

GET THE JOB

Don't Say That in a Cover Letter

It's easy to rely on clichés when writing a cover letter.

You're effective, driven and creative. Still, that doesn't necessarily mean you should describe yourself that way – because everyone else is likely using those same terms. Cover letters and LinkedIn profiles provide a chance to frame the conversation for job seekers. You'll risk getting lost in the crowd with everyone else who describes themselves in such a uniform way. Here's how to avoid overused terms in your cover letter, online profiles and in professional conversations that might lead down the next career pathway.

GET CREATIVE

Other clichés include “organized,” “responsible” and “strategic.” Like “effective,” “driven” and “creative,” they describe widely desired qualities in a job candidate. So, how do you find the right word without using the same word as everyone else? Take a more creative approach so that your words don't lose all their meaning, and that will set your candidacy apart in a crowded talent pool.

BACK THEM UP

Using well-worn words like “innovative” might also lead to surprise questions and uncertain answers, as a hiring manager may ask for a specific instance where you innovated in your last role. Always choose words that describe actions that you actually took, so that you're prepared for these moments. If not, you risk appearing to be unprepared or even untruthful. That's not how you secure a new job.

OUTSIDE THE BOX

Sometimes, taking an innovative approach to presenting similar ideas gives them new meaning. Introduce yourself with today's trendy keywords in an integrated video, audio or multimedia presentation. You can upload this clip to your online profile or website, then use it as part of your candidacy presentation. Recruiters and hiring

managers will get to know you in an entirely different, very modern way.

OTHER VOICES

Every good candidacy includes contact information for references, so hiring managers can discuss your strengths with those who have worked with you in the past. These supervisors, coworkers, industry figures and

respected colleagues convey the value of your candidacy to prospective companies by offering an outside context. These endorsements may include letters of recommendation, phone calls with hiring managers or through LinkedIn. Because they know you so well, their descriptions of you as “effective,” “driven” and “creative” will carry much more weight.



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