**Words and Terms That Ruin a Resume**

*By Charles Purdy, Monster Senior Editor*

Your resume needs an update -- that is, if your resume is like that of most people, it’s not as good as it could be. The problem is language: Most resumes are a thicket of deadwood words and phrases -- empty clichés, annoying jargon and recycled [buzzwords](http://career-advice.monster.com/job-search/getting-started/buzzwords-that-derail-your-job-hunt-hot-jobs/article.aspx). Recruiters, HR folks and hiring managers see these terms over and over again, and it makes them sad.

Wouldn’t you rather make them happy? It’s time to start raking out your resume, starting with these (and similar) terms.

**1. “Salary negotiable”**

Yes, they know. If you’re wasting a precious line of your resume on this term, it looks as though you’re padding -- that you’ve run out of things to talk about. If your salary is not negotiable, that would be somewhat unusual. (Still, don’t put that on your resume either.)

**2. “References available by request”**

See the preceding comment about unnecessary terms.

**3. “Responsible for \_\_\_\_\_\_”**

Reading this term, the recruiter can almost picture the C-average, uninspired employee mechanically fulfilling his job requirements -- no more, no less. Having been responsible for something isn’t something you did -- it’s something that happened to you. Turn phrases like “responsible for” into “managed,” “led” or other decisive, strong verbs.

**4. “Experience working in \_\_\_\_\_\_”**

Again, experience is something that happens to you -- not something you achieve. Describe your background in terms of achievements.

**5. “Problem-solving skills”**

You know who else has problem-solving skills? Monkeys. Dogs. On your resume, stick to skills that require a human.

**6. “Detail-oriented”**

So, you pay attention to details. Well, so does everyone else. Don’t you have something unique to tell the hiring manager? Plus, putting this on your resume will make that accidental typo in your cover letter or resume all the more comical.

**7. “Hardworking”**

Have you ever heard the term “show -- don’t tell”? This is where that might apply. Anyone can call himself a hard worker. It’s a lot more convincing if you describe situations in concrete detail in which your hard work benefited an employer.

**8. “Team player”**

See the preceding comment about showing instead of telling. There are very few jobs that don’t involve working with someone else. If you have relevant success stories about collaboration, put them on your resume. Talk about the kinds of teams you worked on, and how you succeeded.

**9. “Proactive”**

This is a completely deflated buzzword. Again, show rather than tell.

**10. “Objective”**

This term isn’t always *verboten*, but you should use it carefully. If your objective is to get the job you’ve applied for, there’s no need to spell that out on your resume with its own heading. A [resume objective](http://career-advice.monster.com/resumes-cover-letters/resume-writing-tips/whats-your-resume-objective/article.aspx) is usually better replaced by a [career summary](http://career-advice.monster.com/resumes-cover-letters/resume-writing-tips/how-to-write-a-career-summary/article.aspx) describing your background, achievements and what you have to offer an employer. An exception might be if you haven’t applied for a specific job and don’t have a lot of experience that speaks to the position you’d like to achieve.