

## Case Interview

HBS case - lot of page.

Case Interview - nothing

Figuring out what to ask for

Two categories of cases

Business Situation

Estimation Question

\* Do the maximum with minimum resources?

Are you independent enough to solve problems on your own?  
represent a company, need little guidance, achieve goals?

You need a cup of hot water?

Boil 1 cup on stove?

(C)

✓

Boil the ocean? get 1 cup

X.

There is lots of data and you have to be very selective  
- write min no. of questions to get min amount of info you  
need to make an actionable decision.

Being precise  
43.2%.

being good enough to make a decision

### Rule 1

If you say something, have data to back it up

### Rule 2

It's not about just being right, it's about being  
right in a client friendly way  
how you're right matters a lot!

eg - making conclusion without showing your work.

eg. you go to doctor and he directly says you have  
tumor lets do brain surgery. no analysis, no tests. etc.

Bad!

maybe the doctor is right, he saw something, but  
if you can't explain why he is not right, it doesn't

matter  
in client friendly way

eg - Client friendly -

Being scatterbrained

a - b - c linear

and not  $a \rightarrow r \rightarrow s \rightarrow b \rightarrow e \rightarrow c$

clients cannot follow, even if you are right.  
Don't jump around! Not everyone can do abstract thinking!  
They should not feel dumb in the process

- can't be explained visually  $\rightarrow$  not a good answer.
- can't justify with facts & data
- logically correct, but not a practical approach in real life  $\rightarrow$

### Rule 3: Don't be asshole

1. No one likes to work with one
2. not client friendly

You are an outsider, they have to trust you.

Be extra nice!!

### Interviewer's mindset

1. Process excellence vs 'specific answer'.  
Repeatable vs got lucky.

Wrong and right approach is better than  
right and wrong approaches

2. Logical, data driven analysis

All sequentially, very linearly, T/F sometimes

3. Synthesis (Pulling things up to the big picture)  
Recommendation based on your entire analysis,

### How to Open, Analyze and close a case.

#### A) How to open a case?

1. Stall

client: I want to acquire xyz.

You: Hmm... (that's an interesting question)

2. VERIFY your understanding.

a. Terminology, facts.

b. The problem to solve (Don't solve the wrong problem).

Spit it out, Repeat what you understood to client and ask them if that's what they want.

3. Structure the case for analysis

$\Rightarrow$  picking the right framework

- To solve this case we need to understand four core ideas... etc

1. Identify the Problem type

(profit problem, new product problem, market entry problem)  
etc

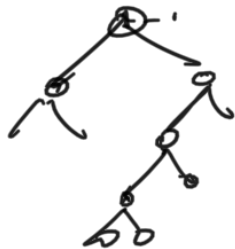
2. Match the appropriate framework for that problem.
3. Pick key components of that framework (don't mention name of framework explicitly).
4. DRAW the framework on a piece of paper

eg. 20% decrease in profits  
→ Profitability problem



## Analyze

To break into component parts., parts into parts and so on.



1. Ask on any info on where to start-

## 2. Hypothesis

eg: You have an experiment and you think the key of curing cancer is gene 14.

Now it can be right or wrong.

If wrong, just rephrase the hypothesis.

eg - Profit down by 20%, we have to look at revenue & cost.  
I am gonna hypothesize its a revenue problem lets gather some data on revenue and see if it is correct.

3. Pick a branch of framework to start.

Pick revenue, has it changed?, which direction?

4. Identify key issues with branch. → Revenue.

Is revenue increased, same or decreased?

Do we have any data to show which one of this is correct.

