Problem solved *	Processed	Procured	Produced
Programmed	Prohibited	Projected	Promoted
Prompted	Proofread	Proposed	Protected
Proved *	Provided	Publicized	Published
Purchased	<b>Questioned</b>	<b>Raised</b>	Ran
Rated	Read	Reasoned	Received
Recommended	Reconciled	Recorded	Recruited
Rectified *	Redesigned *	Reduced *	Referred
Regulated	Rehabilitated	Reinforced	Related
Removed	Rendered	Renewed	Reorganized *
Repaired	Reported	Represented	Researched
Reshaped	Resolved *	Responded	Responsible for
Restocked	Restored	Restructured *	Retrieved
Revamped *	Reversed *	Reviewed	Revised
<b>Satisfied</b>	Saved *	Scheduled	Screened
Searched	Secured	Selected	Separated
Sequenced	Served	Serviced	Settled *
Set up	Shaped	Shared	Showed
Signaled	Simplified *	Sketched	Sold
Solved *	Sorted	Sought	Sparked
Spearheaded *	Specified	Spoke in public	Staffed
Standardized	Stimulated	Stocked	Streamlined *
Strengthened	Structured	Studied	Submitted
Succeeded	Summarized	Supervised	Supplied
Supported	Surveyed	Symbolized	Synthesized
Systematized	Tabulated	Tailored	Taped
Taught	Team built	Tended	Tested
Tightened	Traced	Tracked	Traded
Trained	Transcribed	Transferred	Transformed
Translated	Transmitted	Transported	Traveled
Trimmed	Tripled *	Trouble shot *	Turned around *
Tutored	Typed	<b>Uncovered</b>	Understood
Unified *	United *	Unraveled	Updated *
Upgraded *	Used	Utilized	<b>Validated</b>
Verified	Visited	Volunteered	<b>Washed</b>
Weighed	Widened	Won *	Worked
Wrote			

\* Starred words are especially good for indicating your accomplishments.



# Descriptive words

<b>A</b> ble	Accurate	Active	Adaptable
Adept	Administrative	Advantageous	Aggressive
Alert	Ambitious	Analytical	Articulate
Assertive	Astute	Attentive	Authoritative
<b>B</b> ilingual	Broad minded	<b>C</b> alm	Candid
Capable	Cheerful	Committed	Competent
Completely	Comprehensive	Confident	Conscientious
Considerate	Consistent	Constructive	Continuous
Contributions	Cooperative	Creative	Curious
<b>D</b> ecisive	Dedicated	Deliberate	Dependable
Detailed	Detail-oriented	Determined	Diligent
Diplomatic	Disciplined	Discreet	Diversified
Driven	Dynamic	<b>E</b> ager	Easily
Easygoing	Economical	Effective	Efficient
Effortlessly	Empathetic	Energetic	Enterprising
Enthusiastic	Excellent	Exceptional	Experienced
Expert	Expertly	Extensive	<b>F</b> air
Farsighted	Fast learner	Flexible	Forceful
Friendly	<b>G</b> eneralist	<b>H</b> ard-working	Honest
<b>I</b> maginative	Increasingly	Independent	In-depth
Initiative	Innovative	Insightful	Instrumental
Inventive	<b>K</b> nowledgeable	<b>L</b> eadership	Logical
Loyal	<b>M</b> ajor	Mature	Meaningful
Methodical	Meticulous	Motivated	Multilingual
<b>O</b> bjective	Open-minded	Optimistic	Orderly
Organized	Outstanding	<b>P</b> atient	Perceptive
Persistent	Personable	Personally	Persuasive
Pertinent	Pleasant	Positive	Practical
Precise	Problem-solver	Productive	Professional
Proficient	Profitable	Progressive	Proven
Punctual	<b>Q</b> ualified	Quality conscious	Quick learner
<b>R</b> ealistic	Recent	Reliable	Repeatedly
Resilient	Resourceful	Respectful	Responsible
Responsive	Risk-taker	Routinely	<b>S</b> atisfactorily
Scope	Self-confident	Self-controlled	Self-reliant
Self-starter	Sharp	Significantly	Sincere
Skilled	Skillful	Solid	Sound
Specialized	Specialist	Stable	Strategically
Strong	Substantial	Successful	Superior
Systematic	<b>T</b> actful	Talented	Team player
Technical	Thorough	Timely	<b>U</b> niform
Universal	Up-to-date	<b>V</b> aluable	Varied
Versatile	Vigorous	<b>W</b> ell-educated	Well-rounded
Wide background	Will travel	Will relocate	

\* Starred words are especially good for indicating your accomplishments.