



CAREERS

News & Ideas about your career.
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10 Most Successful Accomplishments

(From 21stCentury Jobs) By Sara & Jarda Tusek

Before you can find your place in the world of work, you need to have a basic knowledge of what you have to offer. One time-tested way of communicating what you've done is the "most successful accomplishments" strategy.

WHAT IS A SUCCESSFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT?

Think of times you were completely happy to be doing what you were doing, when your attention was focused on accomplishing a task. When you completed the task, you felt pleased and satisfied. This process of doing and completing is the basis of defining the most successful accomplishments of your life.

Thinking of your activities in terms of accomplishments helps you pinpoint the goals, values, beliefs, dreams, skills and interests that are most important to you. By analyzing each successful accomplishment in detail, you will produce an itemization, or inventory, of what kinds of activities are most satisfying for you.

Begin your list

Think of ten of these successful accomplishments and you're ready to begin.

- If you've been in the job market for some time, you can look at your past jobs

and analyze your accomplishments in your career so far.

- If you're just entering the job market, or doing a reevaluation of your career to make a change, you can broaden your definition of "success" to include areas not typically labeled as work.

You can write about your ten most successful accomplishments in personal life, academics, family, spiritual, athletics, and volunteer activities. Note that accomplishments, by definition, involve things you actively do, not honors bestowed on you.

ORGANIZE YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THREE PARTS

Below you'll find an easy way to organize each accomplishment. You will write ten of these descriptions, one for each accomplishment.

Part One



"As a . . ." Using this phrase helps you describe the complete situation around the event: why you were involved (as a 1st year law student, as a bank loan officer), who was there, where it happened, the time of year—anything that contributed to your enjoyment or sense of purpose. (to p. 2)



Accomplishments from p. 1

ORGANIZE YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THREE PARTS

Part One (continued)

This part should be one or two paragraphs long.

Example: as Assistant to the Director in a non-profit organization, directed a team of six employees in a \$600,000 fundraising project called "Refugee Welcome Project." This project, which was begun at my initiative, was the first such team-driven project in the organization's history.

Part Two

Explain what you did. Give enough detail, using action verbs (go, contact, etc.) to convey exactly what you had to do to complete the event successfully. Again, a couple of paragraphs should be enough.

Example: Developed and implemented a fundraising strategy for the "Refugee Welcome Project" for a group of newly-arrived refugees from the Ivory Coast. These refugees need housing, transportation, clothing, jobs and lessons in English.

Established working relations with area churches, schools and universities, job centers, charities and local governments. Notified local media as to arrival of refugees; arranged photo and interview session with refugees for publication in local newspaper; secured television and radio interviews for organizational partners. Solicited in-kind donations as well as donations of money. Managed this project with a budget of \$4,500.

Part Three

Sum up the outcomes of your accomplishments, as they apply to your career choices. The phrase "As a result" will help you list the changes that took place in the situation because of what you did.

How can this result influence your future career?

Spend some time looking at your accomplishment from an

outsider's point of view. One or two paragraphs will complete this accomplishment.

Example: As a result, was able to significantly improve my cross-cultural communication skills and gained valuable experience in teamwork, goal setting and strategic planning. Provided publicity and media attention for "Refugee Welcome Project," which is still running. Helped 43 refugees resettle in the area, with 22 children enrolled in area schools and 15 adults finding immediate employment.

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR TEN ACCOMPLISHMENTS?

Take your time writing these ten accomplishments. Search into your personal satisfactions to find what really makes you tick.

When you have them completed, read them aloud to a friend or family member, who can listen for any thread of continuing interests. Maybe all your accomplishments center on sports, or helping people, or challenging yourself. Be sure to write down these precious insights, as they will help you find a job that fits your abilities, interests and values.

Seeing your life in terms of accomplishments is a valuable skill. Rather than focusing on what you lack, or on disappointments and frustrations, you can focus on what has gone well for you and how you can use your strengths in your job. Soon you will be writing not just ten accomplishments, but 50 or 60 each year. Then you'll have a complete catalog of what you can offer to any employer.

Note: You can also use these accomplishments to sketch out a chart of skills for yourself; more details are to be found in the book, 21st Century Jobs.

To get help in the career development process, you can buy a copy of our latest book, 21st Century Jobs, for \$10.00 plus postage by contacting Sara Tusek, ILI Managing Director, at stusek@ili.cc.