

CREATING A STRONG RÉSUMÉ

**A SELF-DIRECTED
RESOURCE**

FIRST EDITION



WORLD BANK GROUP

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
How to Write Accomplishment Statements	2
How to Identify and Use Keywords	4
Résumé Samples	6
How to Write a Career Profile	10
Action Verbs	12
Tips for Preparing a Statement of Interest (SOI)	14
CV/Résumé and Statement of Interest Checklist	15

Cover photo credit:
www.flickr.com/photos/nicmcphee/2756494307



Introduction

The résumé is a career marketing document that takes time and attention to create. The main goal of the résumé is to get invited for a personal interview. This guide is a self-directed resource to get you started, as well as to complement what you learn in one of our workshops. It can also help you prepare for a meeting with a career advisor so you can have a more productive session. It contains a number of resources to help you create and revise your résumé in order to align it with the targeted position and highlights relevant skills, accomplishments, and qualifications.

We recommend attending one of our résumé workshops and/or self-paced E-learning courses to round up your skills after using this self-directed guide.

All our offerings can be found on

[http//careerdev](http://careerdev).

How to Write Accomplishment Statements



When viewing your CV/résumé, employers look for **accomplishments** rather than a description of your responsibilities. Accomplishment statements appear at the top paragraph on your résumé and they demonstrate your proven ability to summarize what you have achieved in former positions.

One suggested format is to begin your description of each position with an overview of the job, i.e., what you helped do, figure out, or answer in your role; who you served; your budget; the region you were responsible for; the number and kind of staff you managed or were a part of; product or service lines, etc.

After this brief overview, what employers want to see is what you achieved on the job – and this is where accomplishment statements have value.

Accomplishments refer to actions you have taken that show results or impact as opposed to tasks or effort. In other words, employers want you to differentiate yourself by showing why your actions have mattered and what difference you were able to make.

The following examples show the impact of using accomplishment-driven statements.

-
- > Relocated office over one weekend, planning and coordinating the logistics. (good)
 - > **Relocated corporate office of 130 staff members over one weekend, planning and coordinating the logistics to result in zero disruption to operational schedules and productivity.** (better)
-

-
- > Managed international development conference, coordinating all aspects from planning through implementation. (good)
 - > **Managed a 2-day sustainability conference for 175 professionals from 6 regional offices. Planned and coordinated event logistics. Communicated with all participants and presenters. Result: ratings of “outstanding” by 95% of participants regarding event logistics, communication, and materials.** (better)
-
- > Developed new presentation methods for annual meetings to make presentations more interesting to participants. (good)
 - > **Developed innovative presentation methods for annual meetings using visual effects technology. Increased viewer interest through video imagery and creative visual effects, resulting in specific feedback on improved presentation methods by more than 85% of participants.** (better)
-



To write accomplishment statements, follow this two-step process:

- Before you start writing your résumé, think about each position you have held and create a list of accomplishments that are related to the kind of work you are pursuing. Always use results, measurable impact and metrics when describing accomplishments.
- To help you to develop this list, ask yourself if you:
 - > increased efficiency or effectiveness
 - > accomplished more with fewer resources
 - > initiated or implemented something that went above and beyond what was in your job description
 - > designed and implemented a technique, strategy, innovation, or improvement
 - > solved a challenging problem
 - > did something that improved client relations or resulted in greater stakeholder engagement
 - > improved a process
 - > saved money, time, or other resources
 - > implemented a policy, procedure, system, or best practice
 - > were recognized informally by clients
 - > Authored or co-authored a published article or book
 - > improved profitability
 - > enhanced productivity
 - > contributed something that was above and beyond

Sometimes, looking at past performance reviews will help to jog your memory of accomplishments.

Also, consider feedback you have received from managers, colleagues and clients.

