

STAR Interviewing

S Situation	Detail the background. Provide a context. Where? When?
T Task	Describe the challenge and expectations. What needed to be done? Why?
A Action	Elaborate your specific action. What did you do? How? What tools did you use?
R Results	Explain the results: accomplishments, recognition, savings, etc. Quantify.

'STAR' Technique to Answer Behavioral Interview Questions

Use the STAR Method to tell a story:

S—Situation: Commence your answer with the background to your experience. Detail the circumstances of your involvement. Provide sufficient detail to develop a context to the rest of your narration.

T—Task: Describe the challenge (or opportunity) at hand: what needed to be done, what should you have done. Detail the outcome that was expected, constraints or conditions that needed to be satisfied.

A—Action: Elaborate your specific action(s) in response to the task. Specify analytical work, team effort or project coordination. Use “I” and “we” statements as appropriate.

R—Result: Explain the results of your efforts: what did you accomplish, what did you learn, how did your managers and team respond, how did your organization recognize you, etc. Wherever possible, quantify your achievements and improvements – e.g., “20% improvement in...” Make sure you’ve answered the question asked, and make sure you’ve communicated your experience and qualities to the interviewers.

SAMPLE STAR RESPONSE:

S – “Advertising revenue was falling off for my college newspaper, The Review, and large numbers of long-term advertisers were not renewing contracts.

T – My goal was to generate new ideas, materials and incentives that would result in at least a 15% increase in advertisers from the year before.

A – I designed a new promotional packet to go with the rate sheet and compared the benefits of The Review circulation with other ad media in the area. I also set up a special training session for the account executives with a professor who discussed competitive selling strategies

R – We signed contracts with 15 former advertisers for daily ads and five for special supplements. We increased our new advertisers by 20% over the same period last year.”

Sample Interview Questions

Practice answering these interview questions. Use the STAR Method for the behavioral questions:

Tell me about yourself.

- What are your long-range and short-range goals?
- What are your major strengths? Weaknesses?
- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
- What are your salary expectations?
- What qualifications do you have that make you feel that you will be successful in your field?
- What personal characteristics are necessary for success in (THIS POSITION/THIS FIELD)?
- How do you determine or evaluate success?
- What qualities should a successful (POSITION TITLE) possess?
- How do you spend your spare time? What are your hobbies?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- Do you have plans for continued study? An advanced degree?
- Do you think that your grades are a good indication of your academic achievement?
- Why are you interested in (THIS COMPANY)?
- What do you know about (THIS COMPANY)?
- What type of position are you most interested in?
- Tell us about a time you had a conflict with a co-worker
- Tell me about a time when you had to manage working on many tasks at the same time.
- What are you most passionate about?
- Describe a time when you had to convince others of a program or initiative.
- What parts of this job description are you most excited about?
- What parts of this job description seem like they might be a challenge to you?
- What characteristics would you look for in team members?
- What characteristics would you look for in a boss?
- What would you do if the priorities on a project you were working on changed suddenly?
- Give an example of a situation in which you had to collect all facts available for solving a problem. How did you analyze the information to arrive at a decision?
- Describe a situation when you had to persuade someone recently to accept an idea/plan/product.
- Tell me about a mistake you made at work and how you dealt with it.
- Tell me about a recent problem you faced at work and how you found the best solution.
- What kind of industry reading do you do?

Ending questions:

- Do you have any questions for us?
- Is there anything else?