

# WRITE THIS, NOT THAT: DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE

# RESUME

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the purpose of a resume
- Become familiar with the format and sections of a resume
- Distinguish between describing duties and responsibilities and describing results and accomplishments
- Develop ability to highlight transferable skills using action statements
- Understand the importance of relevancy and order of information

# PURPOSE OF A RESUME

- Provide an overview of an applicant's relevant qualifications
- To get an interview with an employer or for graduate school admission
- First point of contact = good first impression

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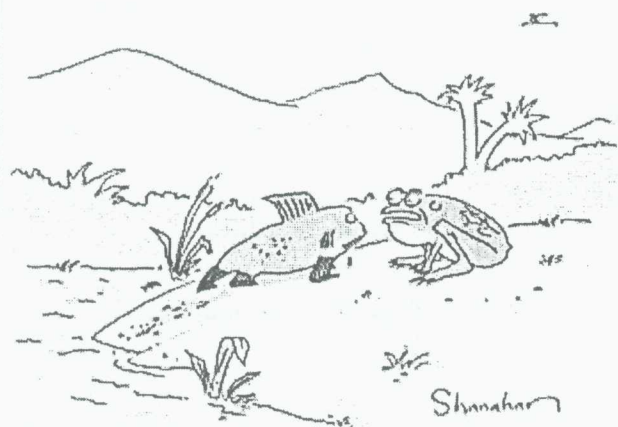


"I must say, Bob, your resume is concise."

# WHY FOCUS ON A RESUME ?

- Necessary for applications, networking, career expos, etc.
- To organize your thoughts about your education, your experiences, and your activities
- Serves as a foundation for creating other documents
- Skills in writing a resume are transferable





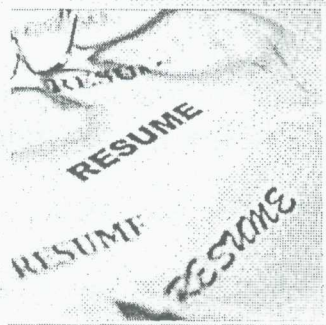
"The first thing you need to do is update your résumé."

## A STANDARD RESUME...

- No longer than one page
- Visually appealing and well organized
- Brief descriptors of experience and work history
- Uses action verbs and industry jargon
- Written on resume-quality paper
- Consistent in verb tense, abbreviations, and formatting
- No typos or grammatical errors

## PARTS OF A RESUME

- Personal Information
- Objective
- Education
- Experience
- Activities and Honors



**Katherine Nguyen**  
katherine.nguyen@rice.edu

Lovett College  
6310 Main Street  
Houston, TX 77005

4329 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Seattle, WA  
cell: (713) 555-8524

### EDUCATION

Rice University, Houston, TX  
Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering expected May 2011  
GPA: 3.85/4.00

*Relevant Coursework:* Kinetics and Reactor Design, Process Dynamics and Control, Separation Processes, Thermodynamics, Material/Energy Balances, Physical and Organic Chemistry

*Computer Skills:* UNIX, FORTRAN, PASCAL, C++, MATLAB

College du Léman, Geneva, Switzerland  
Technical Writing course, Summer 2010

### EXPERIENCE

Schlumberger, Lafayette, LA  
*Chemical Engineering Intern, Summer 2010*

- Researched maximum build rates for drilling tools in short radius environments to inform development of new PowerDrive Archer high build rate RSS.
- Calculated annular pressure buildup for producing wells in high temperature zones.
- Assisted with internal inspections of various heat exchangers, vessels, and reactors.

ExxonMobil, Baytown, TX  
*Research Intern, Summer 2009*

- Analyzed performance of economizers on process furnaces to determine cleaning requirements.
- Designed and implemented system to automatically collect and analyze gas chromatogram data and reactor conditions from four micro reactors using Varian Star GC software.

Society of Women Engineers – Rice University, Houston, TX  
*Development Chair, Fall 2008 – Spring 2009*

- Initiated contact with campus liaisons and members of the engineering community to organize annual fundraising event.
- Increased yearly fund from \$2,500 to \$4,000 by developing alumni relations.
- Collaborated with Society President and education committee to coordinate monthly seminars.

Rice University Chemistry Department, Houston, Texas  
*Teaching Assistant, Fall 2008 – Spring 2009*

- Evaluated student learning and provided feedback on coursework for General Chemistry I.
- Led small group and individual sessions to supplement classroom instruction.

