



Troutman Method Lesson 1: What Are Your Top Accomplishments?

After the federal job decision-making we have completed in the first two steps, we are now ready to get down to the task of creating an outstanding federal resume. It is time to think about YOU.

I find that many people have a difficult time getting started on writing their resumes, because they are either intimidated or bogged down with the daunting task of generating all the details that go into their resume, especially their federal resume.

My solution for easing into resume writing is to start first with the easiest—and most important—piece: your top accomplishments. Your top accomplishments will be the vital sound bites that you want to make sure are communicated to the people reviewing your job application.

Your top accomplishments will be used in the federal application process THREE TIMES:

- ✦ A short version of your accomplishments will be included in your federal resume (Step 6);
- ✦ A longer version will be drafted for the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities narratives or essays that are required by the application questionnaires (Step 7); and
- ✦ You will review these accomplishments once again when you prepare for your Behavior-Based interview (Step 10).

This step is critical to your success throughout your federal job campaign.



Strategy Tip

Supervisors are more easily impressed by accomplishments than duties. Sell yourself with your outstanding accomplishments.

What Can Be Considered An Accomplishment?

Start with these basic questions when you are thinking about your accomplishments:

- What did you actually accomplish in your current job or previous job?
- What did you do that was outstanding – above average?
- Did you achieve something new or better?
- Did you save money for the organization?
- Did you come up with a new idea that saved time or improved customer service?

There are generally two types of accomplishments: *significant accomplishments* and *tangible results*.

Let's start with *significant accomplishments*. Some examples are:

- Projects or teams you lead
- High profile situations
- Controversial or otherwise difficult situations / projects
- Unusually large projects
- Projects subject to very short deadlines
- Big problems you solved
- Important customer service solutions
- New training you implemented
- First time assignments or those requiring creativity to address
- Events or duties you performed that went far beyond your usual expected duties

In some cases, your particular line of work may not have provided you the opportunity to engage in activities resulting in significant accomplishments. Instead, you might need to consider listing tangible results, otherwise known as bean counting. It may be difficult to quantify these numbers after the fact, but remember that demonstrating your accomplishments with numbers could greatly boost the impact of an accomplishment on your resume.

Examples of *tangible results*:

- Number of phone calls you answer in a day or week
- Number of emails you answer in a day or week
- Number of phone calls and emails you receive in a day or week
- Email management strategies created to improve the organization
- Number of times you update the budget in a week or month
- Number of invoices you process in a week or month
- Dollars you spend or handle in a week or month
- Number of appointments you make in a week or month for supervisors
- New Excel files you designed or managed each week or month

Develop a Project List with Results

A very useful regular work habit is to develop and track a list of accomplishments and projects. This information is invaluable for future job applications as well as during evaluation time. Here is a suggested basic outline for your project or accomplishment list:

- Title of Project/Program
- Budget (if relevant)
- Role you played
- Mission, objective, purpose of project
- Customer/vendor
- Who you communicated or worked with to complete project
- Major challenge(s) or problem(s) during project
- Results (i.e., cost savings, increased efficiency, improved service to customers)