

IIM Calcutta Consulting Club



Batch of 2019

Consulting Casebook

Editor

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McKinsey & Co.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Arushi Jain
Interviewing Firm	McKinsey & Co.
Interviewer	Harsh Chhaparia (Associate Partner), Somnath Chatterjee (Partner)
Under-graduate College	Delhi Technological University
Stream	Computer Science
Work-experience (Months)	10 months
Firm	The Boston Consulting Group
Sector	Industrial Goods
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	Friendly and encouraging. Started off with a question to ease me a little, and jumped straight into a case. No personals asked other than the first question.
Round 1	
	<i>Profitability (Automotive sector, Highly data intensive)</i>
Interviewer	So, how do you find Calcutta?
<i>Candidate</i>	Mentioned about going there only once or so till now and how Joka has been quite an experience.
Interviewer	(Smiling) So, should we start the case then? There's a 2-wheeler company which has experienced flattened revenues in the past 2-3 years and they have come to you for help.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay, so we are looking at a 2-wheeler company whose revenues have flattened revenues and we need to figure out the reason for the same. Is there any other thing I need to look into?
Interviewer	No, please continue.
<i>Candidate</i>	So before I move ahead with my analysis, I wish to understand some information about the Industry, Company, Competitors, Products and the Customers.
Interviewer	Sure.
<i>Candidate</i>	Where is the company located and where are these flattened revenues experienced?
Interviewer	The company is located Pan-India, and the revenues are also flattened throughout.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. What part of the value chain is the company in?
Interviewer	The company is a 2-wheeler manufacturer as well as dealer. They have a third party exclusive distribution network.
<i>Candidate</i>	Do we have any information regarding the growth rate of the company and it's market share?
Interviewer	Sure. We are growing at 1-2% with a market share of 50%

Candidate	Great, I'll move onto the competitive scenario now. How many competitors do we have, and are they experiencing a similar situation?
Interviewer	We have two competitors, and no they aren't experiencing this situation.
Candidate	Do we have any information regarding the growth rate of the competitors and their market share?
Interviewer	So the first competitor is growing at a rate of 7-8% with a market share of 15% and the other is growing at a rate of 10% with 25% market share.
Candidate	So, compared to our competitors, we are not doing well at all. What products are we into?
Interviewer	So, there are three products. There is a scooter (<125cc), an economy motorcycle and a premium motorcycle (>125 cc)
Candidate	Alright. Do we have any information on the revenue split between these, and if the revenue flattening is in any one segment or all?
Interviewer	So, the scooter segment has a 25% market share, the economy motorcycle has a 70% market share and the premium motorcycle has a 5% market share.
Candidate	How are these segments doing in terms of the growth rates, and how is our client doing in all these three sectors?
Interviewer	The scooter segment is growing at a 25% rate, economy motorcycle at a 1% rate, and premium motorcycle at 2-3% degrowth. What do you think is happening?
Candidate	So, I'll be in a position to answer best once I know how our client is doing in these sectors.
Interviewer	In the scooter segment, the first competitor has 56% market share. Then there is the second competitor and then us. We are growing at 5% here. In the economy motorcycle segment, we have a market share of 70% and we are growing at 1%. Leave the motorcycle segment for now. So, what do you think, which sector should we focus on?
Candidate	Sure. Very evidently, we are not performing well in the premium scooter segment as our growth rates are nowhere close to the industry growth rates. Which is contributing to the flattened revenues? And I would want to now deep dive into this sector.
Interviewer	Great! Go ahead. What do you want to know?
Candidate	So, do we have any information about our customer segmentation?
Interviewer	The scooter segment is used by the younger generation belonging to the urban middle class. For them, the USP is the mileage as well as the safety this vehicle offers. The economy motorcycle is used by the rural people while the premium one is used by the rich adventurous kids. The scooters offered by the first competitors are sturdy while ours are priced lower by say 2000 rupees. The economy motorcycle offered by the client is durable, of higher quality and is popular.
Candidate	(I had an entire sheet of information given, and I had not started any analysis. But he was patient which made me realise that the real test was not to solve the case but to stay very calm with the information overload.) Can I please take 30 seconds to quickly summarize the case?
Interviewer	Sure! Go ahead.
Candidate	Summarized in a precise way from the beginning till now.
Interviewer	Well done!

Candidate	So, since the competitors are doing well, while we are not, I believe there they either have a product advantage, a cost advantage or the customer preference is in their favor. So I want to look at the product features, awareness and distribution of the product to understand why this is happening.
Interviewer	Which all product features do you want to focus on?
Candidate	I want to focus on Price, Mileage, Safety/Quality, Lifetime, Financing, Physical features, Maximum speed.
Interviewer	I think you are missing out on one aspect.
Candidate	(Taking a few seconds) Oh yes. Wear and tear/maintenance.
Interviewer	Exactly, after sales service. Now, I want you to use digital technologies to reach youngsters in order to attract them to your product.
Candidate	Okay, how I want to proceed with this is that I want to look at the entire customer value chain and identify points where digital can be incorporated
Interviewer	Please define the customer value chain for me
Candidate	So, the steps from the beginning are Awareness, Accessibility, Ambience, Product Selection, Payment and After Sales Service
Interviewer	How can you incorporate changes in the ambience to make it more digital?
Candidate	The ambience can be split into our five senses, sight, sound, touch, taste and smell. For the purpose of the case touch, taste and smell can be left for now.
Interviewer	(Smiles) Sure, for the others?
Candidate	For vision, I would like to include digital displays (displaying discounts, store layout), ipads (with the features of the products), technology assistants/bots to assist in the shopping process.
Interviewer	Great, that will be it. Do you have any questions for me?
Candidate	Asked about McK Kolkata and the team there. He answered, asked a few other questions related to what he said.
Interviewer	Very well done! And all the best.
Candidate	Unconventional case
Round 2	
	Unconventional case <i>The interview style was professional. Only one personal question at the end. The focus of the interview was to just see my structure.</i>
Interviewer	So, let's begin with the case. You have been hired by the Government of Bengal, to start a campaign in order to make Bengal seem a good investment destination for foreign investors. How would you go about doing this?
Candidate	So, I need to layout a plan on how to make Bengal look more attractive for investment opportunities. Is there any other objective I need to be looking at?
Interviewer	No, that'll be all for now.

Candidate	What is the timeline for this plan, and are we focusing on any one particular industry investors to attract?
Interviewer	The timeline is say 5 years, and not any particular industry. But what factors would you look at when you decide which industry to attract?
Candidate	So, when I look at what industries to attract, I would look at the USP of Kolkata. The first thing I know is that the population density of Kolkata is very high. This means we can look at labour intensive industries. Kolkata is also a port city, which makes it attractive for any edible oil manufacturer for example.
Interviewer	Lets look at the fact that it is highly dense in terms of the population. What industries do you think would be attracted by this?
Candidate	The construction industry is one which is highly labour intensive.
Interviewer	Any industry which needs skilled labour?
Candidate	(After some thought) The IT services industry.
Interviewer	Exactly. Now think about how you can make Bengal attractive for the IT industry.
Candidate	(Did a quick 10-second summary to make the objective very clear) So, how I want to go about this is that from the very beginning I will look at all the touch points. I will start with Financing, Legal Barriers to entry, Government regulations, Land acquisition, Labour and labour laws, Market access
Interviewer	Okay. But don't you think some of these are not state issues.
Candidate	Oh okay. Mostly labour is a state issue. Rest are essentially Central subjects.
Interviewer	Yes.
Candidate	So, for the IT industry, labour costs are the major costs. So that is one thing I want to deep dive in. And the other thing we need to portray to make Bengal look attractive is the market access they will get by investing in Bengal.
Interviewer	Okay. Great! I think we can close the case now. So what is the most interesting piece of work you have done till now?
Candidate	There have been two actually. Spoke about one case I worked on while at BCG highlighting how I was hesitant to enter a new industry, but decided to work on it and gained a lot of knowledge. Talked about a steep learning curve, collaborating with a global team etc. He was almost getting up, when i mentioned about my entrepreneurial venture. That interested him and he sat again to have a good 5-7 minute discussion on that.
Interviewer	Great! Please wait outside, we'll let you know.
Candidate	Thank you!

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

The interviewer is not necessarily looking for a solution. In both my cases, no solution was reached as such. But the idea was to gauge how well I handled excess data and an unconventional case. It's imperative to understand where the interviewer is steering the case, and pick hints. Also, a very good practice is to summarize the case in the middle once to get everyone upto speed and focus the discussion.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Atyasha Sinha
Interviewing Firm	McKinsey & Company
Interviewer	Prasad Lad
Under-graduate College	MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology
Stream	Information Science and Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	Fresher
Firm	NA
Sector	NA
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Profitability/Growth; Friendly</i>
Interviewer	Tell me something about yourself.
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>2 mins answer followed by him asking my rank in my UG college which was 11/161.</i>
Interviewer	Let's start with a simple case. Suppose you own a nimbu paani stall outside Joka and you want to increase your profit. How would you go about it?
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>I divided profit into revenue, costs and created a separate section for adding additional revenue streams. We can increase our revenue by simply increasing the price by a small amount for each nimbu paani which will not add much to the revenue. We can also look at increasing the volume or the number of nimbu paanis sold. This can be done by looking at the product quality and improving it, changing the location to a more accessible one, say next to the bus stop, in a cooler area during the day and so on. Looking at promotions doesn't make sense because of the simple fact that its a small nimbu paani stall and its customers will more or less remain the same.</i>
Interviewer	Who will be your customers?
<i>Candidate</i>	Probably some local people, some students from IIMC.
Interviewer	I want you to mention a specific set of customers.
<i>Candidate</i>	Students from the Kendriya Vidyalaya here?
Interviewer	Yes. Now, can you find some new solutions?
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>We can try adding new revenue streams by introducing other drinks such as soda shikanji if possible. We can also introduce a fancy way of making the drink or decorating the stall which will attract more students.</i>
Interviewer	Anything else?

Candidate	A major problem here would be that the demand would suddenly increase either when the students have recess or when they get done with classes for the day. It is very important to be able to cater to this demand. This can be done by already keeping the nimbu paani ready and serving it to the students as soon as possible.
Interviewer	Okay. Now let's look at another case. How would you increase PayTM's profit? Its model already includes whatever it currently has from paying bills to recharging to online shopping and whatever we are aware of. I want you to primarily focus on adding new revenue streams.
Candidate	There are facilities to book movie tickets online. Recently, Netflix, Hotstar and Amazon Prime have become extremely popular. An additional revenue stream could be having a tie up with them which asks users to pay through PayTM when they subscribe to these websites
Interviewer	Anything else?
Candidate	Another existing feature PayTM has includes the coupons it offers. The coupons as we all know are generally quite redundant. We can focus on making the coupons more useful. If we provide more useful coupons which actually promote purchase, we can attract more transactions
Interviewer	Thank you, Atyasha
Candidate	Thank You
Interviewer	How did your first interview go?
Candidate	<i>After I told him that it went well, he told that he was going to test if I can think on my feet and hence would change situations very quickly during the discussion</i>
Interviewer	There is a fully loaded truck which has to be delivered from Paris to Zurich (straight line) and we have to reduce the transportation cost by 25%.
Candidate	I broke the transportation cost into different sections and started analysing how we could reduce the different types of cost.
Interviewer	<i>He was not looking for a specific solution. He just wanted to check if I followed a structured approach in reducing the cost</i>
Candidate	<i>Later, I also gave other suggestions for increasing revenue like having advertisements on the truck when he changed the question</i>
Interviewer	You have to set up a detergent plant in Africa where people use mud for cleaning purposes. How will you decide the location and convince the CEO for the same? You have 2 mins.
Candidate	<i>Anything I suggested to decide the location was refuted by him. I assume he was checking the number of ways I could come up with for deciding the location. I finally decided to suggest Congo after which he changed the question.</i>
Interviewer	The CEO decided to leave. How would you now set up the plant?
Candidate	<i>I suggested multiple ways which he rejected. I finally suggested collaborating with a soaps industry in Africa he had mentioned during the preliminary questions I had asked.</i>

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

The cases for the first round were pretty simple and easier than the cases we had practiced. Maintaining your calm and staying confident definitely helps. As it was a stress Interview, the interviewer did not accept any answer I gave. The only thing which helped me was my attempt to structure my solution for everything he asked. Even if all your answers are being rejected do not let any nervousness show on your face.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Ishita Agarwal
Interviewing Firm	McKinsey & Co.
Interviewer	
Under-graduate College	Hans Raj College, Delhi University
Stream	Economics
Work-experience (Months)	0
Firm	
Sector	
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	Market Entry
Interviewer	Your client is a retail bank and now it wants to enter wealth management practice. Should it enter or not?
Candidate	I was a little scared because I had no idea about wealth management. So I asked in my clarifying questions what wealth management was and other clarifying questions.
Interviewer	He explained to me what wealth management is.
Candidate	Estimated market size, market we can capture and estimated profits from that and then give a recommendation if we should enter or not. Important issues in this case were strengths that the bank had and how it could use those to its advantage.
Interviewer	Why consulting?
Candidate	
Interviewer	Guesstimate the number of passengers in Delhi Metro in a day
Candidate	Clarifying questions like For one line only, Metro operates from 6 AM to 11 PM,
Interviewer	Asked me to calculate it for one trip only.
Candidate	Started with making assumptions that I will be calculating it for an 8 coach yellow line metro with 20 stations
Interviewer	He approved my assumptions
Candidate	I started by dividing in 2 time periods - peak hours and non peak hours. Assumed capacity of one coach on Metro is 50. Occupancy during peak times will be 100% and during non peak hours will be 50%. Assumed 6 hours of peak traffic in a day. Assumed 20% people get off at every station and there are 20 stations.

