

Using the STAR Interview Method

The STAR interview method is a way of answering behavioral based interview questions. Have you ever been asked, “Describe a time when . . .” or “Tell me about a time that you . . .” those are behavioral based questions. Employers use these types of questions to learn how you performed in the past to determine how you might perform in the future at their company. Specifically, they are about how you have handled certain work situations, and require competency-based answers. **STAR** is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, Result. Provided below are examples of how one might outline their answers.

Situation	Task	Action	Result	STAR Interview Answer
Tell me about a time when you worked well on a team.				
Summer camp All the counselors had to assemble a ropes course.	Get the ropes course up and operational within 24 hours to be ready for the campers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We had to select a leader. I was selected. ✓ I divided counselors into various teams based on their strengths. ✓ I oversaw/managed the work from set-up to completion, ensuring safety and quality. 	Ropes course was completed within 14 hours and we had minimal adjusting to do when the first group of campers went through it.	Over the summer I served as camp counselor at Kanikuk. We were tasked with getting a ropes course up and running within 24 hours so it would be ready for the campers. I divided the counselors into teams based on their strengths – so some read the instructions and explained it, others who were more manually dexterous began assembling. Others tested out the set-up and served as quality control and safety. We were able to get the course up and running within 14 hours, and the first set of campers successfully completed the course.
Tell me about a time when you solved a problem.				
Garbage was piling up on a South Florida beach and it was polluting the beach and hurting the sea turtles.	Decided to do something about it. Talked to friends and they suggested doing a beach clean-up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Created a signup genius ✓ Recruited friends to help and sign up ✓ Got necessary materials to collect trash ✓ Directed volunteers. 	Cleaned up a 2 mile stretch of beach and collected 6 bags of trash. Featured on the local news.	I live about a mile from the beach and go there several times a week. I noticed that there was a lot of trash piling up and that it might be an obstacle for sea turtles who were laying eggs. My school really emphasizes being a good citizen and so I organized a group of friends to help me clean-up the beach. I first created a signup genius to determine best day and time for everyone. Then I got heavy duty trash bags, trash picker-upper sticks, and gloves. I divided our team of eight people into quarter miles strips along the beach. Within about four hours we had collected six bags of trash. And, the local news happened to be out that morning and featured me and my friends. I think the turtles were happy.

Your turn to practice. Complete the following:

Describe a time when you had to overcome an obstacle.

S	T	A	R	Put it all together in an interview answer:
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Tell me about a time when you went above and beyond what was expected.

S	T	A	R	Put it all together in an interview answer:
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Describe a time when you really were in a state of “flow” on a work project. You lost track of time and really enjoyed what you were working on doing.

S	T	A	R	Put it all together in an interview answer:
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