WORDS OF POSITIVITY

Resume action verbs worksheet: choose the verb the facts support

Twenty-four weak resume lines, two for each of twelve kinds of work. Read what really happened, choose the verb it supports, then see the stronger line and the facts it needs from you. To do it on screen and check the answers: wordsofpositivity.com/resume-action-verbs#resume-verbs-practice

Name _____ Date _____

Leading, building, analyzing, teaching, selling, fixing

Read what happened. Choose the verb these facts support: the narrowest one that is true, not the strongest-sounding. Sometimes two fit.

EXAMPLE

There was no staff newsletter until last spring, when you started one. You write and send it every month.
Weak line: "In charge of the staff newsletter." Which verb do these facts support? (Created, Transformed, Invented)
Answer: Created. The newsletter did not exist before your work, which is exactly what Created claims. Transformed would need an old newsletter to change, and Invented claims something new to the world. Stronger line: "Created [deliverable or process] to address [need], resulting in [verified outcome]."

1. *Two teams were building the same feature in different ways. You got them to agree on one approach, and they finished it together. You were not their manager and did not own the deadline.*
Weak line: "Led a cross-team project." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Led ○ Galvanized ○ Unified

Your stronger line: _____

_____

2. *The team kept arguing about what came first. You wrote down the three priorities and why, and you found two people from another team to help with the first one.*
Weak line: "Responsible for team priorities." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Empowered ○ Clarified ○ Mobilized

Your stronger line: _____

_____

3. *You wrote the code and set up the data feeds for a sales report. Managers now use it every Monday to decide where to send their teams.*
Weak line: "Created a new reporting tool." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Invented ○ Built ○ Launched

Your stronger line: _____

_____

4. *Orders typed into the shop system had to be copied by hand into the warehouse system. You connected the two, and orders now pass across on their own.*
Weak line: "Worked on a system integration." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Transformed ○ Integrated ○ Invented

Your stronger line: _____

_____

5. *Deliveries were often late. You went through three months of records and showed that the delays began at one loading bay, which was unstaffed during the shift change. The bay's staffing was changed.*
Weak line: "Analyzed operational data." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Diagnosed ○ Observed ○ Forecast

Your stronger line: _____

_____

6. *The budget assumed sales would grow the way they did last year. You checked that assumption against five years of sales figures, found that it held, and the budget went ahead.*
Weak line: "Reviewed the forecast." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Forecast ○ Validated ○ Verified

Your stronger line: _____

_____

7. *You ran four hands-on sessions on the booking system for new staff. By the end, each of them took a real booking on their own while you watched.*
Weak line: "Provided training to new colleagues." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Mentored ○ Informed ○ Trained

Your stronger line: _____

_____

8. *Staff found the expenses system confusing and kept sending you their claims to fill in. You made a one-page picture guide, and they now submit their own claims.*
Weak line: "Helped people understand a complex process." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Simplified ○ Demystified ○ Upskilled

Your stronger line: _____

_____

9. *The sales team had a long list of leads. You checked each one against four agreed criteria (budget, need, timing and who decides) and passed on only the ones that met them.*
Weak line: "Worked on new business opportunities." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Won ○ Networked ○ Qualified

Your stronger line: _____

_____

10. *A large customer had given notice to leave after two late deliveries. You set up a weekly delivery check with them, and they renewed their contract.*
Weak line: "Helped keep an important customer." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Retained ○ Promoted ○ Cultivated

Your stronger line: _____

_____

11. *The print queue crashed every Monday. You found the cause, a log file that filled up over the weekend, replaced the faulty clean-up script, and the queue has run normally since.*
Weak line: "Fixed a recurring system issue." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Stabilized ○ Upgraded ○ Repaired

Your stronger line: _____

_____

12. *The booking site kept going down at busy times. You added a queue so that it stays up under load. The database problem underneath is still being fixed by another team.*
Weak line: "Improved service reliability." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Solved ○ Stabilized ○ Restored

Your stronger line: _____

_____

Researching, organizing, negotiating, designing, supporting, improving

Read what happened. Choose the verb these facts support: the narrowest one that is true, not the strongest-sounding. Sometimes two fit.

