

how to describe good communication skills on a resume

Mastering the Art: How to Describe Good Communication Skills on a Resume

how to describe good communication skills on a resume is a critical component of crafting a compelling application that captures a hiring manager's attention. In today's competitive job market, demonstrating your ability to articulate ideas clearly, listen effectively, and foster strong relationships is paramount. This comprehensive guide will equip you with the strategies and language needed to showcase your communication prowess, ensuring your resume stands out from the crowd. We'll delve into various facets of communication, from written and verbal skills to interpersonal and digital communication, providing actionable advice and example phrases to help you articulate your strengths.

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Why Communication Skills Matter on Your Resume

In virtually every professional role, effective communication is the bedrock of success. Employers actively seek candidates who can not only perform technical duties but also collaborate seamlessly with colleagues, clients, and stakeholders. Your resume is the initial touchpoint, and it must clearly convey your ability to convey information, understand others, and contribute to a positive and productive work environment. A strong demonstration of communication skills on your resume signals your potential for leadership, teamwork, and overall professional contribution.

Beyond just conveying information, good communication skills foster trust and rapport, essential for building strong professional relationships. This can lead to better project outcomes, increased client satisfaction, and a more cohesive team dynamic. By explicitly highlighting your communication abilities, you're demonstrating your understanding of these vital professional attributes and signaling your suitability for roles that require significant interpersonal interaction.

Understanding Different Types of Communication Skills

Effective communication is not a monolithic skill; it encompasses a spectrum of abilities. Recognizing and articulating these different types will allow you to present a more nuanced and comprehensive picture of your strengths. Employers often look for a blend of these skills, depending on the specific

demands of the role.

Written Communication Skills

This involves the ability to convey information clearly and concisely through written mediums. It includes drafting emails, reports, proposals, memos, and other documentation. Strong written communicators ensure their message is understood without ambiguity, using proper grammar, punctuation, and a professional tone. The ability to adapt your writing style to different audiences and purposes is also a key aspect of this skill.

Verbal Communication Skills

Verbal communication refers to your ability to speak clearly and effectively. This includes presenting ideas in meetings, participating in discussions, delivering presentations, and engaging in one-on-one conversations. Articulating your thoughts logically, speaking with confidence, and adapting your tone and pace to suit the situation are all hallmarks of strong verbal communicators. This also extends to active listening, which is crucial for understanding and responding appropriately.

Interpersonal Communication Skills

This broader category encompasses your ability to interact effectively with others. It includes empathy, active listening, conflict resolution, persuasion, and building rapport. Interpersonal skills are vital for teamwork, customer service, and leadership. They involve understanding non-verbal cues, showing respect for different perspectives, and fostering a positive and collaborative atmosphere.

Active Listening Skills

A crucial subset of interpersonal and verbal communication, active listening involves fully concentrating on, understanding, responding to, and remembering what is being said. It requires paying attention not

just to the words but also to the underlying emotions and intentions. Demonstrating active listening skills indicates you are engaged, respectful, and capable of grasping complex information and perspectives.

Presentation Skills

The ability to deliver compelling presentations to various audiences is a valuable asset. This involves structuring information logically, using visual aids effectively, engaging the audience, and responding to questions confidently. Strong presentation skills can influence decision-making, educate others, and inspire action.

Digital Communication Skills

In today's technologically driven world, proficiency in digital communication is essential. This includes effective use of email, instant messaging, video conferencing platforms, and social media for professional purposes. Understanding online etiquette, maintaining professionalism in virtual interactions, and leveraging digital tools for collaboration are key components of this skill set.

Quantifying Your Communication Achievements

While describing your communication skills is important, quantifying your achievements takes your resume to the next level. Instead of just stating you have good communication skills, provide evidence of their impact. This transforms a generic claim into a compelling accomplishment. Numbers and specific outcomes grab the attention of recruiters and hiring managers, demonstrating tangible value.

Think about situations where your communication directly led to a positive result. Did your clear report writing reduce errors by a certain percentage? Did your persuasive presentation secure a new client or funding? Did your conflict resolution efforts improve team morale and productivity?

