

Resumé Writing: Strong Accomplishment Statements

Job candidates that can differentiate themselves through how they describe their experiences in a relevant way will stand out from the rest. Instead of focusing on duties and tasks (**what** you did), shift to highlighting your skills and accomplishments (**how** or **how well** you did it) and tell the employer about what you have to offer **in relation to the job for which they are hiring**. Always consider key requirements and keywords.

Steps:

1. List all your previous experiences (paid and unpaid). Think about what you are most proud of from each experience, and/or what you think is most relevant from that position to your career goals.
2. Consider ways you have stood out in the past. Consider times when you:
 - Initiated something
 - Achieved a goal
 - Exceeded expectations
 - Increased profits/reduced costs
 - Solved a problem/improved something
 - Did something beyond your job description
 - Received excellent praise/award
 - Prevented an issue
 - Built relationships/company image
 - Selected for added responsibility/promotion
 - Demonstrated leadership/trained others
 - Attracted/retained customers
3. Ask yourself these questions to brainstorm additional achievements:
 - a) Have you introduced ideas that were implemented? What were the results?
 - b) Have you had perfect attendance in the last year or longer?
 - c) Have you consistently received high ratings from clients or management? Have you received formal performance feedback? List any complimentary quotes.
 - d) List any awards you won, such as Employee of the Month, volunteer award, etc.
 - e) How have you demonstrated quality or accuracy in your work?
 - f) Give examples of ways you have exhibited interpersonal skills. Have you worked with the public? How have you demonstrated teamwork? Describe situations and your impact.
 - g) What special things did you do to set yourself apart from others? What did you do that was above and beyond your job description? How did you take the initiative?
 - h) List situations where you took on additional responsibilities and give details. Have members of your group chose you for a certain position? Has a supervisor/professor selected you for a special project? If so, out of how many people?
 - i) How have you demonstrated individual drive and determination (for example, as a strong student with part-time employment and extracurricular involvement)?

- Be specific, brief and use strong action verbs. Quantify when possible, with numbers, percentages and dollar values.
- For jobs in the past, use past tense; jobs in the present, use present tense.
- Think about what the employer is looking for and then describe your experiences in a relevant way (use key words from the job description/your knowledge of the job and industry as a guide). Exclude irrelevant tasks or details.

EXAMPLE #1: Before — Unhelpful, Task-oriented Statements:

- Responsible for training new staff
- Organized filing system
- Performed customer service and cashier duties as required
- Entered data

EXAMPLE #1: After — Accomplishment Statements:

Begin with an action verb	Include only <u>relevant</u> details of what you did: who, what, where, how, how many?	What was the result, purpose?
Selected by management to train	5 new staff members	to ensure consistent and excellent customer service.
Initiated and developed	a more effective filing strategy for over 10 years of records	which saved time for staff when solving client issues.
Interacted	professionally to successfully build customer relationships	resulting in repeat business.
Designed	client database using MS Access	resulting in 50% increased retrieval rate.

EXAMPLE #2: Before — Unhelpful, Task-oriented Statement:

- Responsible for planning events for the club and boothing in the concourse.

EXAMPLE #2: After — See 5 ways of creating effective Accomplishment Statements:

Begin with an action verb	Include only <u>relevant</u> details	What was the result, purpose?
Planned and facilitated	4 events per year	by brainstorming event themes and topics (How)
Planned and facilitated	4 events per year	attracting more than 250 participants (Result)
Planned and facilitated	4 events per year	to increase awareness and engagement in programming (Why)
Planned and facilitated	4 events per year	by creating a project management plan and recruiting 20 volunteers (What went into it)
Planned and facilitated	4 events per year	using strong organizational and time management skills (Skills used)

Try this pattern for writing strong accomplishment statements on your resumé:

