# S.T.A.R. Interview Method

An important part of your interview will involve answering questions posed by the interviewer. Your ability to clearly and concisely respond to questions in an informed manner that relates your background to the question posed will set you apart from others that stumble over questions. The S.T.A.R. method simply provides a logical approach to answering any question by providing a guided approach to using one of your past successes in responding to the question. The four steps are:

1. **S= Situation**     *What was the situation?*
2. **T= Task**     *What task did you need to accomplish?*
3. **A= Action**     *What action did you take?*
4. **R= Result**     *What was the result of your action?*

To prepare for an interview, develop a comprehensive list of your many successes, especially those that relate to non-classroom activities such as those listed below. Develop short examples that illustrate your successes in these areas. And remember to **keep it positive!**

- Related experience
- Technical interests
- Leadership examples
- Teaming activities
- Communication skills
- Work experiences

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| **Situation & Task** | Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event. |
| **Action** | Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on you. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what you did—not the efforts of the team. Don't tell what you might do, tell what you did. |
| **Results** | What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn? It is always helpful to provide quantitative examples to confirm your results. |

**Sample Interviewing Story #1:**
- **Situation/Task (ST):** Advertising revenue was falling for my college newspaper, *the Arkansas Traveler,* and large numbers of long-term advertisers were not renewing contracts.
- **Action (A):** I designed a new promotional packet to go with the rate sheet and compared the benefits of *Traveler* circulation with other ad media in the area. I also set-up a special training session for the account executives with an economics/marketing professor who discussed competitive selling strategies.
- **Result (R):** My group signed contracts with 15 former advertisers for daily ads and five for special supplements and increased new advertisers by 20 percent over the same period last year.

**Sample Interviewing Story #2:**
- **Situation/Task (ST):** Several local parents requested tutoring for disadvantaged students, but our University Tutoring program did not have enough Razorback volunteers.
- **Action (A):** I organized a brainstorming session for increasing U of A student participation with three other MBA students. We prioritized the ideas, looked for budget resources, and then I eventually settled on a new program called Friends and Neighbors that matched U of A freshmen with tutorees. We were also able to get free Disneyland tickets supplied by a local organization and funding for after school pizza.
- **Result (R):** We increased the tutor pool by 20 freshmen, doubled the tutoring hours available for 50 local school kids and had a great time at Disneyland with the 12 high school tutorees. The program has continued for the last two years and now has an organization president and vice-president and a budget from the Alumni Association that should guarantee that the program continues.