

Toot Your Horn: What • So What • Now What

Purpose:

This activity helps you turn everyday work into clear, confident accomplishment statements you can use on your resume, LinkedIn, and in interviews without sounding braggy.

Step 1: WHAT did you do?

Just the facts. No fluff.

Prompt yourself with:

- What project, task, or responsibility did you own?
- What problem were you asked to solve?
- What action did **you** personally take?

Write it here:

 *Tip: Start with a verb. Avoid “helped,” “assisted,” or “supported” if you can.*

Step 2: SO WHAT? (Why it mattered)

This is where impact lives.

Prompt yourself with:

- What changed because of your work?
- Who benefited (team, customers, leadership, organization)?
- Did it save time, money, effort, or reduce risk?
- Did it improve quality, speed, or outcomes?

Write it here:

 *Tip: Metrics create context. Context creates clarity. And clarity shapes perception.*

Step 3: NOW WHAT? (Why it matters to the employer)

Connect your accomplishment to the role you’re targeting.

Prompt yourself with:

- What skill does this demonstrate?
- How does this align with the role you want next?
- What does this prove about how you add value?

Write it here:

 *Tip: Think in terms of transferability. What can you do again?*

Put It All Together

Now turn your answers into a strong accomplishment statement.

Formula:

Action + Impact + Value

Final Statement:

Where You Can Use This

Resume bullet points | LinkedIn “Experience” section | Interview answers | Networking conversations | Performance reviews

Reminder

If it felt easy for you, that doesn’t mean it wasn’t valuable. **If it made a difference, it deserves airtime.**

Next Steps: Strengthen Your Statement

Want to take this accomplishment further? Choose one (or both) of the options below:

- **Identify Transferable Skills**

If you’re changing roles or industries, focus on the skills behind your accomplishment, such as communication, problem-solving, organization, leadership, or customer service, and how they apply to different jobs.

 Visit workNet DuPage’s Job Search Toolbox for guidance on identifying and translating transferable skills.

- **Add Metrics to Show Value**

If possible, strengthen your statement by adding numbers or measurable outcomes (percentages, time saved, volume, scope, or results). Metrics provide context and help employers clearly see your impact.

 Visit workNet DuPage’s Job Search Toolbox for tips on adding met