What is an accomplishment?

On your resume, an accomplishment can either be an example of how you contributed to your employer, or an achievement that reflects the kind of worker you are. The best accomplishments use numbers and industry related words to establish fact from opinion.

Accomplishment examples:

- A welder relays dedication to quality: "Achieved a record of zero defects in 100% of interior and rooftop pipe-welding and ductwork jobs."
- An engineer shows contribution to the bottom line: "Drove $1.2 million revenue increase by deploying 200-plus software suites for company's leading product line."

How do I identify an accomplishment?

If you're having a hard time identifying your accomplishments, ask yourself these questions:

- Did you win any awards or receive incentives for your work performance?

- Did you earn superior marks on performance evaluations? How often (use numbers)?

- Did you train new employees? How many, and how often?

- Did your work enable the team to complete a project on time or on budget? (or How far ahead of schedule or how much under budget?)

- Did you earn a perfect safety rating? How many times?

- Did you complete any special training?

- Did you build a reputation for reliability?

- Did you complete all jobs with zero defects or errors?

- Did you recommend or implement processes that improved efficiency, productivity or workflow? Guesstimate the percentage improved or amount of decrease of lost time.

- Did you submit all reports on time?

Getting started

Set a timer for five minutes and begin with your most recent position. Write down any accomplishment, contribution, or achievement that comes to mind, even if it seems insignificant (you can omit ones that don't match skills the job listing is asking for). 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 goodbye party?

With all your prompt questions, think how much, how often, decrease in lost time, increase in savings or safety, etc. Put numbers in as frequently as possible.

Writing Accomplishments

The CCAR Model

- **Challenge** – Describe a specific problem or goal.
- **Context** – Describe the individuals and groups you worked with, and/or the environment in which you worked, to address a particular challenge (e.g., clients, co-workers, members of Congress, shrinking budget, low morale).
- **Action** – Discuss the specific actions you took to address a challenge.
- **Results** – Give specific examples of measures/outcomes that had some impact on the organization.

  - Trained a staff of 100+ internal and external personnel on diversity rules and regulations leading to a 70% reduction in violations and improved the overall atmosphere at ABC Co.

  - Served as journeyman electrician or apprentice on 75+ new home construction projects and 24+ major commercial projects; mastered the use of ammeters, ohmmeters, voltmeters and testing lamps while working with minimal supervision under tight deadlines on equipment up to 50 volts; commended by leadership for guiding team to average completion rates 5% ahead of schedule with zero errors