- Reduced customer complaints by 15% through enhanced email and phone support protocols.
- Increased meeting efficiency by 20% by implementing clear agendas and facilitating focused discussions.
- Secured a \$50,000 contract by developing and delivering a persuasive proposal.
- Improved cross-departmental collaboration, resulting in a 10% faster project completion rate.
- Successfully trained 30 new employees on company procedures, ensuring a 95% understanding rate.

Action Verbs to Highlight Communication Skills

The language you use on your resume is critical. Employing strong action verbs breathes life into your descriptions and makes your accomplishments more impactful. When describing your communication skills, choose verbs that accurately reflect your abilities and the positive outcomes you achieved.

Here are some powerful action verbs categorized by the type of communication they relate to:

- **For Written Communication:** Authored, Composed, Drafted, Edited, Formulated, Generated, Implemented, Prepared, Produced, Published, Rewrote, Summarized, Transcribed
- **For Verbal Communication:** Articulated, Advocated, Briefed, Chatted, Coached, Conveyed, Discussed, Explained, Expressed, Facilitated, Informed, Instructed, Lectured, Negotiated, Presented, Promoted, Reported, Spoke, Stated, Taught, Told, Translated, Verbalized

- **For Interpersonal Communication:** Advised, Collaborated, Connected, Counseled, Demonstrated, Encouraged, Engaged, Entrusted, Guided, Influenced, Mediated, Mentored, Motivated, Partnered, Persuaded, Reconciled, Resolved, Supported, Unified, Unified
- **For Presentation Skills:** Demonstrated, Delivered, Displayed, Exhibited, Illustrated, Introduced, Launched, Modeled, Orchestrated, Showcased, Spearheaded
- **For Digital Communication:** Chat, Connected, Coordinated, Cyber-negotiated, Emailed, Engaged, Fostered, Interfaced, Networked, Online-instructed, Teleconferenced, Webinared

Tailoring Your Resume for Communication Keywords

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) are widely used by employers to filter resumes. These systems scan for keywords relevant to the job description. Therefore, it's crucial to incorporate keywords related to communication skills naturally throughout your resume, especially in your summary, skills section, and experience descriptions.

Carefully read the job posting and identify the specific communication terms the employer is looking for. If the job emphasizes "stakeholder management" and "cross-functional collaboration," make sure to use these phrases, supported by examples of how you've demonstrated them. Similarly, if "client relations" or "technical writing" are mentioned, integrate these terms where appropriate.

Beyond the explicit keywords, consider synonyms and related terms. For example, instead of just saying "communication," you might use "liaison," "correspondence," "dialogue," or "interchange." This broadens your reach and helps the ATS identify you as a strong candidate, even if the exact wording differs slightly.

Examples of How to Describe Good Communication Skills on a Resume

Here are some practical examples of how to describe good communication skills across different sections of your resume, focusing on clarity, impact, and keyword integration.

Resume Summary Examples

A well-crafted summary at the top of your resume can immediately highlight your communication strengths. This is your elevator pitch, so make it count.

- Highly motivated and results-oriented professional with exceptional written and verbal communication skills, adept at fostering strong stakeholder relationships and translating complex technical information for diverse audiences.
- Dynamic and collaborative team player with proven ability to communicate effectively across all levels of an organization, driving project success through clear articulation of goals and active listening.
- Strategic communicator with extensive experience in developing persuasive presentations, crafting clear and concise reports, and leading productive team discussions to achieve business objectives.

Experience Section Examples

In your experience section, use bullet points that demonstrate your communication skills in action, ideally with quantifiable results.

- **Managed client communications** for a portfolio of 20+ accounts, resulting in a 98% client retention rate and consistent positive feedback on responsiveness and clarity.
- **Authored and presented** comprehensive quarterly performance reports to senior leadership, influencing strategic decision-making and resource allocation.
- **Facilitated cross-functional team meetings**, ensuring clear communication of project objectives, task assignments, and deadlines, contributing to a 15% reduction in project overruns.
- **Developed and implemented** a new onboarding program for customer service representatives, significantly improving their written and verbal communication protocols, leading to a 10% decrease in escalations.
- **Liaised with external vendors and partners** to negotiate contracts and resolve issues, ensuring smooth project execution and maintaining strong professional relationships.

