

Tips on Creating An Accomplishment Resume for Scholarship Applications

Academic and work accomplishments are what set you apart from the hundreds of other candidates vying for the same scholarship.

Remember, Reviewers have dozens of resumes to review on a daily basis. In that sea of paper, accomplishments are what capture and retain their interest, so to make certain that you get noticed, highlight your academic or work-related honors, awards, and accomplishments.

What is an accomplishment?

Accomplishments are relevant honors, achievements or awards that you earned for exceeding average standards in either academics, athletics, or in a work environment. Some examples of accomplishments are:

- Scholarships
- Honor Roll inclusion for high grades
- Awards won for specific activities or subjects (i.e., Most Valuable Player (MVP), Fine Art Award)
- Inclusion in student-related achievement publications (i.e., Who's Who in American High Schools)
- Perfect attendance awards
- Work related awards (i.e., Top Sales Performer)
- Promotions to leadership positions in your job (i.e., Shift Supervisor)
- Volunteer related awards (i.e., Volunteer of the Year)

As you can see, the key is to provide a Reviewer with relevant academic honors and achievements that highlight your particular background. Be sure to include other honors and awards as you see fit.

What is not an accomplishment?

Any regular activity that does not include attainment of an award, scholarship, or other means of recognition should not be listed as an accomplishment since your ability to be extraordinary has not been measured by an organization. Examples: Performing daily tasks correctly, promptness for meetings, being congenial or friendly, or attending school on a daily basis.

Describing your accomplishments.

When describing honors, awards, or accomplishments on your resume, it is important to maximize the use of language and wording in order to get your point across in the strongest way. Keep the following tips in mind:

1. Avoid writing vague self-serving statements on your student resume by using quantifying data.

Weak: High School Senior with good grades

Strong: High School Senior consistently named to the Honor Roll, 2000-2004 Member of the National Honor Society

2. Avoid accomplishments that have nothing to do with your future career goal, your current job search, or those that do not enhance your candidacy.

Don't use: Beauty contest "Miss Congeniality" winner

Use: Won Award at High School Science Fair, 2002

3. Be specific with details to capture and retain interest.

Weak: Won Award for Best Art.

Strong: Earned Excellence Award for Art Work (pen & ink drawings), 2008-2010

Weak: Helped customers in showroom.

Strong: Increased sales by \$5,000 during summer by helping clients in showroom. This resulted in sales to 8 out of 10 customers.

Featuring honors, awards, and accomplishments on your resume

Accomplishments, no matter how stellar, will do little to enhance your chances of getting a scholarship unless they are properly showcased.. If you bury them within your daily duties or general academic information, they may not be seen. Remember, Reviewers have many resumes to read. If it's hard for them to find important information about you on your application, they may pass on your candidacy.

You should emphasize your academic, work, or volunteer recognitions by creating a specific honors, awards, and accomplishments section of your resume. Make sure to provide the following details when including your accomplishments:

- Date of recognition or award
- Purpose of award and accomplishment it recognizes (i.e., Academic, athletic, job related)
- Significance of award (i.e., What did you have to accomplish? Only one who received the award?)
- Scope of the award (i.e.: National, regional, or local)

Create a word document (or download a template) to list and store your "Accomplishment Resume". It can be helpful to cut/paste into your scholarship document.