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| **FOCUS AREA** | **SELECTION CRITERIA** |
| **Activity** | **Introducing STAR and creating your brag file** |
| **Duration** | 45 minutes |
| **Learning outcomes** | *Topic Coordinator to map to learning outcomes* |
| **Resources needed** | * [Student worksheet](#PARTB) * [STAR Workskills video](https://flinders.instructuremedia.com/embed/e86e63b4-4615-4d7b-9773-478a92112abf) (1.5 minutes) * [STAR framework](#STARframework) * Example job advertisement/position description with transferable skills (supply your own or ask the Careers team for assistance) * [Examples supporting PART C STAR deconstruction](#STARdeconstruction) |
| **Associated toolkit task** | [750 words written task](https://staff.flinders.edu.au/content/dam/staff/learning-teaching/employabilty-toolkit/selection-criteria.docx) |

## Activity description

Students will be introduced to selection criteria and to the STAR framework, a common approach to structuring responses to individual selection criteria and providing specific and relevant evidence that demonstrates a match to each criterion. Knowledge of this method is essential for some written applications and responding to some interview questions.

**Note**: For the purposes of this activity and to keep it broadly accessible and relevant we have focussed on criteria that relate to transferable skills. The STAR approach may also be appropriate for responding to technical criteria.

## FACILITATOR PREPARATION

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| **Steps** | **Detail** |
| 1. Source a job advertisement or position description relevant to your cohort – the Careers team may be able to help you | Ensure your examples include selection criteria with transferable skills, e.g.   * Proven **ability to work effectively** both as part of a **team** and **independently** * Excellent **communication** (oral and written) and **interpersonal** skills * Good **organisational** and **administrative** skills * Ability to **problem-solve** * Demonstrated **leadership** skills and ability to use **initiative** |

## PART A Introduction to selection criteria and STAR [10 minutes]

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| **Format** | **Steps** | **Prompts** | **Resources** |
| Facilitator-led | 1. Show students your selected **job advertisement/position description** and ask them to identify the selection criteria. | * Job advertisements and position descriptions provide a ‘wish list’ for the ideal candidate. * If you are applying for a role with a detailed position description look for the Essential and Desirable criteria – these are usually the criteria that a candidate will be assessed against. * Always follow application instructions | Example job advertisement/position description (facilitator-sourced) |
|  | 1. Use the **STAR Workskills video** and **STAR framework** to introduce students to the STAR methodology for preparing responses to selection criteria | STAR methodology  Situation, Task, Action, Result  STAR purpose   * A method used to prepare a simple, structured response to selection criteria. * Essential skill for responding to interview questions and some written applications. | [STAR Workskills video](https://flinders.instructuremedia.com/embed/e86e63b4-4615-4d7b-9773-478a92112abf) (1.5 minutes)  [STAR framework](#STARframework) |

## PART B What are the criteria?

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| **Format** | **Steps** | **Prompts** | **Resources** |
| Facilitator-led discussion | 1. Show students Example 1 provided in **student worksheet (PART B).** | This is an example of a written response to a selection criterion – your job is to identify the criterion. | [Student worksheet (PART B), Example 1](#PARTB) |
| 1. First, ask them to identify the skills the candidate is demonstrating. | * What skills are evident in Example 1?   Organisation, prioritisation, interpersonal, initiative, problem-solving, working under pressure, customer service, negotiation, creativity, commercial awareness |
| 1. Now ask students to identify the criterion or criteria that the applicant in Example 1 might have responded to. | In a position description Example 1 may have been written in response to criteria similar to below:   * Demonstrated customer service and interpersonal skills **OR** * High-level initiative, ability to work under pressure and prioritise tasks etc. |
| 1. Next show students Example 2 provided in **student worksheet (PART B)** and ask them to identify the skills the candidate is demonstrating. | * What skills are evident in Example 2?   Teamwork, organisation, verbal communication, report writing, research, analytical, innovation, cultural intelligence, emotional intelligence, leadership, meeting facilitation, social media, project management, organisational skills, time management, problem solving, presentation skills, consultation etc. | [Student worksheet (PART B), Example 2](#PARTBeg2) |
| 1. Finally, ask students to identify the criterion or criteria that the applicant in Example 1 might have responded to. | In a position description Example 2 may have been written in response to criteria similar to below:   * Ability to contribute to high-performing teams * High-level project management and teamwork skills |  |

