

Your Resume

What are you really good at and more importantly... Can you prove it?

How good are you at your job, does your resume “shout from the rafters” what you really good at?

Below is a great blog from Kim Issacs at Monster.com which highlights some easy ways to get yourself started...

If you think you have no career accomplishments, think again. Everybody has them; it's just a matter of digging down and pinpointing what they are.

Dig Deep for Resume Accomplishments

Many of us underestimate our achievements. We're often told not to boast, that modesty is the best policy. We show up to do our jobs every day and sometimes do great things — isn't that enough?

Well, not if you want your resume to get noticed. Employers look for achievers, candidates who go above and beyond their job duties. Your resume allows you to describe your best accomplishments so employers want to take a chance on you.

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What Is an Accomplishment?

On your resume, an accomplishment is an example of how you contributed to your employer, or it's an achievement that reflects the kind of worker you are. The most convincing accomplishments are measurable. Examples:

- A welder relays her dedication to quality: “Achieved a record of zero defects in all pipe-welding and ductwork jobs.”
- An engineer shows how he contributed to the bottom line: “Drove \$1.2 million revenue increase by deploying 200-plus software suites for company's leading product line.”
- A minister demonstrates how she increased church participation: “Helped grow membership from 175 to 249 in one year through active involvement in community events.”

Getting Started

Set a timer for five minutes, and start jotting down your accomplishments for your most recent position. Write down any accomplishment, contribution or achievement that comes to mind, even if it seems insignificant. Complete this exercise for each position on your resume. To help jog your memory, here are questions to ask yourself:

- Did you receive praise, recognition or pats on the back from your supervisor or colleagues? For what (e.g., completing projects ahead of deadline, calming down irate customers, saving money)?
- Did you receive a promotion, award or commendations from customers/clients?
- Were you selected for special projects, committees or task forces?
- Name three accomplishments that make you proud. Did you complete a particularly challenging assignment? Participate in a solution that improved customer service, enhanced efficiency, saved money/time or increased revenues?
- Are you known throughout your department/company for something?
- If you quit your job, what would everybody say about your work at your good-bye party?

Pulling It All Together

Now that you've completed this brainstorming exercise, turn your accomplishments into high-impact statements. Lead with the result, outcome or benefit to your employer. Here are a few examples of how to transform rough notes into accomplishments statements:

Position: Teacher

- **Rough Notes:** When I first started, students were passing state exams at the dismal rate of 67 percent. I updated the curriculum and instilled the students with a love of history. By year's end, my students had achieved a 93 percent pass rate.
- **Accomplishments Statement:** Dramatically increased pass rate of eighth-grade students from 67 percent to a record high of 93 percent on state proficiency testing.

Position: Systems Administrator

- **Rough Notes:** I helped migrate more than 1,000 users from local servers to corporate Unix DCS servers. My boss wanted this done in a month, and unbelievably, I achieved this.

- **Accomplishments Statement:** Integrally involved in seamless migration of 1,000-plus users from various local servers onto DCS corporate UNIX servers in aggressive one-month timeframe.

Position: Administrative Assistant

- **Rough Notes:** On my first day on the job, I couldn't find anything, because the filing system was a mess. Customers were unhappy, because wait times were long as we located files. I reorganized the filing system, which now works beautifully.
- **Accomplishments Statement:** Improved office efficiency and customer service by overhauling previously haphazard filing system.

Still Stuck?

Sometimes it's hard to identify accomplishments. Try asking your supervisor or a colleague to name your top contributions to the team — others may have an easier time recognizing your value than you. Review your performance evaluations, emails from internal – external clients or reference letters, which often include details about your accomplishments. Remember, don't sell yourself short. You may take your accomplishments for granted, but potential employers see past success as an indicator of future performance. Your job search will be more effective if your resume showcases your key accomplishments.

For further advice on writing or updating your CV, speak to Lawson Williams Consulting Group we are here to help.

AND remember to update your CV and details with your Recruitment Consultancy once a year.