



THE STAR METHOD

Responding to behavioral-based interview questions by discussing a specific Situation, Task, Action, and Result.

Situation: Describe a *specific* event or situation with sufficient details.

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

Task: Articulate the goal that you were working toward.

Example: 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.

Action: Define the actions **YOU** took/contributed to effectively address the situation or ensure project success. Use the word "I," not "we" when describing actions.

Example: 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 School of Business Administration professor who discussed competitive selling strategies.

Result: Describe the positive outcomes of your actions. What did you accomplish? What did you learn?

Example: We signed contracts with 15 former advertisers for daily ads and 5 for special supplements. We increased our new advertisers by 20% over the same period last year.

Be sure to follow ALL elements of the STAR method.

How to Prepare for a Behavioral Interview

- Recall recent situations that indicate favorable behaviors or actions, especially involving work experience, leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning, and customer service.
- Prepare short descriptions of each situation; be ready to provide details without rambling.
- Ensure each story has a beginning, middle, and an end and be prepared to describe the situation, including the task at hand, your action, and the outcome or result.
- Be sure the outcome or result reflects positively on you (even if the result itself was not favorable, but your actions highlight your strengths in the face of adversity).
- Be honest. Don't embellish or omit any part of the story. The interviewer will find out if your story is built on a weak foundation.
- Be specific. Don't generalize about several events; give a detailed accounting of one event.
- Vary your examples; don't take them all from just one area of your life or professional background.



Sample Behavioral Interview Questions

Practice using the STAR Method on these common behavioral interviewing questions:

- Describe a situation in which you successfully convinced someone to see things your way.
- Describe a stressful situation in which you demonstrated your coping skills.
- Provide a specific example of using good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- Share an example when you set a goal and were able to meet or achieve it.
- Describe a time when you had to use your presentation skills to influence someone's opinion.
- Provide a specific example when you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
- Please describe an important written document you were required to complete.
- Explain a situation when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done.
- Share a time when you had too many things to do, and you were required to prioritize tasks.
- Describe an example of when you had to make a split second decision.
- What is your typical way of dealing with conflict? Please share an example.
- Describe a time you were able to successfully deal with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa).
- Explain a difficult decision you've made in the last year.
- Describe an example of when you tried to accomplish something, but failed.
- Share an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead.
- Explain a recent situation in which you dealt with a very upset customer or co-worker.
- Share an example of you successfully motivating others.
- Provide an example of you delegating a project effectively.
- Describe an example of you applying fact-finding skills to solve a problem.
- Share an experience when you missed an obvious solution to a problem.
- Describe a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventive measures.
- Explain a situation when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
- Did you ever have to fire a friend? If so, please describe.
- Describe a time when you set your sights too high (or too low).

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