

# 25 Words That Can Hurt Your Résumé

By Laura Morsch, CareerBuilder.com

So, you're experienced? Before you advertise this in your résumé, be sure you can **prove it**.

Often, when job seekers try to sell themselves to potential employers, they load their résumés with vague claims that are transparent to hiring managers, according to Scott Bennett, author of "The Elements of Résumé Style" (AMACOM). By contrast, the most successful job seekers avoid these vague phrases on their résumés in favor of accomplishments.

**Instead of making empty claims to demonstrate your work ethic, use brief, specific examples to demonstrate your skills. In other words, show, don't tell.**

Bennett offers these examples:

**Instead of...** "Experience working in fast-paced environment"

**Try...** "Registered 120+ third-shift emergency patients per night"

**Instead of...** "Excellent written communication skills"

**Try...** "Wrote jargon-free User Guide for 11,000 users"

**Instead of...** "Team player with cross-functional awareness"

**Try...** "Collaborated with clients, A/R and Sales to increase speed of receivables and prevent interruption of service to clients."

**Instead of...** "Demonstrated success in analyzing client needs"

**Try...** "Created and implemented comprehensive needs assessment mechanism to help forecast demand for services and staffing."

## The worst offenders

It's good to be hard-working and ambitious, right? The hiring manager won't be convinced if you can't provide solid examples to back up your claims. Bennett suggests being extra-careful before putting these nice-sounding but empty words in your résumé.

- Aggressive
- Ambitious
- Competent
- Creative
- Detail-oriented
- Determined
- Efficient
- Experienced
- Flexible
- Goal-oriented
- Independent
- Innovative
- Knowledgeable
- Logical
- Motivated
- Meticulous
- People person
- Professional
- Reliable
- Resourceful
- Hard-working
- Self-motivated
- Successful
- Team player
- Well-organized

**SEE REVERSE SIDE**

The bulleted **accomplishment statements** in your resume should capture (communicate) at least 1 of the following concepts in relation to WHAT you actually do/did and HOW specific examples of your achievements (outcomes) are measured in relation to:

- **QUALITY**
- **QUANTITY**
- **RESPONSIBILITY**
- **RESULTS: INCREASED or DECREASED**
- **VARIETY**
- **COMPLEXITY**
- **CREATIVITY / INNOVATION**
- **FREQUENCY**

\* AVOID LISTING JOB DUTIES

- **Duties** are nothing more than what you should be doing in your position and are already identified within the standard job description

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