

**Action Verbs for Underlying Problems**  
(a partial list)

*Some of these are better than others; some are very narrow; some are very broad.*

accomplish	defend	instruct	reduce
achieve	demonstrate	initiate	refresh
adapt	determine	integrate	regulate
add	design	intensify	reinforce
address	develop	interest	relieve
advance	distribute	involve	renew
alleviate	divide	launch	repair
ameliorate	educate	lessen	restore
alter	encourage	magnify	revise
amend	enhance	maintain	revive
amplify	enlarge	manage	reward
appease	enrich	maximize	satisfy
approach	equalize	mediate	schedule
arrange	establish	minify	settle
assemble	evacuate	minimize	simplify
avoid	evolve	mitigate	socialize
balance	exchange	modify	standardize
build	expand	motivate	strengthen
change	experience	order	substitute
combine	express	organize	supervise
compensate	extend	perform	support
compile	foster	persuade	supply
communicate	gain	plan	switch
conduct	generate	prepare	systematize
conserve	group	produce	teach
control	grow	promote	train
convey	improve	protect	transport
convince	increase	provide	upgrade
decrease	inspire	provoke	

**Problematic Verbs**

*The following list contains some verbs that should be avoided.*

- The first list contains weak verbs which are not always clear or active enough for setting goals for the Underlying Problem.
- The second list contains absolute verbs, which are a set-up for failure in Step 3 – it’s difficult to “absolutely” do anything; there’s no room for failure!
- Underlying Problems which contain an absolute verb usually score lower in Focus and Adequacy.
- Placing one of the weak verbs before any of the absolute verbs as helping verbs does not keep the Key Verb Phrase from being designated “absolute.”

Weak Verbs

aid  
attempt  
begin  
help  
show  
start  
try

Absolute Verbs

control  
eliminate  
ensure  
guarantee  
insure  
overcome  
perfect  
prove  
preserve  
prevent  
solve  
stop