



Radford
UNIVERSITY

Career and Talent
Development

Resumes

Career Guide

Radford Career and Talent Development

Action Verbs for Resumes

Action verbs are powerful tools that help clearly and confidently communicate your skills and achievements on a resume. These strong, specific verbs demonstrate initiative and impact, helping employers quickly understand what you have done and how you have contributed. By starting each bullet point with a dynamic action verb, you create a stronger impression and make your experiences more engaging and results oriented. Using a variety of action verbs also prevents repetition and keeps your resume fresh and compelling.

(Also always make sure that you use the correct tense [present/past] depending on whether you are still in a role or not).

Leadership & Management Skills (If you, Managed, Led, Oversaw, say...)	Administered, Aligned, Appointed, Approved, Assigned, Authorized, Chaired, Charted, Controlled, Coordinated, Decided, Delegated, Directed, Enforced, Ensured, Executed, Facilitated, Founded, Guided, Headed, Hired, Instituted, Led, Managed, Mobilized, Motivated, Operated, Orchestrated, Oversaw, Planned, Regulated, Scheduled, Shaped, Supervised, Unified
Project Development & Execution Skills (If you, Built, Made, Completed, say...)	Achieved, Built, Completed, Created, Delivered, Designed, Developed, Devised, Engineered, Established, Formalized, Formed, Formulated, Implemented, Incorporated, Initiated, Introduced, Launched, Orchestrated, Pioneered, Produced, Programmed, Spearheaded
Problem Solving & Process Improvement (If you, Fixed, Improved, Updated, say...)	Accelerated, Advanced, Ameliorated, Amplified, Boosted, Capitalized, Centralized, Consolidated, Customized, Debugged, Enhanced, Expanded, Expedited, Furthered, Gained, Improved, Lifted, Maximized, Outpaced, Redefined, Refined, Refocused, Reformed, Rehabilitated, Remodeled, Reorganized, Restructured, Revamped, Revitalized, Simplified, Standardized, Streamlined, Strengthened, Sustained, Transformed, Updated, Upgraded
Cost Savings & Resource Management	Acquired, Conserved, Decreased, Deducted, Diagnosed, Reconciled, Reduced, Secured, Yielded
Research & Data Analysis (If you, Researched, Analyzed, Tested, instead say...)	Analyzed, Assembled, Assessed, Audited, Calculated, Clarified, Collected, Compared, Conducted, Critiqued, Detected, Determined, Discovered, Evaluated, Examined, Explored, Forecasted, Gathered, Identified, Interpreted, Investigated, Mapped, Measured, Qualified, Quantified, Researched, Surveyed, Systematized, Tested, Tracked
Training, Teaching & Mentoring (If you, Taught, Trained, instead say...)	Accepted, Adapted, Advised, Acknowledged, Coached, Counseled, Developed, Educated, Enabled, Encouraged, Explained, Fostered, Informed, Influenced, Instructed, Lectured, Mentored, Motivated, Recognized, Shaped, Stimulated, Taught, Trained, Tutored
Communication & Writing (If you, Wrote, Spoke, instead say...)	Advertised, Articulated, Authored, Briefed, Campaigned, Clarified, Co-authored, Communicated, Composed, Conveyed, Corresponded, Counseled, Defined, Described, Discussed, Documented, Drafted, Edited, Illustrated, Informed, Interpreted, Lobbied, Marketed, Persuaded, Presented, Promoted, Publicized, Reviewed, Spoke, Suggested, Translated, Wrote
Creative & Visual Contributions (If you, Fixed, Made, Designed, Created, instead say...)	Altered, Augmented, Composed, Conceptualized, Crafted, Customized, Debugged, Devised, Displayed, Drew, Entertained, Fashioned, Illustrated, Innovated, Invented, Modeled, Modified, Originated, Painted, Performed, Photographed, Piloted, Polished, Procured, Published, Rebuilt, Refined, Reformed, Revitalized, Spearheaded, Synthesized, Undertook, Visualized
Operations & Organization (If you, Observed, Provided, Set-Up, instead say...)	Arranged, Assembled, Categorized, Coded, Compiled, Distributed, Divided, Implemented, Inspected, Itemized, Maintained, Monitored, Obtained, Operated, Ordered, Organized, Prepared, Processed, Provided, Recorded, Registered, Reserved, Responded, Routed, Screened, Submitted, Supplied, Systematized, Validated, Verified
Collaboration & Relationship Building (If you, Collaborated, Joined, Contacted, instead say...)	Advised, Advocated, Arbitrated, Collaborated, Consulted, Contacted, Enlisted, Forged, Interacted, Joined, Mediated, Moderated, Navigated, Negotiated, Partnered, Participated, Persuaded, Promoted, Recruited, Represented, Secured
Client & Customer Support (If you, Helped, Assisted, Cared, say...)	Aided, Assisted, Attended, Cared, Contributed, Demonstrated, Familiarized, Fielded, Helped, Inspired, Integrated, Intervened, Listened, Perceived, Prevented, Provided, Referred, Rendered, Resolved, Safeguarded, Serviced, Simplified, Spoke, Supported, Volunteered

Build Your Resumes

Your resume is often your first impression with an employer; it's your personal marketing tool. A strong, well-crafted resume showcases your skills, experiences, and potential, helping you stand out in a competitive job market.