Interviewer	He asked me to do the calculation till the end
<i>Candidate</i>	I made a minor calculation mistake but I realised it myself and corrected it.
Interviewer	He was patient and kept nodding all along. He then asked me to list the revenue and cost streams of a newspaper agency.
<i>Candidate</i>	I did this well and he seemed happy.
Interviewer	He asked me to give him 2 minutes. I left the room
<i>Candidate</i>	2 minutes later he came out and offered me the internship.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Just be calm and confident. The interviewer will try to help you. Take cues from him. Even if you think your interview is going bad, don't give up or get underconfident.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Kunal Desai
Interviewing Firm	McKinsey & Company
Interviewer	Ankur Modi (Partner)
Under-graduate College	IIT Kharagpur
Stream	Mechanical Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	23 months
Firm	ITC Limited
Sector	Operations, Manufacturing
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	1. Introduce yourself 2. Why did you join IIM C? What if not IIM C? 3. How would you rate your academic performance in the first term? Which was your best course, and why? 4. What is your opinion on the MOOCS (online open courses) revolution? What does it mean for the teaching profession? What would you recommend a young school teacher to do?
Round 1	
	<i>Rapidfire mini-cases: After a brief introduction exchange and 3/4 personal questions, jumped directly to a series of short caselets</i>
Interviewer	The interviewer told that he'll be firing short cases at me and wants to look at how I approach those problems. Case 1: Suppose you are a sales executive at P&G, looking after their ice-cream product line. A Walmart store in your area needs to be convinced to open a dedicated space for P&G ice-cream, and stop selling other brands of ice cream. Moreover, you will offer them only half the competitors' margin. What would you do?
Candidate	Demand+Supply side analysis: Started by understanding the P&G ice-cream brand more - how it sells, Points of parity and points of difference as compared to other brands; next moved to what's in it for the Walmart store - how much profit it makes out of the current ice-cream sales and net benefit expected because of the P&G ice cream introduction (both direct profits - due to ice cream sales, and indirect profits - e.g. increased customer visits to store, new customers visiting store)
Interviewer	Case 2: You are an operations executive and are given the following problem statement: Reduce inventory of the warehouse Increase service level Reduce all logistics related cost What would you do to achieve all of these simultaneously?

Candidate	This was a tricky question. The fact that I had expected to get a few ops related questions made me even more nervous to answer this one correctly. Started by asking the product, company, distribution channels. Was told that it's a single product - cigarettes. I had been exposed to the Toyota Production system/Japanese operational excellence frameworks in my previous work ex at ITC and explained that a mix of those would serve the purpose. JIT/Lean led operations mixed with advanced analytics driven network optimization system.
Interviewer	Case 3: A company wants to choose which geography to choose to launch a high-nutritional value dog food product it has recently developed?
Candidate	Assuming no bias/contraint - went on to list the important outcomes desired (%market share and publicity effects), characteristics of an ideal market that will help achieve this result. Identified the top markets the company operates in currently and the external environment (suppliers, regulators), mapped them to the ideal requirement, started listing down top countries of interest. Then on the basis of market share growth in these countries, identified the best-suited country.
Interviewer	Thanks. That'll be great for me. Do you have any questions for me?
Candidate	The interviewer had mentioned about his previous experience with HUL. Asked him about the reason for transition and how his functional expertise helps him.
Interviewer	The interview was based on a single case that the interviewer had already worked on. No preliminary questions, just a round of mutual intros.
Candidate	Our client is an India-based automobile manufacturer which has seen a decline in revenue from the last year. You've been hired to find out the reason behind the same and suggest recommendations.
Interviewer	Started by asking introductory questions regarding the company, geography, products, competitors and the revenue decline situation. Turned out that this was a 2-wheeler manufacturer, and out of 4 major products it sold, its scooter had hit poor sales figures in the last year. Moreover, competing scooter brands were all doing just fine (and better compared to their last year's figures). Proceeded to ask whether we had cut prices, sales number drop or both.
Candidate	Okay, so our scooter sales number has dropped by more than 40% from last year. We haven't tinkered with the prices. However, we do find that the competitors are gaining on the lost market share.
Interviewer	Okay. So it's a problem of declining number of scooters sold. I'll want to first understand whether it's a supply side issue or a demand side issue. Have we experienced any issue with respect to meeting the demand forecast from manufacuring side? Have we seen disruptions in our supply chain network (logistics/warehouse/retailer) that has curbed our ability to serve customer demand?
Candidate	None.
Interviewer	Okay, so this seems to be a consumer demand issue. Apparently, the consumers are not demanding many of our scooters and instead moving towards the other scooter brands. I'll start by eliciting the consumer purchase process : 1. Awareness (Does the consumer know about the existence of our product): Brand

	<p>image, promotions, advertisement efficiency and effectiveness</p> <p>2. Likeability (Does the consumer peg our product high as compared to other competing products), talking about product specifications, unique characteristics, price point, after-sales service feedback</p> <p>3. Accessibility (Given the consumer wants to purchase the product, is it available in his preferred distribution channel e.g. online/offline stores/home delivery)</p> <p>4. Purchase Action (Given the consumer finds the product at his preferred distribution channel, can he complete his purchase completely e.g. availability of vehicle loans/options of card payment or e-payment facilities)</p>
Candidate	<p>That's an exhaustive enough framework. Assume all products were comparable in terms of their features/prices. Let's assume it was a 'purchase action' issue. Apparently the customers, while in store, changed their decision to buy our product. Any reason you can think of?</p>
Interviewer	<p>Well assuming that competitor products were also displayed in the same store, the possible reasons could exist that consumers switched their decision to a different brand:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sales pitch issue: Salesmen bias - differing margins/differing incentives OR salesmen not knowledgeable enough of our product 2. Product marketing: Product not positioned/displayed aptly, features not being displayed aptly 3. Loan availability issue
Candidate	<p>Sure. The competitors had changed their strategy of marketing the scooters to attract younger audiences - with a flamboyant in-store display of features, while our client was focusing on the middle-aged people, kept only 2 colors of models with just a brochure to refer to all product features. Any recommendations?</p>
Interviewer	<p>The client should conduct a market survey to understand consumer preferences in-store and design a pilot to test the results. It should also focus on capturing other channels of marketing for capturing the 'scooter for the young' sentiment - digital could be an important channel to invest in.</p>
Candidate	<p>Thanks.</p>

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

A few pointers:

- 1. Please focus on structures! Even in a rapid-fire short cases type scenario, it's best not to lose composure and focus on the first principles on structuring the problem correctly and approaching the solution.*
- 2. Not all questions are cases! The question related to supply chain/ops was not a case, but was more of a CV-related thing. I had highlighted my operations and manufacturing experience in my CV, and that could've been the reason I was asked the JIT/Lean question.*
- 3. If given an opportunity to ask questions do ask! And it'll be even better if you could take out a thing or two from the interviewer's introduction about himself and frame a question (looks more natural that way!)*
- 4. The interviewer guided me a lot throughout my cases. It is essential that you take cues from what he's leading you towards. He'll generally not try to trick you and is always looking to help you reach the solution quickly.*
- 5. Relax! In the interview room it may get tense if you are caught off guard with some unusual piece of information/fact regarding some case. You could take a paper and jot down your thoughts (in a legible and structured manner), this buys you some time and lets the interviewer know that you've not blanked out.*

Interview Experiences	
Name	Neerja Maheshwari
Interviewing Firm	McKinsey & Co.
Interviewer	
Under-graduate College	Hansraj college, University of Delhi
Stream	Commerce
Work-experience (Months)	NA
Firm	NA
Sector	NA
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	Quickly walk me through your resume. Tell me about your research projects in detail. Tell me one thing which you like and which you don't like about consulting. Tell one event from your life where you faced failure. Why Consulting?
Round 1	
	<i>Market entry</i>
Interviewer	Suppose you are a non-governmental organization who wish to enter India. He has come to seek your advice as to how to go about it.
<i>Candidate</i>	So, our client is an NGO who wishes to enter India. What exactly is the objective of our client? What is the geography in which they currently operate? Which sectors are they currently operating in? Why do they particularly want to enter India?
Interviewer	They are currently operating in health and education sector in US. They want to maximize social welfare. They have no financial constraints and hence I would not like you to look the problem from financial perspective. They want to enter India as they saw an opportunity of social welfare considering the situation of India.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. So, since the objective is to maximize social welfare, I would like to first look into the sectors in which the client can enter, then evaluate all the sectors and then decide the sector to enter keeping in mind the objective of maximizing social welfare. Then I would like to discuss different ways in which our client can enter Indian market.
Interviewer	Okay. Go ahead.
<i>Candidate</i>	There are multiple areas in which the client can enter. It can be health, education, environmental protection, urban planning, waste management, electricity, regional rural bank, etc. Now I would like to evaluate each options in terms of number of lives impacted, the extent of impact and the feasibility of entering in that particular sector.
Interviewer	Sure.
<i>Candidate</i>	The health and education sector will directly affect many lives but at the same time there are multiple governmental and non-governmental organizations working in these areas. Environmental protection is much needed but quick and direct impact of it's activities would not be seen. Feasibility can be checked in terms of government regulations, support of local

	bodies and NGOs, current capabilities of the client and the intentions of the client to establish as a new entity alone or to join hands with any existing NGOs. In case of urban planning, electricity generation and regional rural banks, there will be stringent governmental regulations and multiple permissions would be needed to be taken.
Interviewer	The client is open to all the options of new NGO or merging with an existing NGO.
Candidate	So, considering the pros and cons of all the alternatives, it seems like health and education seems a very good option because of multiple factors. Both the sectors need much attention and many lives can be directly impacted through social work in these two sectors. Moreover, the client has an added advantage in the form of existing capabilities to serve these two areas. The client can easily enter into partnership with any existing local NGO to get knowledge of the present state in India and how to go about development in these sectors.
Interviewer	Okay. Thanks.
Candidate	Profitability
Interviewer	Your client is a banking company who is presently facing profitability issues. How will you solve their problem?
Candidate	So, the client is a banking company and they are facing problems in profitability. It means that their profits as a percentage of revenues has declined.
Interviewer	Exactly.
Candidate	Our client is what type of bank, an investment bank or a traditional bank? What is the geography in which it operates? The issue is with any particular branch or with the entire banking system of our client? Are our competitors facing similar issue in profitability?
Interviewer	Our client is a traditional bank which does the operation of accepting deposits and lending. The profitability issue is in one branch which is located in a rural area. Yes, it is an industry wide issue.
Candidate	So, I would like to understand what is driving profitability by studying its components. Then I would proceed to identify the remedies for these issues. Profitability=profit/revenues, i.e. 1-cost/revenue. There could be three reasons, Profit margins have reduced (Price of products-variable cost per unit), Product mix have changed or fixed costs have shot up.
Interviewer	Okay. Go ahead. I would like you to address these issues in banking terms.
Candidate	First, I would like to check if the profit margins have reduced i.e. if there is any change in the interest rates, lending rate, borrowing rate, repo rate or reverse repo rate because the basic income of the banks come from the difference between the rate at which they borrow and the rate at which they lend.
Interviewer	There is no change.
Candidate	Then I would like to look into the second aspect of if there is a change in product mix. For this, I would like to look into the different sources of revenues of the bank.
Interviewer	Sure, go ahead.
Candidate	Different loans, credit and debit cards, allied services. Is there any change in the percentage of revenues coming from these three products.
Interviewer	There is no change in the percentage of revenues from these products. However, there is a change in the mix of different types of loans. Can you tell the reason why?

Candidate	There could be multiple reasons. Since the bank is operating in rural area, there could have been an increase in the amount of loans offered to farmers at low interest rates. There could be an increase in NPAs. Alternatively, there could have been a change in the sectoral lending requirements by the RBI. Since it is given that the interest rates are constant, another possibility is changes in the margin requirements. Also, there is one bleak possibility of dishonest branch manager approving loans to some selected industrialists at lower rates.
Interviewer	Great. It is because the bank has started offering the loans at lower interest rates to farmers. Also, NPAs have increased. How can you solve the problem?
Candidate	Proper background check of the borrower to judge his credit worthiness. Collaterals should be made compulsory for people with low credit worthiness. Moreover, bank should try to increase lending to different sectors like car loans, home loans, etc. where default rates are low, interest rates are high and the repayment is not directly dependent on uncertain event like rainfall.
Interviewer	Okay thanks. That would be all.
Candidate	Guesstimate
Interviewer	Calculate the number of taxis in kolkata.
Candidate	(Had already practised similar guesstimate) What kind of taxis, call cabs like ola and uber, or yellow taxis?
Interviewer	Calculate the yellow taxis only.
Candidate	I would like to use demand based approach. Number of taxis= (Total #Taxi fares per hour) / (Avg. fares per taxi in a hour). The above analysis can be done for any hour in the day. However we should choose the hour on the basis of ease of computation. For this let us choose the morning time, since we know most people need to leave home to go to work or college at that time. This is better than choosing some other time like afternoon/evening where demand can come for a wide variety of purposes (like going for shopping, theatre) and will make it difficult to compute. We can compute the (Total # Taxi fares) in the morning time (7am-12pm) and divide by number of morning hours to arrive at (Total #Taxi fares per hour) in the morning.
Interviewer	Okay. Let us do another guesstimate. Calculate the number of marriages in India in one year and simplify calculations as much as possible. (Probably the interviewer realized that I have already practised similar guesstimate).
Candidate	Overall strategy- We need to calculate the number of marriages in India in one year. First we would calculate the average number of people who are in the marrying age in the country. Then we would factor in the aspects of people already married, who don't want to marry, child marriages and remarriages.
Interviewer	Assume that there are no child marriages and remarriages.
Candidate	Okay. The population of India is approximately 1.25 billion. Assuming a uniform distribution across all the ages, population between age 0-10= 10-20=20-30=30-40=40-50=50-60=60-80=approximately 178 million. We would assume it to be around 180 million each.
Interviewer	Fair enough. Take that to be 200 million each. Assume that only the people between the age group of 20-40 marry. No marriages of people below 20 and above 40.
Candidate	Assume that 70% people marry between 20-30 years and rest 30% marry between 30-40 years of age. Out of 100 million, 70 million marry between 20-30 and so number of people between age 20-30 marrying in one year is 70million/10=7 million. And so the number of

	marriages= $7M/2 = 3.5$ million.
Interviewer	Fine. How will you calculate number of marriages of people between the age group 30-40.
Candidate	Out of 100 million people between 30-40 age group, 70% are already married. So 30% will marry when they are between 30-40. So number of people marrying in one year is $30M/10 = 3$ million. Again considering 50% men and 50% women, number of marriages is $3M/2$ which is 1.5 million.
Interviewer	Okay.
Candidate	So the total marriages is $3.5 + 1.5 = 5$ million.
Interviewer	Okay. Fine. Thanks.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Do not panic. Try to give structure to the case even if it looks like an unconventional case with no structure. Practice sufficient number of guesstimates to increase calculation speed. Try to follow MECE approach in both conventional as well as non conventional cases. If the interviewer is asking to simplify calculations, simplify it as much as you can. What the interviewer is looking for is not numbers but the approach.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Radhika Gupta
Interviewing Firm	Mckinsey & Co.
Interviewer	Partners
Under-graduate College	Delhi University
Stream	Economics Hons.
Work-experience (Months)	NIL
Firm	N.A.
Sector	
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Guesstimate</i>
Interviewer	You are from Delhi, tell me something about Delhi.
<i>Candidate</i>	Had a small talk.
Interviewer	Estimate the number of marriages in India in a year
<i>Candidate</i>	I started with clarifying questions, some of which are listed down: What types of marriages? Should I consider child marriages, remarriages? Marriages in India or Marriages of Indians?
Interviewer	He asked me to ignore child marriages, remarriages etc. He asked me look at marriages of Indians.
<i>Candidate</i>	I discussed the approach with the interviewer and took the nod to move ahead with it. I started with the entire population of India, looked at the marriageable age and found the population in that range. I then listed down the factors that could determine the proportion of population that would get married in that range. The interviewer was more keen on knowing the factors than finding it numerically. I divided the original number with the relevant range to find the annual number and then divided it by 2 to get the final number.
Interviewer	Do you have any questions?
<i>Candidate</i>	Asked a question.
Interviewer	Cased-based
<i>Candidate</i>	Why consulting?
Interviewer	Discussed the reasons with him.
<i>Candidate</i>	The interviewer laid down the structure of the interview. It had 3 parts, first theory based, then quantitative and then interpretation. The case was: There is a local retail bank based in UK dealing with individual customers, i.e. no corporate clients. The product offered are

	savings account, current account, and loans.
Interviewer	First Part: The bank has seen an increase in revenues but their profitability has reduced in the last 3 years. Find the reason.
<i>Candidate</i>	The case was of declining profitability. I gave a structure and listed all the possible reasons.
Interviewer	The problem was increasing costs. Mention all the costs associated with the bank. Identify which cost could have increased to the extent that it has caused such a large hit to profitability.
<i>Candidate</i>	I listed all the costs under 3 buckets: Administrative, operations, set-up costs/fixed costs.
Interviewer	The next part was quantitative: I was given data on the number of customers of 3 different banks, the average number of products sold, and the average profit per customer. The operating cost per customer reduces by 4.175% if there is an addition of 100,000 customers (take the reduction to be linear). The operational cost is 60% of revenues. Luxemburg bank wants to grow its customers base to equate it to the next best bank. Its present customer base is 400,000 and wants to make it 1200,000. The current profit per customer is given. Find out the final operational cost for the bank.
<i>Candidate</i>	So the increase in customers is 800,000. The final operational cost per customer will be present operating cost*0.96825*8*1200,000. All that is left to find is the present operational cost, that we can find out from the profit per customer and the relationship between op cost and revenue.
Interviewer	Interpret the data.
<i>Candidate</i>	Interpreted.
Interviewer	Do you have any questions?
<i>Candidate</i>	No

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Prepare all the types of cases and try to cover most of the industries.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Rishi Gupta
Interviewing Firm	McKinsey and Company
Interviewer	
Under-graduate College	IIT Kanpur
Stream	Electrical Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	10 Months
Firm	EXL Service Gurgaon
Sector	Consulting
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Guesstimate</i>
Interviewer	Started with tell me about yourself, why is your CGPA low, what all did you do in you under-graduation.
<i>Candidate</i>	Told him about my under-graduation and PORs and that is the reason for low CGPA.
Interviewer	Moved to the guesstimate, he asked to find the amount of cement used in India last month.
<i>Candidate</i>	Started with darifying the objective and asked whether I need to consider only residential construction or commercial as well.
Interviewer	Told to ignore commercial constructions.
<i>Candidate</i>	Took the population of India and divided by rural and urban areas. Found out the number of families and considered 2 types of constructions (Families building their first home and families already having home & building another one).
Interviewer	Was happy with the approach and asked to tell 10 other ways to find the same thing.
<i>Candidate</i>	Started telling approaches and listing them on paper.
Interviewer	Leave the pen and paper and let's just have discussion.
<i>Candidate</i>	Told 3-4 approaches like property registrations, land dealings, government data on taxes etc. and got stuck.
Interviewer	helped me with it, and told to think in terms of other things other dependent things.
<i>Candidate</i>	Took the due, and then was able to tell 8-9 ways (sales of iron bars, bricks, furniture, electronic fitting items etc.). Basically things related to new house.
Interviewer	He was happy with the approach and asked to wait outside for next interview.
<i>Candidate</i>	Guesstimate

Interviewer	How many interviews you already had (he meant with McKinsey).
<i>Candidate</i>	I answered 3 (had 2 interviews with BCG before)
Interviewer	He was surprised, how come I am having 4th interview.
<i>Candidate</i>	Clarified that I meant 2 with BCG & 1 with McKinsey (followed by little bit of laugh)
Interviewer	Tell me about yourself and what all you like to do.
<i>Candidate</i>	Told about my hobbies what I did in under-graduation. Told about what all I can cook (told cooking as my hobby)
Interviewer	How many marriages take place in India in an year?
<i>Candidate</i>	Clarified the objective and explained my approach, told that I will be considering two types of marriages (re-marriages and first time marriages)
Interviewer	Go ahead
<i>Candidate</i>	Started with population and divided by gender. Told the age group that I will be considering for marriage for each gender. Calculated the proportion of this pool that will be marrying this year (kept a lower bound on number of females as population ratio is not same for both genders). Then took assumptions about remarriages using some data about divorces and proportion of divorced people marrying again.
	He was satisfied with the approach and liked few points I covered like remarriages and lower bound on number of females. Asked me about how was my day till now and had a little bit of chit-chat before asking me to wait outside. After sometime both the interviewers came out and congratulated me for the offer.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

- 1. Do not panic at all, I could not get through even after going at 8 AM. Sometimes things don't go as planned, but need to get the confidence back and nail the next interview you get into.*
- 2. Explain you approach properly and ask if you have any doubts before going into case. Interviewers are very helpful and will help you in between if you get stuck.*
- 3. Prepare hard, number of cases is not as important as doing different kind of cases. This is necessary to be confident in final interview. All the best!!! :)*

Interview Experiences	
Name	Samarth Agarwal
Interviewing Firm	McKinsey
Interviewer	8 o clock
Under-graduate College	NSIT
Stream	ECE
Work-experience (Months)	2 yrs
Firm	Royal Bank of Scotland
Sector	Software Engineer, Big Data
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	Give me an anecdote of a time you have failed, and what did you do about it.
<i>Candidate</i>	Give me an anecdote of a time when people were not agreeing your opinions and how did you handle the situation.
Interviewer	(Was able to give examples of both from my work)
<i>Candidate</i>	Case Type - Unconventional
Interviewer	The case had two parts, first we talked about a bank's value chain and the various cost drivers in it (for about 10min)
<i>Candidate</i>	The second part was very quant heavy, where I had to calculate cost incurred based on various aspects discussed above.
Interviewer	The numbers were provided by him and the concepts were not too complex.
<i>Candidate</i>	Interview Over. I felt he was testing whether I was able to drive the discussion of the first part though numbers.
Interviewer	
<i>Candidate</i>	Case Type - Guestimate
Interviewer	No personals, jumped directly onto the case
<i>Candidate</i>	The interview was telephonic, not face to face.
Interviewer	Q - How many golf balls are sold in scotland in an year?
<i>Candidate</i>	Divided the population into age groups

Interviewer	The interviewer gave me the details of the demographics and also mentioned that Scotland is a golfing country
<i>Candidate</i>	Accounted for young kids training golf (hence hire percentage of players) and partially reduced as the grew up, since some stopped playing
Interviewer	Accounted for durability of an average ball, number of balls an average person uses in a game, number of games played in an year
<i>Candidate</i>	Accounted for balls getting lost in trees, water bodies etc
Interviewer	Accounted for seniors passing on balls to their kids/juniors once they stopped playing -- I don't think he was expecting this
<i>Candidate</i>	He mentioned one element was missing. I was unable to come up it, so he mentioned that half of the balls lost in trees etc get found are kept by the finder.
Interviewer	He mentioned its something very specific to golf, so not figuring it out is understandable. I accounted for this in the calculations
<i>Candidate</i>	Guestimate Over
Interviewer	Discussed a little about golf and its spread in India.
<i>Candidate</i>	Ended the interview.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

*Prepare personals and guesstimates well
Feel free to ask questions in case the industry (in my case, sport) is very alien to you*

Interview Experiences	
Name	Sateesh Chandran
Interviewing Firm	McKinsey & Co.
Interviewer	Sujit Chakrabarty (Round 1), Nitesh Gupta (Round 2)
Under-graduate College	IIT Madras
Stream	Mechanical Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	22 months
Firm	Flipkart Internet Pvt. Ltd.
Sector	Business Analytics
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	Let's get into the case then?
<i>Candidate</i>	Sure
Interviewer	India sees a rise in the HIV affected population (% wise) in recent times. Figure out the reasons.
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Frankly stumped at that point.</i> How recent has this trend been seen? Do we have any details regarding the main factors that spread HIV, or should I make some assumptions?
Interviewer	Let's say this has been happening for the past 5 years. We know that HIV is spread primarily from sex workers, then their primary customers and then spreads from there
<i>Candidate</i>	Do we know who their primary customers are?
Interviewer	Sure. They are mostly truck drivers, who travel from city to city and halt at such places where sex workers are common.
<i>Candidate</i>	Ok. Can I take a minute to collect my thoughts around the problem?
Interviewer	Sure
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>About 30-45 secs later...</i> From the data that we have now, it seems that the number of people affected by HIV is rising in India. Has there been any changes regarding the sex workers' business. Has it been expanding? Do we have data around that? Have any regulatory barriers been lifted or relaxed for that business?
Interviewer	No
<i>Candidate</i>	Has there been a rise in awareness regarding HIV in the country, due to which more cases are being reported? Maybe some government initiative to increase HIV awareness?
Interviewer	You are right about more cases being reported. But not due to an increase in awareness as such

