THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA
CREATE CHANGE

Worksheet

Unpacking and articulating your experiences

Experiences can help you develop valuable knowledge, skills and attributes. Reflecting on your experiences can help you recognise these strengths and communicate them to employers.

Choose a recent experience and use the questions below to identify what you did, what you learned and the skills you developed. This information can be used in your Career Action Plan, job applications, resumes and interviews. Your experience could come from:

- Paid employment
- Volunteering
- Work-integrated learning or placement
- A university project or group assignment
- A student leadership or club role
- Sport, community or extracurricular activities

Describe the experience and your role

What were your main responsibilities or contributions?

What skills, knowledge and attributes did you develop or strengthen (e.g., communication, teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, digital literacy, organisation, adaptability)?

The SEAL Reflection Method (Situation, Effect, Action, Learning)

SEAL is a structured reflection framework that can help you identify what you learned from an experience.

Choose one specific example from your experience to reflect on. This could be a challenge you faced, a problem you solved, a positive contribution you made, or an achievement you are proud of.

Situation: What happened? What were the challenges you faced?

Effect: What was the impact on you personally? How did it make you feel?

Action: What action(s) did you take or strategies did you employ to deal with challenge(s)?

Learning: What did you learn from it and how might you do things differently in the future?

Articulating your experiences

Once you have unpacked your experience, you can work on how to effectively articulate this to prospective employers. For example, as part of a recruitment process, you may be asked to provide written examples that demonstrate your suitability for a role.

Translate your SEAL into a STAR response

A SEAL reflection helps you unpack and make sense of your experiences by exploring what happened, the impact of the experience, what you learned, and the capabilities you developed. While SEAL is a valuable tool for personal reflection, employers are more interested in evidence of your capabilities.

The STAR framework helps you structure clear examples that demonstrate your skills and achievements. STAR responses are commonly used in written applications, resumes, and when answering behavioural interview questions. For more information on STAR visit the STAR Template.

Translate the SEAL reflection you completed above into a STAR response, using the prompts below.

Situation: What was the situation? What happened? What was the context?

Task: What was the task or problem? What were you expected to do?

Action: What action did you take or strategies did you employ? What did you do?

Result: What was the result or outcome? What did you achieve?

Use your STAR response to create resume bullet points

Review your STAR response and identify the key actions, skills, and outcomes you want an employer to notice. Use these insights to draft two resume bullet points that:

- start with an action verb
- describe your contribution or responsibility
- include an achievement, impact or outcome where possible

Examples:

- Coordinated weekly meetings for five student volunteers, contributing to the successful delivery of a campus event attended by over 200 participants.
- Responded to customer enquiries and resolved issues efficiently, helping maintain high levels of customer satisfaction.

Draft two resume bullet points in the space below, based on your STAR response.

For further details, please contact:

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CRICOS Provider Number 00025B | TEQSA PRV12080