



# Leadership Principles Behavioral Interview

Amazon

# Perfecting START Method

## STAR answer format

The STAR method is a structured manner of responding to a behavioral-based interview question by discussing the specific situation, task, action, and result of what you're describing. Here's what it looks like:

### SITUATION

Describe the situation that you were in, or the task that you needed to accomplish. Give enough detail for the interviewer to understand the complexities of the situation. This example can be from a previous job, school project, volunteer activity, or any relevant event.

### TASK

What goal were you working toward?

### ACTION

Describe the actions you took to address the situation with an appropriate amount of detail, and keep the focus on you. What specific steps did you take? What was your particular contribution? Be careful that you don't describe what the team or group did when talking about a project. Let us know what you actually did. Use the word "I," not "we," when describing actions.

### RESULT

Describe the outcome of your actions and don't be shy about taking credit for your behavior. What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn? Provide examples using metrics or data if applicable.

Consider your own successes and failures in relation to the Leadership Principles. Have specific examples that showcase your expertise, and demonstrate how you've taken risks, succeeded, failed and grown in the process. Keep in mind, some of Amazon's most successful programs have risen from the ashes of failed projects. Failure is a necessary part of innovation. It's not optional. We understand that and believe in failing early and iterating until we get it right.

[https://www.amazon.jobs.pt/landing\\_pages/in-person-interview](https://www.amazon.jobs.pt/landing_pages/in-person-interview)



# Perfecting START Method - Situation

1. Pick example with the
  - Highest level of complexity and ambiguity of problem
  - Simplicity of solution
  - Seniority of decision-makers and customer/business impact that YOU have
2. Make sure to answer the question that was asked. Example if the interviewer asked to describe a complex problem, try not to respond with something that someone in your capacity solves on a weekly basis.
  - Make sure you have 2 situations per LP
  - If you are not sure ask clarification question to interviewer

# Perfecting STAR Method - Task

## **What goal were you working toward?**

- How would you know you were successful?
  - Find objectives, KPIs and deadlines
- How do you know KPI really matters?
  - KPIs need to be justified
- Are you in risk confusing the interviewer?
  - Focus on the main KPI
- Mention obstacles that you could anticipate, mention them here (Do not invent them but don't miss opportunity to mention obstacles if you experienced)

# Perfecting START Method - Action

1. Avoid “We” use “I” - Use “we” to describe the proverbial boat that you were on.  
But when you took the helm to steer it through the storm, use “I”
2. Create a mental numbered list of concrete steps that you took

# Perfecting STAR Method - Result

1. Always have measurable results to share. Even if binary or anecdotal. Avoid picking situations where there are no measurable results.
2. Share lessons learned regardless of successful or failure outcomes.
3. Make sure the results tie to the KPIs from the “Task” section.

# Perfecting START Method – Ideal flow

1. Ask the interviewer for a couple of minutes to gather your thoughts.
2. Avoid monologue, open with a 4-minute situation compressed in a STAR narrative. Offer enough facts to demonstrate your knowledge of the details.
3. Welcome follow-ups and drill-downs ( this is signal that interviewer is taking interest on your example)
4. Ask meaningful questions at the end (15 minutes)

# Winning characteristics

1. Calm, confident, relaxed, engaged
2. Highly structured, logical and linear
3. Recognizes complexity but strives for simplicity
4. Highly articulate, crisp and to the point; does not loop around
5. Highly numerate; likes numbers (KPIs and Results should have numbers)
6. Use facts to make decisions and arguments
7. Don't be apologetic but have healthy self-criticism
8. Explains and simplifies unknown industry concepts (Don't use much technical terms, keep response more on behavior and humans)

# Arranging Logistics – Summary sheet

1. Create Situation summary sheet with LPs, situation prompts and key results/outcomes as well as lesson learned as per below template.  
Prepare at least 2 situation prompt per LP.

LP	Situation	Key results	Lessons learned
Dive Deep	Category turn-around	From -10% YoY to +5% YoY	Heads-up to senior leadership quicker

# Arranging Logistics – Hardware software

1. Get proper headset
2. Download Amazon Chime and test your hardware in advance
3. Place a test conference call with a friend to test your internet connection.



# Are Right A Lot

- Tell me about a time when you made a difficult decision with input from many different sources such as customers, stakeholders and partner team and so forth
- Tell me about a time when you made an error of judgement

# Other Questions

- **Bias For Action:** Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision without consulting your manager
- **Customer Obsession:** Tell me about a time when you had a difficult interaction with customer
- **Invent & Simplify:** Tell me about a time when you solved a complex problem with simple solution

# Critical LPs Loop round

## **SA Level 5 and Level 6**

- Customer Obsession,
- Deliver Results,
- Invent and Simplify,
- Have Backbone
- Disagree and Commit
- Learn and Be Curious
- Think Big
- Earn Trust (83% of loops)
- Dive Deep (77%)