

Success stories using the STARR method

Introduction

In a job interview you can expect the question to describe a success story. The aim of this question is to find out what your strengths are and where you get your energy from. The interviewer wants to know your qualities and skills. One of the most used methods to learn about your qualities is the STARR method.

This assignment helps you to describe successes / achievements in a few words to support your strengths and motivation. Below you can read the explanation about this method and then you can get started to write your own stories..

Assignment

- Read the information first.
- On the following pages you will find two tables to fill.
- Describe at least two situations (own activities / actions) from your work or private life that you are proud of.
- Describe these situations as comprehensively as possible and describe what you did and why you're proud of it.

Explanation STARE method

A success or achievement is something you are proud of to your own judgement; something that you remember with pleasure. In your opinion the experience was important. It can be a 'big' success (study or PhD completion, successful project, a trip around the world) but it may also be a 'small' success (clearly convey your point of view in a meeting, a successful collaboration with a colleague, cleaning out your garage). Sometimes, when you find difficulties in thinking of a success, think of something that went (almost) wrong. You had to cope with a delay in your project, for example. What did you do to get things right?

The 'STARR' helps to understand which skills you used to reach your personal successes and achievements. This is important because these core competences - along with interest, experience and personal traits - determine whether there will be an optimal match with your future position.

Create your personal success list with examples of your professional and social life. Also in your social environment, within the family circle, during study time and volunteering can perhaps draw on things that you have achieved with pleasure and good results.

Of course you can write down additional success stories, to discover even more competences.

STARE stands for:

STARR	Explanation
Situation	What were the circumstances? E.g. project x, along with..., period, exciting because...
Task	What was your task / role in this situation, what were you responsible for?
Actions	What approach did you use, tell about what you did, how you made it work. Be accurate, mention all your actions. They show your qualities and skills.
Result	What was the outcome? Mention the result you achieved.
Reflection	Looking back: were you confident, what could you have done better, would you do it again like this or what would you do different? Your evaluation is an indication of your self-reflective capacity and your focus on self-development.

Once you have described your example, find out what qualities it demonstrates and write them down. This is also how the interviewer will listen to your story, they will determine what skills you have. Can you collaborate together? Are you independent? Solution-oriented? Communicative? Etc.

Questions about the qualities stated in the vacancy are often asked during a job interview. The question can be: 'Do you have an example of how results-oriented you are?' or 'Can you describe a situation that shows your planning skills?'. Make sure you have good examples of the qualities required for the vacancy. Perhaps you can also use the examples from the pages below to answer these questions. From one example of a story emerge always several qualities. Prepare three good examples and you'll be well prepared for this part of the job interview.

Example 1

The situation was ...

My task / role was, to ...

My approach was / my actions were

The result was ...

Looking back, I think what I could have done better / would do different next time (evaluation)
...

Competences that I demonstrate with this:

Example 2

The situation was ...

My task / role was, to ...

My approach was / my actions were

The result was ...

Looking back, I think what I could have done better / would do different next time (evaluation)
...

Competences that I demonstrate with this: