

S.T.A.R. Method

Stephen F. Austin State University | Center for Career and Professional Development

As an interview candidate, you will find yourself being asked a variety of questions by the employer to learn more about how your prior experience and skills meet the needs of the employer and position. Therefore, “the proof is in the pudding,” as they say. It’s great to identify that you have a skill, or a certain characteristic, but telling the employer a detailed story of how you developed the skill will portray a more vivid justification of your experience. As a result, this will allow the employer to better understand how your skills support the needs of the position. So, how do you become a better storyteller to elaborate on your skills? The S.T.A.R. Method is a great way to begin wrapping your mind around your past experiences and generate stories with a nice, easy flow for the listener. See below for a detailed explanation of how this candidate responded to the following question:

Give an example of a situation that you were involved in that resulted in a positive outcome.

SITUATION	<p>Tell the employer about what was going on. Describe a situation that you experienced.</p> <p><i>“During my internship I was responsible for managing various events.”</i></p>
TASK	<p>What did you need to do in the situation? Describe a task, or a few, that needed to be identified and addressed.</p> <p><i>“I noticed that attendance at these events had dropped by 30% over the past 3 years, so I wanted to improve these numbers.”</i></p>
ACTION	<p>Talk about what you actually did to achieve the task. What action was taken to appropriately handle the situation and task to showcase core competencies from past employment opportunities?</p> <p><i>“I designed a new promotional packet to go out to local businesses. I also included a rating sheet to collect feedback on our events and organized a focus group.”</i></p>
RESULT	<p>Identify what happened in the end. Discuss the achieved result relaying the outcome of the situation, task, and action. By following this structure, you will be able to better articulate not only that you have a skill, but how you developed or actively used the skill in the past.</p> <p><i>“We implemented some of the wonderful ideas we received from the community, made our internal systems more efficient, and raised attendance by 18% the first year.”</i></p>