### ACTIVITIES & HONORS

Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society  
Senior Interviewer, Student Admissions Council  
Co-captain, Lovett College Beer Bike Team  
Rice University Cycling Team  
National Science Foundation Scholarship

Chronological



Katherine Nguyen  
kathnguyen@rice.edu

Lovett College  
6310 Main Street  
Houston, TX 77005

4329 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Seattle, WA  
cell: (713) 555-8524

EDUCATION

**Katherine Nguyen**  
[kathnguyen@rice.edu](mailto:kathnguyen@rice.edu)

School Address:  
Lovett College  
6310 Main Street  
Houston, Texas 77005

Permanent Address:  
4329 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Seattle, Washington  
cell: (713) 555-8524

ExxonMobil, Baytown, TX  
Research Intern, Summer 2009

- Analyzed performance of economizers on process furnaces to determine cleaning requirements.
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Senior Interviewer, Student Admissions Council

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Rice University Cycling Team

National Science Foundation Scholarship



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## PERSONAL INFORMATION SAMPLES

Write This  
**William Smith**  
1234 Main Street  
Houston, TX 77005  
[william.smith@rice.edu](mailto:william.smith@rice.edu)  
555-348-0000 (cell)

Not That  
**William “Billy” Smith**  
1234 Main St.  
Houston, Texas 77005  
[studmuffin@rice.edu](mailto:studmuffin@rice.edu)  
555-348-0000 (cell)



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## PERSONAL INFORMATION SAMPLES

Maybe This

**William Smith**

[william.smith@rice.edu](mailto:william.smith@rice.edu)  
555-348-0000 (cell)



<http://www.linkedin.com/in/williamsmith>

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## OBJECTIVE

- Optional on a resume
- A statement about the career goal you are pursuing
- A well-written objective says you know what you are looking for (position, industry/field, skills)
- The body of resume should prove ability to reach that goal



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**Katherine Nguyen**  
 katherine.nguyen@rice.edu  
 4329 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
 Seattle, WA  
 cell: (713) 555-8524

Objective: A position as a project engineer focusing on design and implementation of operations in the oil and gas industry.

**EDUCATION**

Rice University, Houston, TX  
 Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering expected May 2011  
 GPA: 3.85/4.00

*Relevant Coursework:* Kinetics and Reactor Design, Process Dynamics and Control, Separation

**Objective:** A position as a project engineer focusing on design and implementation of operations in the oil and gas industry.

**EXPERIENCE**

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**ExxonMobil, Baytown, TX**  
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 • Analyzed performance of economizers on process furnaces to determine cleaning requirements.  
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**Society of Women Engineers – Rice University, Houston, TX**  
*Development Chair, Fall 2008 – Spring 2009*  
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**ACTIVITIES & HONORS**

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 Senior Interviewer, Student Admissions Council  
 Co-captain, Lovett College Deer Bike Team  
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# EDUCATION

- List name and location of institution, degree you are working towards and date of graduation
- You might want to include your GPA (above 3.0)
- "Study Abroad University" and dates attended
- Optional sections to add include: "Related Coursework," "Skills," "Languages"



# EDUCATION SAMPLES

## Write This

**Rice University**, Houston, TX  
 Bachelor of Arts in Political Science  
 Expected date of graduation: May 2010  
 GPA: 3.65/4.0

**Related Coursework:**  
 Race and Public Policy, Elections and Voting Behavior, Seminar in Judicial Process and Behavior, Principles of Accounting, Business Communication

## Not That

**Rice University**, Houston 2006-present  
 BA in Political Science  
 Graduating May 2010  
 GPA: 2.90/4.0

**Related Coursework:**  
 Poli 210, 211, and Introduction to Comparative Politics; Art History 200, Business 250



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 Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering expected May 2011

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*Computer Skills:* UNIX, FORTRAN, PASCAL, C++, MATLAB

**College du Leman**, Geneva, Switzerland  
 Technical Writing course, Summer 2010

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# EXPERIENCE SECTION

- Include where you worked, how long you worked there, what your job title was, and your responsibilities and accomplishments.
- Include part-time work, research experience or internships.
- List your experience in *reverse chronological order*.
- Use phrases to describe job duties/accomplishments using *action words*.
- Arrange points in order of relevance for the position to which you are applying.



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4329 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Seattle, WA  
cell: (713) 555-8524

Lowell College  
4310 Main Street  
Houston, TX 77005

EDUCATION  
Rice University, Houston, TX

## EXPERIENCE

### Schlumberger, Lafayette, LA

*Chemical Engineering Intern, Summer 2010*

- Researched maximum build rates for drilling tools in short radius environments to inform development of new PowerDrive Archer high build rate RSS.
- Calculated annular pressure buildup for producing wells in high temperature zones.
- Assisted with internal inspections of various heat exchangers, vessels, and reactors.