Candidate	Do we know if there has been a rise in the number of truck drivers in India? Maybe due to the growing economy there is an increased need for transportation and hence truck drivers. Is that the case?
Interviewer	No. No such changes have happened. I can help you out with some data regarding South Africa where we saw the similar problem in the 70s. We saw a steady proportion of population which contracted HIV for the first 5 years then a sudden spike. <i>He gave me some numbers regarding the rise in HIV cases</i>
Candidate	So this seems to me to be a normal trend that happens with HIV cases. Is it safe to assume that?
Interviewer	Sure. Go ahead. Lets figure out the reason for this rise
Candidate	Well, in case of South Africa, I can think of the Apartheid scare that existed in the past. A revolution regarding abolishing Apartheid in South Africa might lead to people being open to sexual encounters with a larger chunk of the population (including the blacks). That might be the cause of the rise. But the same explanation would not apply for India
Interviewer	Good thinking. But, as you said the same cannot be applied to India. And that was not the case for South Africa as well
Candidate	<i>Was quite stumped at this juncture. Did not know what to do.</i>
Interviewer	Think in terms of what happens after the truck drivers (the primary contractors of the disease) get AIDS? How does it further spread?
Candidate	Oh. The truck drivers have sexual encounters with the larger population.
Interviewer	Correct
Candidate	So this would lead to an exponential rise in the rate of spreading of HIV across the country.
Interviewer	You're right. Let's close the case here.
Candidate	<i>The interview ended very abruptly because of lack of time, and frankly didn't go well at all. But McKinsey gives a second chance. So I was hopeful</i>
Interviewer	<i>Makes me comfortable by asking me some questions about myself</i>
Candidate	<i>I answer those questions</i>
Interviewer	Let's get into the case then?
Candidate	Sure
Interviewer	Let's say your client is a retail bank. And they are seeing a drop in their profitability. They have consulted you to provide them with possible reasons for the drop.
Candidate	Sure. Let me first understand the client's situation a bit better. Where do they operate? Who are their customers? Are they the general population or do we cater to a specific segment of customers? How long has there been an issue with profitability?
Interviewer	They operate in India. They cater to all kinds of customers similar to a normal retail bank. Let's say this issue has surfaced in the last 2 years
Candidate	Ok. We know that profitability is a ratio of profits and revenue, and profits can further be split into Revenues-Costs. So, in totality it just depends on Revenues and Costs. Has there been a similar drop in Revenues? Or a rise in Costs?

Interviewer	There has been a slight rise in the Revenues for the bank. But the costs in the last 2 years have increased much more. And keep in mind that they are just looking for possible causes for this problem. So let's focus on identifying possible reasons why the bank would see a rise in costs.
Candidate	Sure. I'll just take a minute to lay down my thoughts on paper. <i>Proceed to lay down a structure for the various costs that a bank has</i>
Interviewer	Sure
Candidate	I am going to divide the costs of the bank into three parts. Operational costs, which is the daily costs incurred by the bank for their operations. Maintenance Costs, which would include all costs incurred by their branches, for maintenance, supplies etc. The third branch would be labeled as other costs/losses, which would include unforeseen losses
Interviewer	Ok. Let's go through them one by one. Could you list down what could be the factors in each category of costs, that causes a rise in Revenues as well as costs, but increases costs further.
Candidate	Ok. In operational costs, banks basically make money from the difference in loan interest rate and the bank deposit interest rate. So, if there was a rise in deposits as compared to loans taken then it would cause the effect that we are seeing. This can be due to some government initiative urging people to save more. <i>Gave more reasons like marketing campaigns, hiring costs etc.</i>
Interviewer	Ok. How about maintenance costs?
Candidate	If they have opened any new branches recently, that would incur them a huge fixed cost while also pulling in more customers, hence increasing both revenues and costs. Or if they have invested in some sort of training programme or new software which are designed to increase employee productivity, then although it would incur a huge initial cost would still improve productivity and hence number of customers served, which translates to revenue. <i>Gave some more generic factors as examples like new security features, renovation of existing branches etc.</i>
Interviewer	Good. What about the unforeseen losses?
Candidate	Ok. One reason could be loan write offs. Loan write offs would show up as an expense in the bank's balance sheet.
Interviewer	Ok. Good. But how does that translate to revenues?
Candidate	Changing the loan write off policy would indicate that there is some change in the leadership, which wants to bring more focus into areas that bring the bank revenues and eliminate loss making ventures. Such focus would result in an increase in revenue.
Interviewer	Hmm. That's interesting. Now, I have some data regarding some banks here. As you can see bank A has lower revenue but higher growth rate than bank B. Can you figure out how many years it would take them to overtake bank B in revenue?
Candidate	Sure. Should I assume that the growth rates would remain constant for perpetuity, or at least until bank A crosses bank B in revenues?
Interviewer	Yes. You can assume that
Candidate	<i>Now it was a straightforward compounded growth equation. The numbers were a bit complicated, but I could solve it in some time.</i>
Interviewer	Great. It was good talking to you Sateesh. Please wait outside. Give us some time to tell you your results
Candidate	Sure. Thanks

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

The important thing during such interviews is to stay calm. The cases would mostly be at least a tad unfamiliar. So, if you keep your cool you should be able to go through the case well. Also it is important to not lose heart after one bad interview. I had a bad first interview. But I could cope up in my second interview, which led me to get the offer.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Shubham Lalwani
Interviewing Firm	McKinsey and Company
Interviewer	Piyush & Puneeth
Under-graduate College	IIT Bombay
Stream	Computer Science
Work-experience (Months)	22 months
Firm	Optiver, LSL Engineers
Sector	Trading, Business Development
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>2 cases, both guestimates [1 direct guestimate, other in the form of market entry]</i>
Interviewer	Hello Shubham, How are you?
<i>Candidate</i>	I am a bit stressed about the interview. Yesterday (Day -1) was a tough day involving my rejecting a firm, and I find it absolutely necessary to convert this interview, McKinsey being my dream firm.
Interviewer	No worries, have some water.
<i>Candidate</i>	Sure sir
Interviewer	Let us begin with a small guesstimate. Estimate the number of people travelling through the Delhi Metro on a daily basis.
<i>Candidate</i>	Let us begin with considering peak and non peak hours. Assuming 10 coaches, and inter-arrival time of 2mins and 5 mins for peak and non peak, we get a total of $30/\text{hr} * 7\text{hr}/\text{day} * 10 * 100\% * 100 + 12/\text{hr} * 11\text{hr}/\text{day} * 10 * 50\% * 100 = 276000$
Interviewer	Aren't you missing out on something?
<i>Candidate</i>	(Thinking for a bit) Yes, there'll be a few major stations which will involve people getting out, and new people climbing in. Thus, assuming a turn-around of 4 i.e., the people in the metro get overhauled 4 times, we get a total of $4 * 276000 = 1104000$
Interviewer	Good, let us move on to another case. A Marathi newspaper wants to enter Nagpur. Plan its GTM strategy.
<i>Candidate</i>	I would divide a GTM strategy into 3 categories - pre entry, during entry, post entry. Firstly, I would check for the industry attractiveness. (I asked a few preliminary questions regarding Nagpur, and newspaper industry, Porter's Analysis). Following this, I began to estimate market size and the market share we could grab. Lastly, looking at synergies and feasibility, I presented a wholesome structure before digging deeper. For market size, I was helped by the interviewer who gave me the data for the number of newspapers in businesses(hotels,

	airports etc.) to be 10% of the total of subscription and on-the-go newspaper buyers.
Interviewer	Good(stopping me in midway) Do you have any questions for me?
Candidate	Any advice on what one must keep in mind while entering the firm as an intern?
Interviewer	You'll do fine, don't worry too much.
Candidate	Thank you sir.
Interviewer	A telecom giant wants to enter the banking industry by acquiring someone. What would you suggest?
Candidate	(Thinking for a bit, Initially I thought it was an M&A case. But then, I went about thinking about it as just another case) What are the objectives of the acquisition?
Interviewer	Getting market share, break-even in 2-3 years, ultimately becoming profitable. But I want you to focus on the qualitative aspects.
Candidate	I would primarily look at my expertise currently, and the kind of synergies I'll be getting in banking. I would also consider the costs involved, and do a cost benefit analysis.
Interviewer	What synergies do you think could be got?
Candidate	Looking at the banking process, one major synergy is the customer base that I already have. I could directly link them and get a huge advantage at a very low cost.
Interviewer	(seemed very satisfied with this point. We dealt around with very specific aspects for some more time, much of which was just a response to what was being asked) All right. Only 5 minutes left now. Do you have any questions for me?
Candidate	Yes sir. What advice would you give a new joinee, looking at the experience you've had in the firm.
Interviewer	2 points. First, don't be put out by the fact that you might not be the smartest in the firm anymore. Second keep exploring different areas as and when possible.
Candidate	Thank you so much sir.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

1. Practise cases. This cannot be under stressed. I had seen the newspaper guesstimate before, and it went on pretty smoothly in the interview.
2. Integrate the answers to why consulting and why McKenzie in normal interactions itself, which gives an inkling that you are a good fit, even without being asked about it.
3. Stay calm and interact a lot with your buddy. Keep on pestering them for cases until he/she gets sick of it. Don't be afraid that it might be evaluative. In the end, buddies are there primarily to help prep you up for the interview. And McKenzie will definitely interview you, if shortlisted. Good luck!

Interview Experiences	
Name	Shubhangi Nigam
Interviewing Firm	McKinsey and Co.
Interviewer	Ankit Arora(Associate Partner), Sujit Chakraborty (Partner)
Under-graduate College	IIT(BHU) Varanasi
Stream	Metallurgical Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	0, Fresher
Firm	
Sector	
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	Good morning!! Stressed out or not?
<i>Candidate</i>	Good morning. No, not at all. (Had little conversation in and around anxiety during summers for 5-7 min.)
Interviewer	This is a case which is currently undertaken by my team and we are going to give the final recommendations today itself. I would like you to analyze this case and give your insights.
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes, definitely.(Maintaining a smile all the time)
Interviewer	Lets get on with the case. Our client is a leading IT company, say for eg. IBM. Another company, say, Compaq has approached it to get in a deal to provide its services. Should it make the deal or not?
<i>Candidate</i>	Clarified the problem. What is the metric that the client is looking for to carry out the deal?
Interviewer	Long term growth
<i>Candidate</i>	I would like to work out on the problem knowing the 5 dimensions: 1.Industry:Growth 2.Company:Existing business;Synergies;Technical, Human,Financial Capital 3.Competitors: Market share;Numbers 4.Service/Product: Point of differentiation 5.Customers:Preferences (Quality, Price, Convenience);Segment;Growth.
Interviewer	Go ahead. Shoot!(Preliminary questions)
<i>Candidate</i>	What is the industry outlook?Is it growing or not?
Interviewer	There is sufficient growth in the industry.
<i>Candidate</i>	How is company performing relative to its competitors? And are the competitors also undergoing these type of deals?

Interviewer	Currently it is well positioned with respect to its competitors. We have no other information of our competitors.
<i>Candidate</i>	What kind of services do we provide? How are they different from our competitors?
Interviewer	We provide services like a traditional IT service firm does. We differentiate ourselves with quality of services we provide.
<i>Candidate</i>	Do we have the sufficient financial, technical and human capital to carry on the deal?
Interviewer	What exactly do you mean by human capital?
<i>Candidate</i>	The availability of the skilled labor required for the job.
Interviewer	Fine. So, yes, we have enough of all of them. Can you tell how will you proceed from here?
<i>Candidate</i>	So, understanding the background of the company, further I would like to drill down upon the kind of service we will provide and what implications this deal has:1. Financial 2.Technological and then evaluate the risks associated with the deal.
Interviewer	Okay, nice. Go ahead with it..
<i>Candidate</i>	1. Calculated the estimated profit coming out of the deal according to the data given by interviewer(Marginal increase from present value) 2. As the technology is evolving fast and being in IT sector, we need to determine whether the deal will bind us from growing.
Interviewer	Good thought process. So, the service they are asking from us is based on traditional technology while our competitors are shifting to new ones. This deal will restrict us to invest in R&D of new services.
<i>Candidate</i>	So, I think we have hit on a major cause of concern for the company regarding the deal.
Interviewer	According to information received so far, what recommendations you want to make. Should we go ahead with the deal or not and why?
<i>Candidate</i>	Keeping the long term in mind, even though this deal gets us a good client with some increased profits, in my opinion we shouldn't go ahead with the deal as technology will fast and our other customers might switch to our competitor's firms in case we are not able to update the technology within time. This deal will actually handicap us from growing as traditional services are required, so we should reject the offer from Compaq.
Interviewer	Okay,Shubhangi. It was nice talking to you. Do you have any questions for me?
<i>Candidate</i>	I asked 2. First of them was, what was recommendation that they were actually going to make and second was previously prepared one.
Interviewer	Answered and wished me luck for the next round.
<i>Candidate</i>	This interview went pretty well. I was relaxed and laid out a fine structure which the interviewer was impressed with.
Interviewer	Hi, good morning. Let's jump to the case directly and not waste much time.
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes, sir, sure.
Interviewer	So we have a company supplying glasses to ophthalmologists. It is thinking to shift from manual to automation. Whether it is wise or not? What all aspects will you be looking at?(He laid out all the supply chain process of the company. Explained that end product won't be affected.)

