

Interview Prep: How to use the STAR method to your advantage

All interview teams share a common goal: selecting the ideal candidate for their team. Initially, they assess your experience and technical abilities, but it is equally crucial to evaluate your interpersonal skills.

Questions about your technical skills are straight forward, but the interview panel will also assess your ability to handle past situations or challenges by asking behavioral questions to find out if you have the right skills for the job or the team.

By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail (B Franklin)
And who are we to argue with that?



Job interviews can be overwhelming, pressure can hinder your ability to provide structured responses. Particularly questions that prompt you to share a real-life example of how you managed a specific situation in the past can catch you off guard. You might unintentionally overlook key details or veer off-topic during the conversation.

Questions like 'tell me about....' or 'have you ever....' can be challenging if you are unprepared.

You are not alone, we've all been there. We've all experienced that moment of regret, 'Why didn't I say that' and 'How did I reach that point in my story?' 'I was so nervous I couldn't think of an example'

We at Thymic Europe believe that preparation is key. There's a strategy that'll help you prepare for these tricky questions.

The STAR interview method: a technique of concisely answering certain job interview questions using specific, real-life examples.

What is the STAR method?

The S T A R method is an interview technique to structure your story outlining the Situation, Task, Action, and Result.

- **Situation:** Set the scene; what is the context of your example
- **Task:** Describe what your responsibility, the challenge or the purpose
- **Action:** Explain exactly what steps you took to solve the problem
- **Result:** What was the result of your actions? Share your wins.

Shaping your anecdote with these four components will give you the confidence to provide a clear and focused response that will satisfy the interviewers questions and even more importantly demonstrate why you are the right person for the role.

Let's have a closer look at the different parts of this technique.

1 Situation: Start your response by providing context about the particular situation or challenge you want to highlight. Keep this introduction brief, with just **a few sentences to set the scene**, the interviewers are more concerned with the actions you took and the results you achieved.

2 Task Provide a **brief description of your responsibility** or role in the situation. Focus on one or two main points that effectively showcase the task you were required to accomplish.

3 Action This part of your response is crucial as it allows you to demonstrate your skills. The interviewer is interested not only in **what** you have achieved but also in **how** you have achieved it.

Explain what **steps** you took to overcome the challenge or reach your goal. Be as specific as possible, describe each step in detail, and avoid vague phrases like "I worked really hard on this."

When answering, focus on yourself, **use "I" statements**, and describe your individual actions rather than team accomplishments.

4 Result This is your opportunity to showcase the results of your actions to potential employers, a crucial step often overlooked by candidates.

Highlight the positive effects you delivered and how you tackled challenges.

Always aim for a **positive resolution**. Employers appreciate measurable achievements, so remember to support your results with specific examples.

How can you prepare ahead of the interviews?

Below are steps to guide you in develop a STAR interview response to prepare for a job interview:

- **Review the job description.** Consider the challenges or obstacles you might face in the vacant position. Think about the essential qualities and skills required for the role and select stories that highlight them.
- **Recognize behavioral interview questions** Although the wording of these questions may differ in each interview, the underlying purpose of the question usually stays the same. For example, the interviewer could inquire about a time when you had to work under pressure or inquire about your stress management techniques. In both cases, the aim is to assess your ability to handle stressful circumstances.
- **Write down key details** and take them with you to the interview as a back up, having them handy will give you confidence.
- **Practise your answers by talking out loud.** Practice in front of a mirror, record yourself on video, or rehearse with a friend. Keep practicing your responses until they feel natural. This way, during the real interview, it won't seem like you're just reciting lines.
- **Don't rush yourself:** It is ok to take a few seconds in the interview to collect your thoughts.

Why is this important?

You can never predict the questions the panel will ask, but preparation is key. With these tips, you'll be equipped to come across as professional, persuasive, and authentic to the interview panel.

Carefully considering how you deliver your response is as important as the response itself. The interviewer doesn't want to get lost in the details of the day to day details of the story. The team is assessing your suitability for the role they have in store for you. They want to know about your experience and skills but they also want to get an idea of how you will integrate in their team.

By using the STAR method, you can assist the interviewer in visualizing you as part of their hospital team.

The STAR interview technique may appear overwhelming initially, but with practice and preparation, you will see it as an opportunity to showcase your expertise.

Still unsure about using this technique? Or do you have other questions about interview

Let us know we will assist you to our best ability.