



Curtin University

***Curtin Careers - HDR Series***

# ***Selection Criteria & Interview Techniques***

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# Acknowledgement of Country

I pay my respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of our community by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land, the Whadjuk people of the Nyungar nation.



# Learning Objectives

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## Selection Criteria

- Why employers use selection criteria
- Identify different types of selection criteria & techniques to answer these.
- How to respond to Selection Criteria - Understand the STAR technique

[Selection Criteria module](#)

## Interview Techniques

- Types of Interviews & questions
- The importance of preparation & research
- Using STAR to prepare interview responses

[Interviews Module](#)



# Cover Letter vs Resume vs Selection Criteria

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## COVER LETTER:

Formal introduction to your application

Express interest in a career opportunity

Highlights your relevant skills and abilities that would suit the

Captures the employer interest

Convinces the employer to give you an interview!

## RESUME:

Support document to provide background, context and brief examples of your experience and employability.

Tailored and targeted, focusing of relevance



## SELECTION CRITERIA:

Specific detailed examples to support your employability (STAR/SAO framework)

**Often the most important part of your job application!**





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- Speaker name

Understanding Technical skills and Transferable Skills

Using STAR framework



# Highlight Relevant Skills

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**TECHNICAL SKILLS** - Specific, teachable abilities or knowledge that are typically job or industry specific. These are skills you have been taught and learned.

*e.g. Excel / Specific Software / Curriculum Development / Lab Techniques / Professional Writing / Grant Proposals / Financial Reporting*

**TRANSFERABLE SKILLS (Employability)** are skills you can adapt to circumstances, and influence how you work and interact with others.

*e.g. Problem Solving / Stakeholder Engagement / Teamwork / Leadership*

*Technical skills are the tools in your toolbox, while transferable skills support how effectively you use those tools*

# Examples of Transferable Skills

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## **Problem solving**

Involves:

- analysing facts and figures
- defining challenges
- devising contingency plans
- assessing processes
- creating and implementing solutions

## **Creative Thinking**

- Create new ways
- Drives innovation and progress
- Inspiring others
- Generates ideas, lateral thinking, collaboration

## **Organisation**

- Ontime within Budget
- Working effectively with available resources
- Managing multiple tasks and people /
- Prioritising and Delegating

# Activity – Identify your Key Skill Sets

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*Relevant to the roles you are applying to*

- Choose a task or a project you've completed recently ( maybe in your research, internships, or part-time job)
- Consider the task and what you did - identify two technical skills and one transferable skill you used or gained.

For example - Writing a thesis = Project management and technical writing (technical) and stakeholder engagement (transferable)



# STAR framework

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**S**ituation - Context: your position & responsibilities

**T**ask - The problem or opportunity (**C**hallenge)

**A**ction - Your personal action/contribution/resources & evaluation

**R**esult - Achievements, outcome, feedback & learning (quantify where possible)

# STAR Technique

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- Provides a framework for structured and clear responses
- Helps focus on specific examples that highlights abilities, making it clear how your experience aligns with the job requirements
- Provides evidence of success
- Demonstrates how you approach challenges, make decisions, and achieve results

*The STAR technique is a powerful tool for both interviews and selection criteria*



# STAR Example

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## **Worked as part of a team to achieve a goal**

**Situation:** During my master's program, my team was tasked with creating a research proposal for a grant application.

**Task:** To coordinate contributions from five team members, ensure deadlines were met, and compile the final document.

**Action:** I created a shared timeline, assigned responsibilities based on expertise, and facilitated weekly check-ins to track progress and address issues.

**Result:** The proposal was submitted on time, and we secured \$50,000 in funding for the project. Success due to collaboration as a team

# STAR in Use!

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## **Dot Point for a CV**

- Coordinated a team of five, developing a research grant proposal, implemented a structured workflow and weekly check-ins, securing \$50,000 in funding

## **Small Paragraph for a Cover Letter**

As part of my master's program, I developed a competitive research grant proposal coordinating the small proposal team. By implementing a structured timeline, assigned roles based on individual strengths, and facilitating weekly check-ins, I ensured the proposal was completed on time and met all submission requirements. Our efforts were rewarded with \$50,000 in funding, demonstrating my ability to effectively coordinate team projects and deliver impactful results.