Ten Tips for Creating a Resume that Tells Your Story...

1. Start with a blank document.

- Avoid pre-made templates with columns, tables, graphics, design elements, headers or footers. Most employers use Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to scan resumes, and complex formatting can prevent your resume from being read correctly. A clean, simple layout ensures your information is seen. Access the template on the following page or visit the Career Center for help.

2. Use a professional, easy-to-read font.

- Stick to clear (ATS-Friendly) fonts like Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman. Your name should also stand out with a font size between 20 and 28. Use 10-12point font for the rest of the resume to ensure readability.

3. Organize your content clearly.

- Structure your resume in a way that tells your story at a glance. Begin with your name and contact information, then use standard sections such as Education, Experience, Leadership and Engagement, Awards and Certifications, and Skills to keep things straightforward.

4. Incorporate industry keywords.

- Tailor your resume for each job by using keywords and phrases from the job description. This increases your chances of making it through ATS filters and demonstrates your alignment with the employer's needs.

5. Highlight accomplishments, not just duties.

- Start each bullet point with a strong action verb. Focus on what you achieved, how you achieved it, and the impact. Make sure to quantify your results when possible to show measurable success.

6. Be intentional with your content.

- Your resume is a personal marketing document. Include only the most relevant experiences and details that show you are a great fit for the role. Think strategically about what will help you stand out and best showcase your experience and skills.

7. Research and customize.

- Learn about the organization and the specific position. Customize your resume to reflect the skills and values they are seeking, and show how your background aligns with their mission, goals, and the qualifications of the job posting.

8. Proofread and get feedback.

- Carefully check your resume for grammar, punctuation, and formatting errors. Employers should not be the first person to read your resume. Visit the Center for Career and Talent Development to get another set of eyes to catch things you missed and offer helpful insights.

9. Properly saving your resume.

- Always save your resume in two formats: A Word document (.doc or .docx) so you can easily edit it in the future, and a PDF for submitting to employers to preserve formatting. Use a professional, clear file name, such as FirstName_LastName_Resume or FirstName_LastName_Position_Resume (e.g., Bret_Highlander_Accounting_Resume.pdf). Avoid vague or informal file names like ResumeFinal.docx or MyResume.pdf.

10. Follow submission instructions carefully.

- If you are submitting electronically, read the application instructions closely. When possible, submit your resume as a PDF to preserve formatting. Avoid using file types that may be altered or unreadable. (Even Word Documents should be avoided for submission, when possible.)

The Radford University Resume Format

Everyone's resume will look a little different—this example is meant to serve as a guide, not a strict template. Use it to help structure your own resume in a way that best highlights your unique experiences and strengths.

Your Name

Phone Number | Professional Email Address | City, State (Optional) | LinkedIn URL (customized) or E-Portfolio

Education

List entries in reverse chronological order. Current or past institutions should appear first, followed by all other details in reverse chronological order. By sophomore year, remove high school content unless directly relevant.

University/College Name, City, State (if multiple list in reverse chronological order)

Bachelor/Associates/Masters of (Degree) in (Major), Expected Graduation Month Year

Concentration in (Concentration) | Minor in (Minor)

GPA: [include if 3.0 or above] | Honors & Scholarships (if applicable)

Additional details you may choose to include:

- Relevant coursework (only if highly aligned with your field)
- Study abroad experiences
- Certifications earned through your academic program

Experience

List positions in reverse chronological order. This section can include full-time and part-time jobs, as well as internships, co-ops, research, clinicals, or other hands-on experience.

Employer Name, City, State

Job Title, Start Month Year – End Month Year

- Use bullet points to describe responsibilities, accomplishments, and skills used
- Start each bullet with a strong action verb
- Quantify your impact when possible (e.g., “Increased sales by 20%”)
- Include tools, technologies, or methods relevant to your field

Leadership and Engagement

Include clubs, organizations, student leadership roles, athletics, competitions, volunteer work, or class projects that demonstrate applicable and transferrable skills.

Organization Name, City, State

Role/Position Held, Start Month Year – End Month Year

- Highlight leadership, teamwork, project management, communication, or initiative
- Follow the same format and bullet style as your Experience section

Skills

Include technical, industry-specific, and transferrable skills that are relevant to your target role. Focus on hard skills, such as tools, software, languages, or certifications that you can demonstrate. This is not the place to list 10+ soft skills without context or evidence. Employers typically ignore these.

- Software: Microsoft Excel, Tableau, Adobe Creative Suite
- Programming: Python, R, HTML/CSS