

## Telling your story using the STAR model

The STAR model is a simple but highly effective way of relating the details of examples that demonstrate your accomplishments, skills, interests, personal characteristics, and values for a wide range of audiences. While its primary use is for talking points for interviews, it's a great way to develop descriptions for your resume, content for cover letters, and learn how to get comfortable with talking about your achievements, big and small.

STAR stands for:

**Situation:** The setting (timeframe, place, etc.) of an experience you want to describe that demonstrates an accomplishment, skill or set of skills, interest, or personal characteristic.

**Task:** The responsibilities you were charged with, including any obstacles you encountered.

**Action:** The specific steps you took in handling the responsibility and challenges. Don't rush through this section, since this is often the most critical part of the story.

**Result:** What impact or contribution did you make? No matter how big or small, the listener wants to learn your outcome. Quantify or qualify your results when possible.

An example from a former work-study student:

**Situation:** I started working at Acme Clothing as a seasonal sales employee the summer before my junior year, when I had just turned 16.

**Task:** As a sales employee, I assisted customers, worked the cash register, and maintained the sales floor. I was especially interested in the cash wrap area and addressing customer concerns since I was highly committed to offering the best service possible.

One day, all the store supervisors were at an off-site regional meeting, leaving us sales employees without any direct supervision. I was concerned that if problems arose they might not be readily or consistently dealt with, directly impacting our level of service.

**Action:** I took it upon myself to oversee the cash area for the day. I reviewed the receipt journal, assisted the 12-person sales team with all major cashier transactions, and answered their and customer questions so we could meet our daily sales goal and maintain our reputation for strong customer service.

**Result:** After my performance that day, the store managers saw what I could bring to the team. Within a week I was promoted to cashier supervisor and managed the cash wrap area. Within a few months I received another promotion, this time to merchandise supervisor of the men's department, making me the youngest full-time supervisor. I continued to work with Acme Clothing through the rest of high school and was named employee of the month on several occasions.