

Many people find this the most difficult aspect of career assessment because although each of us has achieved many things that were important to our organisations, these achievements are not always documented and therefore not immediately recalled when we are promoting ourselves to a prospective employer. Therefore we often fail to highlight how well a particular achievement illustrates our **skills, past contributions and future potential**.

When trying to decide what could be considered an achievement think of the **circumstances or context** that may have lead you to take **action** and achieve any of the following **results** which are frequently expressed in **achievement statements**:

- Improved quality
- Increased sales /revenue
- Saved costs
- Increased profits
- Improved employee relations
- Delivered a project to plan
- Improved productivity and teamwork
- Improved efficiencies
- Achieved a technological breakthrough
- Established an administrative process
- Planned a programme from inception
- Exceeded established standards of performance

Identifying your Achievements:

- Ask yourself the following questions. Did you:
 - Achieve more with the same resources?
 - Achieve the same with fewer resources?
 - Take the initiative to improve or develop a system?
 - Introduce new procedures, systems or efficiencies?
 - Lead the implementation of a new strategy or direction?
 - Exceed targets, forecasts or budgets for revenue?
 - Make significant cost savings through streamlining resources or reducing staff numbers?
- Review the exercises already completed in this section with your consultant to establish the achievements you wish to highlight
- Review any previous performance appraisals, 360 feedback, letters of recommendation or written references and testimonials that you may have on file
- Use the **CAR** method

CAR – Evidence of your Achievements

This is an effective way to clarify your achievement statements for your resume and also to prepare for the behavioural style interview which you may encounter in your job search (see chapter 6).

C – Context/ Circumstances where you found yourself faced with a problem, situation or task, which required you to take a specific or unusual course of action

A – Action you took to solve the problem, improve performance, add value to the business and achieve a result

R – Result you obtained which can be expressed as an achievement. If the result can be expressed in a quantifiable way in terms of dollars saved, percentage increase in sales, reduction in waste etc it becomes a very strong achievement statement.

Suggesting to help you write Achievement Statements

- Start by gathering information and identifying the achievements you want to highlight
- Use the **CAR** method
- Start each achievement statement with an action verb
- Don't use the same verb for every achievement. We have included a list on Page 4
- Your achievements can be group or individual. If the achievement statement includes a group activity remember to highlight your role in the group
- Where possible quantify or qualify results. Give your achievement statements the "So What?" test. What was the result? Whom did it benefit? How?
- When you start out don't limit the number of achievement statements you develop. You may not include them all in your CV but they will certainly be useful in your preparation for self-promotion and interviews
- Your achievement statements should highlight the benefit to your employer, organisation or workgroup. The reader will be looking to establish your past contributions as an indicator of your future potential.

Sample Achievement Statements for Your CV

Championed the implementation of SAP throughout the organisation.

Managed cross-functional teams and systems experts to ensure implementation on time and within budget.

Outsourced the payroll system for 1500 FTE's and 800 contract employees to Paywell Consultants. Worked with the administrators throughout the transition to ensure minimum disruption to the payment process.

Introduced an induction and training programme for new hires which significantly increased employee engagement, as measured by their 3 month performance/satisfaction appraisal.

Doubled revenue in 2 years by introducing a new sales and commission structure for both marketing and direct sales staff. Put in place the recruitment and training necessary to support the new sales culture.

Redesigned the effluent treatment plant to align with new environmental regulations, reducing waste and saving \$70,000 in its first year of installation.

Achieved returns on capital investments in excess of 60% per annum.

Diversified product range and successfully increased market share, utilising existing infrastructure and human resources.

Developed an employee satisfaction and feedback process, which reduced employee turnover in the call centre by 15% over two years.

Set up the Beijing manufacturing plant, and achieved the first 3 year targets for profit and production.

Reduced customer complaint handling from 1 week to 2 day turnaround. Provided product knowledge training to encourage cross selling. The result was an over all increase in job satisfaction, sales and company profile.

Significantly reduced downtime and the use of external maintenance contractors by simplifying shift change over procedures and documenting breakdowns and repairs.

Increased shareholder returns and year-end profits every year for the past 4 years, despite a downturn in the market.

Action Verbs For Achievement Statements

Accelerated	Established	Presented	Structured
Accomplished	Evaluated	Processed	Succeeded
Achieved	Expanded	Produced	Summarised
Administered	Forecast	Programmed	Superseded
Analysed	Formulated	Promoted	Supervised
Approved	Founded	Proposed	Systematised
Budgeted	Generated	Provided	Terminated
Built	Headed	Purchased	Traced
Completed	Implemented	Recommended	Tracked
Conceived	Improved	Recruited	Traded
Conducted	Improvised	Redesigned	Trained
Consolidated	Increased	Reduced	Transferred
Controlled	Innovated	Reorganised	Transformed
Converted	Installed	Researched	Translated
Co-ordinated	Instituted	Revised	Trimmed
Created	Introduced	Scheduled	Tripled
Cut	Invented	Serviced	Uncovered
Delegated	Launched	Set up	Unearthed
Delivered	Led	Simplified	Unified
Demonstrated	Maintained	Sold	Unravelled
Designed	Managed	Solved	Utilised
Developed	Motivated	Sparked	Vacated
Devised	Negotiated	Staffed	Verified
Directed	Operated	Started	Widened
Doubled	Organised	Streamlined	Withdrew
Earned	Originated	Strengthened	Won
Edited	Performed	Stressed	Worked
Eliminated	Planned	Stretched	Wrote

Writing Your Achievement Statements

For each of the following, describe the context or circumstances you faced (C), the action you took (A), and result of the Action (R) in numerical or percentage terms, including the benefit to the organisation or to you personally. Continue to describe as many achievements as you can recall. Use the worksheet format on the following pages.

To answer behavioural interview questions in around 1.5 to 2 minutes, describe the circumstances or problem in approx. 20 seconds, spend most of your answer on your actions (60 – 80 secs) as this is the area where you are demonstrating how well you used the particular skill being probed, and finally conclude with around 20 seconds on the result which justifies your actions and ideally quantifies the benefits you brought.

For your CV however, you don't have room on the document to write this out in full so summarise your **actions** and the **result** into 2 – 3 short impactful sentences as per the examples on page 3.

Achievement No. 1:

C =

A =

R =

Achievement Statement for CV (A & R):

Achievement No. 2:

C =

A =

R =

Achievement Statement for CV (A & R):

Achievement No. 3:

C =

A =

R =

Achievement Statement for CV (A & R):

NB: When you are writing your “Achievement Statement” start with at the Action or Result. Quantify or qualify whenever possible.