# STAR in Use!

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**Selection Criteria: Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively in a team environment to achieve outcomes.**

During my master's program, I was part of a team tasked with developing a research grant proposal to secure funding for a multidisciplinary environmental project. I played a leadership role in this team, coordinating the contributions of five members, utilising their diverse experience and expertise. To ensure efficiency, I developed a structured workflow that included a shared timeline, delegated tasks based on each member's strengths and facilitated weekly check-ins to monitor progress and address challenges.

One of the challenges was ensuring all sections of the proposal maintained a consistent tone and adhered to the strict guidelines of the funding body. I addressed this by reviewing drafts, providing constructive feedback to each team member, and consolidating the final submission.

As a result of our team effort, the proposal was submitted on time and successfully secured \$50,000 in funding. This experience highlights my ability to foster collaboration, manage complex projects, and achieve tangible outcomes within a team setting.

# Selection Criteria

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# What are selection criteria?

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- Key selection criteria are the skills, experience and qualifications that the employer has defined as being essential for satisfying the requirements of the job.
- We address the criteria using specific examples and evidence.
- Common in Government or public service roles, but can be required in other sectors, where they want to ensure that every applicant is judged fairly and equitably.

# Understanding employer requirements

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1. Understand the criterion – read the job description several times. Highlight key words/skills and experience to address.
2. Brainstorm ideas for each criterion. When have you demonstrated this?
3. Select the best ideas and expand with detail and evidence.
4. Confirm the statement in the opening sentence.
5. Demonstrate your relevant experience using the STAR approach.





Department of  
**Local Government, Sport  
and Cultural Industries**



## Regional Support Officer

# How to apply for this position

Applicants are encouraged to apply online and must provide:

- A comprehensive **CV**
- A two **A4** page (maximum) outline on your skills and knowledge in relation to the **Essential Work-Related Requirements** that are listed on the attached **Job Description Form**
- Contact details of two referees, with a preference of one from a current/most recent line manager

## Regional Support Officer

### Work related requirements

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This section outlines the necessary minimum requirements, in relation to the knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications required to perform the duties of the position.

#### Essential

1. Strong customer service and communication/interpersonal skills for dealing with general enquiries from the public and other government departments, local government or community groups.
2. Well-developed organisational and time management skills and an ability to work in a team environment with minimal supervision.
3. Demonstrated experience in office administrative procedures and competence in using business computing applications such as Microsoft Office.
4. Demonstrated ability to use initiative to resolve issues and solve problems.



# Types of Selection Criteria

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**1. Skills-Based Questions** -ask you to explain how you've demonstrated a particular skill - STAR Technique

- *When have you demonstrated high-level problem-solving skills*

**2. Knowledge based questions** - asks you to explain your understanding or expertise in something. Explain how you have gained the knowledge and how you intend to keep up to date with it.

- *What is your knowledge of occupational health and safety policies and legislation.*

**3. Attributes and Values-Based Questions** - illustrate how your personal values align with those of the organization and highlight past experiences where you've demonstrated these values using STAR.

- *Commitment to the principles of equal opportunity in the workplace.*

**4. Qualification Questions** - outline the qualification you've completed or are currently working towards.

- *Relevant qualifications in Education"*

# Example statement

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## ESSENTIAL

1. Demonstrated high level of ability to communicate effectively, verbally and in writing (Skills based-criteria)
2. Ability to work in a team and a collaborative environment (Skills based-criteria)
3. Knowledge of strategic and business planning and the ability to conduct research on a range of issues.  
(Knowledge Criteria)
4. Demonstrated conceptual and analytical skills and the ability to contribute to practical and innovative solutions to problems (Skills based-criteria)
5. Commitment to the principles of equal opportunity in the workplace (Values/attributes criteria)

## DESIRABLE

1. Relevant qualifications or progress towards an applicable qualification (Qualifications/certifications criteria)



# STAR example- Notes

*Demonstrated initiative and sound organisational skills, including the ability to meet deadlines and prioritise tasks*

## **Situation and Task**

- committee member of the Curtin Guild / Organised networking event- students and industry professionals.

