



The **STAR method** is a structured manner of responding to behavioral-based interview questions by discussing the situation, task, action, and result of the situation you are describing.

**Situation:** *Describe the situation that you were in and what you needed to accomplish. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. The experience can be from a previous job or internship, or any relevant event.*

**Task:** *What was the goal that you were working toward?*

**Action:** *Describe the actions you took to address the situation with an appropriate amount of detail and keep the focus on you. What specific steps did you take and what was your particular contribution? It is important to remember that an interview is a place to be confident in yourself, so don't be shy in explaining your success.*

**Result:** *Describe the outcome of your actions. What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn? Make sure your answer contains multiple positive results. Also, if your task had quantifiable results, include those as well.*

Make sure that you follow all parts of the STAR method. Be as specific as possible at all times, without rambling or including unimportant details. Often, students have to be prompted to include their results, so try to include them without being asked. Eliminate any examples that do not paint you in a positive light. However, keep in mind that some examples that have negative results (such as "lost the game") can highlight your strengths in the face of adversity.

## HOW TO PREPARE FOR A BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW

- Recall recent situations that show favorable behaviors or actions, especially involving course work, work experience, leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning, and customer service.
- Prepare short descriptions of each situation; be ready to give details if asked.
- Be sure each story has a beginning, middle, and an end.
- Be sure the outcome or result reflects positively on you (even if the result itself was not favorable).
- 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.
- Vary your examples; don't take them all from just one area of your life.

## Sample Behavior Based Questions

These questions ask for examples of past situations which demonstrate whether you have the job skills and work behaviors that the employer wants. Give specific examples to these questions. Describe for the interviewer the situation/challenge, your actions/behaviors, and the results/outcomes.

- Tell me about a time when you found yourself faced with a new and seemingly tough problem. What did you do? What was the result? What did you learn? What did you like least about this experience?
- What was the most important project you've worked on in your career? What special skills and/or knowledge did you need to accomplish your role in that project?
- Describe a situation in which you had to translate business goals into specific individual goals. Explain how you did this, how you communicated it and the goals you established.
- Can you share one of the most difficult decisions you have made? Why was it difficult?
- Creative approaches and solutions often mean stepping back from regimented ways of thinking. What techniques do you use to break out of the structured mind-set and intuitively develop concepts and ideas?
- Give me an example of a work situation that was stressful. How did you handle it?
- Have you implemented any new procedures or techniques into your job recently?
- Give an example when your listening skills played an effective role in your effectiveness.
- Describe a situation where you had to persuade another team member or peer to follow a particular course of action. What did you take into consideration? What was the outcome?
- What are some of the largest or most demanding groups to which you have made presentations? Tell me about one (or two) of these presentations.
- Compare the terms effort and results. Can you share an example when your effort did not match your desired result?
- Tell me about a time when you were participating in a team project and somebody was not pulling his/her weight. What did you do to help the team finish the project on time?
- Describe a specific problem that you solved for an employer or professor. How did you approach the problem? What was the outcome?
- Give me an example of a time that your communication skills helped you accomplish a task.