Strengthening Your Resume

Why are strong position descriptions (bullet points) important?

When describing your past experience on your resume, position description statements provide the most information in a way that is easy to read and understand quickly. It is critical to start your statements with action verbs that represent the relevant skills you gained in a given experience. Incorporate additional skills into your descriptions as well, not just tasks. Make your statements easy to read by listing them on your resume preceded by a bullet point.

Use this three-part "formula" to create a strong bullet statement:

Action Verb/Best Skill	+	Details/Skills	+	Results
Start with your best skill. *Communicated… Designed… Analyzed*		Who? What? What skills did you use? Can you quantify?		What was the positive outcome of your effort? How did it help?

Brainstorm information within each category and add the details and skills most relevant to the position you are applying to.

Example 1:

Action Verb/Best Skill	+	Details/Skills	+	Results
Communicated		Students and staff (who) Dozen/daily (quantify) Appointments/questions (what) Professional/friendly (skills) Problem solved (skills)		Positive customer experience

Before: Answered phones.
After: Communicated with over a dozen students daily about appointment scheduling and problem solved issues in a professional manner to ensure a positive customer experience.

Example 2:

Action Verb/Best Skill	+	Details/Skills	+	Results
Researched		Protein folding (what) Faculty (who) Two (quantify) Collaboration (skills) Analyzing data (skills)		Presented results at research symposium

Before: Assisted faculty with research.
After: Researched and analyzed protein DNA interactions in collaboration with two faculty members and presented results at the Denver Research Symposium.

Effective Sentence Openers (Action Verbs & Skills)

Accommodate	Cooperate	Flexible	Multitasking	Sell
Accurate	Coordinate	Forecast	Negotiate	Simplify
Achieve	Counsel	Formulate	Network	Social media
Adapt	Courteous	Founded	Obtain	Strategize
Adjust	Create	Friendly	Observe	Strengthen
Advertise	Critique	Gather	Operate	Structure
Advise	Critical thinking	Generate	Organize	Summarize
Allocate	Cross-cultural	Graph	Oversee	Supervise
Analyze	understanding	Guide	Patient	Support
Appraise	Customer service	Handle logistics	Perform	Survey
Articulate	Customize	Host	Persistent	Synthesize
Assertive	Delegate	Hypothesize	Persuade	Systematize
Assess	Demonstrate	Implement	Pilot projects/plans	Tailor
Arrange	Design	Improve	Plan	Teach
Audit	Detailed	Incorporate	Positive attitude	Test
Balance	Determine	feedback	Prepare	Train
Brainstorm	Develop plans	Initiate	Present	Transform
Budget	Devise	Innovate	Prioritize	Translate
Build relationships	Direct	Interpersonal skills	Problem solve	Tutor
Calculate	Display	Interpret	Process	Verbal ability
Chair	Document	Launch	Produce	Work
Coach	Draft	Lead	Professional	independently
Collaborate	Edit	Learn quickly	Promote	Write
Collect data/info.	Educate	Listen	Program	_____
Communicate	Efficient	Maintain	Provide	_____
Compare	Empathize	Make decisions	Publish	_____
Complete	Encourage	Manage	Publicize	_____
Compose	Engineer	Market	Recruit	_____
Compute	Enhance	Measure	Reliable	_____
Computer skills	Establish	Mediate	Report	_____
Conceptualize	Estimate	Meet deadlines	Represent	
Conduct meetings	Evaluate	Mentor	Research	
Confident	Examine data	Microsoft Office	Resolve conflict	
Confidentiality	Expedite	Monitor	Restructure	
Construct	Explain	Motivate	Review	
Consult	Facilitate	Motivated	Schedule	