

Use Numbers to Highlight Your Accomplishments

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If you were an employer looking at a resume, which of the following entries would impress you more?

- Wrote news releases.
- Wrote 25 news releases in a three-week period under daily deadlines.

Clearly, the second statement carries more weight. Why? Because it uses numbers to quantify the writer's [accomplishment](#), giving it a context that helps the interviewer understand the degree of difficulty involved in the task.

Numbers are powerful resume tools that will help your accomplishments get the attention they deserve from prospective employers. With just a little thought, you can find effective ways to quantify your successes on your resume. Here are a few suggestions:

Think Money

Organizations are and always will be concerned about money. So as you contemplate your accomplishments and prepare to present them on your resume, think about ways you've saved, earned or managed money in your internships, part-time jobs and extracurricular activities so far. A few possibilities that might appear on a typical resume:

- Identified, researched and recommended a new Internet service provider, cutting the company's online costs by 15 percent.
- Wrote prospect letter that has brought in more than \$25,000 in donations so far.
- Managed a student organization budget of more than \$7,000.

Think Time

You've heard the old saying, "Time is money," and it's true. Companies and organizations are constantly looking for ways to save time and do things more efficiently. They're also necessarily concerned about meeting deadlines, both internal and external. So whatever you can do on your resume to show that you can save time, make time or manage time will grab your reader's immediate attention. Here are some time-oriented entries that might appear on a typical resume:

- Assisted with twice-monthly payroll activities, ensuring employees were paid as expected and on time.
- Suggested procedures that decreased average order-processing time from 10 minutes to five minutes.

Think Amounts

It's very easy to neglect mentioning how much or how many of something you've produced or overseen. There's a tendency instead to simply pluralize your accomplishments -- e.g., "wrote news releases" or "developed lesson plans" -- without including important specifics -- e.g., "wrote 25 news releases" or "developed lesson plans for two classes of 20 students each."

Don't fall into the trap of excluding numbers. Instead, include amounts, like these:

- Recruited 25 members for a new student environmental organization.
- Trained five new employees on restaurant operations procedures.
- Created process that bolstered production 25 percent

The more you focus on money, time and amounts in relation to your accomplishments, the better you'll present your successes and highlight your potential -- and the more you'll realize just how much you really have to offer prospective employers. Add it all up, and you'll see that playing the numbers game is yet another way to convince employers that you should be a part of their equation for success.