

STAR Response Planner

Step Into Leadership | Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals

Use this planner to prepare structured, evidence-rich responses to interview questions that ask about your experience and impact as a leader. The STAR format helps you tell a clear, compelling story.

Complete one planner per example. Bring multiple completed planners to your interview.

S	Situation	Set the scene. What was the context, challenge, or opportunity? When and where did this occur?
T	Task	What was your specific role or responsibility? What were you trying to achieve?
A	Action	What did YOU do? Describe the specific steps you took, the decisions you made, and the skills you applied.
R	Result	What was the outcome? Use data and evidence where possible. What did you learn?

My STAR Example

Role / Position applying for <i>e.g. Leading Teacher, Learning Specialist</i>	Interview question or topic area <i>Write the question here before you plan your answer</i>
---	---

S | SITUATION

What was the context or challenge?

Describe the school, team, or system context. What problem, gap, or opportunity existed? Avoid generic statements; be specific about what YOU observed.

T | TASK

What was your specific role or responsibility?

What were you tasked with, or what did you take ownership of? What did you need to achieve?

A | ACTION

What did you do?

Be specific and use 'I' not 'we'. List the key actions you took, strategies you applied, or decisions you made. Reference relevant frameworks (e.g. FISO 2.0, VTLM 2.0, HITS) where appropriate.

What challenges did you face, and how did you respond?

If things did not go to plan, what did you do? This shows adaptive leadership.

R | RESULT

What was the outcome?

What changed as a result of your actions? Use evidence: data, student outcomes, staff feedback, observation records, achievement metrics.

What did you learn, and what would you do differently?

Showing reflection and growth is a hallmark of strong leadership. Be honest and forward-looking.

Self-Check Before Your Interview

☐	My response is specific to MY actions, not 'we' or 'the team'.
☐	I have referred to relevant frameworks or evidence-based practice.
☐	My result is measurable or observable, not just a feeling.
☐	My response is concise: I can deliver it in 2-3 minutes.
☐	I have a second example ready if the panel asks for another.