



The finesse language of effective resume

Clichéd forms of speech are frequently used in CVs but they should be avoided as they do not convey what you really did and are basically meaningless

Think about what you want your CV to say about you. If you frequently use the below common, meaningless statements you run the risk of the hiring manager just scanning over your CV and then pushing it to the side.

- Results-oriented professional
- Cross-functional teams
- More than [x] years of progressively responsible experience
- Superior (or excellent) communication skills
- Strong work ethic
- Met or exceeded expectations
- Proven track record of success
- Works well with all levels of staff
- Team player
- Bottom-line orientation

Find better ways of saying these things. After all, just because you think of yourself as a results-oriented professional does not necessarily make it fact. Why not just list your actual results? You have a proven track record? Proven by whose standards? And if there is a “record” of it, why don’t you just give them an example its contents?

Met or exceeded expectations? Whose expectations? The guy down the street at the coffee shop? Tell them instead about the time you had to lead a project with a seemingly impossible timeline and budget

Here are some other examples of 6 over-used and tired statements with some examples of a better way to get your CV to be noticed!

1. Responsible For

Of course you’re responsible for something. But how many? How long? Who? What? When? Rather than waste the hiring manager’s time reading a vague list of responsibilities, be specific and use quantitative figures to back up your cited skills and accomplishments.

BAD

- Responsible for writing user guides within tight timelines.

GOOD

- Wrote six user guides for 15,000 users two weeks before deadline.

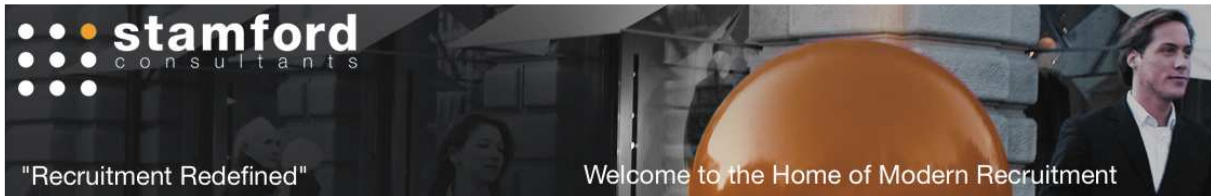
BAD

- Responsible for controlling production costs.

GOOD

- Reduced production costs by 15 percent over three months.

Employers want the numerical facts. Write percentages, dollar amounts, and numbers to best explain your accomplishments. Be specific to get the point across quickly. Prove you have the goods to get hired.



The resume that avoids vague “responsibilities” and sticks to facts detailing figures, growth, reduced costs, number of people managed, budget size, sales, and revenue earned gets the job interview.

2. Experienced

Saying you’re experienced at something and giving the facts on that experience are two very different approaches.

BAD

- Experience programming in PHP.

GOOD

- Programmed an online shopping cart for a Fortune 500 company in PHP.

Hiring managers want to know what experience, skills, and qualifications you offer. Do tell them without saying, “I am experienced.”

3. Excellent written communication skills

This phrase is basically useless and yet it is on most CVs. Is it on yours?

BAD

- I have excellent written communication skills.

GOOD

- Wrote jargon-free online help documentation and reduced customer support calls by 50 percent

If you have good writing skills, do say what you write and how you communicate. Are you writing email campaigns, marketing materials, or user documentation? However you wrap your words, be sure to give the details.

4. Team Player

Again, what does this mean? Unless you want to sound like every other applicant then get some hard facts behind your statement of being a team player.

BAD

- Team player working well in large and small groups.

GOOD

- Worked with clients, software developers, technical writers, and interface designers to deliver financial reporting software three months before deadline.

If you want to get an interview then do clearly say what teams you were involved in and qualify the teams’ achievements.

5. Detail Oriented

What does detail oriented mean? Give the specifics to the details with which you are oriented. Please, orient your reader to the details.



BAD

- Detail oriented public relations professional.

GOOD

- Wrote custom press releases targeting 25 news agencies across Europe.

If you have the details, do share them with the hiring manager. Give the facts, the numbers, the time lines, the quantitative data that sells your skills more effectively.

6. Successful

Hopefully you only list the successes on your resume. So if everything is a success, then why write the s-word? Stick to showing your success by giving concrete examples of what you've done to be successful! Let your skills, qualifications, and achievements speak for you.

BAD

- Successfully sold the product.

GOOD

- Increased sales of organic chocolate by 32 percent.

When it comes to your successes, please don't be shy. It is important to not embellish but to be sure to sell yourself! At the end of the day the client should say, Wow! I want to interview this person because I can see from his CV the value he would bring to my company.