

Describing Your Accomplishments

Accomplishments are an important foundation for communicating what you have done, why you fit, and what you offer an organization.

- Accomplishments indicate specifically what you have achieved during your career. For example:
 - A task you performed on a regular basis.
 - A project you managed.
 - A team in which you participated.
 - A sale for which you were responsible.
 - A portfolio you managed.
 - An award you received for a specific process.
- Accomplishments are used throughout the career development process.
 - Foundation of your resume to highlight skills, capabilities, and *results*.
 - Bulleted or described in your letters to identify what you can do for the organization and why you are a good fit.
 - Summarized and spoken in your 60-Second Commercial, interviewing, and other networking situations.
- In thinking about which accomplishments to highlight, consider what you *want* to do in addition to what you did.
 - Orient your accomplishments toward your desired audience and the skills they need.
 - This requires a clearly articulated sense of purpose plus an understanding of the needs of the individual, industry, position, or sector.

Six general guidelines can help you in writing your accomplishment statements.

- Begin with stimulating action verb (see *List of Power Action Verbs*)
- Write in the past tense.
- Show result gained from your action.
- Be brief, yet stimulating.
- Demonstrate what you are proud of.
- Suggest what skills you used

It may be helpful to refer to job descriptions and your performance appraisals to recall what you did in each position.

Accomplishments are compiled in three parts.

- **Situation:** Why did you take the action?
 - It was inefficient.
 - It was too slow.
 - I wanted to learn a new skill.
 - Other.
- **Action:** What did you *do* under that job description?
 - Did I create something new?
 - What tasks did I perform?
 - Did I train someone?
 - Did I coordinate something?
 - Other.

- **Result:** What benefit did you create from that action? (quantify where possible)
 - Did I reduce costs?
 - Did I improve productivity?
 - Did I save time?
 - Did I receive an award for something special?
- **What skills did I use to do this?**
 - Technical skills that relate to specific performance of tasks (computer, publishing, analytical, etc.)
 - Functional skills that are obtained by virtue of the field, industry, or sector in which one works (HR, finance, marketing, government, finance, health care, etc.)
 - Administrative skills that are the managing “getting the job done” skills (organization, leadership, project management, facilitation, communication, etc.)

Accomplishment statements include only the Action and Result; the others are implicit.

Job Title

- **Situation:**
- **Action:**
- **Result:**
- **Skills:**
- **Accomplishment Statement:**

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- **Action:**
- **Result:**
- **Skills:**
- **Accomplishment Statement:**

Sample accomplishment statements.

- Created a new loan procedure that resulted in \$200K savings to the bank and improved processing turnaround time by 50%.
- Modeled worldwide flow of trade and capital to predict multi-year exchange and interest rate movements.
- Directed sales organization in gaining market share in company’s largest business segment despite negative economic indicators in the industry.
- Drafted a wide range of congressional testimony, speeches, and opinion-editorials concerning energy and defense related issues.
- Utilized Excel to develop a spreadsheet for determining salary plan impact on bank, which became standard tool bank-wide.

- Participated on task force charged with improving administrative processes, resulting in overall savings of \$3MM annually.
- Created and presented a program to educate regional branches in common fraudulent practices.
- Complied and distributed weekly activity report to all vice presidents in a timely manner with the highest degree of accuracy.
- Prepared budget and profit-and-loss analysis for product lines, providing management with estimates of product profitability for strategic planning.