

# How to answer situational questions

During an interview you may be asked about a time you did something in particular, e.g. worked in a team or took the lead. In these situations, try the **STAR** method:

## **STAR = Situation, Task, Action, Result**

**Situation:** Introduce the situation, where you had to do/show this, why it was necessary and who it was for.

**Task:** What you were required to do.

**Action:** What you did and how you did it.

**Result(s):** What was the outcome? What skills did you develop?

**Important:** it doesn't matter if the situation you're describing has nothing to do with the job or course you're being interviewed for, the most important thing is that you can describe the skills you have developed that can be transferred across many jobs and situations.

## **Examples of situational questions**

- **Can you give me an example of when you worked as part of a team?**  
Give an example of when you've worked in a team. This can include school/sports groups. What sort of team member are you: a leader, an ideas person, someone who organises everyone else?
- **Can you tell me a time when you achieved a goal and how you went about achieving it?**  
This can be anything that you decided to do and then went on to actually achieve. It can be something public like winning a prize or private such as turning up for an exam despite things at home being very difficult.
- **How would you handle a customer who shouted at you?**  
Consider putting yourself in the customers shoes – why are they angry? If you were them how would you like the worker to respond to you?
- **What are the qualities a person should have to be a good team member?**  
This is about knowing the sort of people and behaviours that make a team work such as asking for views from other members and listening to what they say; helping other people etc. Say how you work in a team; do you take the lead? Take the notes? Offer to do the design work?
- **Can you give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead?**  
If this is your first job, you can use an example from school, home, sport, clubs, voluntary work, work experience or even friendship groups.