A.P.A.R.A.D.E.R

A MENTAL TOOL TO AID COMMUNICATION FOR TECHNICAL PEOPLE.

This is a tool, you use to give a report, an experience in the workplace or for an interview situation.
The acronym stands for Audience, Problem, Anticipated Consequence, Role, Action, Decision-Making-Rationale, End-Result and Reflection

AUDIENCE.

Your communication needs to be pitched to the level of your audience. Are you speaking to the technical manager only, or also to HR? Even if the person is technical, does he know the acronyms or specific domain knowledge that you worked in? Translate specialised knowledge into terms and explanations that the layman can understand.

PROBLEM.

What is the problem, critical issue, main concern or priority you or your organization, or project is facing?

If you are a developer, what is the underlying problem such that you needed to develop a solution for it, or needs to be considered to drive your strategy. If you are a tester, give the situation, product and stakeholder requirements what the main priorities that your testing needs to address?

Anytime you explain a career experience, extra-curricular activity, academic experience, work report, or presentation frame the experience as the underlying problem people are trying to solve. The audience is interested in knowing if you make intelligent decisions because you understand the bigger picture, or if you are simply a coding monkey or a robotic tester.

ANTICIPATED CONSEQUENCE.

What consequence did you or your organization face if this problem continued without resolution? You need to demonstrate that you understand the impact of why these problems or issues matter.

ROLE.

What was your role in resolving this problem? People are trying to evaluate the truthfulness of the situation, i.e. what portion of the project were you exposed to, what is your perspective.
(E.g. Interviewers want to know what you did… not what "we" did. A source of irritation for many interviewers is when the candidate says something like, "One of the things we did was <insert everything that the whole team did>…." A savvy interviewer will immediately ask, "I see… and what specifically was`1+`- your role in this situation?")

ACTION.

What action did you take? What did you do? Be specific.
 Say, "I did three things: a) I did X; b) I did Y; c) I did Z."

DECISION-MAKING RATIONALE.

Explain why you decided to take the action that you did. What other options did you consider? Why didn't you choose the other options? Why, this specific decision? What quantitative data/information did you consider? What qualitative data/information did you consider?

What was your decision-making rationale include analytical factors ("I considered X, and determined Y was the better choice for Z reasons") It is also important to consider interpersonal factors in your rationale. "Option A was the best logical option, but it was also a tough sell, given the culture of the organization. Option B was 80% as good as Option A but had no cultural resistance. Given the political environment, I chose Option B."

END-RESULT.

After you took the action that you did, what happened? What was the outcome? Be specific — when possible, cite a quantitatively measurable outcome.

REFLECTION.

Did things go as planned? What worked, what didn't work? What did you learn from the situation? What would you do differently?