

# STAR TECHNIQUE

So you may have noticed that we have mentioned the STAR technique several times throughout this kit, and I am sure you are thinking, what is this?

The STAR technique is a useful method to structure your answers to competency based questions which look to assess your skills and qualities.

- S = Situation** This sets the story - it's the who, what, where and when?
- T = Task** What were your objectives? What did you have to achieve?
- A = Actions** What were the steps / processes you took to achieve the task?  
What skills and qualities did you use?
- R = Result** What was the outcome?

By using **STAR**, you are providing the interviewers with a 'story' of a real life example of how you have successfully demonstrated that skill or quality within a work, voluntary or education environment.

## Example

Describe a situation when you had to deliver excellent customer service following a complaint?

- [SITUATION]** During my time as a Sales Assistant at Shoe City, a customer complained in store that her online order had been delivered incorrectly, with the left foot being a size smaller than the right.
- [TASK]** She was anxious and upset as she needed the shoes for an event that night and wanted to exchange them for the correct sizing.
- [ACTION]** I apologised for the mistake and checked our stock for whether the correct size was available. Unfortunately it wasn't and due to the time frame, delivery or ordering them into the store was not an option. Using my initiative I instead suggested similar alternatives that I thought may be suitable and bought them onto the shop floor so that the customer could try them on.
- [RESULT]** The customer found an alternative which she said she liked even better than the original pair she had bought and left the store happy.

# EXAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS!

<p><b>Common interview questions.</b> <i>You can use these when preparing and doing mock interviews</i></p>	<p><b>Please use this space to make notes to help structure your answers.</b> <i>Remember the STAR technique!</i></p>
<p><b>Tell us about yourself?</b></p>	
<p><b>What do you know about us / What interests you about working for us?</b></p>	
<p><b>What are your strengths and weaknesses?</b></p>	

## TIP

The interviewer does not want to know your whole life story! Keep it relevant and focused on education, work experience, skills, achievements and hobbies/interests.

## TIP

This is where all your research comes in handy. Demonstrate a genuine interest in the company/job and talk about what enthuses you the most.

## TIP

Focus on your strengths and evidence these through providing real-life examples. Prepare for more, but only provide one weakness and explain how you have worked to overcome this.

**TIP**

What makes you stand out? Discuss your relevant skills, experience knowledge and passion for the role.

We are seeing a number of candidates for this position. Tell us why we should hire you?

**TIP**

Make sure you know the personal specification really well and relate your answer to the key skills and experience they have outlined on there.

What skills and experience do you have that are relevant to this role?

**TIP**

Mention why you want to work for the organisation/company and what interests you in the role BUT also stress what skills and experience you can bring.

Why do you want this job?

**TIP**

This could be in the workplace, education, volunteering or personal life. Explain what the achievement was, what skills and personal attributes you used to ensure you were successful.

**TIP**

Be honest but balance this with not sounding too negative – never bad mouth others or blame. Explain how you dealt with failure, learnt from it and used it to move forward.

**TIP**

Outline your positive attributes and qualities, and provide reasons for why you think your manager would label you these things. Where possible, use genuine feedback you have received from any managers.

**TIP**

Always ask at least one question. As a basic, always ask when you can expect to hear back from them, or refer to our 'Interview top tips' section for more examples!

**What has been your greatest achievement?**

**What has been your biggest failure?**

**How would your manager describe you?**

**Do you have any questions for us?**



Always give examples! Use the STAR technique (you can find this in the 'Reserves' section on page lettered J)

**Competency Based Questions – these are questions based on the knowledge, skills and experience outlined in the Job Description / Person Spec**

**A significant amount of your time within the office will be spent providing admin support to the team. What experience do you have of administration?**

**This role will require you to work with community groups. What experience do you have in this and how did you engage them?**

**This role will involve providing customer service. What qualities do you think are important when working with members of the public?**

**TIP**

Describe the size of the team and explain your role within it. Always use "I" rather than "we" so that employers know what you did within that team

Can you give me an example of when you have successfully worked as part of a team?

**TIP**

Although this question does not ask for an example- still give one! so that you can evidence how you would behave within a team

What do you think makes a good team member?

**TIP**

Consider how you organise yourself on a day to day basis to ensure you do not miss any deadlines

Tell us about a situation where you have had to deal with more than one task at the same time?

**TIP**

Give examples of all aspects of Microsoft Office and any other ICT software/hardware you have used. Be confident in your abilities but do not exaggerate

What ICT skills do you have?

**TIP**

Be respectful of previous employers or organisations so that you show loyalty and respect

Can you give me an example of a particularly difficult client you have had to deal with and how you used your skills to successfully overcome the problem they had?

**TIP**

A lot of employers will ask a similar question to test how you treat people from different backgrounds to yourself

What is your understanding of Equal Opportunities?

Some employers may ask you some 'off the wall' questions, particularly graduate schemes or private companies. Prepare for the possibility of being asked some strange things such as

- If you were an animal, what animal would you be?
- If you were a Microsoft program, which one would you be?
- How many different ways can you get water from a lake at the foot of a mountain, up to the top of the mountain?

The aim of these types of questions is to test your 'creativity' and 'outside the box' thinking!