

STAR STORY EXAMPLES

Here are real examples of STAR stories I used in university. These are written in the form I would say out loud. Your notes should be more like brief bullet points.

► Story 1 - Failing First College Test

Situation - During my freshman year of college, I failed the first test I took with a 37 in Calc 2. I was devastated as I had never failed a test before. I was a math major at the time and it was hard seeing other students who weren't, doing much better than me.

Task - I was determined to learn how to study and pass the class.

Actions - I didn't need to study in high school so at first I wasn't sure how to get started. I spoke with the TA in the class to get some advice. I got a tutor to help explain the concepts I wasn't understanding. I started reading the chapters we would cover in class before the lectures to be more prepared. I also started completing many more practice problems besides the homework.

Result - I received a 73 on the second test and an 86 on the third. It wasn't perfect, but I learned how to study for college level tests. I also learned that I could still achieve something even if the work didn't come easy to me like in high school.

Could answer questions like:

- Tell me your hardest challenge
- Tell me about a time when you failed
- What was the most stressful situation you have faced?
- Give an example of an important goal that you set in the past. Tell about your success in reaching it.

► Story 2 - Creating On-boarding Document

Situation - During my internship last summer at M.I.T. Lincoln Labs I noticed there was no documentation for getting my computer setup on the project.

Task - I knew from previous internships that set up can be annoying and difficult. I decided to create a document on environment and project setup for future interns and team members.

Actions - I kept track of each step in the setup including screenshots. I noted all problems I ran into as well and saved the links to the solutions. I developed an editable document using Google Docs with all this information.

Result - At the end of getting setup, I sent the document to my boss and he was impressed. This documentation was used and improved upon by new team members and other interns.

Could answer questions like:

- Describe a situation when you demonstrated initiative and took action without waiting for direction. What was the outcome?
- Give an example of a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty.
- When is the last time you had to introduce a new idea or procedure to people on this job? How did you do it?

► Story 3 - Dealing With A Difficult Team Member

Situation - I was in a group of 6 students for my Social Psychology & Organizational Behavior course. We were assigned work on 3 group projects throughout the semester. One member was consistently behind deadlines, causing someone else on the team to have to pick up his work.

Task - Since this was a course on organizational behavior the main objective of the group projects was to learn how to work better with a group. I wanted to successfully complete the final project with this team member's involvement.

Action - I spoke with the member outside of a group setting to ask if he was dealing with any extenuation circumstances we did not know about. He responded that he wasn't and I explained to him that his lack of effort was hurting the group. He didn't seem to care that much. As the group leader, I tried to decide the best course of action. I assigned him to the less critical parts of the project. I made deadlines for his parts earlier than necessary and had frequent communication with him about his progress.

Result - In the end, even though his part was "late", with the extra buffer time added, it was still done before we actually needed it. The project was successful completed on time with an A.

Could answer questions like:

- Tell us about setbacks you have faced. How did you deal with them?
- Describe your leadership style and give an example of a situation when you successfully led a group.
- Tell us about the most difficult or frustrating individual that you've ever had to work with, and how you managed to work with them.