

GET THE JOB

EMPLOYMENT GUIDE



Overused Words in the Job Search

Are you effective, driven or creative? Turns out, you're not alone. According to a recent LinkedIn list, those three descriptors fall within 2013's most overused words and phrases in members' profiles. Here is the full list:

- Responsible.
- Strategic.
- Creative.
- Effective.
- Patient.
- Expert.
- Organizational.
- Driven.
- Innovative.
- Analytical.

WORD GAMES

What's so wrong about being an innovative expert, you may ask? Nothing. But here's hoping that you're not banking on those descriptors to land your next gig. The point of your resume is to stand out from your competition, not blend in.

Recruiters are looking for unique thinkers and tangible examples of how your strongest attributes have catalyzed major impacts within your past employers.

If you label yourself as innovative, then a hiring manager will look for proof backing this up. Include examples supporting your claims within your job descriptions or key achievements to help sell your story to the reader.

RECOMMENDATIONS

One way to really convey your value is to have others do it for you. Endorsements or recommendations on LinkedIn can help your profile shine. They can also give recruiters an honest assessment of your key skills because it's not you delivering your pitch



anymore. The words of support are coming from your colleague or manager, lending credibility to the feedback.

For the more traditional approach, a strong letter of recommendation accommodating a paper or emailed resume also can go a long way. And co-workers, managers or former professional acquaintances are usually

willing to offer their help in finding you a new job by penning a positive letter or praise and support.

THE EXTRAS

Another way to set yourself apart – besides an infusion of trendy, powerful keywords – is a personal online

portfolio. For LinkedIn users, this can mean taking advantage of integrating videos and presentations into their profiles, or providing a link to a live website.

Recruiters love this type of extra information because it can give a more complete picture of prospective candidates.

Improve Public Speaking Skills

Do you tremble and lock up at the thought of public speaking? Then a job interview is probably not your forte.

If you struggle to keep your composure in the face of a public interaction, here are some relaxation tips that can help you find your comfort zone:

RECOGNIZE IT

The first step toward realizing you may be in need of some stress reduction is recognizing its onset. This can help you effectively address it before it overtakes you. Some of the most common indicators of stress or nerves include muscle tightening, clenched hands or perspiration.

Even the strongest of resumes and qualifications can be overshadowed by interview stress. Try to take a moment to breathe and calm down before continuing with your conversation. Realize that you are simply chatting with another person and that they are probably also nervous about finding a quality candidate.

DEAL WITH IT

The American Institute of Stress offers other ways to relieve tense situations, including clenching and relaxing muscles or thinking of a soothing image. Each person can have their own measures for effectively

reducing stress. Find yours and stick with it for a stress-free job interview.

If you can, look for humor in stressful interview situations. As long as it's not over the top, humor can be a great stress-reliever during any kind of tense communications. Engage in any small talk that your

interviewer initiates and look for ways to incorporate a funny story or comment.

PREPARATION IS KEY

Just as in most aspects of life, practice makes perfect. The more prepared you are

entering an interview, the less likely you will be overcome with nervous energy and stress.

If there are certain questions that really get you rattled, practice answering these inquiries in a mirror prior to the interview. Take note of your facial and body expressions, and try to

keep them as positive as possible.

Giving off any type of negative vibe is never a good thing during an interview, because hiring managers are looking for honesty and reason to believe that you are the strongest candidate to help move their company forward.



Find a Job on LinkedIn

More than 250 million people can't be wrong. LinkedIn – the online unifier of qualified professionals and candidate-seeking employers – has rapidly grown in popularity since its 2002 inception.



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With an ever-expanding interface of profile features, the company isn't resting on its laurels. And it remains a highly effective means of landing a gig for digitally driven job-seekers.

AN ENGAGING SUMMARY

Is your LinkedIn summary a direct duplicate of your

resume? This is a big no-no that only hinders your chance of finding a job on LinkedIn. The purpose of your LinkedIn profile is to complement your resume, not copy it.

Use a more social first-person approach to your LinkedIn summary, which serves as your digital first impression for recruiters scouring for online candidates. Explain your passion

for your industry and tie in examples of how you've made a difference.

Break up your text into small, digestible paragraphs for easy reading and don't forget to mention if you're actively looking for an employment opportunity.

KEYWORDS

LinkedIn's search engine allows recruiters and hiring

managers to actively find potential employees before they even post a job opportunity. This allows companies to save the time of receiving applications and scheduling interviews. It also means your profile better be loaded with the right keywords to make sure your profile is easily found.

Let's say you're a chef. What types of keywords will recruiters use to search for a

chef in their local area? "Culinary," "kitchen management" and "food safety" come to mind. Write a list of 10 keywords and phrases for use in your LinkedIn summary and key skills listing. LinkedIn currently lets you list 50, so the more the better.

A PICTURE IS WORTH 1,000 WORDS

Or maybe just 1,000 profile views. A photo within your LinkedIn profile is a must-have. Hiring managers are seven times more likely to check out your profile if you have posted a photo of yourself, according to LinkedIn research.

And the key to a strong photo is knowing what industry you are targeting. The CEO of a financial services firm, for example, would not be advised to sport an informal profile picture from a family barbecue.

Likewise, a relationship manager would not be advised to post a stone-faced portrait of themselves. Understanding your target audience is the first key to choosing and posting the right photo of yourself to your LinkedIn profile.

Answer the Weakness Question



What would you say is your greatest weakness? Anyone who has been on multiple interviews has probably heard some iteration of this question.

The key to answering it is finding the balance between coming off as underqualified and overconfident. You want to reply honestly but without crossing into either one of the aforementioned sectors. Here's how:

- **Answer Honestly:** Tell hiring managers what you are working on and what you have done so far to improve your skills in this arena. Maybe you aren't overly proficient in a key industry software tool. But if you have been taking online courses to enhance your understanding of it, this can show your dedication to honing your craft.

- **Choose Your Weakness Wisely:** If the job you're interviewing for requires skills in bookkeeping, accounts payable and corporate communications, it is best not to list one of these as a weakness. Choose something a little further down the list of qualifications. If one of your weaknesses is directly related to an important qualifier, it could take you out of the running for the position.

- **The 'Perfectionist':** Have you been labeled a perfectionist or overly analytical? These descriptors can actually be turned into a strength, even if you list them as being a weakness. Eluding that some

people may be faster at the job than you, but not as thorough can be seen by hiring managers as an honest response from a candidate who pays close attention to detail.

- **Check with Your References:** Before going on an interview, pose the weakness question to your references. Employers will likely ask them what you need to work on to improve your professional skills. Be sure to get an honest assessment from your references so you can align your response with theirs. This will help avoid numerous weaknesses floating around in the hiring manager's head.

Women's Workforce Outlook

Women hold about 60 percent of the total jobs in the 30 occupations projected recently by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics to have the most net growth through 2022.

That figure was calculated recently by the National Women's Law Center, which added that 18 of those 30 jobs are already female-dominated.

A common theme is that many of the fastest-growing industries offer flexible hours, collaborative environments and better pay – all cited as reasons for the uptick in women seeking a healthy work-home balance with their families.

Here's a close look at where women expect to pick up the pace in filling high-level roles:

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Women are taking over many financial jobs that are often perceived as male-dominated, according to the Women's Bureau. They comprise 54.7 percent of financial managers, 59.3 percent of budget analysts and 62.8 percent of insurance underwriters, the Bureau reports.

A recent search on the job board Indeed.com found that financial management positions offer top workers the opportunity to earn six figures, making this an attractive field for women to strengthen their footing.

ACCOUNTING

Women are getting more jobs in the accounting and tax preparation industries. The Women's Bureau reports that accountants and auditors are 61.8 percent female, tax preparers as 65.9 percent female, and tax examiners and collectors are 73.8 percent female.

In these positions, women earn a median of \$900 per week, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and upward of \$50,000 per year.

MEDICAL

Women are also moving up into top-tier medical positions. Some 92 percent of registered nurses are female, according to the BLS, while other positions are increasingly being filled by women.

The Women's Bureau reports that 56.9 percent of medical scientists, 61.2 percent of veterinarians, 68.8 percent of psychologists and 69.5 percent of medical and health services managers are women.



Keeping Your Resume Current

If you can't remember the last time you updated your resume, then you are due for an overhaul. Many candidates wait until they find a job that interests them before scrambling to add key projects or experience that could give them the edge in the hiring process.

Before they know it, their competition has earned the spot because they sent their updated submission well ahead of the deadline.

Don't let this happen to you. There are many tips and tricks to keeping your resume updated throughout the years. And doing so can help you save critical time should the need arise.

BABY STEPS

Updating your resume doesn't have to be a stressful experience done under the pressure of an impending job announcement deadline. Start small by taking a few minutes on the first day of every month to jot down your most recent achievements, tasks or special projects.

Type them into your resume and save the version with a date in the title so you can remember when you last updated the document. Now when you find that perfect job opportunity, you will be prepared with a resume ready for distribution.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Recruiters love numbers: Budgets, number of direct reports and cost savings can be made much more impressive by letting people know the numbers associated with them. And it is critical to separate your achievements from your main responsibilities.

This differentiation helps recruiters scan through resumes to find tangible accomplishments. If you choose to include all of your tasks and achievements in paragraph form or in a running list of bullets, how are recruiters supposed to easily find what your impact on the company is?

EDITING

Keeping updated doesn't apply strictly to adding information. As content ages and becomes less

relevant, it may make more sense off of your resume than actually on it. In most cases, recruiters are spending very limited time reviewing incoming documents.

The goal of every job-seeker should be to craft a shorter and more concise resume that

adequately tells their story without compromising crucial experience. There is no steadfast rule on the number of pages a resume should be, but keeping your information listed to one or two pages is a great rule of thumb.



Job Market: By the Numbers

Can you guess the average number of people who apply for any given job? Twenty? Fifty? How about 118? Ding, ding, ding!

Those types of statistics can be useful to job hunters as they send their resumes into the competitive employment stratosphere.

The following is a compilation of other career-focused statistics from the resource Interview Success Formula and its online employment

sources, including the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Glassdoor.com, CNN, TheUnderCoverRecruiter.com, and The Wall Street Journal.

1. About 80 percent of available jobs are never advertised.

2. Twenty percent of the 118 people who apply for any given job get an interview.

3. Many companies use applicant tracking software to weed out up to 50 percent of applications before a human even lays eyes on them.

4. Interviews last an average of 40 minutes. It usually takes 24 hours to two weeks to hear a company's decision.

5. About 36 percent of employers look for multitasking skills before making an offer, while 31 percent look for initiative, 21 percent look for creative thinking and 12 percent look for something else in the candidate.



6. In the U.S., 42 percent of professionals are uncomfortable negotiating salary.

7. More than half of all employers reported that a candidate rejected their job offer in 2013.