

ACHIEVEMENT STATEMENTS

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Contemporary CVs are achievement-focused. Whereas responsibilities are what you are supposed to do, achievements are what you have actually delivered, over and above what was required. You sell yourself to a prospective employer by including powerful achievements in your CV.

Many CVs used to contain long lists of responsibilities then a few achievements. Increasingly now there is less emphasis on the responsibilities so that more space can be dedicated to achievements. One approach is to contain a couple of broad sentences explaining your responsibilities then launch into the achievements in dot points. You do not then need to explain the dot points as "achievements".

Each achievement should start with *strong verb in the past tense*. You can even disguise responsibilities to read like achievements by writing them this way (eg Instead of saying that one responsibility was "Managing a team of four", you can say "Managed a team of four". We have included in this flyer a long list of suggestions for different verbs to inspire you to sell yourself better.

SUBSTANTIATING ACHIEVEMENTS

The ultimate result of an achievement is usually to make the employer organisation money or save it money. In many government and administrative positions, however, there can be other less obvious advantages such as making a system more robust or compliant.

Some roles are easy to substantiate achievements. These usually have tangible outcomes are part of the job. For example, meeting sales targets, delivering projects or producing other set results. Even if your role tends to be more ongoing, try to avoid the mistake of making your CV read like a reproduction of your job description - this offers the reader no real insight into what you did or are capable of.

QUANTIFYING YOUR IMPACT

If you have trouble identifying achievements, ask yourself:

- What have I done to change this job from when I arrived to when I left? or
- How is the job different from when I started?

The gap in both cases represents your achievements. Keep asking yourself "resulting in what?" to prompt you to dig further into the benefit you have delivered.

CONSIDER ENDORSEMENTS AND FEEDBACK

Doing a great job and receiving positive feedback is an achievement in itself eg:

- *The improvement was rolled out nationally and I was commended by the CEO for my innovation.*
- *Received consistent positive feedback.*
- *Rated 'outstanding' in my performance reviews.*

COMBINING ACHIEVEMENTS

Consider combining similar achievements under an overarching theme. This can save repetition, increase impact and provide an opportunity to list specific examples eg:

- *Appointed to various positions of responsibility:*
 - » *WHS Committee member*
 - » *Diversity champion*
 - » *SAP Subject Matter Expert*
- *Implemented several significant process improvements. Examples included:*
 - » *Introducing staff debit cards with spending limits. These saved staff waiting for travel expenses to be reimbursed and reduced processing times considerably for the staff member and accounts.*
 - » *Automating the payment system of recurring invoices. This freed up the Accounts Payable team half a day per week.*
 - » *Investigated and gained approval for a new overdraft facility. This saved up to \$10,000 per year in unnecessary interest payments.*

FLATTERING LANGUAGE

It is possible, rather than just "undertaking" a secondment, you were "selected" for it or "invited"? Consider using language that paints your achievement in the strongest possible light. Other examples are "appointed", "elected", "nominated" and "promoted".

STRUCTURING ACHIEVEMENTS

The general formats used are:

- Result from action - List the result first then explain how you got there.
- Action leading to a result - Specify the action first and link it to the result.

Many achievement statements include the challenge component, if included, may be positioned at the beginning or end of the sentence. Some examples may

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include “within tight timeframes” or “during a time where staff levels were at 50%” or “in a fast-paced, constantly changing environment”.

IMPROVING ACHIEVEMENT STATEMENTS

- **Good:** Conducted many training programs in several offices that reduced problems.
- **Better:** Conducted more than 45 service technician training programs throughout eight offices reducing customer complaints by 22% in a six-month period.
- **Best:** Reduced customer complaints by 22% in a six-month period by conducting more than 45 service technician training programs through eight offices.

HELP

Your careers consultant is here to help you. Please make an appointment for a review of your CV. Consider emailing your CV in advance so that your consultant can work on it with you in the session.

USEFUL VERBS

The cumulative effect of all these action words is to paint a picture of a person that makes a difference, goes over and above and/or gets things done. If you are stuck for a word to sell your achievements, here are some options:

Accelerated	Developed	Initiated	Project-managed	Stressed
Accomplished	Devised	Innovated	Promoted	Stretched
Achieved	Directed	Installed	Proposed	Structured
Administered	Drafted	Instigated	Provided	Summarised
Analysed	Established	Instituted	Purchased	Superseded
Approved	Evaluated	Introduced	Quantified	Supervised
Awarded	Event-managed	Invented	Received	Systematised
Budgeted	Exceeded	Launched	Recommended	Terminated
Built	Expanded	Led (note spelling)	Recruited	Traced
Championed	Filled	Maintained	Redesigned	Tracked
Completed	Financed	Managed	Reduced	Traded
Conceived	Forecast	Mentored	Reinvigorated	Trained
Conducted	Formulated	Met	Reorganised	Transferred
Consolidated	Founded	Negotiated	Researched	Transformed
Controlled	Fulfilled	Organised	Retained	Translated
Converted	Gathered	Operated	Revised	Trimmed
Convinced	Generated	Oversaw	Rewrote	Tripled
Coordinated	Handled	Persuaded	Scheduled	Uncovered
Created	Headed	Planned	Saved	Unified
Cut	Implemented	Presented	Serviced	Updated
Delegated	Improved	Processed	Simplified	Wrote
Delivered	Improvised	Produced	Sold	
Demonstrated	Increased	Programmed	Spearheaded	
Designed	Influenced	Program-managed	Streamlined	

SAMPLE ACHIEVEMENT STATEMENTS

- *Received a customer satisfaction rating of 99.9% by developing a high level of proficiency on a new software during a two-month system conversion.*
- *Developed a promotional fundraising campaign that provided contributions exceeding \$30,000, three times the previous record.*
- *Increased Consumer Markets Division's revenue from \$54m to \$125m over three years with no increase in personnel. Built pre-tax profit from a loss of \$3m to returns of \$11m.*
- *Established and directed manufacturing task forces that reduced waste by 20% in plastic processes and increased productivity by over 10% in forming and printing processes.*
- *Identified excess investment in manufacturing and warehousing facilities. Negotiated sales of assets which generated over \$4m and reduced fixed costs by approximately \$1m annually.*

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