5. Ask standard questions:

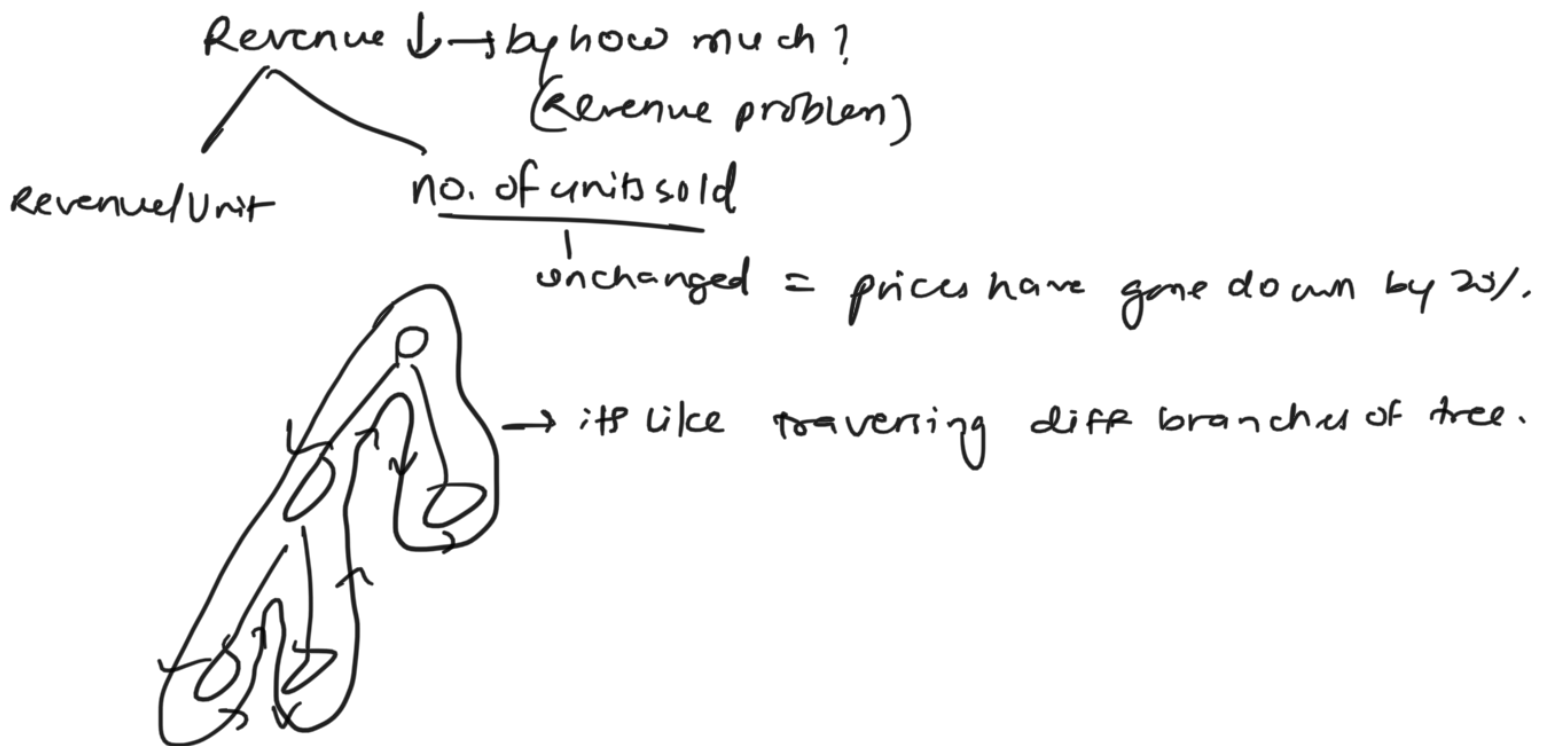
6. Go deeper down the branch if the data suggests to do so, or go up a level and work on different branch

Revenue  $\rightarrow$  same  $\rightarrow$  cost might be a problem

7. REFINED hypothesis as you discover more insights.

Dont ask vague questions, be very specific.

Eg. of going deeper.



Tips for analysis-

- Speak out loud
- Have a lot of hypothesis
- Company vs Competitors  
(company specific or industry wide?)
- Current Year vs Previous years
- Segment your numbers
- Ask for data (but explain why u need it)

How to close a case.

1. Figure out what's important about what you have discovered. ("Insight")
2. Provide a big picture point of view or conclusion.  
Ideally with recommended actions.
3. Support your point of view with data.

Synthesis - Putting back pieces to a whole to form a coherent whole for client to make sense of it.  
(opposite of analysis)





four core frameworks

- 1) Profitability framework
- 2) Business Solution
- 3) Mergers & Acquisition.
- 4) Supply & Demand Framework (Industry capacity)