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CV and Interview Preparation:

Writing and articulating your greatest achievements with impact

Case Study Template

1. Preparation: Writing your greatest achievements

When writing your CV or preparing for an interview, invest time in brainstorming your greatest achievements to date. These should be things you have personally delivered where there has been a tangible output and benefit.

The STAR Model below is a helpful format when thinking them through and is often used in interviews to ask competency questions (tell me about a time when...)

The STAR Model

- ★ Situation Set the scene and give the necessary details of your example
- ★ Task Describe what was needed in that situation
- ★ Action Explain exactly what steps you took to address it
- ★ Result Share the outcomes your actions achieved including numbers

This simple example explains how you would use the STAR Model to answer an interview question:

Q: Tell me about a time you went 'above and beyond' at work

Situation

A: "After I had worked for eight hours and was about to leave work, a team member approached me and asked if I could stay behind to help on a client pitch that had been passed to the team at the last minute and was needed the following morning.

Although I was tired and ready to go home, I realised that he needed my help and it was for an important client and a potential piece of new business. I stayed an extra couple of hours and wrote a section of the presentation.

Without my help, he would have had to stay at least four hours. We completed the pitch that evening with time to practice before meeting the client the next day. We went on to win the business which was a £50k contract."

Action

Result

Task

Naturally the language will differ slightly if you are writing for your CV (concise and punchy), versus writing as you would answer an interview question (a little more story telling to engage your audience). [Template to follow section 2.]

2. Practice: Articulating your greatest achievements

When you are preparing for an interview, you should practice saying your examples out loud.

To make them even more impactful, lead with a taster of the **Result**.

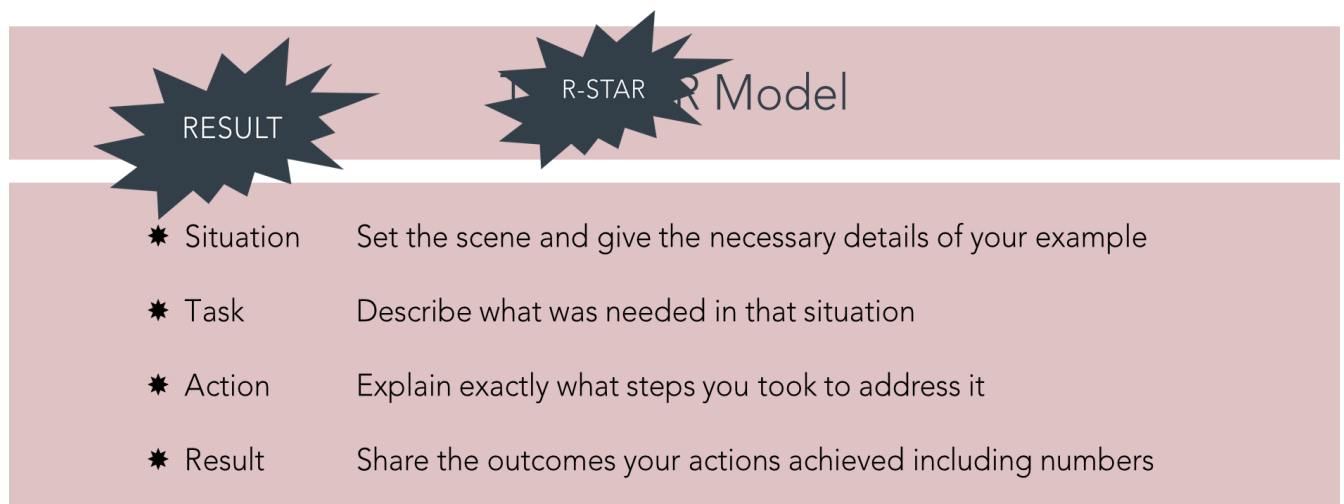
So, using the example above:

→ Q: Tell me about a time you went 'above and beyond' at work?

Instead of starting with the **Situation**, and setting the scene as above, give the interviewer a taster of the Result you achieved first, as below:

→ A: Yes, I will tell you about a time I contributed to winning a £50k contract. [Pause for impact, then go into the STAR as before...] After I had worked for eight hours... etc.

I call this the R-STAR model:



The diagram features a light pink background. At the top, the text 'R-STAR Model' is displayed. To the left of this text is a dark blue starburst shape containing the word 'RESULT'. Below this, a list of four items is presented, each with a starburst icon and a corresponding description:

- ★ Situation Set the scene and give the necessary details of your example
- ★ Task Describe what was needed in that situation
- ★ Action Explain exactly what steps you took to address it
- ★ Result Share the outcomes your actions achieved including numbers

Scroll down for your template to print out and use for each of your achievements.

(Top tip: when you have written them, stick them up somewhere and read them regularly).

Greatest Achievement Case Study Template

For each of your greatest achievements fill in the following template and practice saying it until it becomes natural:

Achievement: _____

Result (taster sentence)	Share a taster of what is to come – the most impressive output, ideally a metric.
Situation	Set the scene briefly and give the necessary details of your example
Task	Describe what was needed in that situation
Action(s)	Explain exactly what steps you took to address it
Result (in full with all outputs / metrics)	Share the outcomes your actions achieved including numbers

Competencies this case study could demonstrate: _____