## **Actions**

- created project plan with other committee members which included all key tasks. (Initiative)
- allocated schedule completion time by analysing the priorities. (Organisation)
- booked venue, catering and speakers were booked before commencing other tasks (Organisation)
- diary management to ensure that tasks were completed on time. (Organisation)
- secured employer sponsorship which provided Employability Club \$5000 budget for the event. (Initiative)

## **Result**

- event was delivered on schedule & within budget.
- positive feedback received from students and employers
- student membership to the Curtin Employability Club increased by 25%

# STAR example

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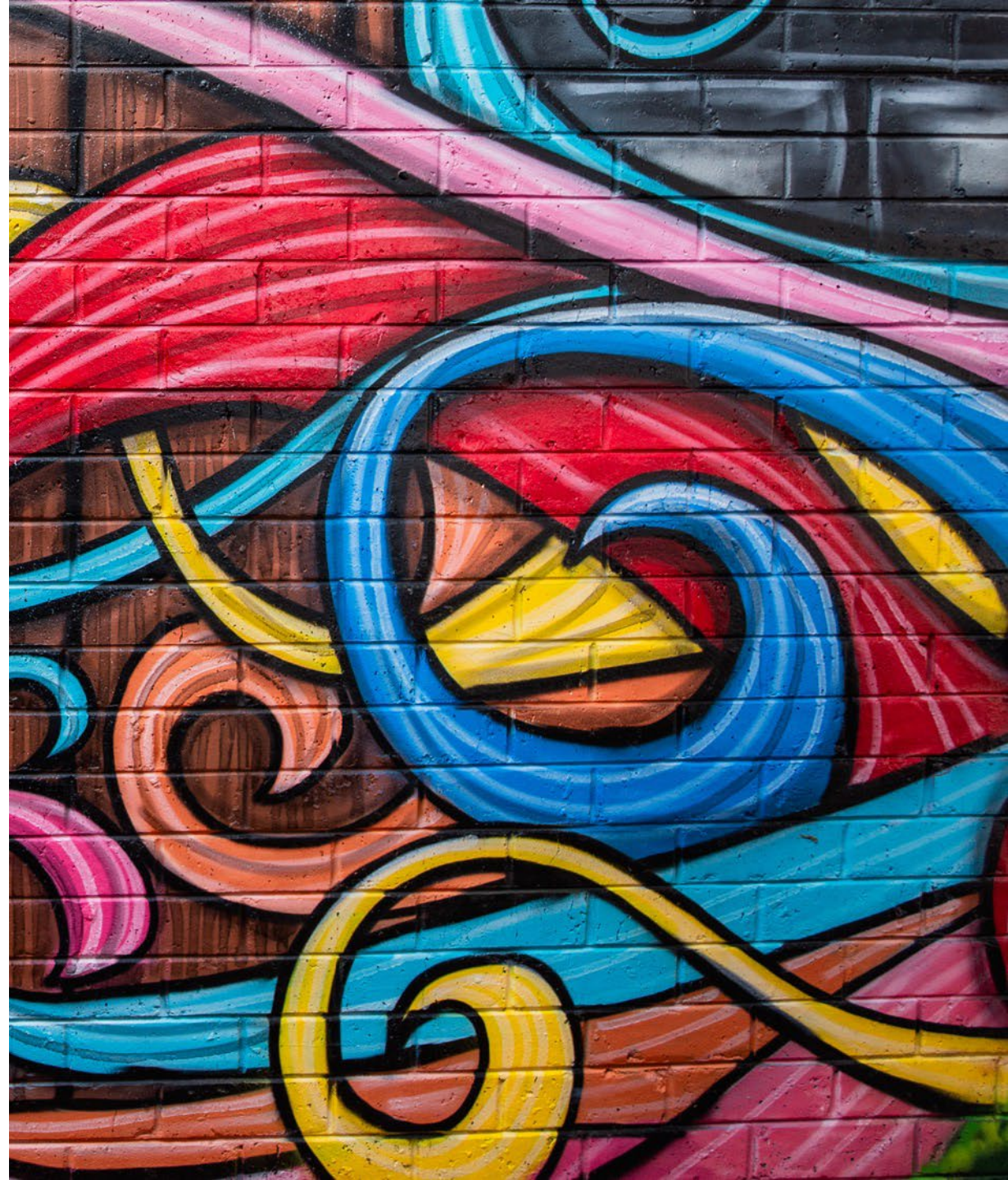
*Demonstrated initiative and sound organisational skills, including the ability to meet deadlines and prioritise tasks*

