



The STAR Method Cheat Sheet

How to answer "Tell me about a time when..." without rambling. Prep three stories, and you're ready for 80% of any interview.

★ The formula

S — Situation	Set the scene in one sentence. Where were you, what was going on?
T — Task	What was <i>your</i> job in it? One sentence.
A — Action	What did you actually do? This is the meat — say "I," not "we."
R — Result	How did it end? Use a number if you can (time saved, money made, grade earned).

Target: 60–90 seconds per answer. Short setup, long action, concrete result.

🎤 Example answer (no "real job" needed)

Q: "TELL ME ABOUT A TIME YOU HANDLED A DIFFICULT SITUATION."

"Last spring I was coordinating a fundraiser for my club (S), and I was responsible for the volunteer schedule (T). Two days before the event, half the volunteers dropped out. I made a shared sign-up sheet, personally messaged 20 classmates, and rearranged shifts so no slot was empty (A). We ran the event fully staffed and raised \$1,800 — 20% more than the year before (R)."

School projects, part-time jobs, sports teams, and volunteer gigs all count. Interviewers care about the behavior, not the setting.

? Questions this answers

- ☐ Tell me about a time you faced a challenge / conflict
- ☐ Describe a time you made a mistake (pick one you fixed — end on the lesson)
- ☐ Tell me about a time you led / worked on a team
- ☐ Give an example of working under pressure or a deadline
- ☐ Tell me about something you're proud of

👉 Build your 3 stories (fill these in)

One story about a **challenge you overcame**, one about **teamwork or conflict**, one about **something you built, fixed, or improved**. Rotate them to fit almost any question.

Story 1 Challenge

Situation

Task

Action

Result

Story 2 Teamwork / conflict

Situation

Task

Action

Result

Story 3 Built / fixed / improved

Situation

Task

Action

Result

🎓 **Dad's Quick Take:** It's okay to pause before answering — say "Good question, let me think of a good example." That's the power pause, and it reads as confidence, not weakness.