

## Action Verbs

### 4-H'ers,

When compiling your portfolio, you want to DESCRIBE to the judges what you have done during the year in your project area. You should use action verbs in your portfolio because they make sentences and statements more concise. Since concise writing is easier for readers to understand, it is more reader centered. Because reader-centered writing is generally more persuasive, action verbs are more convincing than non-action verbs. Read below to see the difference between using non-action verbs and action verbs. Then use the list to get an idea of action verbs. Try not to use the same verb over and over in one section of your portfolio. Look at the Get S.P.E.C.F.I.C. sheet in this workbook for examples of using action verbs to be more descriptive.

- Was the teen leader of a team of six for Challenge Bowl
- Led a team of six 4-H'ers for Challenge Bowl

The description using a non-action verb is less concise. It contains twelve words, and it focuses action on a form of the verb (was).

The description using an action verb is more concise. It contains nine words, and it focuses action on an action verb (led). Because concise writing is easier for readers to understand, the description using an action verb is more powerful and is more persuasive.

### Examples of verbs to use:

- |                |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| ▪ Adopted      | ▪ Handled      | ▪ Raised       |
| ▪ Applied      | ▪ Helped       | ▪ Received     |
| ▪ Assisted     | ▪ Honored      | ▪ Recited      |
| ▪ Attended     | ▪ Inspected    | ▪ Redesigned   |
| ▪ Caroled      | ▪ Instructed   | ▪ Represented  |
| ▪ Chaperoned   | ▪ Introduced   | ▪ Restructured |
| ▪ Cleaned      | ▪ Judged       | ▪ Reviewed     |
| ▪ Collected    | ▪ Led          | ▪ Sang         |
| ▪ Communicated | ▪ Made         | ▪ Selected     |
| ▪ Competed     | ▪ Managed      | ▪ Shared       |
| ▪ Contributed  | ▪ Manned       | ▪ Sold         |
| ▪ Cooked       | ▪ Mentored     | ▪ Sorted       |
| ▪ Coordinated  | ▪ Nominated    | ▪ Spoke        |
| ▪ Created      | ▪ Observed     | ▪ Supervised   |
| ▪ Danced       | ▪ Operated     | ▪ Supported    |
| ▪ Demonstrated | ▪ Organized    | ▪ Talked       |
| ▪ Developed    | ▪ Over-saw     | ▪ Taught       |
| ▪ Directed     | ▪ Participated | ▪ Trained      |
| ▪ Donated      | ▪ Performed    | ▪ Viewed       |
| ▪ Elected      | ▪ Placed       | ▪ Visited      |
| ▪ Entered      | ▪ Planned      | ▪ Volunteered  |
| ▪ Experienced  | ▪ Planted      | ▪ Voted        |
| ▪ Founded      | ▪ Practiced    | ▪ Watched      |
| ▪ Funded       | ▪ Prepared     | ▪ Watered      |
| ▪ Gifted       | ▪ Presided     | ▪ Worked       |
| ▪ Guided       | ▪ Provided     |                |

## Categorized List of Action Verbs

This categorized list contains only a few action verbs you can use to compose, *persuasive, reader-centered* resumes (4-H Portfolios), cover letters, or other types of documents. The examples are illustrations that overview the uses of action verbs in professional writing.

There are sample portfolios in this workbook containing action verbs.

### Communication Skills

- *Negotiated* price reductions of up to 30% with key donors for 4-H
- *Interpreted* financial information from the clubs annual report
- *Translated* all relevant 4-H Club information into Spanish

**Other words:** Advocated, Clarified, Corresponded, Encouraged, Interpreted, Negotiated, Persuaded, Presented, Publicized, Solicited, Spoke, Translated

### Creative Skills

- *Created* an interior design layout for a 500 square foot retail venue
- *Introduced* a new method of navigating through a Software Program
- *Presented* a new research project to my 4-H Project Club

**Other words:** Acted, Applied, Composed, Created, Established, Founded, Improvised, Introduced, Navigated, Originated, Presented

### Data / Financial Skills

- *Computed* and *recorded* inventory valuation on a monthly basis
- *Documented* inventory counts at the end of each week
- *Verified* the amount owed for club dues

**Other words:** Adjusted, Allocated, Budgeted, Compared, Computed, Counted, Documented, Estimated, Forecasted, Inventoried, Invested, Predicted, Projected, Quantified, Recorded, Retrieved, Verified

### Helping Skills

- *Assisted* Cloverleaf 4-H'ers with Project Achievement
- *Trained* new 4-H'ers through demonstration techniques
- *Volunteered* in the nursing home every weekend to serve the community

**Other words:** Aided, Assisted, Built, Demonstrated, Facilitated, Familiarized, Helped, Performed, Represented, Solved, Supported, Trained, Upheld, Volunteered, worked

## **Management / Leadership Skills**

- *Administered* a variety of surveys to collect data about Honey Bees
- *Implemented* a safety communication program to promote internet safety
- *Recommended* an alternative solution to beekeepers problems

**Other words:** Achieved, Administered, Assigned, Attained, Challenged, Coordinated, Decided, Delegated, Established, Executed, Handled, Headed, Implemented, Incorporated, Intervened, Launched, Led, Managed, Mediated, Motivated, Organized, Oversaw, Planned, Prioritized, Recommended, Scheduled, Supervised, United

## **Efficiency Skills**

- *Eliminated* unnecessary spending of 4-H project club
- *Maximized* donations for Cancer Society by 15% during the month of July
- *Heightened* the level of 4-H'er moral through program incentives

**Other words:** Accelerated, Allocated, Boosted, Centralized, Downsized, Edited, Eliminated, Enhanced, Expanded, Expedited, Heightened, Lessened, Leveraged, Maximized, Merged, Optimized, Outlined, Outsourced, Prevented, Prioritized, Reorganized, Reduced, Revised, Simplified, Standardized, Stream-lined, Systematized, Upgraded

## **Research Skills**

- *Examined* a new mechanism that may reduce sickness in goats
- *Identified* a major defect in a microscopic organism
- *Surveyed* a group of students with regard to Product A

**Other words:** Analyzed, Collected, Compared, Controlled, Detected, Diagnosed, Evaluated, Examined, Gathered, Identified, Investigated, Located, Measured, Organized, Reported, Replicated, Researched, Reviewed, Searched, Surveyed, Wrote

## **Teaching Skills**

- *Defined* a new fundraiser and discussed how it would be implemented
- *Instructed* Cloverleaf 4-H'ers on how to put together visuals
- *Prepared* a brochure on how to put together a portfolio

**Other words:** Aided, Advised, Clarified, Communicated, Defined, Developed, Encouraged, Evaluated, Facilitated, Fostered, Guided, Helped, Incorporated, Informed, Initiated, Instructed, Lectured, Prepared, Supported, Supervised, Stimulated, Taught

### **Technical Skills**

- *Assembled* First Step bags for first time mothers
- *Designed* a brochure for Hands on Henry
- *Programmed* three new computer programs tailored for a network

**Other words:** Analyzed, Assembled, built, Calculated, Computed, Conducted, Designed, Devised, Engineered, Maintained, Operated, Programmed, Reengineered, Remodeled, Transmitted