



# CARING RELIABLY

Be Compassionate. Be Safe. Be Reliable.

## Caring Reliably Tool of the Month: Stop, Think, Act, Review (STAR)

The Caring Reliably program emphasizes the importance of skills that can help us make healthcare safer by focusing closely on the task at hand. Self-checking is a habit of the mind that keeps our attention on task and can help us pay greater Attention to Detail. The STAR technique is a tool for developing strong self-checking habits.

It's equally useful at home or work. Consider driving: If you sometimes drive a car with a clutch, but then get into a car with automatic transmission, it is easy to slam on the brake thinking you need to clutch. It's by consciously pausing to remember that you don't need to clutch that you prevent getting rear ended by slamming on your brakes!

**S**top: Pause for **one** second  
**T**hink: About your act  
**A**ct: Perform the act  
**R**ever: Check for response

### How should we use this tool?

Use self-checking when processing information such as reading a label, flow-sheet, warning sign, posting, computer screen, indicator, etc. Use self-checking when doing things with your hands such as entering data, documenting, connecting devices, selecting supplies, selecting meds, etc.

Use self-checking when doing things you are expert at doing.

The one second pause keeps thinking ahead of doing so that there's no acting without thinking.

Click on the link to see a common way we use the STAR tool, and consider how much more important self-checking is at work than at the vending machine. Think about all the everyday ways you already use the STAR tool in your daily life.

[STAR Video](#)

### Did you know?

1. Skill-based errors are sometimes called errors of the hand (not errors of the head) because the intent of the act is correct – it's the execution of the act that is incorrect.
2. Skill based errors can be caused by:
  - a. Inattention (including preoccupation and inadequate mental states)
  - b. Distractions (both divided and diverted attention)
  - c. Low alertness (sleepy or fatigued)
  - d. Time pressure (both urgent tasks and high workload)
3. Self-checking using **STAR** ensures that our hands do what our conscious mind just decided. The **one second pause** keeps our *thinking* ahead of our *doing* and helps reduce our skill based errors by **tenfold**.



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## **Safety Story: Preventing Errors Using STOP – THINK – ACT – REVIEW (STAR)**

A patient is having a postpartum hemorrhage and the team is asking the obstetrician for a drug to combat the bleeding. One of the first medications typically used is Methergine, and the nurse has it ready to administer. Since the obstetrician also typically uses Methergine first, she is ready to OK the order until she stops to remember that the patient has high blood pressure, a contraindication to the medication. Using STAR and stopping for a few seconds to review the patient's history prevented an error that could have had serious consequences for the patient.

STAR is a proven safety tool that can significantly reduce the chance of error occurring. A **one second pause** reduces the chance of error ten-fold. A **two second pause** can reduce the chance of error occurring up to one hundred-fold.

If you are interested in learning more about the Caring Reliably program or would like to sign up for a class, please go to the [Caring Reliably Sharepoint page](#) to learn more.