Candidate	I started out by laying 4 factors :1.Industry 2.Competition 3. Company 4.Product and reasoned my structure one by one while listing.
Interviewer	Cross-questioned every factor. What else will you look at?
Candidate	We have previously not considered the financial implications of this shift. We need to find out what this technology will cost us.
Interviewer	Okay, I was waiting for this eagerly. Glad you asked yourself.(Takes out a sheet completely loaded with data with old and new technology changes, explains the situation and asks me to calculate the breakeven point)
Candidate	I can't understand the Cost equivalent term. (I consistently asked him until I understood the term, but it took almost 5 min to comprehend, too late, I guess. There were too many numbers, this time I panicked a bit. He wasn't helping. I came up with the answer almost knowing that I took a lot of time, and had tanked the interview. I had missed a factor which I realised after he asked to check again.
Interviewer	
Candidate	Depreciation rate Cost Utilisation rate Hourly rate of operating Wages rates Life of machine: These were given and the life differed from 3 years which I missed in the depreciation calculation.(Sorry, I couldn't recall the data)
Interviewer	Can you draw the Iron Carbon diagram for me. I want everything to be accurate with all the temperature and compositions.
Candidate	Yes, definitely.(Though was not really sure but replied confidently, smiling)
Interviewer	Okay,let's leave that. I will ask you 3 questions. I want the answers within a minute for each of them.
Candidate	Okay, sure.
Interviewer	Tell the number of steps you took to come to the interview room today.
Candidate	(Easy one) Came up with an answer.
Interviewer	Tell the number of people affected by malaria each year in India.
Candidate	Went with dividing India's population:BPL and APL and then according to the probability of catching malaria according to the 1. age and 2. geography
Interviewer	Are all the factors considered?
Candidate	(He was consistently telling about the time left) Took a while to consider in the seasonality factor for India considering it to be a tropical country with high incidence and recalculated the number.
Interviewer	What should be done to increase India's growth after demonetisation?
Candidate	After demonetisation, the currency had to be disposed off either in banks or to immediately buy goods/services. Growth of a country is reflected by GDP of that country and GDP is in turn related on 4 factors-1. Consumption expenditure 2.Investment 3. Government expenditure 4. Exports-Imports(Net exports). To increase GDP, we need to see which factors we can focus on. After demonetisation, consumption decreased because currency in circulation had reduced by more than 50%. Reasoned out subsequently to increase government expenditure and investment, both of which will drive the GDP of the country.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Dos:

- 1. Keep smiling; show that you are enthusiastic and not anxious.*
- 2. Practice number intensive cases*
- 3. Personals*

Don'ts:

- Don't panic and keep track of time when you are clarifying your doubt from interviewer.*
- Don't overdo it which I did in my 2nd interview.*

Boston Consulting Group

Interview Experiences	
Name	Abhinav Bibhu
Interviewing Firm	Boston Consulting Group
Interviewer	8:00 AM
Under-graduate College	IIT Kanpur
Stream	Chemical Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	2 years
Firm	PwC Diamond
Sector	Consulting
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Market Entry</i>
Interviewer	Hi, tell me something about yourself?
<i>Candidate</i>	Answered.
Interviewer	Ok let's get down to the case. It is 1990. Our client is Starbucks and they want to enter the Cambodian market. Suggest how they should go about it.
<i>Candidate</i>	Paraphrased the problem statement and checked if there are any other objectives.
Interviewer	No.
<i>Candidate</i>	Asked a few preliminary question to understand the objective behind this market entry, why Cambodia specifically, the product Starbucks planned to offer.
Interviewer	Gave short answers.
<i>Candidate</i>	Came up with a structure on how to assess the market. The structure primarily looked at if it made sense to enter the market and if yes, what could be the best way to enter the market.
Interviewer	Let's focus on the substitutes available and competitors.
<i>Candidate</i>	Discussed the substitutes in details asking him about details about the Cambodia market.
Interviewer	The interviewer seemed satisfied with the analysis. Asked me to come up with market size.
<i>Candidate</i>	Laid out a guess estimate structure which he seemed fine with but was asked to come up with a final number as well which I did.
Interviewer	Suggest some proxy we can use for market size if we don't have the population data.
<i>Candidate</i>	Suggested other fast food chains (since no other coffee shop was present)

Interviewer	He ended the case and asked a few questions on the resume.
Interviewer	Asked me to introduce myself
Candidate	Done.
Interviewer	He was a fan of United too and asked me if Pogba was worth the dollars spent.
Candidate	Gave a detailed analysis as to why Pogba deserves 89 mn dollars and his role in the team.
Interviewer	Our client is a manufacturer of tools and has 4% market share in India which has been consistent for the last 3 years. The client has been struggling hard to improve its market share but it has failed to do so till now. The global management has given the Indian firm a deadline of 3 years to get into the top 3 players by market share or pull out of the Indian market.
Candidate	Asked a few preliminary questions and then laid out a basic growth strategy framework. Started with the existing revenue channels and if there is a chance of optimizing it further.
Interviewer	Seemed happy with the structure. Told me that the existing channels are pretty optimized once I laid out the structure in detail.
Candidate	Next I looked at new products, new geographies (basically the Ansoff matrix).
Interviewer	Again these were dead end since we were present everywhere we could be.
Candidate	The last part of the structure talked about acquisitions. Asked him if we had enough cash flow to support acquisitions.
Interviewer	Yes, we do.
Candidate	Looked at the market share of the top 4 players who had >7% market share and suggested that we can acquire the 4th largest player with a market share of 8%. This made more sense because of the synergy present in terms of tools made and geographies catered to.
Interviewer	Seemed satisfied with the analysis. Apparently this was a case he had worked on before and the final recommendation to the client was the same as I mentioned.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

1. Don't panic even if you are given a case where you don't have a lot of context. Ask questions to get more clarity.
2. Be very precise with your calculations if given a guess estimate as part of the case.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Aditi Gupta
Interviewing Firm	BCG
Interviewer	Round 1 by Principal and Round 2 by Partner
Under-graduate College	PEC University of Technology
Stream	Electrical
Work-experience (Months)	21 Months
Firm	Grail Research
Sector	Market Research and Strategy Consulting
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	Good. Let us start with the case. Our client is a logistic service provider. His network is such that he enables delivery within one day. He wants to increase his profit 2 times.
<i>Candidate</i>	Re-iterated the problem and asked some clarifying questions about mode of logistics (trucks), area of operation, time in which he wanted to achieve these profits etc. Divided Profit into revenue and cost. Asked him to focus on which aspect.
Interviewer	He Pointed Towards Cost
<i>Candidate</i>	Listed the entire value chain of the firm and associated cost at each level. Suggested cost reduction methods at each level such as fuel efficiency, ownership of trucks
Interviewer	Asked me to move towards revenues
<i>Candidate</i>	Divided into number of orders and revenue per order
Interviewer	Revenue per order cannot be increased. Focus on number of orders
<i>Candidate</i>	Listed out three possible ways of growth: Existing Clients, New Clients and Business Diversification
Interviewer	Start with existing clients
<i>Candidate</i>	Listed out ways such as re-negotiate contract, business in other geographies (All the cost control measures I had already listed, so avoided that)
Interviewer	Okay now lets move to new clients. How will you pitch to them
<i>Candidate</i>	Asked about some details of the target client's current vendors
Interviewer	The current vendor charges lower than us and takes 2 days to deliver the order. Also, our firm is in no way ready to decline our prices

Candidate	Started to draw the possible ways we can pitch
Interviewer	Asked me to stop and just say what will be the best pitch supposing my prospective client is HUL
Candidate	I said that with FMCG goods, inventory management is an issue. There is a possible scenario that the cumulative cost that comes out of handling the inventory because of 2 day lead period and transportation cost may be more than what we charge. Asked him for numbers to prove my hypothesis.
Interviewer	At this point he asked to stop the case. Said he got what he was looking for and asked me to wait while he left the room
Candidate	
Interviewer	Asked me to tell me something about myself. One thing that I got to do in my day.
Candidate	Answered
Interviewer	Two-wheeler firm wants to enter the Indian market. Evaluate the decision and develop a strategy for entering
Candidate	Re-iterated the problem and asked some clarifying questions such as the purpose behind entering the market, kind of product, any particular value proposition
Interviewer	Answered basic things and asked me to not get in detail and move ahead with the case
Candidate	This was the time I realised I was asking too many clarifying questions, so started with my case. Asked for a minute and made a tree. Divided the decision into opportunities and threats. Under opportunities, mentioned industry attractiveness and business evaluation. Under risks mentioned execution barrier and risks
Interviewer	She asked me to start with industry attractiveness
Candidate	I asked about market size, growth, no of competitors. Based on the information provides, industry looked attractive
Interviewer	Move on to business evaluation
Candidate	I asked about the price of our product vs competitors
Interviewer	Told our product was priced higher but our maintenance cost was less. Shared the numbers
Candidate	Calculated how the overall cost of our product (initial price and maintenance) was lower than that of competitor's. Made a little mistake but the partner guided me. I proceeded to calculate the final revenue numbers we can earn but she asked me to move to the next step on the possible ways of market entry. I started to tell her the ways while building the tree but she asked me to take my time and first write down what I had in mind. I laid down the entire value chain that the firm will have to set-up for entry and mentioned the three modes of entry: Set-up own operations, acquisition and joint venture. I told her the same and said that synergies is the key that will drive the final decision. I asked her that which aspect she wants me to look into next.
Interviewer	By this time, she was satisfied with the value chain I laid down and asked me to stop with the case. She asked me to wait and left the room.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Starting questions are very important. If they are right, it is like the half job done. Moreover don't have any pre-conceived notions about the case, even if you have done a similar one before. Solve the case one step at a time, because usually there is a tweak even in a seemingly similar case. Also try to do unconventional cases, they help you think faster and deal with uncertainty

Interview Experiences	
Name	Avani Deora
Interviewing Firm	Boston Consulting Group
Interviewer	Partner
Under-graduate College	DJ Sanghvi College of Engineering, University of Mumbai
Stream	Information Technology
Work-experience (Months)	22 months
Firm	JP Morgan Chase and Co.
Sector	Mortgage Banking
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>No particular type but closest to growth strategy type of cases</i>
Interviewer	Was going through my CV. Asked me to briefly explain about myself while covering the points mentioned in the CV.
<i>Candidate</i>	I answer this. Went on for rather long. I took pauses in case he wanted to ask me anything related to whatever I was speaking. But he asked me to continue.
Interviewer	Favourite subject in Term 1?
<i>Candidate</i>	I answer Marketing Management and OB
Interviewer	Okay so lets do a case on Marketing, STP, Etc. pick ANY brand, label, etc
<i>Candidate</i>	I picked starbucks.
Interviewer	"You are the CMO/CEO of starbucks and you want to devise a 5- year strategy to keep starbucks relevant in the market. Also, 50 percent of your pay is variable, so you should be bottom line focussed too."
<i>Candidate</i>	Re-iterate the objectives and understand what do we mean by relevant and should relevance take first priority or the increase in revenues.
Interviewer	You are the CEO, you decide.
<i>Candidate</i>	I will consider both, increase revenues sustainably. I make two divisions, where is starbucks now, what do I want it to be 5 years hence. I was told to assume any and everything. When I asked if starbucks has any particular mission, I was told that I should also decide the mission as the CEO.
Interviewer	okay, that's a fair approach. Go on. (since it was a vague case where there was no information provided, I kept pausing to take his approval.
<i>Candidate</i>	I pointed out the things I feel are good in starbucks and areas of improvements from personal experience. I then jotted down the points where starbucks is facing problems of fading brand value which I had read in an HBS case in MM.