- > Use the **STAR** model to write your accomplishment statement. STAR stands for:

S = Situation solved or opportunity created
T = Tasks that needed to be done
A = Actions you took
R = Results achieved

For each accomplishment statement, briefly tell:

- > What was the **SITUATION**: What was the problem, need, or issue?
- > What **TASKS** needed to be done: Describe the challenge and expectations.
- > What **ACTION** did you take: What was your role? What did you do? What challenges did you overcome? What steps did you take? What techniques did you use?
- > What were the **RESULTS**? What was the impact of the actions you took? What were the benefits: Quantify the results whenever you can, using metrics such as numbers, \$, %. When you cannot quantify, show the impact of your action (i.e., saving time, increasing efficiency, strengthening communication, streamlining operations, building relationships with external stakeholders, expanding product lines).

Key success concepts in writing STARs are:

- Start each with an action verb. (Use past tense for completed accomplishments).
- Be specific.
- Quantify, using metrics whenever possible (and when it is helpful).
- Show concrete results or the impact of your actions.

How to Identify and Use Keywords

When you **align your CV/résumé content with an employer's requirements** for a position or TOR, it makes it easier for an employer to shortlist you. Alignment is not about copying the job posting and placing the exact contents into your CV/résumé. (Yes, we have seen it happen!). It's about making a list of keywords and key phrases that are common to job postings for your field that show what employers are typically looking for and making sure that, when true, these are represented in your CV/résumé.

Keywords and key phrases are what recruiters and Applicant Tracking Systems (software used by organizations to do an initial screening of incoming résumés) search for when reviewing your CV/résumé. **They are the nouns and phrases that describe the skills and qualifications employers typically search for as they identify qualified candidates for your field.** They can include skills, experience, knowledge, areas of expertise, certifications or special training, education, and personal qualities that are core to the kind of position you are seeking.

A good exercise *before* updating your résumé is to identify the keywords and key phrases that show up most frequently for your field. Sources for identifying keywords and key phrases for your field include:

- > job postings: Review 5-7 job postings (e.g. on Compass) and make a list of keywords and key phrases that come up most often in job postings for your role.
- > employer websites and mission statements
- > social media profiles of others in your field
- > colleagues
- > professional associations



Résumé Sample #1: Chronological

NAME

Email:

Street Address (can leave street address off)

Phone:

City, State Zip Code

LinkedIn:

CAREER SUMMARY

Resourceful agriculturist and operations manager with over 15 years of international experience. Major strengths include program development and portfolio management for global agricultural technology projects, resulting in improved profitability and sustainability. Recognized for strong client orientation and the ability to develop and implement highly successful solutions for key issues affecting portfolio performance. A team player dedicated to motivating and mentoring colleagues within multicultural settings.

EXPERIENCE

THE WORLD BANK GROUP, Washington, D.C.
1994-present
Senior Agriculturist, Rural Development Unit

Islamabad's Field Office, South Asia Region

2013-present

Manage a team of 25, focusing on improving the performance of the Bank-assisted portfolio across all sectors including agriculture. Portfolio size 45-50 projects with an outstanding balance of \$4-5 billion.

- Planned, processed and directed the country and provincial portfolio performance reviews; identified key issues and actions affecting project implementation and developed solutions which improved project performance and fund utilization.
- Managed and mentored staff to improve performance of task leaders and task assistants. Analyzed slow-moving projects; worked with team members to determine causes and create innovative and cost-effective solutions.
- Developed a new project supervision strategy which improved team performance, bringing projects in on time and under budget while consistently meeting client expectations.
- Planned and organized annual meetings to develop collaborative donor, research, and institutional linkages to broaden the exchange of views and experiences on country-assisted agricultural development programs.

Senior Agriculturist

Bangladesh Resident Mission, Dhaka

2007-2013

Managed projects in the field of agriculture research, extension, and forestry. Introduced significant improvements in the extension and research systems to increase productivity, improve resource management, and strengthen physical and social infrastructures.

