

ANSWERING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS USING THE STAR METHOD

Since employers often view past behavior as the best predictor of future behavior, candidates can give interviewers information about how they can perform a job by supporting their statements with specific examples of their experiences. The STAR method (Situation or Task, Action, Result) is a way of structuring your answers so they are clear and concise and tell the interviewer everything they need to know. Think of a SPECIFIC example of when you demonstrated a behavior, and then discuss the situation or task with which you were faced, the actions you took regarding the situation/task, and the result of your actions. Remember that you can draw your material to answer behavioral questions from a number of different sources (i.e. academic projects, community service, leadership roles, extra-curricular activities, internships, full/part-time work etc.).

EXAMPLES:

“Describe a conflict you had with a supervisor/co-worker/colleague and the process you used to resolve it.”

AN ARTICULATE ANSWER FROM A CANDIDATE:

Situation/Task - “Last semester, I was working with a group on a project for a class. We needed to decide on a topic and determine the data that needed to be analyzed. A number of people in the group became argumentative and we could not come to a consensus as to what direction to take.”

Actions - “I decided to take the lead and suggested that we sit down and outline all of our options so we could determine exactly where we actually disagreed.”

Results- “Once we saw the points of contention, we were able to discuss the matter more productively and make a decision. In the end, we were able to work well together and we were able to pull off a great project. The professor said that it was one of the best organized that she had ever seen!”

“Describe a situation where you were able to achieve a particularly challenging goal.”

AN ARTICULATE ANSWER FROM A CANDIDATE:

Situation/Task - “Advertising revenue was falling off for my college newspaper, *the Stetson Reporter*, and large numbers of long-term advertisers were not renewing their contracts.”

Actions - “I responded by designing a new promotional packet that compared the benefits of the *Reporter* circulation with other ad media in the area, so that advertisers could see the value in our ads.

Results - “As a result we signed contracts with 15 former advertisers for daily ads and five for special supplements. We increased our new advertisers by 20% (quantities are always good) over the same period last year.”