One way to build your story is using the STAR Methodology.

The STAR Methodology

Project-oriented work is often best described using the STAR methodology, where you organise your story by first talking about the situation you encountered, the tasks you need to perform, the actions you needed to take and finally the results accomplished. In building this story, you might have a shortened version to fit a resume or project addendum, and a longer vignette for interviews and meetings. Here’s how it works.

S stands for Situation

Describe the nature of the project, its purpose, who was impacted and why it was critical. For instance: Our mission was to review and improve the structural safety of a proposed three story orphanage and children’s center in the aftermath of an earthquake that killed an estimated 3,000 people. Despite shortages of lumber, water and electricity, construction needed to be completed within a year in order to provide much needed shelter for homeless children. Of course, it needn’t be that dramatic. For example, you might refer to a project that had an urgent deadline, why that deadline was so important, and what the consequences might have been for missing the deadline.

T stands for Task

Describe your specific responsibilities and what you needed to achieve. For example: My job was to engineer a safe zone for the occupants during an earthquake.

A stands for Action

Explain how you approached the project, the steps you took to implement the project and how you overcame problems and obstacles using your experience, engineering skills, tools and so forth. Use examples to show not only what you know, but also how you applied critical technical knowledge and soft skills.

R stands for Results

Share the results including the specific benefits and impact. For instance: We were able to project that the building’s unique design will help it withstand a magnitude 8.0 earthquake. Best of all, construction was completed within 11 months for less than $1 million.

Finally, remember to grab the manager’s attention by infusing your story with colourful adjectives and engineering action words. There’s nothing like a great story to captivate your audience and set yourself apart.

Action Words

Type of Experience
Broad, Complete, Comprehensive, Consistent, Diversified, Extensive, Intensive, Scope, Solid, Specific, Successful, Varied

Accomplishment
Achieved, Designed, Elected To, Established, Expanded, Improved, Pioneered, Reduced (losses), Resolved, Restored, Transformed, Executed, Generated, Implemented, Optimized, Handled
STAR METHODOLOGY

Administrative Skills
Administered, Coordinated, Designed, Established, Evaluated, Interpreted, Interviewed, Managed, Mediated, Negotiated, Organized, Oversaw, Prepared, Planned, Purchased, Supervised

Time Management Skills
Administered, Developed, Directed, Generated, Improved, Initiated, Increased, Promoted, Reduced, Consolidated

Counselling/Helping Skills
Accompanied, Adopted, Advocated, Aided, Assessed, Assisted, Assumed, Clarified, Coached, Collaborated, Combined, Counselling, Demonstrated, Devoted, Diagnosed, Disclosed, Educated, Affected, Enlarged, Ensured, Executed, Expanded, Expedited, Facilitated, Familiarized, Fortified, Guided, Helped, Increased, Involved, Maintained, Modified, Motivated, Offered, Participated, Protected, Provided, Reduced, Referred, Rehilitated, Reinforced, Represented, Retained, Reviewed, Revised, Sampled, Served, Set up, Shared, Suggested, Supplied

Creative Skills

Communication Skills

Financial Skills
Administered, Allocated, Analyzed, Appraised, Assessed, Audited, Balanced, Bargained, Bought, Budgeted, Calculated, Computed, Developed, Exchanged, Forecasted, Insured, Managed, Marketed, Planned, Prepared, Procured, Purchased, Researched, Sold

Function/Task
Approved, Arranged, Catalogued, Charted, Classified, Collected, Compiled, Delivered, Dispatched, Distributed, Drafted, Edited, Executed, Filed, Generated, Hosted, Implemented, Inspected, Memorized, Monitored, Operated, Organized, Outlined, Prepared, Processed, Purchased, Recorded, Registered, Relayed, Reorganized, Reproduced, Retrieved, Scanned, Screened, Separated, Simplified, Specified, Systematized, Tabulated, Transferred, Updated

Organizational Skills

Management Skills

Research Skills

Technical Skills
Adjusted, Advanced, Altered, Amplified, Assembled, Built, Calculated, Computed, Designed, Devised, Developed, Engineered, Excavated, Extrapolated, Fabricated, Installed, Interpreted, Maintained, Mapped, Measured, Mediated, Moderated, Motivated, Negotiated, Obtained, Operated, Overhauled, Persuaded, Plotted, Produced, Programmed, Promoted, Publicized, Reconciled, Recruited, Remodelled, Renovated, Repaired, Restored, Rotated, Solved, Synthesized, Translated, Upgraded, Wrote

Training Skills
Adapted, Advised, Clarified, Coached, Communicated, Coordinated, Developed, Enabled, Encouraged, Evaluated, Explained, Facilitated, Guided, Informed, Initiated, Instructed, Motivated, Persuaded, Presented, Stimulated

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