

MALONE CENTER FOR CAREER ENGAGEMENT

STAR METHOD INTERVIEW PREPARATION GUIDE

“Tell us about a time when you utilized initiative to solve a problem.” Your stomach is in knots, your palms are sweating, your heart is racing, and now, you’re drawing a blank. Interviewing is intimidating and we understand how difficult it can be to showcase your skills and value in a stressful situation. Below, we will outline how to use a technique called the STAR method to help you both prepare for and answer some of the most difficult behavioral interview questions. Employers use these questions to gain a better understanding of your past behavior, and how that will translate to your future behavior as a potential employee.

STAR STANDS FOR

Situation: Set the scene and give the necessary details of your example.

Task: Describe what your responsibility was in that situation.

Action: Explain exactly what steps you took to address it.

Result: Share what outcomes your actions achieved.

EXAMPLE

Question: Tell me about a time when you utilized initiative to solve a problem.

Situation: For the past two years, I’ve been involved with the Environmental Action Group on campus. This organization focuses on educating the campus and Greenville community on sustainable business practices and hosts events to encourage engagement.

Task: To kick-off the school year, we decided to host a seminar and dinner for students and local community members.

Action: I organized and led a committee of 5 fellow students and managed the budget for the event. I delegated responsibilities and primarily focused on the content of the seminar and marketing. Using social media, faculty collaboration, and print media, we ended up with around 75 RSVP’s.

Result: The event was a success; however, our attendance did drop from the original RSVP count. 55 people attended and we received positive feedback from the community. I learned the importance of time management and delegation to put on a quality event.

HOW TO PREPARE

Spend time reflecting on your experiences both in and out of the classroom. Focus on brainstorming specific examples of your skills. To get started, focus on transferable skills that any employer would want such as problem solving, teamwork, communication, leadership, global/intercultural fluency, etc.

TEAMWORK, PROBLEM-SOLVING, LEADERSHIP, AND COMMUNICATION

See if you can come up with 2-3 examples for each skill. The goal is to have an “arsenal” of specific examples ready for behavioral-based questions.

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STAR ACTIVITY

Practice using the STAR method on the following interview questions . . .

Question: Tell me about a time when you worked effectively under pressure.

<p>Situation:</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Task:</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Action:</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Result:</p> <hr/> <hr/>

Question: Give an example of a goal you didn't meet and how you handled it.

<p>Situation:</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Task:</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Action:</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Result:</p> <hr/> <hr/>