

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES = NO ACCOMPLISHMENTS & ACHIEVEMENTS = ABSOLUTELY

It's often been said that you should showcase your accomplishments on your résumé, *not delineate your job duties*. Listing responsibilities is even worse. Saying that you're '*responsible for*' something actually communicates that this is something that "... you were *kinda – sort of supposed to do*; but **doesn't say that you actually did it**. Nor does it provide any type of performance indicator. But illustrating accomplishments and achievements is a totally different ballgame. Both of *these* strategies give a sense of your **value**. And it's true—accomplishment statements are the best way to showcase the remarkable things you've done at your past jobs, plus sell prospective employers on what you can do for them. Your list of weekly assignments? Who cares how you spend the hours comprising your workday?

So why is it that the vast majority of résumés out there still look like job descriptions, or a '*laundry list*' of duties and or responsibilities? This is what we, here at Career Development Resources, call a **Tombstone Resume**. Well, it turns out that turning job duties into accomplishments can be a tough concept to grasp. But once you get it— you will certainly, exponentially increase your opportunities for career advancement success. **So go get your résumé, and sit down with this step-by-step guide to eliminating the duties and ensuring that those bullet points sell your candidacy and top-rated value.**

1. DIFFERENTIATE: Understand the Difference

Quite simply, a duty indicates what you are supposed to do / or what you did; and an accomplishment is something that you did *well* with some type of *performance indicator* or description that illustrates how well you did it. For example, "grew customer base" would be considered a job duty, whereas "*delivered explosive growth in customer base by penetrating new markets*" is quite an accomplishment.

Why is this so important? Firstly, an employer doesn't care how you spend your work day. S/ he isn't interested in a generic job description. You want to tell the person reading your résumé something s/he doesn't already know. For the most part, hiring managers will understand what duties are associated with your job titles. It's common knowledge that, for example, an Executive Assistant will answer phones, manage files, and provide customer service. So, placing those statements as bullet point statements on your résumé is an incredible waste of valuable, prime real estate. Conversely, by referencing accomplishments, you paint a picture of your abilities—one that will sell yourself.

So now that you understand the difference, how do you make the change?

2. Make a List

Get started by compiling a list of all the things that differentiate you from '*the rest of the herd*'. For each of the positions on your résumé, ask yourself the following:

- ⊕ What did I do that was above and beyond my normal job duties?
- ⊕ How did I stand out among my peers?
- ⊕ Was I ever recognized by a supervisor for a job well done? When and why?
- ⊕ Did I win any awards or accolades?
- ⊕ What new processes did I implement or recommend (to my boss) to improve things?

- ⊕ Within my peer group, have I ever been the acknowledged ‘*go-to*’ person for particular situations?
- ⊕ What problems did I solve?
- ⊕ What potential problems did I *prevent*?
- ⊕ Did I ever consistently meet or exceed goals or quotas?
- ⊕ Did I save the company money?
- ⊕ What made me really great at my job?

3. Increase the Intensity and Sharpen The Focus:

Strengthen the anecdote by **quantifying** or **qualifying** the results.

Then, take your list, and add the details: facts, figures, and numbers that “*prove your case*”. After implementing your innovative strategy; how many man-hours were saved. How many people were impacted by your work? By what percentage did you exceed your goals? How much has your customer base grown or your sales volume? What about profitability increases, as a result of a tactic or strategy that you implemented?

Instead of saying you effectively managed a budget; list how much money you managed, and how much money you saved.

It’s essentially a waste of time and space to merely tell the reader that you did something unless you show some type of performance indicator. *Make sure that you tell them how well you did!*

By qualifying your effectiveness and quantifying your accomplishments, you not only make them easier to understand, you really allow the hiring manager to picture you performing well and clearly visualize the **level** of work or responsibility at which you performed in order to achieve this accomplishment.

4. Get To The ‘Pay-Off’ — Demonstrate The VALUE or BENEFIT

Any statement that leaves the reader with a “*so what?*” or “*who cares?*” feeling is a waste of valuable résumé *real estate*.

Next, go one step further and add in what the benefit was to your boss or your company to each statement. By doing this, you clearly communicate not only what you’re capable of, but also the direct benefit the employer will receive by hiring you. And let’s face it, everyone wants to know what’s in it for them!

Remember: All employers listen to radio station WIFM {*what’s in it for me?*}

So, say you have “created 20 client reports each month” on your list. Instead, write something like “created and prepared 20 weekly and monthly status reports to ensure clients consistently received timely and complete information.” Reading that, a hiring manager will automatically see that, if s/he hires you, you’ll be able to develop ways to provide great service to their clients. When you include the benefit, you are able to do a more effective job in persuasively selling the tangible things that you can bring to the company.

A résumé loaded with accomplishments is the best way to advance your candidacy by demonstrating what you can do and thereby setting you up for your next success: landing a great new job.

5. Consider using Aggressive Verbiage in place of Non-Aggressive Verbiage

NAV: Helped new employees.

AGV: Effectively trained new employees to rapidly attain unprecedented level of productivity for recent hires.

NAV: Possess in-depth knowledge of capital markets and corporate finance.

AGV: Achieved reputation for expertise in capital markets and corporate finance.

ALWAYS REMEMBER:

- * There is an ENORMOUS difference between *telling* and **selling**.
- * There is also a MASSIVE difference between *value* and **perceived value**.

Mark Berkowitz is the owner and President of Career Development Resources, LLC. Changing lives and transforming careers since 1985, Mark provides one-on-one career consulting services, résumé building assistance and guidance to help each client achieve not only job advancement, but lasting and meaningful success in their career path as well. A distinguished figure in his field, Berkowitz is one of the top career builders in the country and has been quoted in nearly two dozen books and publications on the topic of career advancement.

Passionate about empowering others to realize their dreams, Mark served as an executive board member of the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches. He has been helping clients successfully advance in and/or change their careers for over 36 years. With a Master's Degree in Career Development and four specialized certifications (**National Certified Career Counselor, Certified Professional Résumé Writer, Int'l Certified Job & Career Transition Coach, and Certified Employment Interview Professional**), he is uniquely qualified to help you improve your career situation. A recognized expert in the field, he had not only taught in Graduate Schools and led workshops and seminars, but also trained other counselors. Mark served as chairman of the Certification Board for the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches and was a founding member of the Career Management Alliance (*fkn* Career Masters Institute). Additionally, he has shared his expertise in effectively utilizing career assessment tools with graduate counseling students from Fordham University, helping to prepare them for their future counseling careers.

Mark connects with clients locally as well as international clients via the internet. He also provides outreach to high school and college students, presenting career planning and job search strategy workshops.

- Highly regarded with résumés, cover letters, and interview strategies showcased in nearly two dozen books.
- Enjoys an INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION as a “Résumé Guru” by members of the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches.

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See how you can benefit from his expertise instead of suffering from your career mistakes.