## PART C STAR deconstruction [5 minutes]

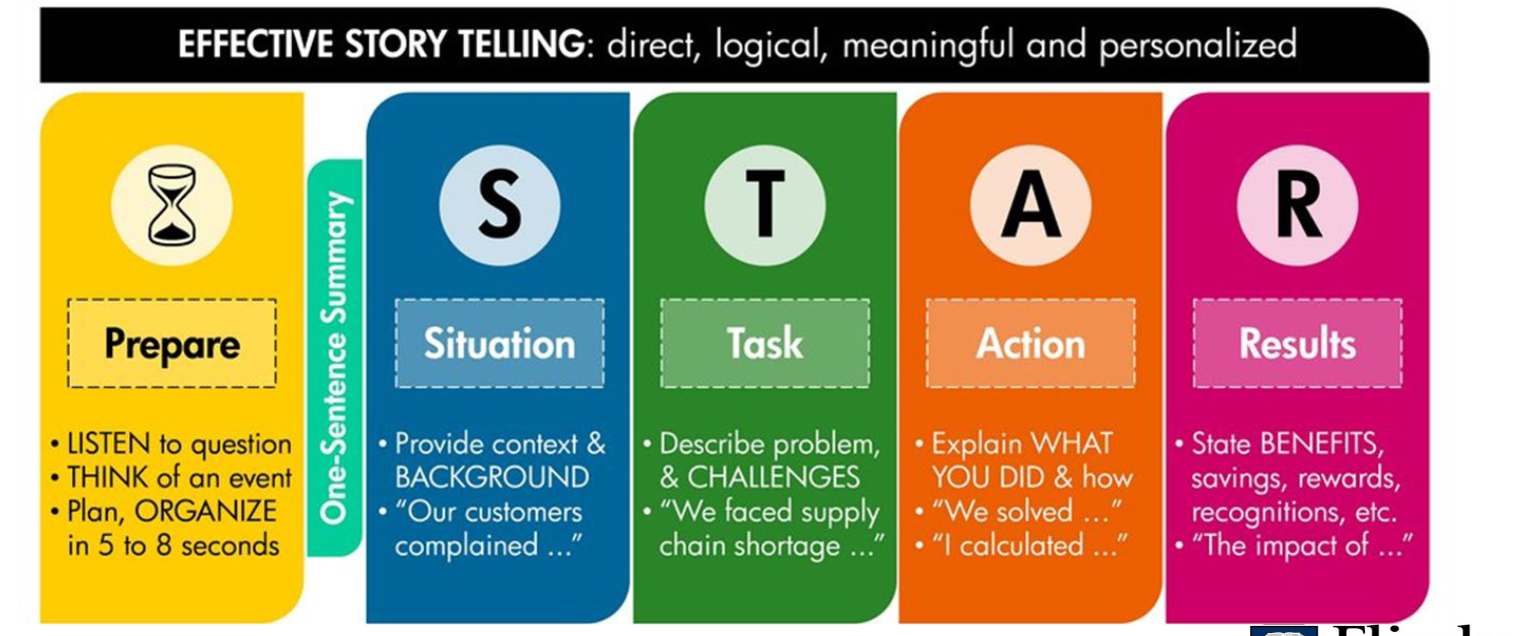
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| **Format** | **Steps** | **Prompts** | **Resources** |
| Facilitator-led | 1. Refer students back to **Student worksheet (PART B)** Example 1 and Example 2 and ask them to identify where each STAR component begins. | STAR methodology  Situation, Task, Action, Result  Use the **examples supporting PART C Star deconstruction.** | [Student worksheet (PART B)](#PARTB)  [Examples supporting PART C Star deconstruction](#STARdeconstruction) |

