POLICE SCOTLAND
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COMPETENCY BASED ASSESSMENT - STAR METHOD

The STAR Method is a structured approach to answering behavioural interview questions in which the candidate describes a previous experience that demonstrates a specific competency.

The acronym **STAR** stands for

- **S**ituation
- **T**ask
- **A**ction
- **R**esult.

This is a universally recognised communication technique designed to enable you to provide meaningful and complete answers to questions asking for examples.

At the same time, it has the advantage of being simple enough to be applied easily and allows information to be given in a structured manner.

Situation

Describe the situation that you were confronted with. With the STAR approach you need to set the context. Make it concise and informative, concentrating solely on what is useful to the story. For example, if the question is asking you to describe a situation where you had to deal with a difficult person, explain how you came to meet that person and why they were being difficult.

Task

Describe the high level strategy that you took to deal with the situation you have outlined. Explain the task or tasks that needed to be accomplished as a result of the situation.

Action

This is the most important section of the STAR approach as it is where you will need to demonstrate and highlight the skills and personal attributes that the question is testing. Now that you have set the context of your story, you need to explain what you did. In doing so, you will need to remember the following:

- Be personal, i.e. talk about **you**, not the rest of the team.

- Go into some detail. Do not assume that they will guess what you mean.

- Steer clear of technical information, unless it is crucial to your story.

- Explain what **you** did, how **you** did it, and why **you** did it.

Result

This is a crucial part of your answer .Explain what happened eventually – how it all ended. Also, use the opportunity to describe what you accomplished and what you learnt in that situation. This helps you make the answer personal and enables you to highlight further skills.

In summary using the STAR method will assist you to demonstrate the competencies being tested and will allow you to articulate your personal examples in a clear and concise manner.