### ExxonMobil, Baytown, TX

*Research Intern, Summer 2009*

- Analyzed performance of economizers on process furnaces to determine cleaning requirements.
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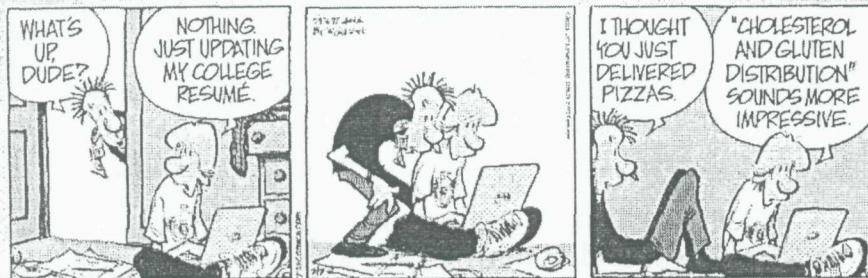
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# HOW DO I DESCRIBE...?



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# EXPERIENCE SECTION

- Start with an **action verb** (“Organized...!”)
- Follow it with a **noun** that relates to the experience an employer is looking for (“Organized a *marketing campaign, consulting team, a herd of sheep...*”)
- End with **results or accomplishments** (“Organized a marketing campaign which resulted in *10% increase in profits, to reduce time spent on research, for higher quality of wool.*”)



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## EXPERIENCE SAMPLES

### Write This

- Provided individual instruction to 5 students weekly in math and science subjects. Grades increased overall by 20% at end of semester.
- Developed procedure for identifying *Drosophila* demonstrating gravitaxic abnormalities... Created an apparatus to test resting response to gravity...

### Not That

- Helped middle school students with math and science homework.
- Carried out genetic screens with *Drosophila melanogaster* species of Diptera. Purpose of the project was to isolate behavioral mutants containing a mutated calmodulin gene and to isolate mutants demonstrating gravitaxic abnormalities in order to test *Drosophila*'s resting response to gravity.



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## TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Skills that may translate to different settings.

- Analytical and problem solving ability
- Teamwork and leadership
- Written and verbal communication
- Organizational skills and attention to detail
- Research and presentation
- Customer service and conflict resolution

Identify relevant skills you have developed and illustrate by writing in detail the ways in which you have developed each one.



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## EXPERIENCE SAMPLE (STANDARD)

**Pre-Health Society, Rice University,** Houston, TX  
*Development Chair, Fall 2010-Spring 2011*

Attended weekly meetings, managed a budget of \$2,500, organized fundraising events, and interacted with members of the medical community and organization representatives.



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## EXPERIENCE SAMPLE (DESCRIPTIVE)

**Pre-Health Society, Rice University,** Houston, TX  
*Development Chair, Fall 2010-Spring 2011*

Initiated contact with campus liaisons and members of the medical community to organize annual fundraising event. Increased yearly fund from \$1,500 to \$2,500 by developing alumni relations. Collaborated with Club President and education committee to coordinate monthly seminars.



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# TO BULLET OR NOT TO BULLET?

## Without Bullets:

Initiated contact with campus liaisons and members of the medical community to organize annual fundraising event. Increased yearly fund from \$1,500 to \$2,500 by developing alumni relations. Collaborated with Club President and education committee to coordinate monthly seminars.

## With Bullets:

- Initiated contact with campus liaisons and members of the medical community to organize annual fundraising event.
- Increased yearly fund from \$1,500 to \$2,500 by developing alumni relations.
- Collaborated with Club President and education committee to coordinate monthly seminars.



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# ACTIVITIES AND HONORS

- Honors, membership in groups or organizations
- A way to personalize your resume
- Demonstrate well-rounded personality
- Show skills not shown through experience
- Evidence of commitment to field



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# ACTIVITIES AND HONORS SAMPLES

## Write This

Rice Peer Career Advisor  
National Hispanic Scholar  
President's Honor Roll  
Rice Engineering Society

## Maybe Not That

Pole Dancing Association  
Ultimate Frisbee player in HS  
Beer Bike Chug Captain  
Baptist Student Ministries



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Rice University Chemistry Department, Houston, Texas

*Teaching Assistant, Fall 2008 - Spring 2009*

- Evaluated student learning and provided feedback on coursework for General Chemistry I.
- Led small group and individual sessions to supplement classroom instruction.

