

Skills, Responsibilities, and Accomplishments

(Do you know the difference?)

What is a Skill?

According to the dictionary, a skill is:

- the ability, coming from one's knowledge, practice, aptitude, etc.; to do something well
- competent excellence in performance; expertness; dexterity

Skills, especially transferable skills, are non-job specific and acquired during an activity or life experiences. For students, consider all the activities in which you participate such as class projects, community activities, campus activities, part-time summer jobs, athletic activities, etc.

There are two categories of skills:

1. **Hard Skills:** Those things you have practiced enough to do well, often accompanied by a body of knowledge.

Examples of hard skills: database applications, programming, public speaking, engineering, researching

2. **Soft Skills:** Personal traits or personality type skills.

Examples of soft skills: energetic, hard-working, courteous, dedicated, dependable

What is a Responsibility?

According to the dictionary, a responsibility is:

- the state or fact of being responsible
- a person or thing for which one is responsible
- accountability, answerability

Often times in writing or preparing a résumé, individuals confuse responsibilities with accomplishments. While responsibilities (tasks) are very important to understand what you did, it is also important to know how well you did them, how often you did them, how many people you did them for, etc. This is the primary difference between a responsibility and an accomplishment.

Examples of responsibilities in a résumé:

1. Created and led activities for young campers
2. Selected as a mentor to underclassmen

What is an Accomplishment?

According to the dictionary, an accomplishment is:

- an act or instance of carrying into effect
- something done admirably or creditably
- achievement

Stated previously one often confuses responsibilities and accomplishments. For the purposes of a résumé try to quantify or qualify your responsibilities whenever possible. This provides a better understanding to the potential employer of the scope of your responsibilities.

Examples of accomplishments:

1. Received the Camp Counselor's Leadership Award for creating and leading activities for 63 campers ages 8-13
2. Selected to mentor 5 underclassmen while carrying a full class schedule

Remember when writing your résumé to quantify or qualify wherever possible!

Prepared by the StartSavvy® Team