- Mentored national staff of the Agriculture/Natural Resources Team to improve task leadership.
- Promoted successfully the use of NGOs as development partners for forestry protection operations and home gardening projects.
- Interacted with the donor community to more effectively coordinate country assistance programs in agriculture.

NAME

Page 2

Senior Agriculturist**2000-2007**

India Department, Washington, D.C.

Managed two major agricultural rural development projects. Successfully completed complex negotiations of the Upper Krishna Resettlement and Irrigation Project (\$550M).

- Led the Tamil Nadu Agriculture Development Project, a one-of-a-kind initiative at the time, from inception through Board presentation.
- Persuaded Indian authorities of the need for a major change in project design and concept from a multi-state extension program to a one-state development program, resulting in successful implementation and replication over several states within India.

Agriculturist/Senior Agriculturist, World Bank Europe**1994-2000**

Middle East and North Africa Region

Led Bank missions in project preparation, appraisal, and supervision in Yemen, Egypt, and Syria.

- Introduced significant improvements in project design, focusing on agricultural technology. 95% of farmers served adopted at least one new technology.
- Strengthened linkages and collaboration between agricultural research and extension through policy changes and reorganization.

CIMMYT, Mexico**1992-1994****Training Officer**

Redesigned the wheat agronomy training program to include more on-farm activities and increase farmer participation.

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT (AUB), Lebanon**1990-1992****Assistant Professor, Faculty of Agriculture**

Taught graduate and undergraduate courses in plant breeding and agronomy/crop science. Conducted research to increase productivity and farmers' income in field crops. Collaborated closely with the Ford Foundation and Lebanese government research departments.

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Agriculture - Plant Breeding and Genetics, University of Wisconsin

M. Sc., Agriculture/Crop Sciences, AUB

B. Sc., Agriculture, AUB

LANGUAGES

English: Native fluency in speaking, reading, and writing

Arabic: Fluent

Spanish: Proficient

Résumé Sample #2:

Hybrid

NAME

Street Address (can leave street address off)

City, State Zip Code

Email:

Phone:

LinkedIn:

PROFILE

Writer/editor with experience in the Washington, D.C. market. Background includes international marketing and communication roles in the private and public sectors. Recognized for conceptualizing, writing, and successfully marketing ideas and proposals. Core strengths include creative concepts development, writing and editing, and cross-cultural communication.

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Creative Concepts Development

- Conceptualized, wrote, and successfully marketed a proposal to a major new customer in the U.S. government. Generated innovative ideas targeted to identified needs, translated the best idea into a written plan, and sold the idea to management. Result: Submitted a grant proposal that brought in an \$80,000 contract for a new area of work from a highly sought-after customer.
- Developed two additional contract proposals based on lessons learned from earlier proposal experience. Networked with potential clients, developed ideas, and created a mock game to field-test and refine the ideas. Result: Produced two award-winning proposals and substantial new work for the business unit.
- Created several intranet websites and concepts for web-based informational newsletters for small businesses. Conducted focused interviews with key company officials, created an appropriate communications theme, and developed a website to market products to clientele and an intranet newsletter for company staff. Result: Improved website sales and informed and motivated staff through a monthly updated newsletter.

Writing and Editing

- Wrote and edited press releases, country background reports, and briefs on developing countries for USAID-sponsored contracts. Identified information resources, researched key issues, and provided extensive writing and editing. Result: Published briefs that were utilized for worldwide public distribution.
- Wrote and edited abstracts on U.S. intelligence and national security issues from the Truman to the Clinton administrations. Researched and reviewed information; developed summaries on key points of interest. Result: Published and sold well-received abstracts to national libraries and universities.
- Developed several briefing reports for the U.S. State Department, on issues such as a dispute between the French Judicial branch and the French government and political unrest in Algeria. Researched the events in French, identified the major issues, and prepared summary briefs. Result: Received requests for additional briefs to be developed based on value of initial briefs.

