

# 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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**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.