

## THE STAR INTERVIEWING METHOD

The STAR method is a structured manner of responding to a behavioral-based interview question by discussing the specific **S**ituation, **T**ask, **A**ction, and **R**esult of the situation you are describing.

<b>Situation:</b>	Describe the situation that you were in or the task that 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. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.
<b>Task:</b>	What goal were you working toward?
<b>Action:</b>	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 <u>you</u> take and what was <u>your</u> particular contribution? Be careful that you don't describe what the team or group did when talking about a project, but what you actually did. Use the word "I," not "we" when describing actions.
<b>Result:</b>	Describe the outcome of your actions and don't be shy about taking credit for your behavior. What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn? Make sure your answer contains multiple positive results.

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

### **SAMPLE STAR RESPONSE:**

**Situation:** During my internship last summer, I was responsible for managing various events.

**Task:** I noticed that attendance at these events had dropped by 30% over the past 3 years and I wanted to do something to improve these numbers.

**Action:** I designed a new promotional packet to go out to the local community businesses. I also included a rating sheet to collect feedback on our events and organized internal round table discussions to raise awareness of the issue with our employees.

**Result:** We utilized some of the wonderful ideas we received from the community, made our internal systems more efficient and visible, and raised attendance by 18% the first year.

### **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, i.e., be ready 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).
- 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.