EXAMPLE

Every expense claim needed three signatures. You showed that one of them added nothing, and the form now needs two.
Weak line: "Helped with the expenses process." Which verb do these facts support? (Streamlined, Documented, Tracked)
Answer: Streamlined. You can name the step you removed and how the process got simpler, which is what Streamlined claims. Documented would mean you wrote the process down, and Tracked that you followed it over time. Stronger line: "Streamlined [process] by removing [unnecessary step], resulting in [verified improvement]."

13. *You held one-hour conversations with twelve parents about how they choose a preschool, then grouped what they said into five reasons.*
Weak line: "Conducted user research." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Interviewed ○ Surveyed ○ Discovered

Your stronger line: _____

_____

14. *Before changing the homework policy for the whole school, you tried the new approach with two classes for one term and reported what happened to the principal.*
Weak line: "Tested a new approach." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Surveyed ○ Piloted ○ Investigated

Your stronger line: _____

_____

15. *The team's drawings were scattered across email, three shared drives and a cupboard. You recorded each one in a single list with its number, date and project, so anyone can now find a drawing by searching the list.*
Weak line: "Organized project information." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Consolidated ○ Scheduled ○ Cataloged

Your stronger line: _____

_____

16. *Three teams needed the same test lab. You set the order and the dates so that no team waited on another, and the release went out on its planned day.*
Weak line: "Managed the delivery schedule." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Prioritized ○ Scheduled ○ Tracked

Your stronger line: _____

_____

17. *Sales and support disagreed about who answers refund emails. Neither team reported to you. You met both, set out the options, and they agreed on a split that both signed off.*
Weak line: "Worked with two teams on a disagreement." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Defused ○ Advocated ○ Mediated

Your stronger line: _____

_____

18. *You met the packaging supplier on your company's behalf to agree next year's delivery days and payment terms, and both sides signed the new terms.*
Weak line: "Handled supplier discussions." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Negotiated ○ Brokered ○ Liaised

Your stronger line: _____

_____

19. *Staff needed to book meeting rooms from their phones. You decided how the booking screens and the room data would work together, and a developer built it to your plan.*
Weak line: "Designed a solution for internal users." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Prototyped ○ Configured ○ Designed

Your stronger line: _____

_____

20. *The company's safety guide was written for engineers. You asked warehouse staff which parts they found hard, rewrote it for them, and they now use it on shift.*
Weak line: "Made the material easier for the audience." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Illustrated ○ Tailored ○ Specified

Your stronger line: _____

_____

21. *Callers who are deaf or hard of hearing could not use the phone menu. You set up a text-message route that puts them straight through to the support team, and their questions now get answered.*
Weak line: "Supported customers with their questions." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Connected ○ Reassured ○ Accommodated

Your stronger line: _____

_____

22. *For two years you ran the monthly checks on the school's fire alarms, and the building passed every inspection in that time.*

Weak line: "Helped maintain an important service." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Rescued ○ Maintained ○ Safeguarded

Your stronger line: _____

_____

23. *New hires used to wait for a laptop before they could begin training. You arranged for laptops to be ready on day one, and you have the start dates before and after for every new hire this year.*

Weak line: "Made the onboarding process faster." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Shortened ○ Maximized ○ Accelerated

Your stronger line: _____

_____

24. *The weekly report took a full day to prepare. You tried three orders of the steps, chose the one that met the Monday deadline without extra staff, and wrote down why.*

Weak line: "Improved the weekly report process." Which verb do these facts support?

○ Revitalized ○ Enhanced ○ Optimized

Your stronger line: _____

_____

Answer key

Resume action verbs worksheet: choose the verb the facts support

Before you use a line: The situations are made up for practice; never copy their facts into a real resume. Once the verb is chosen, fill each bracket of the stronger line with a true detail from your own work, and delete any part you cannot back up.

Leading, building, analyzing, teaching, selling, fixing

1. **Unified**

   Unified: two separate efforts became one approach in practice, which is what the verb claims. Led claims you directed the people and owned the result, and you were not their manager. Galvanized means getting a hesitant group moving, but both teams were already working.

   Stronger line: Unified [contributors] around [shared decision], enabling [result you can evidence].

   Facts only you can supply: contributors; shared decision; result you can evidence

2. **Clarified or Mobilized**

   Clarified and Mobilized are both true here, and the stronger line uses both: you cleared up a real confusion, then brought in people to act on it. "Responsible for" names a duty, not something you did. Empowered claims you changed people's authority or tools, and nothing here did that.

