What is STAR?
A simple, structured technique to help you answer interview questions.
It stands for **Situation, Task, Approach** and **Results.**

When do you need STAR?
Ever been asked a question that starts with 'Tell me about a time you did X' by an interviewer? Chances are that you were being asked a competency question.
Competency questions are generally used to find out how candidates would react to certain situations, by asking for real-world examples to back-up their claims.
Candidates can easily be thrown by these types of questions, but don't let their open-ended nature fool you. There is a formula you can apply to keep your answers on track, and that's where STAR comes in.

How do I use STAR?
To use STAR effectively, all elements of your answer need to work. Here's a breakdown of how to approach each letter:

S – Situation

Think of this section as 'setting the scene'.
Provide the interviewer with a bit of background about the question and give them some context. Try and be specific and include names and dates wherever appropriate to help add credibility.
Example:
Whilst at "X Company" I was asked to fix XXX type of equipment.

T – Task

Build on the background you've given and outline the task at hand.
Specifically, how did the situation relate to you? And what were the major tasks you needed to undertake to resolve it? Include how important or difficult the situation was to overcome, as well as any constraints you came up against.
Example:
The machine was done, and the engineering manager was putting the pressure on to fix it and the company have a first fix service level agreement in place.

A – Approach

Translation: what did you actually do to resolve the situation?
Outline the steps you took to ensure a successful outcome, without being tempted to take all the credit. The key to effectively incorporating the 'approach' part of your answer is to identify what skills the interviewer really wants to see and reinforce them throughout.
Example:
I did some simple electrical tests then figured out is was XXX part of the machine and I needed to order a new part. I knew that I could safely do a quick fix until the part arrived

R – Result

Finally, it's time for the pay-off.
What was the outcome of the situation? Remember, everyone loves a happy ending, and recruiters are no different. Make your happy ending quantifiable, and you'll really have nailed your answer.
Example:
The production line was up and running within a minimal amount of downtime. The Engineering Manager and Production manager congratulated me on fixing it so efficiently, I showed them the fix and advised I would be back for routine maintenance to replace the part.

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