



TRANSLATING YOUR ATHLETIC EXPERIENCE

How to Write Powerful Resume Bullets

Why Your Athletic Experience Belongs on Your Resume

Employers consistently rank teamwork, leadership, work ethic, and resilience as their most sought-after qualities — the same qualities you build every day as a collegiate athlete. The challenge is not whether your experience is relevant. It is learning to describe it in language employers recognize.

The Formula: Action + Context + Result

Every strong resume bullet follows the same structure:

Action Verb + What You Did + The Impact or Result

Strong bullets start with a powerful action verb, describe a specific task or responsibility, and — whenever possible — show the outcome or scale of what you accomplished.

You do not always have a number to attach to an outcome — and that is okay. But you should always be specific. Vague bullets blend in; specific bullets stand out.

Before & After: Real Examples

Weak Bullet	Strong Bullet
Was a team captain.	Served as team captain for 45-person roster; facilitated weekly film sessions and led pre-game team meetings to align on game plan and culture expectations.
Helped teammates with mental preparation.	Initiated a peer mentorship program pairing upperclassmen with incoming freshmen to support team cohesion and reduce first-year attrition.
Managed my time between school and athletics.	Maintained a 3.6 GPA while training 20+ hours per week and competing in 28 games across two semesters.
Was involved in community service.	Coordinated team volunteer initiative, organizing 12 athletes to log 80+ hours of service at a local youth sports organization over one academic year.
Worked hard and showed up every day.	Competed through a mid-season injury, adapting role from starter to scout-team contributor and supporting teammates in preparation for the conference tournament.

Not Sure What to Write? Start Here.

Ask yourself these questions — then write down your answers in plain language. Your bullet points are already in your answers.

Leadership & Influence

- Have you ever held a formal or informal leadership role — captain, upperclassman, position group leader?
- Did you mentor, coach, or encourage a younger teammate? What did that look like?
- Have you been trusted with extra responsibility by a coach or staff member?

Teamwork & Communication

- Describe a time your team had conflict. How was it resolved — and what role did you play?
- How do you give and receive feedback? Can you name a specific example?
- Have you collaborated cross-culturally or across different personality styles?

Resilience & Adaptability

- Have you dealt with a coaching change, role change, or injury? How did you respond?
- What is the hardest thing you have done in your sport — and what did you learn from it?
- Have you had to learn something quickly under pressure (new position, new system)?

Work Ethic & Time Management

- How many hours per week do you dedicate to training, travel, film, and competition?
- How do you manage deadlines during a heavy competition schedule?
- Have you balanced a job, internship, or significant volunteer commitment alongside your sport?

Action Verb Bank for Athletes

Start each bullet with one of these. Choose the verb that most precisely describes what you actually did.

Leading	Communicating	Performing	Adapting
Captained	Advocated	Achieved	Adjusted
Directed	Coached	Competed	Developed
Guided	Collaborated	Completed	Expanded
Mentored	Coordinated	Earned	Implemented
Motivated	Facilitated	Excelled	Improved
Organized	Mediated	Executed	Responded
Oversaw	Negotiated	Maintained	Restructured
Spearheaded	Presented	Produced	Solved
Unified	Represented	Sustained	Transitioned

Quick Checks of Each Bullet Point Before You Submit

- ___ Does it start with a strong action verb?
- ___ Is it specific — does it name a role, context, number, or outcome?
- ___ Does a non-athlete reader understand what you actually did?
- ___ Does it show a skill or quality an employer would care about?
- ___ Is it concise — ideally one to two lines?