Interviewer	He looked convinced with the initial structuring. Then wanted me to take a focussed approach to address STP.
Candidate	I picked up each of the issues with starbucks which I had listed down, one by one. And started jotting down solutions or suggestions for each. While doing so I realised this is going hay-wire. So after listing them down, I bucketed them again in single areas such as marketing, infrastructure, operations, etc.
Interviewer	what else can you do? (He was expecting an answer around IT and marketing, big data analysis, etc)
Candidate	I couldn't precisely reach his point but I had mentioned how starbucks is already leveraging social media marketing. Gave an example of how starbucks employees intentionally write the wrong name so that the customer would take a photo and upload it.
Interviewer	We were out of time so he decided to wrap it up and asked me summarise
Candidate	Summarised the case.
Interviewer	Was convinced with the suggestions and how I touched upon different aspects. Gave me feedback around how I could have come to actual solution of the case a little faster and that bringing in the relevant personal experience in the field of technology would have helped.
Candidate	
Interviewer	After asking a little bit about my college, work ex, jumped to the case in 2-3 mins. Your client is an automobile company who wants to enter into African country called Angola. Should they? If yes, how?
Candidate	Asked prelim questions about- company, product, current market, why expansion, competitors, criteria of decision?
Interviewer	Gave precise answers to each question. Also said, I can ask specific questions for getting more data instead of making any assumptions on my own. Told the company's expansion depends on whether they will be able to capture 'x'% market share. And there is only one other competitor in the market.
Candidate	Asked more about the potential market.-What do customers look for while buying automobiles?
Interviewer	Customers are price sensitive. They look for lowest 'Total cost of Ownership'
Candidate	Listed down factors that contribute to TCO- initial purchase, fuel, maintenance cost. Asked about details about life of car, all expenses.
Interviewer	Gave all details, with numbers
Candidate	Calculated TCO for client and the competitor. In spite of higher downpayment, TCO for client was better because of lower fuel costs. Suggested that client should enter the market and use and market it with lower 'Running cost'.
Interviewer	Looked convinced and liked that I followed of structure of first analysing client, product, customer base and competition.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

During an unconventional case, it's important to get the interviewers buy-in at each stage. They might guide you in the direction they want you to think about.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Kopal Gupta
Interviewing Firm	BCG
Interviewer	8:30 am
Under-graduate College	IIT Roorkee
Stream	Architecture
Work-experience (Months)	21 months
Firm	Citi, Axtria
Sector	Risk Analytics
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Profitability</i>
Interviewer	Your client is an oil manufacturer and the profits are down, suggest him the reason
<i>Candidate</i>	I followed the usual case objective clarification process and asked more about the company, competition, consumer and product.
Interviewer	The company manufactures edible oil, has multiple factories and doesn't have a lot of competition. Retailers buy oil from the company's warehouses.
<i>Candidate</i>	I made the profitability structure and asked if the revenues were going down, the cost were going up or both of them simultaneously
Interviewer	Cost is going down
<i>Candidate</i>	I made the value chain and he started to ask me details for each part of the value chain
Interviewer	I want you to concentrate on the outbound logistics part now
<i>Candidate</i>	Since there were multiple factories, I listed the cost of outbound logistics as the product of # of Kms travelled and the cost per Km. I suggested possible areas of improvement as capacity utilization of the tankers, the optimization of trips/path and the cost of fuel, taxes etc.
Interviewer	What other factors can you think which can reduce this cost?
<i>Candidate</i>	After much of discussion, the factor came out to be the demand & supply gap. There were multiple products and each factory didn't produce all of them while the demand varied across the regions.
Interviewer	Someone knocked the door to signal the time constraint and the interview got over
<i>Candidate</i>	Your client is an automobile manufacturer in India and wants to enter the Angola market. What all factors will you consider to decide the entry?
Interviewer	I re-stated the problem and asked the preliminary questions regarding the company and the product.

Candidate	Our client only manufactures motorcycle and the objective to enter the market is to increase profits.
Interviewer	I laid down the structure to evaluate the market size, probable market share and the expected profit per unit. Then listed some non-financial aspects to be considered.
Candidate	Let's decide how much market share can you expect in the first year.
Interviewer	I asked about the existing competition and what all differentiates our product from theirs
Candidate	The competitor's product was 15K cheaper but our product had 15Km/l better mileage than the competitor's
Interviewer	I suggested that either we can reduce the price, if possible, or market the better mileage to compensate on price. Then I calculated how in a span of 7 years, it was cheaper to use our product than our competitor's. The interviewer discussed some other factors and closed the interview.
Candidate	M&A
Interviewer	Post some 10-15 minutes of personals, the interviewer presented the market share, revenues, revenue split and EBITA of 7 telecom firms.
Candidate	We discussed the numbers of our client firm and decided what all business should they retain and sell. Then I suggested that our firm can merge with another to improve its position.
Interviewer	Imagine you are the CEO of the client's firm and I am the CEO of the larger firm, with whom the merger will take place, let's negotiate the deal.
Candidate	We negotiated for the next 5 minutes with all sorts of offers and counter offers. Somewhere during this conversation, he offered a handshake while asking - do you want to join BCG.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Kritin Gupta
Interviewing Firm	The Boston Consulting Group
Interviewer	Neetu Vasanta (Principal at BCG Delhi Office, worked in the Automotive Practice)
Under-graduate College	NSIT, Delhi University
Stream	Instrumentation & Control Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	10 months
Firm	The Boston Consulting Group
Sector	Consulting
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	2 mini cases - GTM & Growth & 1 guesstimate
Interviewer	Good morning Kritin! I am Neetu Vasanta, I work in BCG's Delhi office. I just went through your CV, why don't you tell me about yourself a little?
Candidate	<gave her my introduction, mentioned quizzing as one of my interests>
Interviewer	Yes, your CV does have a lot of quizzing...
Candidate	<the next 5 min revolved around quizzing and how it is similar to consulting>
Interviewer	So let's begin with a case. There is an auto-parts manufacture in India. They are looking to expand into a new country in Africa. How would you go about it? What factors would you consider?
Candidate	<repeated the case objective to ensure that we are on the same page> I would like to ask some clarifying questions just to get some context. What products does the company make?
Interviewer	The company makes a clutch-friction disk (some other technical details were given, but they were not important) that is used in cars and bikes. They last for around 10 years or 25,000km, after which it has to be replaced.
Candidate	Are CFDs generic or are they specific to a car model?
Interviewer	Good question. CFDs are particular to a car model and our client supplies to only one automotive company.
Candidate	What are the business segments of the company?
Interviewer	So there are 2 segments, one is the OEM and the other is Replacement Parts. Concentrate on the replacement parts market only. How would you enter this market?
Candidate	Could I take some time to structure my thoughts?
Interviewer	Yes sure!

Candidate	So, I would structure the case into three parts. First I'd try and determine if our client has a Cost Advantage, ie can sell the same products cheaper than competitors, a product advantage ie has superior products than the competitors or if there is a supply demand gap ie the current players are not able to adequately meet the demand in the country. Then I'd determine our client's capabilities and based on that would suggest either Organic, ie on their own or Inorganic means - JV or M&A
Interviewer	<interrupts> so we have 1 competitor that has a 100% market share in the country. Their products cost roughly half of our client's products. So there is no cost advantage as such. The competitor is meeting all the demand in the market.
Candidate	Do we have any information on the market size of this segment?
Interviewer	Why don't you estimate that. Just ask me whatever information you need
Candidate	So as our product depends on the number of cars sold, I'd first estimate the number of cars sold.
Interviewer	<Gave me the sales of last 10 years of car sales, averaged around 50,000 to 60,000>
Candidate	<Got stuck here, thought of estimating the future car sales etc. >
Interviewer	So, what else would you need? When would someone buy a CFD?
Candidate	A customer would buy a CFD when the one in their car breaks down. So...
Interviewer	So you would need the probability of the breakdown of CFD in the last 10 years sales. <Gave me the probability of the a CFD breaking down in a car sold 1,2,3...10 years ago, starting from 0.1 to 0.25 rising in 0.05 steps and then rising in 0.15 steps, plateauing at 0.8>
Candidate	<Calculated the expected CFD sales, this gave me a clue that the lifetime of the two products was key here> So you mentioned that our competitors products cost half of our client, but do we have any information on how long does it last?
Interviewer	Yes, their product last roughly 5 years or 10,000km
Candidate	So my hypothesis here is that although our products cost more, in the entire lifetime of the customer, it would come out to be cheaper for the customers
Interviewer	Show me how.
Candidate	<I assumed the lifetime of a car as 100,000km and calculated the utility in per km terms by simply dividing price/km, our product was cheaper on a per km basis. Also, showed that our product would be replaced 5 times a lifetime of a car while that of our competitor would be 10 times>
Interviewer	So how will you enter the market
Candidate	Using this calculation as our basis, I would advertise and show how our product is not only superior in quality, but would in fact result, in greater savings for our customers over the lifetime of a car.
Interviewer	Okay, so lets say that this player also wants to grow within India, how would you structure your approach?
Candidate	(took 5 minute and, as it was similar to the Growth Strategy cases done before, drew a MECE structure, felt that this was the strong point of the interview as she seemed happy with the structure)

Interviewer	So, let's focus on the growing within the current geographic segment and in the existing product line only. What measure would you suggest?
Candidate	<took 30 seconds and structured my recommendations> First, I would try and market the product through garages and mechanics as my hypothesis is that for such a specialized product, customers would rely on the discretion of the ones installing it in the car. Second, I would focus on R&D and try and develop a CFD that can be ubiquitously used across all models if possible. I realize that this may not be possible but nonetheless feel that this should option should be explored as the payoffs are high. Lastly, I would try and offer warranties and perhaps bundle the CFD with other complementary products like tyres, would explore a partnership in such a direction

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips	<p><i>I got the feeling that the interviewer was placing emphasis on the structure and approach rather than the actual solutions or answers.</i></p> <p><i>Would recommend devising your own structures with your case groups for the regular types of cases like Profitability, GTM and Growth Strategy.</i></p> <p><i>Don't neglect personals as the first 5 min are usually those and help set the tone for the interview!</i></p>
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Interview Experiences	
Name	Naina Raturi
Interviewing Firm	BCG
Interviewer	Partner
Under-graduate College	NSIT
Stream	Instrumentation and Control
Work-experience (Months)	10 months
Firm	BCG
Sector	Analytics
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	Hi. Can you tell me a little about the work you did at BCG?
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Explained the project I had worked on</i>
Interviewer	(After a few follow up questions on my project) I want you to estimate BCG's annual revenue.
<i>Candidate</i>	Asked a few clarifying questions - was finally told to estimate BCG India's annual revenue and not by using an approach where I could look at the projects BCG works on but was asked to think of something else. I then said that we could calculate the revenue by looking at what salary the employees earn . We could then calculate it for the whole year for different employee segments like consultants, principals, partners etc
Interviewer	What would vary for these segments?
<i>Candidate</i>	Billing rate and possibly the kind of work they do- partners would be more involved in bringing business to BCG and have more client interaction whereas the consultants would have to finally give the deliverables. Also partners oversee a larger number of projects at a given time than their juniors
Interviewer	What would be its implications?
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>(After some prodding and hints given by the interviewer)</i> Billing rate is not actually charged till the partners bring the project, that would probably mean that partners can't charge for the billing rate until they bring it and actually start working on it.
Interviewer	Let's calculate it now.
<i>Candidate</i>	We can do it this way: number of employees* billing rate per hour*number of hours

