

RESUME ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENTS

Employers hire candidates who have the most potential to contribute to the company. Accomplishment statements provide evidence of your ability to make important contributions. They set you apart from other applicants while making your resume unique and personal. The way you present your skills and abilities to a potential employer will make the difference between getting an interview and your resume ending up in the garbage.

Ask yourself these questions, “**Why should the employer believe me? How will they know I’m telling the truth? Where is the evidence?**” You need to provide evidence by explaining your contribution and accomplishments.

Turning Your Duties to Accomplishments

Here are some steps you can use to turn vague resume statements into eye-catching accomplishment statements.

1. Recognize or Recall Your Accomplishments

Get started by recalling and compiling a list of all the things that set you apart. For each of the positions on your resume, ask yourself the following:

- What new duties or tasks did I take on? What did I do that was beyond my normal job duties?
- What special projects did I contribute to? What significant contributions did I make?
- What new ideas or innovations did I come up with? Did I think of any ways to increase productivity or efficiency?
- Was I recognized or rewarded for a special achievement? Include bonuses, promotions, or pay raises.
- Did I ever receive special recognition or commendation from my co-workers, instructors, supervisors?
- How did I stand out among other employees?
- Did I win any awards or be named “employee of the month/ year”?
- What problems did I solve?
- What made me really great at my job?

2. Quantify Your Accomplishments

Take your list and add in as many facts, figures, and numbers as you can. How many people were impacted by your work? By what percentage did you exceed your goals? Instead of saying you effectively managed a budget, list how much money you managed.

By quantifying your accomplishments, you not only make them easier to understand, you really allow the hiring manager to picture the level of work or responsibility you achieved in your previous roles and work experience.

3. Highlight the Benefit

Take each statement one step further and add in what the benefit was to your boss or your company. So, say you “created 20 client reports each month”. Rewrite this statement like “created and prepared 20 weekly and monthly status reports to ensure clients consistently received timely and complete information.” A hiring manager will automatically see that, if she/he hires you, you’ll be able to develop ways to provide great service to their clients.

Accomplishment Statement Approach, Formula and Tips

1. PAR

- **P-** Problem or procedure that existed. Were there any problems that you were able to solve for your employer? Were there any existing procedures that you improved?
- **A-** Action. What did you do to resolve the problem or improve the situation?
- **R-** Result. How did your actions improve business or help your employer?

Examples:

- Collected over \$50,000 in overdue receivables and set-up a follow-up notice system which reduced late payments by 75%.
- Analyzed machinery breakdowns and implemented a maintenance schedule, reducing downtime by over 60% in the first year.

2. Accomplished [X] as measured by [Y] by doing [Z]

(Adapted from My Personal Formula for a Winning Resume | LinkedIn)

Examples:

- Assisted with 26% social media growth, as measured by Facebook page likes, by designing a more compelling customer-facing cover photo.
- Increased customer base by 10% through word of mouth referrals and by reorganizing the product ordering system to improve operating efficiency and to better reflect customer needs.

3. Action (What) +Method or Purpose (How and Why) + Accomplishment (Result)

Examples:

- Handled customer complaints with empathy, patience, and a strong understanding of company policy, resulting in a loyal customer base.
- Improved the product ordering system to increase operating efficiency and better reflect customer needs; this improvement resulted in a 10% growth in customer referrals.

What if you don’t have exact numbers? How can you quantify your accomplishment bullets?

Lily Zhang, a Career Specialist at MIT, suggests three ways: **range, frequency, or scale**:

Range: Give it your best estimate, and the range will show your capacity. And, of course, focus on your impact.

- Supervised **7-12** undergraduate research students each year who have all since gone on to graduate school in astrophysics, physics, or mathematics.

Frequency: Include how frequently you do a particular task. This is particularly helpful in illustrating your work in high-volume situations—a hiring manager will be able to see just how much you can handle.

- Reviewed and evaluated 40-50 topical articles **per week** and made the decision to either pass articles to the editorial team or send articles back to authors for further revisions.

Scale: Including the frequency of your actions gives a great sense of scale, but an even more eye-catching way to do this is to talk about the bottom line. Think about all the things you do that ultimately save your company money, whether it's streamlining a procedure, saving time, or negotiating discounts with vendors. Consider adding how many people you interact with or serve.

- Managed project to upgrade defect sensing and marking devices, resulting in the elimination of human inspection online, **saving \$200,000 to \$350,000 per year.**
- Chaired promotional committee of 12 and presented marketing plans to an **audience of 40 to 60 students** at weekly university senate meetings open to **all 2,000 community members.**

Exercises for Writing Accomplishments

Procedures

- ⇒ Improved production by... (how much, by what actions?)
- ⇒ Improved (what, how?)
- ⇒ Increased accuracy or speed of... (what?) by. (how, how much')
- ⇒ Decreased costs by. (how much, how, with what result?)
- ⇒ Reorganized... (what) to. (why?)
- ⇒ Introduced a better system of...
- ⇒ Took responsibility for ...
- ⇒ Improved reporting of...
- ⇒ Reduced inventory of (what?) by (how?)

Innovation

- ⇒ Implemented new...
- ⇒ Improved...
- ⇒ Solved ... (a problem?)
- ⇒ Contributed...
- ⇒ Created, designed ...

Sales and Profits

- ⇒ Increased profits or sales (by ____, % or \$ _____) within (what time frame?)
- ⇒ Increased market share by... (how much?, how where?)
- ⇒ Reduced overdue accounts by (how much?, how?, with what result?)

Personnel

- ⇒ Reduced staff needed. . . (to do what?) by... (how did you do this?)
- ⇒ Reduced employee turnover by. . (how much?, how?)
- ⇒ Improved staff morale by... (how?, with what result?)
- ⇒ Improved team relationships by... (how?. with whom?, with what result?)

Awards

- ⇒ Recognized by. . (whom?) for... , (doing what?)
- ⇒ Awarded or received ... (what?) for achieving... (what?)