Name

Page 2

Cross-Cultural Communication

- Translated status reports from English to French and correspondence from Spanish to English. Edited correspondence in French and Spanish; became a key contact source for all three languages.
- Functioned as a public relations facilitator for an important business conference with a large international firm. Assisted in the development of communication strategies; wrote information releases in French, Spanish and English. Interacted with journalists, businesses, and officials from several countries. Result: Received formal acknowledgment for the quality of the communication strategies as being an important contributing factor to a highly successful event.
- Taught conversational French and led English as a Second Language conversation groups for community-based programs as a volunteer (2011-13). Assisted in French and Spanish translation and interpretation of promotional materials to reach target audiences.

EXPERIENCE**Writer/Editor, External Affairs****2006-present**

The World Bank Group, Washington, D.C.

Writer/Editor/Translator (consultant)**2000-2006**

Institute for Research and Development, Fairfax, VA

Editing Assistant**1997-2000**

National Security Archives, Washington, D.C.

Marketing Assistant**1996-1997**

Agence France-Presse, Washington, D.C.

Junior Foreign Service Officer (Intern)**1995-1996**

U.S. Department of State, Bordeaux, France

EDUCATION

M.A., International Affairs, Washington, D.C., 1998

B.A., Romance Language and Literature, University of Chicago, 1995 Academic Scholarship recipient

LANGUAGES:

French (fluent reading, writing, oral) Spanish (proficient reading, writing, oral)

How to Write a Career Profile

(also known as a Career Summary or Executive Summary)

Placed at the top of your résumé underneath your contact information, this is prime real estate in a CV/résumé. Its purpose is to show an overview of your core qualifications and the value you bring to an employer. It can be a paragraph overview or it can be a paragraph followed by a bullet listing of core qualifications, special skills, certifications, or areas of expertise.

The summary can include:

- > How much and kinds of relevant experience you have
- > Key qualifications and skills (These are the keywords and key phrases that are most important to your field and to the position)
- > Specialty area of expertise and experience
- > Differentiators (what makes you unique when compared to other candidates)

One model to use for developing your Career Profile is that each sentence answers a different question for the reader.

- > **1st sentence:** Define yourself in terms of your career. This can be by position, title, field, or a specialized functional area or area of expertise within your field.
- > **2nd sentence:** Identify the strengths you are promoting about yourself.
- > **3rd sentence:** Provide additional depth or breadth. Can also define the kinds of activities you would like to do that are required for the positions you are seeking.
- > **4th sentence:** Define unique traits as they relate to the position and organization. Here's a chance to showcase soft skills (personal qualities or strengths that support the job). Think about what others say about you, what you are known for, what people come to you for when asking for your help, etc.

Phrases that may be helpful to you as you develop your Career Profile:

- > Over X years of experience in..., Extensive experience in..., Expertise in...
- > Proven strengths in..., Major strengths include..., Skilled in..., Core strengths include...
- > Proven ability to..., Proven success in..., Proven record of ..., Excellent track record of..., Demonstrated X capabilities with...
- > Strong background in..., Background includes...
- > Recognized for..., Recognized as a..., Consistently acknowledged as a...
- > Country experience includes...
- > Regional experience includes...
- > Sectors include...
- > Languages...



Examples:

#1: CAREER SUMMARY

Skilled learning specialist, with over 10 years of experience in public, private, and nonprofit organizations. Proven strengths in needs assessment, program design and delivery, and program evaluation. Strong background in working with all levels of management and staff, consistently improving organizational performance through classroom and virtual programs. Recognized for facilitating active learning and incorporating innovative learning strategies to motivate others to achieve their personal best.

#2: PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Extensive experience in environmental policy and strategy development for global development organizations, with expertise in carbon finance. Proven background in carbon fund operations in the South Asia, East Asia and Pacific regions. Field experience includes land use, land-use change, and forestry. Recognized for developing highly effective partnerships with stakeholders to establish and implement carbon fund programs.

