STAR Self Checking

Todd Jerome Jenkins | v2.0 | October 13, 2026 | 5–10 minutes plus field checks

What and why

STAR is a self-check before and after a consequential action: Stop, Think, Act, Review. Use the current instruction to identify the right item, the intended action and the expected result. Familiar work makes it easy to select the wrong item or miss an unexpected result. STAR creates a deliberate check; it cannot repair a missing safeguard or an unusable instruction.

Objective: Demonstrate all four STAR steps and hold an action when identity, instructions or results are uncertain.

When and where

Before an important action, especially after an interruption or when items look alike. If action status is uncertain, establish it through the work process before proceeding. At the point of action: a desk, dispatch station, workshop or field location. Work from a safe position with the relevant instruction available.

How to use it

- STOP before the action. Reduce distractions. THINK: confirm the item, instruction, required protection and expected result.
- ACT only when authorized and prerequisites are verified. Follow the task procedure; STAR does not replace required checks.
- REVIEW the actual result against the specified expectation using the approved safe method. Report a mismatch; do not experiment.

Verify It in the Field

Locate the real task's criterion, safe checking method and authorized checker. Record the observed result and time; matching a label alone does not prove protection works.

Practice on paper: instruction says file B24; cards show B24 and B42. Explain STAR, select B24 and compare the selection with the instruction.

Repeat with an unreadable identifier. Success means holding the action and seeking clarification. No live equipment or records are changed.

Failure points and stop triggers

Look-alike items; distractions; memory replacing instructions; skipping Review; confidence mistaken for evidence. Hold for unclear identity, missing protection, lost step status or an unexpected result. Use the task's safe response and obtain the required resolution before restart.

Toolbox talk questions

1. Where is our expected result defined?

2. What could distract us at the action point?

3. What evidence distinguishes a completed action from a successful result?

Use the separate supervisor field check and attendance sheet. Practice is not qualification or work authorization.

Source: DOE-HDBK-1028-2009, Vol. 2, printed pp. 18–19. References and task-specific limits on the webpage.

Next step: Apply this skill to one step on the free JHA/JSA field-verification worksheet.

Expanded guidance and separate forms: toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/self-checking-item-action-result

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