*Strong initiative and sound organisational skills have ensured success throughout my university experience.* For example, (S) as a committee member of the Curtin Employability Club, I was (T) tasked with organising a networking event involving both students and industry professionals. (A) Demonstrating strong organisational skills, I developed a detailed project plan in collaboration with other committee members. The plan included all key tasks and scheduled completion times,. Analysing the priorities, I ensured the venue, catering and speakers were booked before commencing other tasks including sending out the 65 invitations. Using my strong initiative, I strategically engaged with local businesses, successfully securing employer sponsorship which provided the Employability Club with a \$5000 budget for the event, in exchange for marketing and promotion throughout the evening. (R) As a result of my initiative and strong organisation , the event was delivered on schedule and within budget. Positive feedback was received from students and employers and student membership to the Curtin Employability Club increased by 25% one month after the event.

# Final SC Tips

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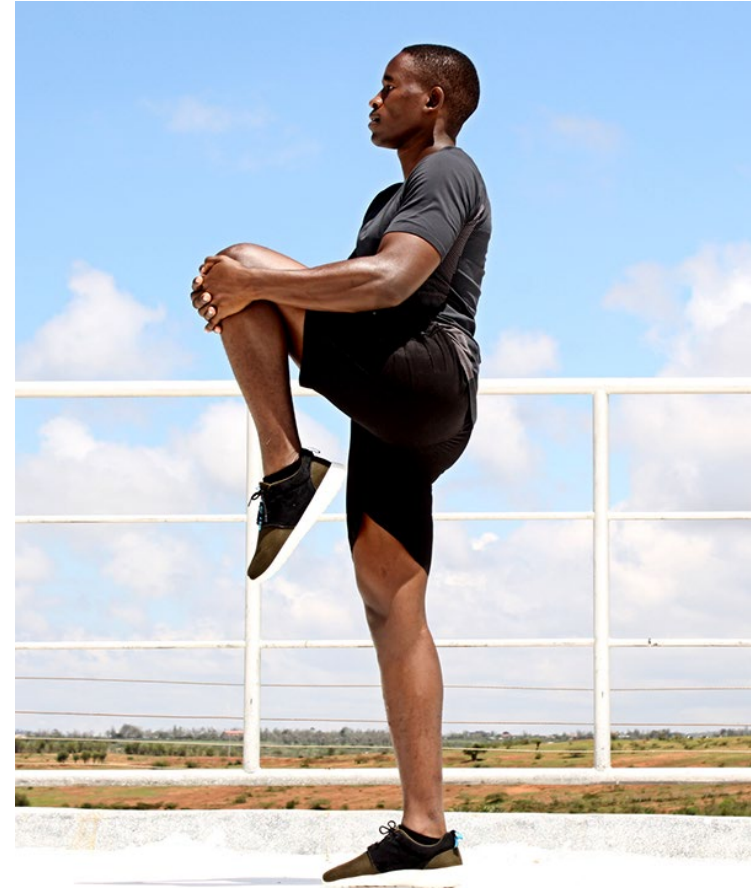
- Research the employer / Understand the job
- List each criteria as headings & address in paragraphs
- Address all parts of the criteria
- Use STAR and strong action words e.g. 'assessed', 'implemented', 'organised', 'developed'
- Prioritise relevance, edit and check your final document





# Stretch break!

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# Interviews

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**How do you feel about interviews?**

# Purpose of an Interview? (Employer)

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**Can you do the job?** - Assessing: Skills, abilities, qualifications.

**Do you want the job?** - Assessing: Interest, attitude & motivation.

**Will you fit the organisation?** Assessing: Personality to ensure you will fit their workplace culture.

## **Interviewer's Objective**

To find the BEST and RIGHT person for the job



# Purpose of an Interview? (You)

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**Can you do the job?** - Assessing: Does this align with my skill set and give me opportunity for career growth

**Do you want the job?** - Assessing: Will I be working on problems and challenges that interest me?

**Will you fit the organisation?** Assessing: Does this align with my values, will I be happy here for a while, will it lead to other interesting opportunities.

