

Wordsmithing your CV

Cv writing is harder than it looks and many people struggle to find the right tone and the right words to put in theirs. I was reading some research about how to liven up your CV and make it more interesting and one of the key criticisms was that people use the same verbs too much,– those strong powerful verbs that you need at the start of each bullet point. Too often they open every bullet point with 'led' or 'managed' and it gets tedious. So here is my new 2013 list of 50 great verbs for your CV.

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|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Accelerated | 18. Formulated | 35. Programmed |
| 2. Attracted | 19. Generated | 36. Projected |
| 3. Boosted | 20. Implemented | 37. Recommended |
| 4. Critiqued | 21. Impacted | 38. Refined |
| 5. Closed | 22. Investigated | 39. Revamped |
| 6. Collaborated | 23. Increased | 40. Recovered |
| 7. Co-ordinated | 24. Initiated | 41. Resolved |
| 8. Designed | 25. Influenced | 42. Secured |
| 9. Demonstrated | 26. Integrated | 43. Simplified |
| 10. Enhanced | 27. Innovated | 44. Streamlined |
| 11. Excelled | 28. Instigated | 45. Strengthened |
| 12. Exceeded | 29. Mentored | 46. Transformed |
| 13. Expanded | 30. Multiplied | 47. Troubleshoot |
| 14. Enriched | 31. Overcame | 48. United |
| 15. Finalised | 32. Overhauled | 49. Upgraded |
| 16. Forecasted | 33. Partnered | 50. Validated |
| 17. Fulfilled | 34. Persuaded | |

Please accept this list is not exhaustive, I have cut out lots of excellent suggestions to get it down to 50. www.CVwordchecker.com will give you a list of 500 words!

Research in 2005 came up with a list of least attractive words in the Cv,

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|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Always | 7. Hate |
| 2. Never | 8. Mistake |
| 3. Abandoned | 9. Nothing |
| 4. Awful | 10. Panic |
| 5. Bad | 11. Problems |
| 6. Fault | |

You might have considering using some of those in a positive way.. 'nothing fazes me' 'I hate making mistakes', 'I would never let go of an opportunity'. The truth is that the brain seems to register the negativity rather than the overall intention of the phrase. And the always and never words suggest you are showing off and not being realistic.

Of course there are some real platitudes that have the same turn off effect. So try to avoid the bald and the generic...

- A strong leader
- A great team player
- An exceptional.... well anything...
- A self starter
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Work well on their own and as part of a team
- Accomplished professional
- Dynamic professional
- Works well under pressure
- People person
- And the person who suggests they are an 'out of the box thinker' might want to come up with something more original in the way they describe themselves!

Linked In analysed the most commonly used phrases.. these are so commonplace that they lose their impact. But this list shows what a blunt search tool can do.. most employers would want some of those qualities, if not all!

1. Creative
2. Organizational
3. Effective
4. Extensive experience
5. Track record
6. Motivated
7. Innovative
8. Problem solving
9. Communication skills
10. Dynamic

Just in case you forgot what recruiters really hate about poor CVs.. here are the results of a recent survey of employers from one of the job boards. The survey shows the percentage of employers that were put off by CVs with the following...

- large blocks of text that are difficult to read (36%)
- exact text from the job advertisement pasted into the document (36%)
- unaccompanied by cover letter (26%)
- more than three pages (18%)
- listing an objective instead of a career summary (17%)
- an unprofessional email address (16%)

And finally check out <http://www.cvwordchecker.com/> where you can get an analysis of your CV and its power!