Developing CAR Accomplishment Statements

Past accomplishments illustrate added value to an organization and demonstrate skills.

**Examples of Accomplishments**

* Created or designed a new product, program, or service
* Achieved results above goals/expectations
* Achieved same results with fewer resources
* Resolved a difficult problem
* Met or beat deadlines
* Implemented cost-saving procedures
* Improved systems or operations
* Contributed to major decisions affecting the company/organization
* Ensured compliance with policies and procedures
* Achieved results beyond goals or expectations
* Received special recognition/award

Though interesting, these achievements are not complete and only stating the result. Every achievement should be put in perspective. What was the challenge that you had to overcome, what actions did you took? Ask yourself:

* *What constraints did I have to deal with?*
* *Was I given all of the information to be efficient or did I had to deal with ambiguity?*
* *Was I in a stable or unstable working environment?*
* *Was I emotionally challenged and had to keep the focus?*
* *Etc.*

Quantify above accomplishments if possible and display how the action benefited the organization. The benefit may be in the form of increased efficiencies, cost savings, time saved, or increased revenues. **Generating Accomplishments Statements for Interviewing**

The **CAR** approach to creating accomplishment statements the easiest to use and can then be leverage to PAR or STAR (Problem, Action, Result or Situation, Task, Action, Result):

* **C** is for the **Challenge** or situation in your job that needed attention (ambiguity, time constraints, fast moving environment, work overload, absence or limited support, etc.)
* **A** is for the **Action** taken to resolve the problem, with what focus?

**R** is for the **Result** obtained by taking the action

**SAMPLES**

**Challenge:** Merge branch ATM and computer networks of acquired bank into existing system while being on the job for only one month.

**Action:** Drafted strategic plan, selected expert team, ran tests and implemented conversion, focusing on applying past merging experience from another industry to this one, while adapting the strategy accordingly.

**Result:**  Beat critical deadline by two weeks without service interruption and with minimal problems. Senior management and branches were extremely pleased.

**Verbal or written 10 sec. pitch about the CAR accomplishment statement**:
“*Directed successful merger of ATM and computer networks of acquired bank, achieving the most efficient conversion two weeks before deadline.”*

**Skills highlighted:** Time management, creativity, analytical thinking.

Demonstrating Competencies

During an interview situation, storytelling is the best way to demonstrate how you think and behave in a professional context with some given constraints. It’s “show don’t tell”.

Consider the C-A-R Model (Challenge – Action – Result) to document your examples.

This will help you when answering competency questions within application forms and interviews and also to help you identify any gaps within your competency portfolio that need to be developed. You can consider any of your experience related to your past employment, education background or extra-curricular activities such as voluntarism or performing arts/sports.

Prepare your CAR Stories

**Prepare: Pick 5 amongst the most in demand soft skills from Master and MBA students and craft your CAR story around. See at the end of the exercise for some more insight on how to complete your preparation.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Soft Skills** | **Work Experience** | **Education** | **Extra-curricular** |
| Multicultural Teamwork | **C**=respond faster to customers**A**=evaluated, selected, and trained web-based system**R**=improved response time by 30%; reduced error rate 25%. | **C**= Address label company hired our senior marketing class to research alumni associations.**A**=worked with team 8 to execute 3-month market research project across all 50 US states.**R**=Company accepted recommended to not pursue alumni associations. Saved potential wasted investment. | **C**=Creating an external networking event in collaboration with professional people from the work market.**A**=Created an internal Club structure that fostered collaboration and exchange**R**= Students connected 500 professionals, some got an internship. |
| Cross-culturalComm. | C=A=R= | C=A=R= | C=A=R= |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Adaptability | C=A=R= | C=A=R= | C=A=R |
| ProblemSolving/Creativity | C=A=R= | C=A=R= | C=A=R= |
| Attention toDetail | C=A=R= | C=A=R= | C=A=R= |
| DecisionMaking | C=A=R= | C=A=R= | C=A=R= |
| Leadership | C=A=R= | C=A=R= | C=A=R= |
| TimeManagement | C=A=R= | C=A=R= | C=A=R= |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Resilience | C=A=R= | C=A=R= | C=A=R= |
| Negotiation/Persuasiveness | C=A=R= | C=A=R= | C=A=R= |
| ClientFocused | C=A=R= | C=A=R= | C=A=R= |
| Initiative | C=A=R= | C=A=R= | C=A=R= |

Be ProfessionalBecause your stories are related to your PAST experience, **you need to validate** with the interviewer if that **story was relevant to address their specific job need, and how**. Therefore, you must prepare some feedback questions to ask after telling your CAR story, such as:

* *Can I ask how do you see this story as relevant to this position?*
* *Let me ask you please, would the initiative I took in this story be welcome in your company?*
* *How does that story connect with your company’s reality? How much should I adjust my approach in a similar situation?*
* *Could you tell me your feedback about the skills I have used and how I could take it to the next level, if I was given that position?*

Over all, your interviewing experience should be aimed at creating a dialogue, rather than a monologue. See the Interviewing Focus (IFA) Model to know more about this dynamic.