## PART D Create your Brag File [20 minutes]

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| **Format** | **Steps** | **Prompts** | **Resources** |
| Facilitator-led | 1. Introduce students to **student worksheet (PART D)** where they will begin to prepare their Brag File | Brag File   * a collection of specific examples (6-8) that you collect from your work, study and extra-curricular activities that clearly demonstrate your skills – and where you come out looking like a ‘star’! | [Student worksheet (PART D)](#PARTD) |
| Individual or small group exercise | 1. Ask them to identify 2-3 transferable skills that they can prepare examples against. | Transferable skills, e.g.   * Organisation, prioritisation, interpersonal, initiative, problem-solving, working under pressure, customer service, negotiation, creativity, commercial awareness,   teamwork, verbal communication, report writing, research, analytical, innovation, cultural intelligence, emotional intelligence, leadership, meeting facilitation, social media, project management, time management, problem solving, presentation skills, consultation etc. |
| 1. For each skill, ask them to roughly sketch out STAR examples drawing from their work, study and broader life experiences. | * Your examples should show specific evidence of how you meet that skill. * Choose examples that make you look like a ‘star’! And that can be developed later into written responses against selection criteria. |
| Facilitator-led discussion | 1. Lead students to share what they have learned. | * What other skills are on display in each example? Did you choose examples that might also be suitable for other criteria/skills? |  |
| 1. Finally, ask the students to read the written example against the ‘communication’ notes in the Brag File to see how the notes can be translated to become a full written criterion response. | * Keep adding to your Brag File as you move through your studies – expand on your examples later when you need to respond to selection criteria in applications or interviews . |  |

## Tips for teaching staff

This activity is a useful extension to the [Audit your skills](https://staff.flinders.edu.au/learning-teaching/employability-toolkit) activity and precursor to the [Interview task and activities](https://staff.flinders.edu.au/learning-teaching/employability-toolkit).

**STAR framework**

**Examples supporting Part C Star deconstruction**

**Example 1**

**High-level initiative, ability to work under pressure and prioritise tasks**

**SITUATION** Working as a waitress in the Fine Wine Bar at the Convention Centre of Australia, I needed to take customers’ orders and serve food, coffee, and drinks. Sometimes the team was understaffed which resulted in delayed service. **TASK** A family had come into the restaurant and ordered lunch to dine in, but after waiting some time for their orders to arrive they notified me that their son would have to leave soon. **ACTION** I offered sincere apologies. After checking with the chef about the delay, I relayed to the customers that the food would still take some time to be ready and offered free coffees to make up for the poor service. I offered take away coffee cups as I knew the son had to leave. **RESULT** They were visibly pleased by this suggestion and took the offer. After eating the meals, they commented on how delightful it was and how they would be returning another time when they were not so rushed. This decision established a good rapport with the customers and made them feel heard. Despite their initial frustration, I was able to change their views with a simple offer that would not dramatically affect costing within the business.

**Example 2** 

**Ability to contribute to high-performing teams**

**SITUATION** During March 2021, I was involved in the Future Leaders Competition, as a member of a team acting as management consultants to the multinational consulting firm XYZ Networks. **TASK** Our task was to prepare a business report and presentation of our recommendations on an issue proposed by the organisation. The team of 8 was a highly diverse mix of nationalities, generations and disciplines and we had a tight time frame to get to know each other and cohesively function to achieve our outcome.

**ACTION** As well as being team leader, I was involved in research and analysis of the issue, which included liaising with and benchmarking other consulting services’ and other recognised ‘employers of choice’; the collation of the 30-page business report; and the preparation and delivery of the recommendations we presented. We met regularly, constructed project timelines, used a Trello Board for communications, and created small working parties (such as research, IT) to resolve task specific issues. These working parties then converged to discuss broader project issues. As leader I ensured conflicts were resolved quickly by the appropriate parties and that they were conducted with open communication and mutual respect. **RESULT** The result was that we could consider diverse perspectives, while staying on task and keeping to time-frames.  Our presentation was so highly regarded by our organisation that it led to our team representing SA in the National Finals.

**PART B What are the criteria**?

**Example 1**

Working as a waitress in the Fine Wine Bar at the Convention Centre of Australia, I needed to take customers’ orders and serve food, coffee, and drinks. Sometimes the team was understaffed which resulted in delayed service. A family had come into the restaurant and ordered lunch to dine in, but after waiting some time for their orders to arrive they notified me that their son would have to leave soon. I offered sincere apologies. After checking with the chef about the delay, I relayed to the customers that the food would still take some time to be ready and offered free coffees to make up for the poor service. I offered take away coffee cups as I knew the son had to leave. They were visibly pleased by this suggestion and took the offer. After eating the meals, they commented on how delightful it was and how they would be returning another time when they were not so rushed. This decision established a good rapport with the customers and made them feel heard. Despite their initial frustration, I was able to change their views with a simple offer that would not dramatically affect costing within the business.

