

Structuring Answers with the STAR Model

Using the ‘STAR’ method can be a really helpful way of making sure your responses – either verbal or written – are **FOCUSED and RELEVANT** and **make them easy to READ** by assessors. Use the STAR grid below to help you structure your responses to questions which are asking for examples to show your competencies. This can be used both in applications and interview situations.

SITUATION: Put the situation in context: **briefly** describe the situation so that the example can be clearly understood by your assessors.

TASK: Go into more detail: when, where, how many, how often etc.

ACTION: State what **ACTION** you actually took – what was **your** contribution? Avoid ‘we’ if talking about a situation in a team context. The assessor needs to know what specific contribution/difference **YOU** made.

RESULT: Describe the outcome – what were the positives/learning points/reflections on the situation?

Think about what your involvement was – what was your role?

- How did you do it?
- What did you actually do?
- What was the highlight/low point?
- What skills did you acquire or develop further?
- What difference did YOU make?
- What obstacles did you have to overcome if any?
- What feedback did you receive either positively or negatively?
- What did you LEARN as a result? (About the situation/topic and about yourself?)
- How have you applied your learning?

Situation The background + context	Task More details: what, when, where, how, how often	Action What was your contribution?	Result What was the outcome, result & learning?
Use the first 12-25% or so of your response to ‘set the scene’ – giving enough detail to prepare the reader (or listener) for the rest of your response, but not going overboard with facts. Then add more detail which is relevant to what they need to know. What did the example occur? How often? (e.g. was it something that was sustained over time or was it a one off activity?) Where did it happen? How many people were involved? Offer the most relevant details for your response.		Use the next 50-70% or so to go in to what you actually did. Be specific about the detail.	Use the final 15-25% or so to tell your reader (or listener) about the outcome and what you learnt from the situation – showing evidence of reflection, insight and learning, what you might do differently next time and/or how it applies to Foundation training.