## ACTIVITIES & HONORS

Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society  
Senior Interviewer, Student Admissions Council  
Co-captain, Lowett College Beer Bike Team  
Rice University Cycling Team  
National Science Foundation Scholarship

Chronological



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## Christopher Hyslop

2343 Greenbriar, #345 • Houston, Texas 77001 • (713) 555-3247 • hyslop@rice.edu • www.hyslopfolio.com

### Objective

To obtain a position in publishing or advertising.

### Skills

#### PUBLISHING & DESIGN

- Assisted in copy editing of weekly Houston newspaper.
- Developed programs that increased circulation of weekly newspaper by 6% and tracked reader response.
- Contributing writer for *The Rice Graduate*.
- Designed layouts for publications printed by various student organizations.
- Created CD cover designs for a number of local bands.

#### MARKETING & ADVERTISING

- Planned storyboards for 3 locally-aired commercials.
- Proposed and designed print ads selected for use in local magazines.
- Implemented strategic plan for marketing ad campaign at Rice University using data collected from student focus groups.
- Composed promotional materials and assessed consumer response.

#### TECHNICAL & STUDIO

- Utilized a range of graphics and design software in completing projects.
- Demonstrated ability in artwork development using various mediums, including watercolor, acrylics, charcoal, oil, and ink.

### Work History

The Houston Press, November 2008 - Present  
The Paper, September - May 2007  
Publications Office, Rice University, September - May 2007

### Education

Rice University, Houston, Texas  
B.A. in Art and Managerial Studies expected May 2010

### Activities

Copy Editor, The Thresher  
Photographer, The Campanile  
Rice Student Volunteer Program  
College Representative, Rice Honor Council  
Rice Social Dance Society

Functional



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## KIMBERLY L. STEVENS

6320 S Main Street  
Houston, Texas 77005  
(713) 555-3563  
kstevens@rice.edu

### OBJECTIVE

Position as a Financial Analyst with a consulting firm.

### EDUCATION

Rice University, Houston, Texas  
Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Sociology expected May 2010  
GPA 3.75/4.00

Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca, Spain  
Advanced level coursework in Spanish language and literature, Summer 2009

### FINANCIAL EXPERIENCE

Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Houston, Texas Sept 08 - May 09  
Developed a theoretical model of statistics to calculate tax estimate for US Income Tax Returns. Designed tax-planning strategies for clients on foreign assignments.

Merrill Lynch, Stafford, Texas Summer 2008  
Performed database operations and revised strategic guides for financial planning. Collaborated with clients in developing individual programs for investment consultations.

### GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

Congressman Bill Archer, Washington, DC Summer 2007  
Researched tax proposals and served as liaison for the House of Ways and Means Committee. Implemented methods to respond to constituent inquiries more efficiently using the Internet.

### LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Vinson & Elkins LLP, Houston, Texas Jan - May 08  
Edited and summarized proposals for prospective clients in Litigation Section.

### HONORS & ACTIVITIES

Rice Program Council, Treasurer  
College Women's Intramural Volleyball Team  
Habitat for Humanity  
National Merit Scholar  
Rice Board of Governors Scholarship

Combination



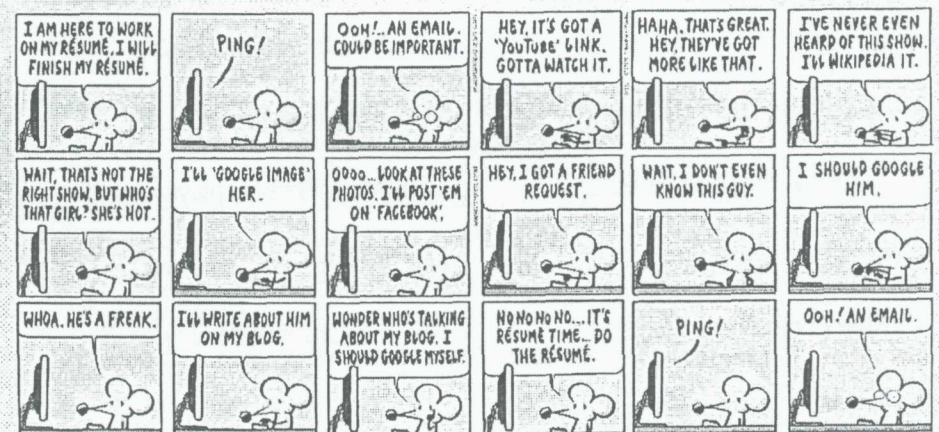
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## REMEMBER...