   Stronger line: Clarified [priorities] and mobilized [resources] toward [verified delivery outcome].

   Facts only you can supply: priorities; resources; verified delivery outcome

3. **Built or Launched**

   Built: you made the working whole, code and data feeds. Launched is also true, because managers use it every week; choose it when getting it into use was the hard part. Invented claims a device or method that did not exist anywhere before, which a report rarely is. Whichever verb you pick, the line needs who uses the tool and what they decide with it.

   Stronger line: Built [reporting tool] that enabled [audience] to [verified decision or action].

   Facts only you can supply: reporting tool; audience; verified decision or action

4. **Integrated**

   Integrated: the two systems now exchange orders in practice. Transformed claims a fundamental change to how the whole operation works, and removing one manual step is a real gain but rarely that. Invented claims something that did not exist anywhere before. "Worked on" hid what you did.

   Stronger line: Integrated [systems or data flows], removing [verified handoff problem].

   Facts only you can supply: systems or data flows; verified handoff problem

5. **Diagnosed**

   Diagnosed: your analysis found a supported cause (the unstaffed bay), not just the symptom, and it led to a fix. Observed claims you watched it happen yourself, and you worked from records. Forecast estimates the future, and this was about why past deliveries were late.

   Stronger line: Diagnosed [operational problem] using [evidence], enabling [verified corrective action].

   Facts only you can supply: operational problem; evidence; verified corrective action

6. **Validated or Verified**

   Validated: you tested the assumption against independent evidence, and it could have failed. Verified is also accurate, since your check could have disproved the claim; validated is the usual word when the thing checked is an assumption or a model. Forecast would claim you made the projection, and you checked someone else's.

   Stronger line: Validated [forecast assumption] against [evidence], informing [decision you can substantiate].

   Facts only you can supply: forecast assumption; evidence; decision you can substantiate

7. **Trained**

   Trained: learners practiced and then showed a job skill, a real booking taken alone. Informed claims only that you gave them facts. Mentored claims an ongoing relationship shaped around one person's growth, and four group sessions are not that.

   Stronger line: Trained [colleagues] to [perform task], enabling [verified capability].

   Facts only you can supply: colleagues; perform task; verified capability

8. Demystified or Simplified

Demystified: your guide removed a barrier that came from the system seeming hard. Simplified works too if the line says what you simplified, the instructions rather than the system itself. Upskilled claims new, more advanced skills, and filing an expense claim is a basic task.

Stronger line: Demystified [process] through [teaching method], enabling [verified independent use].

Facts only you can supply: process; teaching method; verified independent use

9. Qualified

Qualified: you applied explicit criteria to decide where the team's effort should go. Won claims a secured deal, and nothing here says one closed. Networked claims you built new connections, and you sorted leads that already existed.

Stronger line: Qualified [opportunities] against [criteria], focusing effort on [verified commercial result].

Facts only you can supply: opportunities; criteria; verified commercial result

10. Retained

Retained: there was a real risk of losing the customer (they had given notice), and your action changed the outcome. Cultivated is for growing a relationship over time, and this was saving one at risk. Promoted means raising awareness of an offering.

Stronger line: Retained [customer or account] by [specific action], preserving [value you can evidence].

Facts only you can supply: customer or account; specific action; value you can evidence

11. Repaired

Repaired: a broken part works again because of you, and the stronger line opens with Diagnosed because finding the cause was half the work. Stabilized is for making an unreliable system steady without fully fixing it, and this one is fixed. Upgraded claims a higher standard than before, not a return to normal.

Stronger line: Diagnosed [root cause] and repaired [affected component], restoring [verified behavior].

Facts only you can supply: root cause; affected component; verified behavior

12. Stabilized

Stabilized: the site now stays up, but the root problem is still open. Solved claims the problem no longer exists, which is not yet true. Restored means a lost function came back, and the site was unreliable rather than lost.

Stronger line: Stabilized [service] after [documented failure mode], maintaining [condition you can evidence].

Facts only you can supply: service; documented failure mode; condition you can evidence

Researching, organizing, negotiating, designing, supporting, improving

13. Interviewed

Interviewed: purposeful research conversations, analyzed afterwards. Surveyed claims a defined survey method with a stated scope, and twelve conversations are interviews. Discovered claims the five reasons were unknown before your work; say that only if you can show it.