- > REDD + Readiness
- > Capacity building
- > BioCarbon Fund (BioCF)
- > Portfolio management
- > Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF)
- > Carbon finance training
- > ERPA
- > Development finance

#3: PROFILE

Over 10 years of experience leading administrative support staff to provide comprehensive program support services. Proven organizational and time management skills, prioritizing and delegating work to ensure that tight deadlines are met. Recognized for applying strong research and analytical skills to manage and track data, produce reports, and strategically respond to client issues. Committed to demonstrating sensitivity in handling confidential information.

#4 SKILLS

Microsoft Office (Advanced Proficiency) | SAP | TRS | LARS | LMS | Adobe Acrobat | SharePoint

Action Verbs

Powerful action verbs help your achievements to come out clearly, emphasize the contributions you have made in former positions and increase your chances to be found and shortlisted if an employer uses software support. Here is a list of ACTION VERBS you can use.

accelerated	conceived	examined	joined	provided	studied
accepted	conceptualized	exceeded	justified	published	submitted
accomplished	concluded	executed	kept	purchased	substituted
achieved	conducted	exhibited	launched	pursued	succeeded
acquired	confirmed	expanded	learned	qualified	suggested
adapted	constructed	expedited	leased	quantified	summarized
added	consulted	experienced	led	ranked	supervised
addressed	contacted	experimented	leveraged	rated	supported
adjusted	contracted	explained	licensed	received	surveyed
administered	controlled	explored	linked	recognized	synthesized
advanced	converted	expressed	located	recommended	tackled
advised	conveyed	facilitated	logged	reconciled	targeted
allocated	convinced	filed	maintained	recovered	taught
analyzed	cooperated	filmed	managed	recruited	tested
announced	coordinated	financed	mandated	reduced	trained
answered	corrected	finished	matched	referred	translated
anticipated	counseled	forecast	measured	refined	transported
applied	created	formulated	mediated	regulated	traveled
appointed	critiqued	fostered	mentioned	related	treated
appraised	cut	found	mentored	released	troubleshoot
approved	decided	founded	met	renegotiated	turned
arranged	decreased	fulfilled	modified	reorganized	uncovered
assessed	defined	furthered	monitored	replaced	unified
assigned	delegated	gathered	motivated	replied	updated
assisted	delivered	generated	moved	reported	upgraded
assumed	demonstrated	guaranteed	multiplied	represented	used
attained	described	guided	named	requested	validated
audited	designated	handled	negotiated	researched	visited
augmented	designed	helped	observed	resolved	worked
authorized	detected	hired	obtained	responded	wrote

awarded	determined	identified	opened	reevaluated
balanced	developed	illustrated	operated	retained
bargained	devised	implemented	ordered	revamped
bolstered	diagnosed	improved	organized	reversed
boosted	directed	improvised	outlined	reviewed
bought	discovered	incorporated	oversaw	revised
briefed	discussed	increased	paid	salvaged
brought	disseminated	indexed	participated	saved
budgeted	distributed	indicated	partnered	scheduled
built	documented	influenced	perceived	screened
cataloged	earned	informed	performed	secured
caused	edited	initiated	persuaded	selected
certified	educated	insisted	pioneered	serviced
chaired	eliminated	inspected	placed	set
changed	employed	inspired	planned	settled
clarified	enabled	installed	prepared	shaped
classified	encouraged	instituted	presented	simplified
closed	endorsed	instructed	prevented	solved
coached	engineered	insured	priced	sorted
collaborated	enhanced	integrated	prioritized	sought
collected	enlarged	interacted	processed	specified
combined	enlisted	interpreted	procured	spoke
communicated	enriched	interviewed	produced	staffed
compared	ensured	introduced	programmed	stimulated
compiled	equipped	invented	projected	strategized
completed	established	investigated	promoted	streamlined
composed	estimated	involved	prompted	strengthened
computed	evaluated	issued	proposed	structured

Tips for Preparing a Statement of Interest (SOI)