Skills Section Examples

Your skills section is a great place to list your communication proficiencies concisely. You can also elaborate on these in your experience or summary.

- **Communication:** Written, Verbal, Interpersonal, Presentation, Active Listening, Public Speaking, Technical Writing, Client Relations, Negotiation, Cross-functional Collaboration, Digital Communication

Common Mistakes to Avoid

While aiming to showcase your communication skills, it's easy to fall into common traps that can diminish your resume's effectiveness. Being aware of these pitfalls can help you create a stronger, more impactful application.

- **Being too generic:** Stating "good communication skills" without any elaboration or examples is often overlooked. Employers want to see what "good" looks like in practice.
- **Lying or exaggerating:** Be honest about your abilities. If asked in an interview about a skill you embellished, you could be in a difficult position.
- **Not tailoring to the job description:** Using the same generic list of communication skills for every application won't be as effective as customizing them to match the employer's specific needs.
- **Focusing only on verbal skills:** While verbal communication is important, don't neglect to highlight your written, digital, and interpersonal communication strengths, as these are equally valued.
- **Lack of quantifiable achievements:** Without metrics or specific outcomes, your claims about communication skills may not be perceived as credible or impactful.

By focusing on specificity, tailoring your language, and providing concrete examples, you can effectively convey the depth and breadth of your communication expertise. This strategic approach will significantly enhance your resume's appeal and increase your chances of landing an interview.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How can I demonstrate strong communication skills without directly stating "communication skills"?

A: Instead of using the phrase "communication skills" as a blanket statement, focus on describing specific actions and outcomes that exemplify these abilities. For instance, in your experience section, use bullet points that detail how you "presented findings," "negotiated contracts," "authored reports," or "mediated disputes." These action-oriented descriptions implicitly showcase your communication prowess.

Q: What are the most important communication skills employers look for on a resume?

A: The most crucial communication skills often include verbal communication (clear articulation, active listening), written communication (clarity, conciseness, grammar), interpersonal skills (teamwork, empathy, conflict resolution), and presentation skills. Digital communication proficiency is also increasingly vital. The specific emphasis will vary depending on the industry and role.

Q: How can I quantify my communication skills on my resume?

A: Quantifying involves using numbers and specific results to demonstrate the impact of your communication abilities. For example, instead of saying you "improved client relations," state "improved client retention by 15% through proactive communication strategies." Similarly, quantify the size of presentations delivered, the number of people trained, or the percentage of issues resolved.

Q: Should I include communication skills in my resume summary, skills section, and experience descriptions?

A: Yes, it's beneficial to weave your communication skills throughout your resume. Your summary can provide a high-level overview, your skills section can list them concisely, and your experience descriptions should provide concrete examples and achievements that demonstrate these skills in practice. This reinforces your message and caters to ATS scanning.

Q: How do I describe conflict resolution skills on a resume?

A: To describe conflict resolution skills, use action verbs and focus on the positive outcomes. For example, you could state: "Mediated disagreements between team members, fostering a collaborative environment and ensuring project deadlines were met," or "Successfully resolved customer complaints by actively listening and identifying mutually agreeable solutions."

Q: What if I have limited work experience? How can I highlight communication skills?

A: If you have limited work experience, draw examples from internships, volunteer work, academic projects, or extracurricular activities. For instance, you might have "co-led a student project team, facilitating task delegation and ensuring clear communication of objectives," or "presented research findings to peers and faculty, honing public speaking and presentation skills."

Q: Is active listening a communication skill worth mentioning on a resume?

A: Absolutely. Active listening is a highly valued communication skill that demonstrates your ability to understand others, absorb information effectively, and respond thoughtfully. You can mention it in your skills section or illustrate it through examples in your experience, such as "actively listened to client

needs to develop tailored solutions."

Q: How can I tailor my communication skills descriptions for different job applications?

A: Carefully review each job description for keywords and specific communication requirements. If a job emphasizes "client-facing communication" or "technical documentation," highlight those aspects of your skills more prominently. Use the same terminology found in the job posting where appropriate and relevant to your experience.

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