

# Situation or Task:

The Situation or Task is the background or context in which you (the candidate) took action. It explains why you acted the way you did.

Situations or Tasks are created by occurrences such as:

- Changes in job responsibilities
- Demands made by a manager or customer
- Challenges in meeting a deadline or in getting along with a team-member or co-worker.

Examples:

*Part of my job is to update the inventory database for my company. When we lost the lease on our largest storage facility, we had to reconsider what and how much we were going to keep on hand.*

*For two months after the earthquake, calls to our insurance office tripled.*

*When the new health care budget went into effect last March, our department's role changed dramatically.*

# Actions:

Actions are *what* you said or did in response to a Situation/Task and *how* you did it. Actions are the heart of the STAR because they show us your behavior.

Actions might include:

- The steps taken in completing a work assignment.
- How someone laid out work for a particular project.
- What a person did to meet a tough deadline or avoid costly delays.
- What a person said that caused a co-worker to become angry.
- Precautions someone should have taken but didn't.

Examples:

*When I realized that our storage capacity would be cut in half, I contacted our largest distributors and found out how much it would cost if we purchased the same amount from them but had it delivered in smaller quantities and biweekly instead of monthly.*

*Suddenly, everyone wanted to buy extra homeowner's insurance. There wasn't time to hire and train new sales representatives, so I initiated a special bonus program for the current staff- everyone: administrative people and sales.*

*With the reorganization, our nurses were required to handle aftercare and physical therapy scheduling that had been handled by social workers in the past. I wrote protest memos explaining that the extra paperwork would really interfere with the medical care nurses were giving. I even circulated a petition among the staff members of other units.*

## Results:

Results are the effects of your Actions. They tell us what changes or differences you have made and whether the actions were effective and appropriate.

Examples:

*The extra money we spent for the bimonthly deliveries was far less than we had been spending for leasing storage space. Even when an unexpected order came in we had to have the parts sent by overnight express, our costs were still far less than when we kept a month's inventory on hand. Our accountant figured that my plan saves the company almost \$400,000 a year,*

*Even though everyone worked lots of nights and weekends, no one seemed to mind making extra money. We really celebrated when our office topped all sales records for the quarter.*

*Well, we just couldn't get through to the administration. We lost three of our best floor nurses to special units. Six months later, the policy changed again, but by then it was too late for us. Morale on the floor is still down.*

## False STARS:

False STARS are statements with lots of glitter but no substance. They're responses that are vague, state an opinion, or are theoretical or future oriented. There are three basic types of false STARS:

- **Vague Statements:** are general statements that might sound good but provide no specifics on what you actually did.

- Opinions: are personal beliefs, judgments, or views. They tell us how you feel but provide no information on what you actually did- no behavior.
- Theoretical or Future-oriented Statements: tell us what you “would do” or “like to do” or “would have done”

### Examples:

Read the following statements and underline the words that are vague

1. I always take the time to find out what the customer wants, and I've made a lot of customers happy that way.
2. There weren't many times that I wasn't able to figure out what was wrong with the piece of equipment.
3. When it looked like we wouldn't make our deadline, we all pitched in and got it done.

## Opinions:

Opinions are the reflection of thoughts or perceptions.

## Theoretical Statements:

Theoretical Statements are always positioned with a future orientation. (examples: *I plan, I wouldn't have, next time*)