

RMIT Career Development and Employment Quick Tips

Action Words

Your resume and letter of application must convince the employer that you have the personal qualities and skills they are looking for. A way of making your resume and letter of application convincing is to use “action words.” These are verbs that end in “ed,”. For example: delivered, diagnosed and devised. When used in your skill and achievement statements, action words convey a sense of accomplishment, and tell the employer that you get results. Compare the following statements – the first is written in passive form, the second uses action language: it is really a difference of tense – see Application Express www.rmit.edu.au/careers/applicationexpress for information on active/passive.

- *“I was searching for facts about my achievements and deciding on which were most suitable for my resume,” or*
- *“Searched for facts about my achievements and decided on which were most suited to my resume.”*

There really is no comparison. The first statement sounds slow and indecisive; the second suggests energy and decisiveness. Which impression would you rather convey to employers?

‘Using action words rather than ‘I’ to begin your statements also sounds less self-centered and indicates a direct communication style that is valued by many employers. For example you could start your achievement statements as follows:

“Completed distinction level, 3,000 word report on ...” avoiding repeated use of ‘I’

Accomplished	Achieved	Acted	Acquainted	Adapted	Addressed	Adhered
Administered	Advanced	Advised	Allocated	Amplified	Analysed	Answered
Applied	Appraised	Appropriated	Approved	Arbitrated	Arranged	Articulated
Assessed	Assisted	Assured	Attained	Attended	Audited	Augmented
Authored	Authorised	Awarded	Backed	Balanced	Boosted	Braced
Broadened	Briefed	Budgeted	Built	Calculated	Catalogued	Centralised
Certified	Chaired	Charted	Clarified	Classified	Coached	Collaborated
Collected	Comforted	Communicated	Compared	Compiled	Completed	Composed
Computed	Conceived	Concentrated	Conducted	Conserved	Consoled	Consolidated
Constructed	Consulted	Contributed	Coordinated	Counselled	Created	Critiqued
Defined	Delegated	Delivered	Demonstrated	Designed	Detected	Determined
Developed	Devised	Diagnosed	Directed	Discovered	Dispensed	Disseminated
Dissuaded	Distributed	Documented	Drafted	Edited	Educated	Effected
Eliminated	Empowered	Enabled	Enacted	Encouraged	Enforced	Ensured
Established	Evaluated	Examined	Excelled	Executed	Exhibited	Experimented

Expanded	Expedited	Explained	Explored	Extracted	Fabricated	Facilitated
Fashioned	Formalised	Formulated	Facilitated	Familiarised	Finalised	Fixed
Focused	Fostered	Found	Founded	Furthered	Gained	Gathered
Generated	Governed	Graduated	Grouped	Guided	Handled	Harmonised
Headed	Helped	Hired	Identified	Illustrated	Implemented	Improved
Increased	Influenced	Initiated	Innovated	Integrated	Interfaced	Interpreted
Interviewed	Introduced	Invented	Investigated	Joined	Judged	Justified
Launched	Lectured	Liaised	Listened	Lobbied	Located	Logged
Maintained	Managed	Manipulated	Marketed	Mastered	Measured	Mediated
Mentored	Ministered	Moderated	Modified	Monitored	Motivated	Navigated
Needed	Negotiated	Nominated	Nurtured	Obliged	Observed	Obtained
Opened	Operated	Optimised	Orchestrated	Ordered	Originated	Organised
Overhauled	Packaged	Perceived	Perfected	Performed	Persuaded	Piloted
Pioneered	Planned	Predicted	Prepared	Prescribed	Presented	Prevented
Prioritised	Processed	Produced	Programmed	Projected	Promoted	Proposed
Provided	Publicised	Purchased	Qualified	Questioned	Raised	Reached
Realised	Reassured	Reclaimed	Recognised	Recommended	Reconciled	Recorded
Recruited	Rectified	Redirected	Reduced	Referred	Refined	Reformed
Regulated	Rehabilitated	Reorganised	Repaired	Reported	Represented	Researched
Reshaped	Resolved	Responded	Restored	Retrieved	Revamped	Reviewed
Saved	Scheduled	Screened	Secured	Selected	Separated	Served
Settled	Simplified	Solved	Sorted	Specialised	Sponsored	Staffed
Standardised	Stimulated	Streamlined	Strengthened	Summarised	Supervised	Supplied
Supported	Surpassed	Surveyed	Systemised	Trained	Translated	Tutored
Uncovered	Unified	United	Updated	Upgraded	Utilized	Vacated
Validated	Valued	Ventured	Verbalised	Verified	Versed	Vitalised
Visualised	Volunteered	Weighed	Welcomed	Worked		