**Example 2**

During March 2021, I was involved in the Future Leaders Competition, as a member of a team acting as management consultants to the multinational consulting firm XYZ Networks. Our task was to prepare a business report and presentation of our recommendations on an issue proposed by the organisation. The team of 8 was a highly diverse mix of nationalities, generations and disciplines and we had a tight time frame to get to know each other and cohesively function to achieve our outcome.

As well as being team leader, I was involved in research and analysis of the issue, which included liaising with and benchmarking other consulting services’ and other recognised ‘employers of choice’; the collation of the 30-page business report; and the preparation and delivery of the recommendations we presented. We met regularly, constructed project timelines, used a Trello Board for communications, and created small working parties (such as research, IT) to resolve task specific issues. These working parties then converged to discuss broader project issues. As leader I ensured conflicts were resolved quickly by the appropriate parties and that they were conducted with open communication and mutual respect. The result was that we could consider diverse perspectives, while staying on task and keeping to time-frames. Our presentation was so highly regarded by our organisation that it led to our team representing SA in the National Finals.

**PART D Create your Brag File**

You will find the STAR method useful when applying for jobs where there are selection criteria to be addressed, and also when preparing for interviews. Maintaining a Brag File throughout your studies will enable you to document and store the times that you have demonstrated various competencies.

In your Brag File below, choose 2-3 transferable skills and think of a specific occasion where you have demonstrated that skill. Note your examples in STAR format. Examples may be drawn from your work, life and study experiences.

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| BRAG FILE | | | | |
| **Skill/criterion** | **Situation** | **Task** | **Action** | **Result** |
| *e.g. communication, teamwork* | *Set the context. Describe the specific event or situation where you used the skill.* | *What was your role and what was required of you? This is about your personal contribution to the task. Focus on “I” not “we”.* | *What did you specifically do and how? Be specific – outline the steps you took and your specific role. If you encountered any obstacles describe how you managed them.* | *What did you achieve? What was the end result? What feedback did you receive?* |
| *e.g. communication* | Member of committee, 2022, organizing BBQ event/membership drive | Organise and do promotional talks in lectures | * Spoke to the lecturers to organise the talks * prepared and practised the talk, gained feedback from the committee * Effectively delivered the presentations and implemented social media campaign | Best attendance in 3 years at the BBQ  Increased membership by 40% |
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*Keep adding to your Brag File as you move through your studies. Aim to have 6-8 examples that could be repurposed for different criteria and remember. Remember you can repackage and repurpose your examples to suit different criterion.*

**STAR Example**

This is an example of how you can use your notes to prepare a 230-word\* response to a criterion using the STAR Framework. This written example would also be suitable to share verbally in an interview.

We’ve shown one criterion this example could be used for – with some tweaking it might also be suited for a criterion asking you to demonstrate your initiative or organisation skills.

**High level oral communication skills**

In 2022 I was a member of a 6-person committee that organised a barbecue for the Disability and Developmental Education Club. The event was important as it was combined with a membership drive. My role was to coordinate and deliver brief promotional talks to eight lecture classes of up to 200 students in the 2-week period before the barbecue. I liaised with the lecturers concerned to explain the Club’s purpose and to negotiate the time needed for the talk. The presentations consisted of introducing the club and myself, selling the event and clearly outlining the key benefits of club membership for students. To prepare, I drafted my talk and delivered several practice runs including one in front of the committee to ensure that I covered all the points and that the presentation ran to time. I used the committee feedback to hone the content. As this was a promotional presentation, I aimed to deliver the presentation in an upbeat and energetic manner, using eye-catching PowerPoint slides. I also designed and implemented a social media campaign. As a result of the planning and preparation stages, and my interest and enthusiasm for promoting the club, my verbal communication was confident and effective. The success of this promotional campaign saw 50 students attend the barbeque (the best attendance in the 3 years of the club’s existence), and we increased our membership by 40%. (230 words)

\*Word and page limits will often apply in written applications – if it’s not clear aim for 175-250 words