

10 words you should never use on your resume

Here are 10 of the most overused, uber-cliché words you could ever use on a resume, cover letter or job application. Here's why:

1) **Ambitious:** "If it were so, it was a grievous fault; and grievously hath Caesar answer'd it." Ambition may be a wonderful thing for your career, but no one wants to hire someone who's going to try to replace them or leave as soon as he gets a bit of training at the company's expense.

2) **Competent:** If that's the best you can say about your work performance maybe you ought to consider a new line of work, perhaps the Post Office. When the chips are down we want people who are awesome. Don't tell us you're competent, show us you're amazing.

3) **Creative:** The last thing we need is more creative accountants. You're trying to demonstrate business value. Creativity is neither measurable nor reliable. It can sometimes be turned into profit. In that case tell us how you did it and how much it was worth. Let us determine for ourselves how creative you are.

4) **Efficient:** So was Jack the Ripper. What we really want to know is how you're efficiency is going to make us money.

5) **Flexible:** What are you, a contortionist? If by this you mean that you're able to take on a number of different tasks then show us a range of what you can do. Better yet, show us the range of results you can get. If you mean that you can put your foot behind your head then show us that too, you'll definitely get remembered.



6) **Hard-working:** We could say the same of a prisoner on a chain-gang. What an employer is looking for is results. If you achieve them by hard work or occasional bursts of brilliance doesn't matter a whole lot. Merely working hard isn't enough. For all we know you tend to do it at cross-purposes.

7) **Knowledgeable:** Everyone has knowledge of one sort or another. It comes from being alive and experiencing things. If you have a degree, tell us that. If you have specific knowledge relating to the job then you'll be asked to demonstrate it in the interview. Use the valuable space in your resume to show us what you can do with what you know.

8) **Logical:** If you arrived at your results by logic, intuition or voodoo isn't truly my concern. The only question that matters is if you're going to be a profitable investment. A computer can follow a prescribed set of instructions and doesn't earn overtime.

9) **People Person:** This is a truly vacuous term. It sounds pretty, nice and alliterative, but at what does it actually mean? Whether you like people or not is irrelevant, as is if they like you. It's what you can do with your "people skills" that you're getting paid for and we want to know if you're going to be worth the money.

10) **Successful:** This is either self-evident or false. Without a definition of success to apply to your situation we can't tell which one. Show us some successes; we'll be much more impressed.

These words will not only make you look like everyone else, they might even throw out your application due to plagiarism or copyright fraud! Be specific in what you write and what you bring to the company in terms of business value.