Achievement Brainstormer

A duty is what you're expected to do. An achievement is what happened because you did it well. This worksheet helps you dig out achievements you didn't know you had.

Duties vs Achievements

Duty	Achievement
Processed invoices	Reduced invoice errors by 40% and cut processing time from 3 days to 4 hours
Filed documents	Created filing system that reduced document retrieval time by 60%
Met sales targets	Exceeded sales targets by 15% for eight consecutive quarters
Managed projects	Delivered $2m system implementation 3 weeks early and 12% under budget
Trained new staff	Developed onboarding program that reduced new hire ramp-up from 6 weeks to 3

The Achievement Excavation Exercise

Give each question a proper think. Write down whatever comes to mind, even if it seems small.

1. What would go wrong if you stopped showing up? What would fall apart first?

2. Forget achievements. What do you actually do, day to day? Which of those things are you better at than the person who had the job before you?

3. Has anyone, a boss, colleague, or client, ever said thank you for something specific? What was it?

4. What's the thing people always come to you for? The question only you can answer, the problem they bring to your desk?

5. Have you ever trained someone new? What did you teach them?

6. Think about the worst day at your last job. What went wrong? What did you do about it?

7. Has a process ever changed because of something you suggested or did differently?

8. Have you ever caught a mistake before it became a bigger problem? What was at stake?

9. What was a mess before you got involved and worked properly after?

10. If your replacement started tomorrow and called you for advice, what would you tell them?

11. Have you ever been given more responsibility, even informally? Why did someone trust your judgment?

12. What would your most supportive colleague say about you if someone asked?

The 'If You Disappeared' Test

If you vanished tomorrow, what would fall apart? What would stop getting done? What would people suddenly realize they'd taken for granted? That's your value.

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The 'So What?' Test

Every achievement needs to pass this test. Read it out loud. Then ask: so what? If you can't answer with something concrete, a number, a result, a change, keep digging.

Your Achievement Statement	So What? (The Impact)	Pass?

Quick Reframes

You Think	Reframe
"I just did my job"	You solved problems that someone was willing to pay for. That counts.
"Nothing interesting happened"	What felt routine to you might be genuinely impressive to someone outside your world.
"I don't have numbers"	Think about time saved, people helped, problems avoided, things that didn't break.

| "My job was boring" | Keeping things running smoothly when others couldn't is an achievement. Own it. |