# YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENT STORY

An accomplishment story is used in informational and actual interviews to highlight your achievements with a focus on unique skills and attributes. The Situation – Action – Result (S – A – R) framework provides structure to your story.

## S – A – R Framework and Accomplishment Story Example

*Interview Question:* Tell me about a time you were part of a team and were able to create significant value for the company?

*Answer:* **(Situation)** While at Company X, I was chosen by the CFO to serve on a 4-member task force to improve the administrative process around supply orders. The team discovered that orders were not being coordinated and that by instituting some basic guidelines, orders could be streamlined and create significant cost savings. **(Action)** My role in the project was to develop a training tool. Then, I met with each department lead to gain their buy-in for the new guidelines and prepared them to train their team using the new tool. **(Result)** One year after the guidelines were in place, the company experienced a $1MM savings and my training tool is still being used today.

*Preparation:* Referring to the job description for which you're interviewing, make a list of role requirements. Common themes are leadership, teamwork, problem solving, communication skills, conflict management, and drive for results. For each requirement, develop at least two Accomplishment Stories using the S – A – R framework. Use the list of sample behavioral questions in this guide to practice answering questions with Accomplishment Stories.

**Develop your accomplishment story using the S-A-R.** You have to "sell yourself" to the employer and differentiate yourself from other candidates. The best way to do this is to tell compelling stories that highlight tangible, measurable results. And the best "tool" to use for this purpose is the Accomplishment Story. The S-A-R exercise below will give you a clear idea of how to develop and use your own Accomplishment Stories for interview success.

**A checklist to help jog your memory about your accomplishments:**

*Was there ever a time when you…*

- Managed teams, departments or projects?
- Saved money for your department or company?
- Achieved greater results with limited/fewer resources?
- Received special recognition, awards, or letters of commendation?
- Solved an unusually challenging business problem?
- Were promoted or given more responsibility?
- Wrote papers or reports, or conducted presentations?
- Brought-in projects under budget and before deadline?
- Exceeded expectations of the boss?
- Organized and carried-out new initiatives?
- Trained or mentored employees?
- Increased your company's productivity or profitability?

**WORKSHEET: Developing Accomplishment Stories using S-A-R**

Develop 2 – 3 Accomplishment Stories for each of the job themes that relate to the role. Common themes are leadership, teamwork, problem solving, communication skills, conflict management, and drive for results.

| Context | |
|---|---|
| *Situation*<br>Summarize the nature of the problem you faced or the goal you sought to accomplish. | |

| Your Role | |
|---|---|
| *Action*<br>Describe the action taken. What did you do? What skills, knowledge and expertise did you demonstrate? Include analysis of the opportunity, the planning and preparation, and the resources involved. Use action words and avoid passive constructions such as "participated in". | |

| Impact | |
|---|---|
| *Result*<br>What resulted from your effort? What impact did your actions lead to? | |

**Draft one accomplishment story using the SAR framework**

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