

Ambiguous Words

Below is a short list of imprecise "action" words, which always call for further clarification and supporting details before they can serve as the means to describe work behaviors. These words should be avoided when writing duties statements.

Accepts	Interfaces
Accompanies	Is in charge of
Accomplishes	Is available for
Acts for/as	Is responsible for
Aids	Keeps abreast of
Appears (before a group)	Keeps records
Ascertains	Keeps staff informed of
Assists	Maintains
Assumes responsibility for	Makes
Assures	May (perform, serve, etc.)
Attends	Orientates
Briefs	Participates
Carries out (instructions)	Performs
Communicates	Prepares
Conducts	Processes
Cooperates	Provides
Effects	Receives
Endorses (an idea)	Relates
Enforces	Replies to
Engages in	Responds to
Ensures	Requests
Establishes	Requires
Executes (an action)	Secures
Facilitates	Sees that
Follows (instructions)	Serves as (in a functional role)
Follows up	Supervises
Functions as	Supports (someone)
Furnishes	Takes necessary action
Gives	Talks
Handles	Understands
Helps	Uses
In cooperation with	Utilizes
Initiates	Verifies
Institutes	Visits
Insures	Works with
Interacts	

Please note that some of these words if used in an appropriate context may be acceptable action words, e.g., "Endorses a check"

Reprinted from the State of Minnesota's manual, Describing Job Content: Class Specifications.