

The STAR Technique

Master the Art of Storytelling

The purpose of storytelling is to provide proof to the employer that you will be an excellent employee and meet their needs. Merely claiming that you have leadership qualities or excellent communication skills is not enough. You must support your claims with vivid examples. People remember best those things that are locked in their minds as pictures. You need examples, stories and anecdotes that describe your successes from the past.

Key Information in Telling Your Story:

Situation: The situation as you came into it.

Task: The problems and challenges you faced and tasks to be done/problems to solve.

Action: Your analysis, recommendations and solutions implemented.

Results: The results that were obtained.

Steps to Using the STAR Technique:

- 1. Recall 10-15 experiences that you are proud of:** Think about what skills each experience illustrates and this will help you to decide which stories you will tell to different employers.
- 2. Write 100-300 word stories:** Quantify results whenever possible to show accomplishments (e.g. increased sales by 25%). Use word pictures to make it memorable. Create before and after pictures that highlight your impact on the situation. Describe how smooth or effective things became. Create the strongest contrast possible without exaggerating.
- 3. Practice storytelling:** Do it aloud so that you can be comfortable in effectively telling each story without stumbling over your words. Practice until you can tell it in 1-2 minutes.
- 4. Vary your technique:** You can use a non-work experience with a recent work experience or combine a distant experience with a more recent one to show that you have had “x” ability/skill for a long period of time.
- 5. Slip your stories into your answers to interview questions whenever you can:** This is one of the most effective techniques you can use as an interviewee. You can add these stories regardless of whether the interviewer asks you the right questions or not. You control the content of what is said. To slip a story into an answer, you can say, “*For example . . .*” and then begin with your story.