- Tailor your resume to suit your audience
- Focus on results and accomplishments
- Order information according to importance or relevance to the reader
- Use keywords or jargon relevant to the industry
- Check spelling and grammar



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# Resume Dos & Don'ts

## Do

- Use good quality (at least 20 lb. bond) paper
- Use a readable font and print on a high-resolution printer (laser is best)
- If you use an objective, make it specific
- Emphasize results produced, significant achievements, and recognition from others
- Quantify when possible and use specific examples
- Check the spelling of every word; make sure grammar and punctuation are correct
- Have someone proofread your resume
- Get feedback from several people
- Begin phrases with action verbs such as "developed," "initiated," etc.
- Be truthful about your accomplishments
- Keep your resume to one page unless you have extensive experience related to your job objective

## Don't

- Use resume templates that come with word processing software
- Begin phrases with "I" or use complete sentences
- Include personal information such as marital status, social security number, age, or national origin
- Use flashy graphics or colored paper
- Mention controversial activities or associations
- List unrelated, minor duties such as "opened mail" or "filed documents"
- Exaggerate your experience
- Use meaningless words or phrases such as "seeking a challenging position" or "seeking a position working with people"
- Start phrases in the experience section with "My responsibilities (or duties) included"
- Use abbreviations

# Resume Checklist

- Is the resume pleasing to the eye - easy-to-read font, good layout?
- Are your name, address, city, state, zip code, phone number and email address at the top of the page?
- Does your objective (if used) state clearly the functional areas in which you seek employment and the level of the job you want?
- Did you use bullets, bold, all capitals, and underlining to highlight key strengths?
- If you know your resume will be scanned, did you omit columns, underlining, and bullets?
- Is information listed in order of importance and relevance to the position?
- Does the resume avoid generalities and focus on specific information about experience, projects, products?
- Did you check the spelling of every word and make sure the grammar and punctuation are correct?
- Do most phrases begin with action verbs such as "developed," "initiated," etc.?
- Have you been truthful about your accomplishments rather than being falsely modest or hyping them too much?
- If you were the employer, would you call you for an interview?



# Verb List for Resumes and Letters

## Management Skills

administered  
analyzed  
assigned  
**attained**  
chaired  
consolidated  
contracted  
coordinated  
delegated  
developed  
directed  
evaluated  
executed  
**improved**  
**increased**  
organized  
oversaw  
planned  
prioritized  
produced  
recommended  
reviewed  
scheduled  
**strengthened**  
supervised

## Communication Skills

addressed  
arbitrated  
arranged  
authored  
collaborated  
**convinced**  
corresponded  
developed  
directed  
drafted  
edited  
enlisted  
formulated  
influenced  
interpreted  
lectured

mediated  
moderated  
negotiated  
persuaded  
promoted  
publicized  
reconciled  
recruited  
spoke  
translated  
wrote

## Research Skills

clarified  
collected  
critiqued  
diagnosed  
evaluated  
examined  
extracted  
identified  
inspected  
interpreted  
interviewed  
investigated  
organized  
reviewed  
summarized  
surveyed  
systematized

## Technical Skills

assembled  
built  
calculated  
computed  
designed  
devised  
engineered  
fabricated  
maintained  
**operate**  
overhauled  
programmed

remodeled  
repaired  
solved  
**upgraded**

## Teaching Skills

advised  
clarified  
coached  
communicated  
coordinated  
demystified  
developed  
enabled  
encouraged  
evaluated  
explained  
facilitated  
guided  
informed  
instructed  
persuaded  
set goals  
stimulated  
trained

## Financial Skills

administered  
allocated  
analyzed  
appraised  
audited  
balanced  
budgeted  
calculated  
computed  
developed  
forecasted  
managed  
marketed  
planned  
projected  
researched

## Creative Skills

acted  
conceptualized  
created  
customized  
developed  
directed  
established  
fashioned  
**founded**  
illustrated  
**initiated**  
instituted  
integrated  
**introduced**  
**invented**  
**originated**  
performed  
planned  
**revitalized**  
shaped

## Helping Skills

assessed  
assisted  
clarified  
coached  
counseled  
demonstrated  
diagnosed  
educated  
**expedited**  
facilitated  
familiarized  
guided  
motivated  
referred  
rehabilitated  
represented

## Clerical or Detail Skills

approved  
arranged  
catalogued  
classified

collected  
compiled  
executed  
generated  
implemented  
inspected  
monitored  
operated  
organized  
prepared  
processed  
purchased  
recorded  
retrieved  
screened  
specified  
systematized  
tabulated  
validated

## More Verbs for Accomplishments

**achieved**  
**expanded**  
**improved**  
**pioneered**  
**reduced** (losses)  
**resolved**  
(problems)  
**restored**  
**spearheaded**  
**transformed**

Words in **bold**  
are especially  
good for  
pointing out  
accomplishments