## **Your Objective**

To find the BEST job for you, for now

# Types of Job Interviews

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- Telephone interview
- Face to Face interview
- Group interview
- Assessment Centre interview
- Online face to face interview
- Video interview

# Preparing for the interview

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- Know as much about interviewer as possible
- Study the job advertisement / job description – What words / terminology are they using.
- Research the Company – values, current projects, key clients
- Dress for the interview – feel confident and provide a good first impression.
- Know where you are going, plan your route and parking



# Interviews – Managing Nerves

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- Nerves are normal – accept them as part of the process
- Build confidence through clarity in what you offer and in practicing your responses
- Use positive self talk
- Exercise – burn off nervous energy

*Take the glass of water when offered*

# Preparation

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- Why do you **want** the job?
- What are your **strengths** for the role? (Technical and Transferable)
- How do your **skills & ability** align with the organisation?
- What experiences make you the **good fit** for the role?
- What are the company's **values/mission**? Why / How does this resonate with you
- What **interests** you about the role/organisation? - motivation
- How will you **demonstrate** your values and skill sets (STAR Examples)

# Common Interview Questions

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1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you want to work for **this** company/ position?
3. What are your key strengths?



# Tell me about yourself

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- The employer wants to know about your skills and ability and motivation, *relevant to the position they are considering you for.*

## *Strong start – Good First Impression*

- Similar content to the content of your cover letter. You want an engaging, informative and relevant. Talk about your relevant skills and interest
- *Who are you professionally? (past) / what do you bring to this role (present)/ Why are you here? (future)*
- Add anything not career related if it supports your application

# What interests you about THIS company /Position

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The interviewer wants to know why you have chosen their company, and what you know about the company. They want see how interested you are in the job.

- Bring up something specific that you've found during your company research phase and tie it in with your answer
- Be authentic and honest
- Discuss why the role or company interests you

*I am interested in your latest mining project which offers greater scope for me to use my skill in....*

*I'm excited about this job opportunity, as it would allow me to use my strengths in..... I feel my skills are particularly well-suited to this position because ...*

# What are your key strengths

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Prepare answers that gives specific examples that will support your job application.

- Have key strengths - that are relevant to the role you are applying
- Show - don't tell. Be able to give specific examples from your current or previous position/s that demonstrate your strength.

*One key strength is my knowledge of safety legislation. Throughout my research I have relied upon my strengths in both understanding and interpreting legislation to inform my decision making and recommendations, which greatly enhanced my project work with XYZ mining.*

# Behaviour Questions (STAR!)

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- Most popular type of interview questions, assess competence, based on past behaviour
- Respond with specific examples from your experiences. Use STAR framework
  - *When have you achieved* a goal working as part of a team? What value did you bring?
  - *Tell us about a time* when you used your initiative to suggest improvements



# STAR Worksheet -

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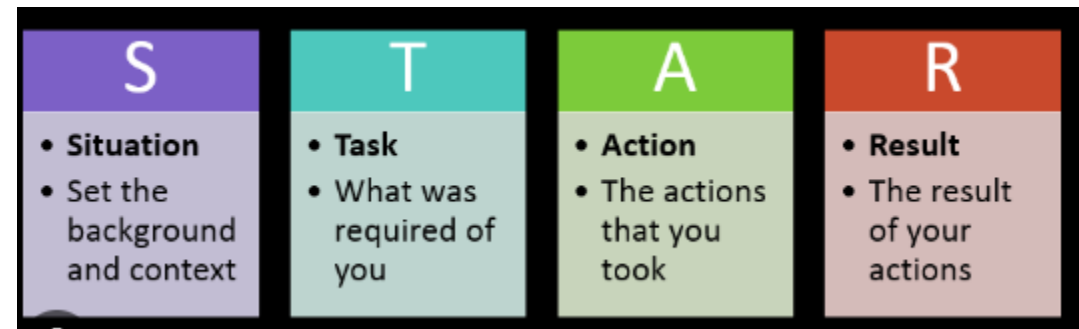
Practicing this technique can help reduce your interview nerves & increase your performance.