	worked per employee. We can calculate this for consultants, project leaders, partners etc separately and then add them up
Interviewer	How would you estimate the number of hours worked?
Candidate	No of days worked* no of hours worked per day: For no of days we can exclude the national and religious holidays and account 7 -10 days for vacation and another 4-5 sick days. Consultants work for about 10-12 hours a day .
Interviewer	They may work for 10-12 hours a day but do they really charge for that much?
Candidate	<i>Realized my mistake</i> and corrected by saying that no the upper limit is 8 hours per day only.
Interviewer	Gave me some numbers to calculate.
Candidate	Solved and reached at the final number.
Interviewer	
Candidate	By this point of time I was nervous, so the interviewer started with an anecdote from his college days to calm me down. He then gave me a numbers-heavy case. A telecom company was our client and it had 3 business divisions: landline, broadband and enterprise. Balance sheet and income statement of the client was shown to me. Figures for industry and company growth figures for the 3 divisions was also given. I had to figure out what was going wrong for the company.
Interviewer	Did some calculations to find that the company was making a huge loss, particularly because of one of the business divisions
Candidate	Asked me the possible options for the client
Interviewer	I suggested that they could acquire a competitor that's doing well or sell off their business.
Candidate	Asked me the rationale behind these suggestions. Then showed me some financial figures for 5 competitors of the client.
Interviewer	After analyzing the competitors' position and our client's financials I suggested that the business should be sold off or closed down which was the answer he was looking for.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Stay calm. Don't let the pressure of Day 0 get to you. Practice a lot as it would give you confidence on the interview day and you won't be easily flustered by some never-seen-before case. The interviewer would try to give hints when he/she sees you are going down the wrong path; take those hints.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Nandini Bagaria
Interviewing Firm	BCG
Interviewer	1st - Partner 2nd- Project lead
Under-graduate College	St. Xavier's College + CA
Stream	Commerce
Work-experience (Months)	29 months
Firm	Barclays
Sector	Financial Services
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	<p>Started with tell me about yourself and then some general chatting about my background and work experience.</p> <p>Case was not a normal structured case. The client was a telecommunications company. He gave me a sheet of paper which had financials (Revenues, Cost, Capital Structure etc) of three divisions of a company- Fixed Line, Mobile and one more. He asked me to first tell him whether the company was making money or not.</p>
Candidate	On calculating the EBITDA and interest cost it was seen that the company was not generating enough cash to cover its interest cost as well. So i spoke about how it is in a debt trap and it is possibly borrowing more money to pay off its interest.
Interviewer	Then he gave me growth rates and market shares of each division and asked him to advise on what should the company do.
Candidate	<p>I spoke about which divisions the company should focus on and which it can possibly look to exit to generate some cash and come out of the situation.</p> <p>I even suggested a merger, on which he gave me some additional data about competitors and their market shares and asked me to advice on who should we merge with. From there it became a discussion and he gave me some insights about the industry and told me why some of the ideas I gave may not be practical.</p>
Interviewer	He asked whether I had any questions and I just asked about whether it was an actual case and what was the solution to it.
Candidate	<p>Asked me about how IIM Calcutta has been till now and what activities I have been a part of.</p> <p>This was a structured case about declining profits of a cement manufacturer. The problem was on the revenue side and with a particular segment of customer. Following a proper structure helped.</p>

Interview Experiences	
Name	Pallavi Grover
Interviewing Firm	BCG
Interviewer	Don't remember
Under-graduate College	IIT Delhi
Stream	Chemical Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	22 months
Firm	PwC Diamond Consulting
Sector	Consulting
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Unconventional</i>
Interviewer	Gave his introduction, asked generic questions from my CV
<i>Candidate</i>	Answered questions
Interviewer	Okay, so you are CEO of a solar panel company and your product is going to be launched next year, what will be the things you need to take care of?
<i>Candidate</i>	(Clarified the problem statement and started with prelim questions about product types, geography, market etc)
Interviewer	The company is in India, there are 2 types of products, 1 for factories and the other for residences, the market is estimated to grow at 20% and there are no major competitors currently.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay, I would like to have a minute to come up with a structure
Interviewer	Sure, go ahead
<i>Candidate</i>	(Started drawing the structure, breaking it into supply demand and then further segments and started explaining my structure)
Interviewer	Lets not get into structures, lets discuss the major points that you have in mind
<i>Candidate</i>	(stopped with the structure and asked for a minute) started discussing the major points related to how much of each type to produce based on surveys and analytics
Interviewer	Sure,, go ahead
<i>Candidate</i>	We will also need to developing competitive advantage who will definitely come up in an year or soon after that, we can look up to tying up with government for their projects and developing longer duration contracts with forms
Interviewer	Good point

Candidate	(talked about it some more and a few other things related to marketing and getting suppliers, no structure was followed)
Interviewer	Okay, we did all this, launched our products. The business did well for the first 4 years, started failing after that, can you look into it why
Candidate	(clarified the problem statement) okay, so we have not been able to sell our products as much for 2 years now, we have to find out why
Interviewer	Yes
Candidate	(Asked questions about market share of each product, prices, type of customers)
Interviewer	Major revenue is generated from panels in factories, we are getting less repeat orders now as well
Candidate	May I take a minute to come up with a structure
Interviewer	Sure
Candidate	(started drawing internal external framework, including government regulations, substitutes, macroeconomic conditions) started explaining the factors
Interviewer	Yes, this is right. We can end here. Wait here. (Got offer in a couple of minutes)

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Keep on communicating and clarifying your thoughts with the interviewer.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Rahi Jain
Interviewing Firm	The Boston Consulting Group
Interviewer	Partner
Under-graduate College	IIT(BHU), Varanasi
Stream	Chemical Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	24 months
Firm	OYO Rooms
Sector	Business Associate (Hospitality Industry)
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Short case on Growth (Market share)</i>
Interviewer	Please tell me about yourself.
<i>Candidate</i>	Told him about my background, hobbies and how different nodes converged to IIMC
Interviewer	Can you briefly tell me about the projects you did at OYO Rooms
<i>Candidate</i>	Talked about various projects I did and their deliverables. Since he knew one of my seniors (who is an ex BCG), we talked about his projects as well.
Interviewer	Gave me the case question- The client was a global tool (power tools and hand tools) manufacturing company which entered Indian market some time back. They are in Top 3 in hand tools industry but have very less market share in Power tools. They have 18 months to improve this condition or else they will leave the market.
<i>Candidate</i>	Asked preliminary questions about entry strategy adopted by the firm, competitors in the market and consumer base.
Interviewer	Told me that the firm started from scratch (were an old player in hand tools market but have entered power tools market < 5 years ago), had three major competitors in power tools who had major market share and the consumers were other industries. They had tried various strategies but nothing helped them get market share
<i>Candidate</i>	(I asked for some time to think and started forming a structure on my sheet). After 2-3 minutes I started explaining my approach to him..
Interviewer	He cut me off and asked to tell him just one thing that I would recommend as he was running short on time
<i>Candidate</i>	(Took 30 seconds to think) Since the company had tried various strategies and had just 18 months to come in top 3, recommended to acquire an existing company. (I had read in casebooks previously that it is the best way to gain customers quickly)
Interviewer	At this point the interviewer got interested in the case and asked me which of the three companies I would go for.

Candidate	I told we could go for any of the companies with #2 or #3 market share. We can decide this depending upon their Market share in hand tools segment, cost of acquisition and values of the firm (so as to have synergy)
Interviewer	Told that he is done from his end and if I would like to ask anything.
Candidate	I asked the strategy that BCG adopted to help this client.
Interviewer	He told me that they did pretty much the same- acquired #3 company after #2 company refused.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

It is very important to be calm in the interview and weigh everything before you speak. The interviewers are helpful and will give subtle hints. Try to understand them to be concise correct answers. Also, its important to do well in buddy cases. I did one case each with my primary and secondary buddy. Doing those well make a lot of difference.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Rohan Pratap Singh
Interviewing Firm	Boston Consulting Group
Interviewer	Both were Partners
Under-graduate College	IIT Delhi
Stream	Production and Industrial Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	32 months
Firm	Fractal Analytics, OYO Rooms, Towntrot Inc. Ltd
Sector	Analytics and E-Comm
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Brand Equity (Growth)</i>
Interviewer	Hi Rohan - How are you ? I haven't had a chance to look at your CV can you please run me through it
<i>Candidate</i>	(I gave a well rehearsed answer) I pointed out my startup experience and my positions of responsibility as those were the strong suits on my CV
Interviewer	Why do you want to move into consulting given you did your own startup don't you wanna focus on that?
<i>Candidate</i>	Told him how consulting would help me further and how since my days at IIT I always wanted to move into consulting (A good story in short)
Interviewer	What is your favorite subject in 1st year?
<i>Candidate</i>	I told him I liked Organizational Behaviour
Interviewer	Don't you like courses on strategy or Finance?
<i>Candidate</i>	(He was under the impression that I have completed first year) I told him that we have just been through the first term
Interviewer	Can you explain what you did exactly in this Marketing Study project which you did for Fractal
<i>Candidate</i>	Explained everything from Brand levers, how regression was performed, ROI for the company, market dynamics of UK (The project was on UK data). I also explained what happened once we delivered the project and how good were the results once the project was delivered
Interviewer	I see you have done some trekking - can I tell you what is the motivation to do that and what do you like about it
<i>Candidate</i>	Spoke two points - one was the innate desire for exploration and the other the challenge related to it
Interviewer	What is your favorite brand - say anything that comes to your mind.

Candidate	I asked should it be retail only (really don't know why I did that)
Interviewer	No anything - just say something don't think
Candidate	Starbucks
Interviewer	Ok so you are the Marketing head of starbucks and you have to increase the Brand Equity of starbucks in the next 3 years. How will you go about it?
Candidate	(I was totally stumped as I hadn't encountered a case like this). Divided starbucks operations into External and Internal. Drew the supply chain
Interviewer	He told me to focus on the marketing part of the job
Candidate	I told him a few campaigns we can run (To get the people who are in the lower income bracket to come to starbucks store). I covered a lot of different marketing solutions with respect to different kind of media
Interviewer	I am impressed by some of the things which you have said here but you could have structured your answer a little better
Candidate	(Goner !)
Interviewer	Starbucks is not just coffee its an experience and all the touchpoints with the customer from the time he/she places the order and gets coffee are important and even some touchpoints after that (after sales service etc)
Candidate	Yes Sir
Interviewer	This was outside the interview. Nice talking to you. You will have one more round
Candidate	Thank you sir the pleasure was mine
Interviewer	Hi Rohan - What is this Towntrot on your CV
Candidate	Explained him my startup and the business model
Interviewer	Ok Lets do a case , Your client is a solar panel maufacturer and electricty producer in India - the client is performing really well in the commercial segment and is the market leader but struggles in the home users segment. You need to find out the reason and suggest some things to improve this
Candidate	I asked some preliminary questions with regards to other players, the share and since how long has this been happening
Interviewer	The home user space is fairly new. The client invested in it but has not got the desired returns
Candidate	How long back did they enter
Interviewer	So they entered 5 years back but the money dried up after first 2 years back
Candidate	Ok give me a moment to structure my thoughts (I drew a preliminary structure as to why its not working - external and internal factors)
Interviewer	Lets focus on the external factors as of now
Candidate	The area in which the service is launched , plus the type of consumers , regulatory issues

Interviewer	How can you segment consumers
<i>Candidate</i>	I segmented them with respect to income - so bills were not being paid on time that is the reason - there is a dearth of cash and heavy default rate
Interviewer	Yes as the solar panels are installed in villages where these people are being provided electricity at subsidized cost but don't pay the bills on time. But what can be the reason of cash drying up 2 years back and 3 years the bills were paid
<i>Candidate</i>	My guess is that the company wanted to gain the market share initially and provided the panels at subsidized cost but as the company gained market share it removed the discount which led to higher defaults
Interviewer	Yeah that is correct - That will be all.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

The cases which you practice would help you in deciphering a difficult and novel situation. Also be calm and look for cues the interviewer gives you. Focus on your prep and do not worry much about how many cases other people are doing.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Vaibhav Chowdhury
Interviewing Firm	BCG
Interviewer	Partner
Under-graduate College	SRCC
Stream	B.Com(H)
Work-experience (Months)	NA
Firm	NA
Sector	NA
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Cost reduction</i>
Interviewer	So, I see that you have completed graduation from SRCC. And there you were a part of Enactus. My younger sister was also in Enactus at SRCC. She kind of helped in founding it. So can you tell me what is happening now and what was your role in it ?
<i>Candidate</i>	Yeah. I told him about how we started a couple of new projects and how we have gradually phased out of the earlier projects. I had a keen interest in Enactus and could drive the conversation. This seemed like the initial ice breaker as well as a CV point question.
Interviewer	Should we then move into the case ?
<i>Candidate</i>	Yeah sure.
Interviewer	Okay so your client is an edible oil manufacturer and he has hired you to optimize his costs as he feels his competitor has a cost structure lower than his.
<i>Candidate</i>	So, my client is an edible oil manufacturer who want to reduce costs to become competitive. Any other objectives ?
Interviewer	No. Focus on only this for now.
<i>Candidate</i>	What kind of edible oil ? How much do we have to reduce costs by ?
Interviewer	He sells mustard oil. You tell me all avenues where he can reduce costs. He would like to reduce it as much as possible.
<i>Candidate</i>	Sure. I would like to know a little more about my client before proceeding into the case. So where does he operate ? Where in the Value chain does he operate ? What all products does he sell ?
Interviewer	He sells only one kind of edible oil. Only in India. And he procures raw materials and manufactures the oil and then sells it to the distributor.
<i>Candidate</i>	He seemed to be rushing through it. So I thought I should now jump into the case. I wanted to ask about competitors also, but I thought of tackling it later. I then asked him - I would like to

