

OVERVIEW

Writing resume bullets is often the most challenging aspect of writing a resume. Yes, settling on the best design and format and determining the most relevant experiences to highlight on your resume can take time; however, effectively describing your experience is the most important task. In many ways, this is because your bullets provide most of the content and context for your resume, and it is the content of a resume (i.e. the resume bullets) that will distinguish an average resume from a competitive one. The first step to writing more effective bullet points is to recognize that your bullets can and should be more than just a list of the tasks and responsibilities you managed in a particular role.

Don't just copy and paste directly from your position description. While a job description is a great place to start, simply listing your duties doesn't harness the full potential of a resume bullet. It doesn't communicate the skills that you have developed nor does it distinguish you from someone else who has been in the same role or had similar experiences. Most important, it doesn't demonstrate the impact or results of the tasks and the responsibilities you had. Instead, think of your bullets as accomplishment statements. Using this framework, you can focus more on the results of your work and the skills you have developed through your various experiences

THE FORMULA

To help you get started, use the following basic formula to craft your resume bullets:

Action Verb

Every bullet should begin with a strong action verb. Having a hard time brainstorming strong action verbs? Take a look at our list of action verbs sorted by skill categories to jumpstart your ideas.



What You Did

This is a brief statement of the task, duty or responsibility. Take any opportunity to quantify what you did. Keep in mind, however, that this is not the central focus of your bullet point.



Additional Descriptive Information/Results

Go beyond telling what you did and describe how and why you did it? When/how often? What did you accomplish? What was the result or outcome of your work? What was the impact?
Note: This is what distinguishes a good resume bullet from competitive one.

THE P.A.R. FRAMEWORK

In addition to the above mentioned formula, many students find it helpful to think about their experiences using the Problem – Action – Result framework. For each task or responsibility, what problem were you seeking to address? What action

did you take to address this problem? What were the results of your action? Once you have determined these answers, you can summarize the content into one (or more) bullets.

EXAMPLES

Before

Responsible for data entry.



After

Accurately entered data into BannerWeb using strong attention to detail in order to update alumni contact information after yearly alumnae survey.

Provide after school tutoring support.



Tutored approximately 10 students in chemistry and biology on a weekly basis while constantly assessing each student's needs in order to structure and scaffold instruction appropriately.

Answer phone calls at crisis hotline.



Provide weekly crisis counseling to sexual assault survivors to give them immediate emotional support and refer them to appropriate counseling, legal, and medical advocacy services.

Managed student organization website.



Managed, updated, and developed website using HTML and CSS in order to maintain consistent and reliable communication with organization members.

Researched and wrote memos on environmental issues.



Drafted memos on climate resilience for 10 lower income communities across the country.