<b>SITUATION</b> (Where were you?) context, your position & responsibilities	<b>TASK</b> (What were you doing?) the problem or opportunity	<b>ACTION</b> (What action did you take?) your personal action / contribution / resources & evaluation	<b>RESULT</b> (What was the outcome?) achievements, results, feedback & learning

# Activity: Behavioral Questions

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1. When have you worked in a team to accomplish a project?
2. Good organisational skills are needed for the job –Provide an example that demonstrates these skills?
3. Can you give an example of when you have had to apply for *knowledge and skills* to solve a problem?



# After the interview

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- Take stock – what went well, what would you do differently next time?  
Make notes, keep the notes
- **Ask for feedback.** You may get some tips that you can try out at the next interview (it may also be helpful to know why you were not chosen, rather than to imagine why not).
- **Be professional in all your dealings with the employer** if you get a job offer from elsewhere, cancel your interview and explain why.
- Not being successful, does not mean that you don't have a strong skill set, or could not do the job – it just means that at that moment, you were not the chosen candidate. **Keep going!**

# Upcoming Workshop

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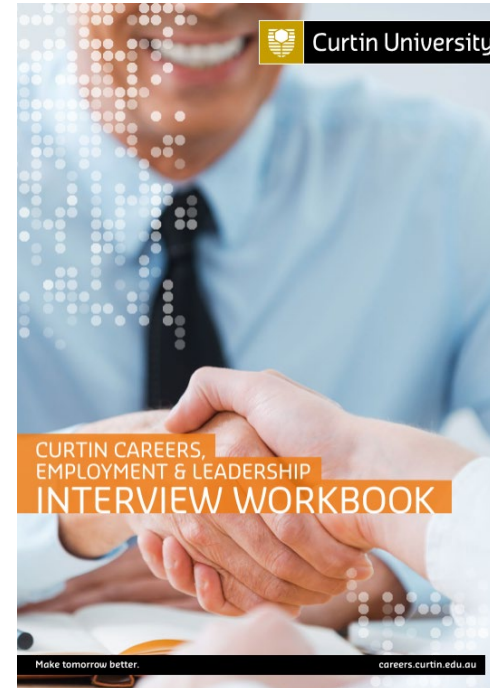
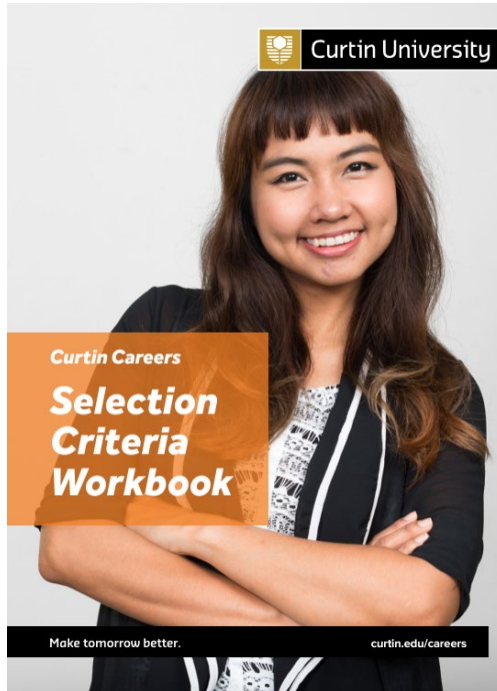
**HDR students - Networking & Using LinkedIn**

Wednesday, 27 November 2024 - 2:00pm-3:30pm



# Additional Resources

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“How to write and talk to selection criteria: improving your chances of winning a job”, by Dr Ann Villiers (Book/ebook) <https://www.selectioncriteria.com.au>

# Curtin Careers

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- One to one career conversations
- Job applications support
- UniHub Resource Library

**[curtin.edu/careers](https://curtin.edu/careers)**



# Feedback

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## Selection criteria and Interviews

- Understand the role you are applying for and use the STAR framework
- Prepare, Prepare, prepare for interview.



HDR – Selection criteria and Interviews





# Curtin Careers

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