Stronger line: Interviewed [participant group] about [question], identifying [finding you can support].

Facts only you can supply: participant group; question; finding you can support

14. Piloted

Piloted: a deliberately limited trial, two classes for one term, to learn before a school-wide change. Surveyed would mean collecting answers with a defined method. Investigated means examining a question for facts, and you tried something out.

Stronger line: Piloted [approach] with [honest scope], informing [verified decision about next steps].

Facts only you can supply: approach; honest scope; verified decision about next steps

15. Cataloged

Cataloged: a consistent record of every drawing, with details people can search. Consolidated would mean you brought the drawings themselves into one place, and they are still where they were. Scheduled is about timing work.

Stronger line: Cataloged [records] by [usable scheme], enabling [verified retrieval or control].

Facts only you can supply: records; usable scheme; verified retrieval or control

16. Scheduled

Scheduled: your timing decisions solved a real capacity limit, one lab for three teams. Prioritized means ranking work by importance, and you arranged times so every team got the lab. Tracked means following progress over time, not deciding it.

Stronger line: Scheduled [workstreams] around [dependencies], ensuring [delivery condition you can evidence].

Facts only you can supply: workstreams; dependencies; delivery condition you can evidence

17. Mediated

Mediated: you were a neutral go-between, and the two sides reached an agreement. Advocated means arguing for one side. Defused means lowering tension without settling the disagreement, and this one was settled.
Stronger line: Mediated [dispute] between [parties], reaching [agreement you can evidence].
Facts only you can supply: dispute; parties; agreement you can evidence

18. Negotiated

Negotiated: you took part in real discussion that produced agreed terms. Brokered is for arranging a deal between two other parties, and you were one of the parties. Liaised means keeping groups in touch over time, not settling terms.
Stronger line: Negotiated [terms] with [supplier], securing [verified operational or value outcome].
Facts only you can supply: terms; supplier; verified operational or value outcome

19. Designed

Designed: you made the choices about how it works, and someone else built it. The verb was never the weak part of this line: what it lacked was what you designed, for whom, and what it lets them do. The stronger line uses Architected, a word for designing the structure of a technical system; use it only when that is what you did. Prototyped would mean you made an early working version to test. Configured means setting up existing software.
Stronger line: Architected [solution] around [user and technical constraints], enabling [verified capability].
Facts only you can supply: solution; user and technical constraints; verified capability

20. Tailored

Tailored: what you learned from the warehouse staff drove the changes. Illustrated claims you drew the pictures or diagrams. Specified means setting exact requirements for how something should be made.
Stronger line: Tailored [material] to [audience need], producing [response you can evidence].
Facts only you can supply: material; audience need; response you can evidence

21. Connected or Accommodated

Connected and Accommodated are both accurate. Connected names the access you gave, callers reaching the support team; Accommodated names the adjustment you made for a real need. Pick the one your reader cares about. Reassured means calming a worry with credible information, and these callers needed a way in.
Stronger line: Connected [customers] with [relevant resource], enabling [verified resolution or access].
Facts only you can supply: customers; relevant resource; verified resolution or access

22. Maintained

Maintained: keeping a service working to its standard was the achievement. Safeguarded is close, but use it only if you can name the risk your checks controlled, not just that nothing went wrong. Rescued would dramatize routine work.
Stronger line: Maintained [service or standard] through [specific practice], ensuring [condition you can evidence].
Facts only you can supply: service or standard; specific practice; condition you can evidence

23. Shortened or Accelerated

Shortened and Accelerated both fit, because you can compare the time before and after. Shortened names the length of the stage; Accelerated names the speed of the process. Maximized claims no better result was possible, which you cannot show. Whichever you choose, use your own dates, never a number from an example.
Stronger line: Shortened [onboarding stage] from [verified baseline] to [verified result] by [specific change].
Facts only you can supply: onboarding stage; verified baseline; verified result; specific change

24. Optimized

Optimized: you used evidence to balance a stated goal (the Monday deadline) against a limit (no extra staff). Enhanced is weaker, because it does not say what got better or why this was the best choice. Revitalized needs a decline that was turned around, and the report had not declined.
Stronger line: Optimized [workflow] for [stated objective] under [constraints], achieving [result you can evidence].
Facts only you can supply: workflow; stated objective; constraints; result you can evidence