- > The Statement of Interest (SOI) is similar to a cover letter but it can be longer (2 pages maximum) and does not use business format.
- > Read the announcement carefully and highlight or underline all of the items in both the Duties and Accountabilities and Selection Criteria sections that match your experiences, skills, and education.
- > Prepare statements describing your qualifications for each of the items you have highlighted or underlined. What examples can you provide? You can showcase a few specific details from your résumé. Select and describe relevant experiences, showing their significance to the position. Make the connection for the reader in an interesting way.
- > The SOI does not need to be chronological. Lead with the most relevant information or an impactful statement or story.
- > Avoid using general terms such as several, numerous, various, or familiar with.
- > Limit self-reported behaviors/skills, such as “excellent communicator” or “good people skills.” Instead, describe an experience that validates the skills and/or behaviors.
- > Keep the information in your application relevant to the vacancy announcement. Information not related to the vacancy can cause the reader to wonder if you read the announcement.
- > It is not necessary to describe the issues related to the position. The readers should be aware of them.
- > Limit your text. Two pages are sufficient.
- > Proofread carefully to eliminate any grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors. Do not rely on spell check to catch grammar and spelling errors!

Statement of Interest Format

> **1st paragraph:**

Begin with interest statement that emphasizes why you are interested in this position and the value you will bring. Ask yourself and address: Why are you interested in this specific position? What draws you to this position? Avoid describing how you will benefit from the position if selected. The reader wants to know your motivations.

> **Following paragraphs:**

Use a 2-page maximum length: Use your prepared statements describing your qualifications for the Duties and Accountabilities, Selection Criteria, and Competencies of the announcement. Include specific accomplishments or experiences that are of greatest interest and relevance to this position and unit.

> **Closing paragraph:**

Thank the reader for his/her consideration and review of your attached CV and indicate you look forward to the opportunity to meet to further discuss how you can meet their needs.

CV/Résumé and Statement of Interest Checklist

Layout and Appearance

	Yes	No
- Name is at top of page and in bold and larger font.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Address, phone number, and email (LinkedIn URL optional) are easy to read.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Résumé is appropriate length (generally 2 pages for experienced professionals).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- There are 1" (1/2" minimum) margins all the way around.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Font size is clearly legible (usually 11 or 12 pt; 10 is minimum, depending on font style).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Formatting is consistent throughout (font size, bullet sizes, heading sizes).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Verb tenses are in the present for current jobs, unless an accomplishment stated has been completed. Verb tenses are in the past for previous jobs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Weight and balance are clear: positions at the WBG and those with greatest relevance to the job you are seeking have greater length and description.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- The most important information is on the top half of the résumé.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Headings (Name and Page Number) are placed on Page 2 and subsequent pages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- You have not overused bullets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- In about a 10-second scan of your document, the reader's eye is drawn to your most important points.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Content

- Summary statement at top shows direction, focus, an overview of your strengths, and the value you bring.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Relevant jobs and experiences are included that show you are qualified for the position.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Keywords are used in the summary and throughout the résumé.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Statements demonstrate accomplishments rather than routine tasks and duties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Each statement begins with an action verb. Responsible for is not an action verb!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Metrics are included, when possible, and/or the impact/results of your actions. A model to use is: Action verb + action taken on your part + results.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Statements support and demonstrate the summary at the top of the résumé.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- There are no complete sentences. There are no I statements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Descriptions are clear, concise, compelling, and confident.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- The résumé is free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Statement of Interest

- It is two pages or less.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- It addresses the key elements in the job announcement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- It begins with an interest statement that shows why you are interested in the position and the value you will bring.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- It follows with an unfolding of your background as it relates to the position. It has paragraphs that describe your relevant experience and qualifications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- It includes accomplishments that are of greatest interest and relevance to the position.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- It is free of grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SELF-DIRECTED RESOURCE

- Interviewing Successfully
- ✓ Creating a Strong Résumé
- Conduct and Effective Job Search



WORLD BANK GROUP