	go through the entire value chain of our client and look for cost reduction avenues. Is this approach fine ?
Interviewer	Yeah sure.
Candidate	I drew out the entire value chain. Started with raw material suppliers, inbound logistics, inventory, manufacturing process, inventory, outbound logistics, distributor. I asked him- Is this value chain sufficient or have I missed out on any stage relevant for this case ?
Interviewer	He looked at it. This is fine. Go ahead.
Candidate	Throughout this analysis, I am going to benchmark our client's activities with the competitors as we have to reduce costs to match theirs.
Interviewer	Ok. Good. (Boosted my confidence)
Candidate	So, first focussing on the raw materials. Where do we get our seeds from ? Is it different from competitors ?
Interviewer	We get our seeds locally from India. Our competitors get it from some South American country.
Candidate	Is it cheaper there ?
Interviewer	Not always. That price is set by some exchanges internationally. It keeps on fluctuating. It has a standard price lower than India, but during the harvest season here, Indian seed is cheaper.
Candidate	We would also have to factor in Transportation costs before comparing the Indian and South American seeds.
Interviewer	Yes. Even after comparing the transportation costs, it is generally cheaper.
Candidate	Ok. Any constraints in the quality there or our machinery's capability of processing different seeds ?
Interviewer	No.
Candidate	So, we can design an inventory management program, whereby we can place orders based on where it is available cheaper at what time of the year and save costs here. We can use information from the futures market to get an idea of the fluctuating prices of seeds. Use historic information to predict prices of Indian seeds and then devise a plan.
Interviewer	Ok. Move on.
Candidate	I saw inbound logistics. And I figured it was already kind of discussed. He asked me to move onto the next stage. So now we have the Inventory. I would like to know about how and where we store our raw materials as compared to our competitor
Interviewer	Just tell me the cost drivers for the inventory and how can you save costs in each driver.
Candidate	Ordering costs : You can save by ordering in bulk and hence placing lesser number of orders which we can do by following the above discussed plan. Then Inventory carrying costs which includes the rent paid for the warehouses and the labour costs involved in maintaining it. Also the costs involved in wastages and all. These can be saved by striking better deals., taking longer leases, maybe owning warehouses, we will have to see it according to the case
Interviewer	Ok. Any thing else you are missing ?
Candidate	I thought a lot but couldn't come up with anything. I got a little nervous. I cant think of anything else at the moment.

Interviewer	So if you manage orders and get it in bulk from south america during the off season, what costs will you have to bear ?
<i>Candidate</i>	We would need a larger warehouse and costs associated with it. Also there would be wastages and losses due to that.
Interviewer	What else ? Why don't you get 10 litres of oil at once for your kitchen apart from the fact that it may get spoilt ?
<i>Candidate</i>	I was sweating. I was nervous. But then it struck me. The working capital costs sir. The amount of money held up here will have an opportunity cost which also has to be factored in
Interviewer	Good. Move on.
<i>Candidate</i>	Next we move on to the Manufacturing processes. I would like to know about the manufacturing processes in this industry.
Interviewer	He said something about refining. I don't remember exactly.
<i>Candidate</i>	I divided the costs here into variable and fixed. He said to elaborate on variable costs. I listed out the items : labour, input costs, electricity, spares, admin costs.
Interviewer	Any other thing important for refining ?
<i>Candidate</i>	I thought about it and then said that the input output ratio must be important. I mean how much is going in and how much edible oil is coming out ? What is the wastage and how do we use it ?
Interviewer	Good. Suppose you have all that information. What will you do with it ?
<i>Candidate</i>	I would measure the efficiency of our plant with the competitors and see which parameter we can improve on.
Interviewer	Why competitors?
<i>Candidate</i>	Because we have to match his cost structure. I then thought a little and said we can also use industry standards if any and see if we are operating below them. We can research and find out ways to improve the efficiency here to gain cost advantage over our competitors.
Interviewer	Okay. Move on.
<i>Candidate</i>	Now we have outbound logistics.
Interviewer	Just tell me the drivers for transportation costs.
<i>Candidate</i>	I had known the costs associated with transportations because of the number of cases it was used in. I drew a nice flowchart and explained it to him.
Interviewer	Okay well done. We can close the case now.
<i>Candidate</i>	I summarised the case including the recommendations at each stage.
Interviewer	Okay. Wait here
<i>Candidate</i>	I was waiting. I heard sounds outside of people getting the offer. A senior from BCG walked in. I was very tensed. He asked me if I needed water. I smiled at him. He left and then came back 30 seconds later. It seemed like a lot longer then. He then said: This is the best part of coming to campus. And then he hugged me.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Follow where the interviewer is trying to lead you. Practice all types of cases. Have a flexible framework and be willing to shift it around as and when the case demands. Don't rush through the case. Take your time. Be absolutely sure of what you are going to do or say.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Varuni Goel
Interviewing Firm	BCG
Interviewer	8:00 AM
Under-graduate College	IIT Delhi
Stream	Biochemical Engg. And Biotechnology (<i>Dual Degree</i> , B. Tech. and M. Tech.)
Work-experience (Months)	22 months
Firm	EY - Business Advisory
Sector	Consulting
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	Your client is a professional services firm that provides five major services to its clients, mainly in the areas of consulting, IT services, financial advisory, manpower management and assurance. Can you identify certain problems that might arise from a Go-To-Market perspective?
<i>Candidate</i>	GTM in a services based company was a bit unconventional. Couldn't think of a structure to the problem right away, decided go about the preliminary questions first. Repeated the problem statement. Could you tell me how the client's firm is structured?
Interviewer	There is a CEO under which there are 5 separate teams for each of the business divisions. Each of the business units has its own head, who reports directly to the CEO. Each of the heads form teams for projects from within their respective departments.
<i>Candidate</i>	How does the client get projects right now ? (Realised it was a bit vague question, but couldn't think of a better question)
Interviewer	It works like any other professional services firm.
<i>Candidate</i>	I would like to break down the existing process into sub parts and identify potential areas of problem.
Interviewer	Good. You can proceed with that.
<i>Candidate</i>	Broke down the process into parts: Identification of a potential client/ project + Approaching the client + Building a proposal + Presentation to client + Defining scope of project work + Negotiation on terms and conditions + Team formation + Project execution + Project closure
Interviewer	Good. You have covered the entire chain of events. For now, let's focus on the first and second aspects.
<i>Candidate</i>	Each of the business unit heads would approach a different person at the CXO level in the client's firm. Consulting head - CEO, IT services - CTO, Financial advisory - CFO, Manpower -

	<p>HR head, Assurance - CFO.</p> <p>I would like to break down the problem into two parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approaching new clients 2. Getting repeat business
Interviewer	Focus on getting repeat business for now
<i>Candidate</i>	<p>If we are already doing a certain project for a client and there is a potential new project. In such a scenario the client would discuss the requirement with the existing head working with them. The head may not be interested in the opportunity if it doesn't directly involve him/ her. The possibility of getting a repeat business from the client would be lost.</p>
Interviewer	So how do you think the client should structure its teams instead?
<i>Candidate</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Referral of projects to other heads should be recognised and incentivised. 2. We should have a common resource pool within the organisation up to a certain level. A lot of projects require expertise in multiple domains and therefore any new project that comes up should pick resources across the business units to form a team specific for the project. Resources should be allowed to move laterally.
Interviewer	Good. You did well. That will be all for now.
<i>Candidate</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I didn't ask too many questions trying to understand the 5 different services that the client, which was good. They were not really relevant to identifying the problems mentioned above. 2. Although I had worked on Go-To-Market projects before, I had never applied it in a services context. Drew a parallel between my previous organization and the client's firm.

Bain & Co.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Alipt Doshi
Interviewing Firm	Bain & Co.
Interviewer	Mihir
Under-graduate College	IIT Kharagpur
Stream	Aerospace Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	11 months
Firm	Credit Suisse
Sector	Risk model validation
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Profitability</i>
Interviewer	The case study I want to discuss with you today is pertaining to single piston internal combustion engines. These engines are used for automotive purposes but are considerably smaller than the ones you see in cars and trucks. They are used typically in three wheeler vehicles.
<i>Candidate</i>	Like auto-rickshaws you mean?
Interviewer	Yes. Our client works in the B2B space and has a monopoly on the market for single piston engines. He supplies to all the manufacturers of three wheeler vehicles in India. The client is seeing a decline in his profits for about a year now and is a little worried about it.
<i>Candidate</i>	Alright. So I would like to know a little bit about the client and the product...
Interviewer	Let's not talk about single piston engines. Let's talk about the three-wheeler industry as there has been a decline in demand for three wheelers in the country.
<i>Candidate</i>	Ok. You mentioned that the engine supplier supplies to all the three wheeler manufacturers. I would imagine two different sorts of three wheelers that are in production. These are your typical auto-rickshaws that are used like cabs across the country and goods transport vehicles like small trucks and lorries.
Interviewer	Correct. Let's call these uses commercial and transport.
<i>Candidate</i>	Ok. I would imagine that the reduction in demand for three wheelers is an industry wide problem as the supplier for engines supplies to the entire industry.
Interviewer	Absolutely correct. It is an industry wide problem.
<i>Candidate</i>	Now, is this reduction in demand across both the vehicle types or specific to one?
Interviewer	The commercial sector has not really taken a hit. The drop is specific to the transport sector.

Candidate	Alright. Within the transport sector, there are probably different kinds of industries that use three wheelers to move their goods. Is the reduction in demand specific to an industry?
Interviewer	Let's classify that into small goods and large goods.
Candidate	Ok. Just to understand, an example of small goods would be FMCG products like shampoo, soap or chips and large goods would be things like washing machines and refrigerators.
Interviewer	Correct. If you were to draw the value chains of these types of industries what would be the difference you would spot pertaining to transport vehicles.
Candidate	For the small goods industries the value chain would comprise supply production and retail with transport vehicles moving raw material from the suppliers to the manufacturing unit and finished goods from the manufacturing units to retail outlets. In the case of large goods, I would imagine home delivery to be a norm. So to the previous value chain there would be an extra movement of products from retail outlets to customers homes for delivery purposes.
Interviewer	Perfect. We conducted some studies and analyzed some historical data and found out that the reduction in engine sales is a business cycle and the sale would come back to its original levels which did happen. Can you summarize the case for me.
Candidate	Sure. Our client is a single piston engine manufacturer and controls the industry in India. He is facing a reduction is due to a business cycle and the profitability would resurrect itself. Our conclusion came from an analysis of the three wheeler industry in which we saw a reduction in demand in three wheeler transport vehicles causing our profitability reduction.
Interviewer	Thank you.
Candidate	Thank you.
Interviewer	Our client is a polymer rope manufacturing company. These ropes are used for various purposes. They are thinking of expanding into the fisheries business by developing fishing nets. They have come to us to figure out how to go about it.
Candidate	So essentially the client wants to enter into the fishing nets business. What is the purpose of this entry?
Interviewer	Our client believes that the market is more or less untapped and hence lucrative.
Candidate	Alright, and the client wants us to help him make the decision about entering?
Interviewer	No. They are more or less sure that they want to enter. They want to know about how to go about it.
Candidate	Alright. Could you please give me some information about the product they have in mind and who the existing players in the market are.
Interviewer	The current market is fairly fragmented in nature and the product they want to enter with is a nylon polymer net that tends to have a much larger life span than the current one. They also want to sell the rope to allow net weavers to intertwine our rope with a cheaper variety to create a sort of hybrid net.
Candidate	Alright. To assess the options at hand I would like to consider the following parameters: the competitive landscape, barriers to entry and exit, market size, modes of entry and risks and regulations.
Interviewer	Let's look at the market sizing part of it.
Candidate	Alright. I can estimate the market size based on supply or demand. I would imagine this business to be demand constrained and hence would like to estimate it based on demand.

Interviewer	Go ahead. Assume you know the annual consumption of fish. Do not plug in numbers, just walk me through the process.
<i>Candidate</i>	Ok. (At this point I created a formula based on the following averages: Fishing frequency, depth of net, distance into sea, aerial density of fish with respect to depth and distance etc.) All of the variables mentioned in the formula are subject to seasonal variations and the answer would hence have some seasonality to it.
Interviewer	That is fine but it seems you missed...
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes. The formula calculates the area of net required to catch the annual demand of fish. The number would have to be divided by the life span of the net for market size.
Interviewer	Thank you.
<i>Candidate</i>	Thank you.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Ashish Singhal
Interviewing Firm	Bain & Co.
Interviewer	Sriwatsan Krishnan (Principal) and Marzi Patell (Manager)
Under-graduate College	IIT Delhi
Stream	Production and Industrial Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	12 months
Firm	MakeMyTrip
Sector	E-commerce
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	Cost Reduction
Interviewer	<i>Introduced himself and asked for my introduction</i>
Candidate	<i>My introduction followed by brief chat</i>
Interviewer	Moving on to the case. Our client is a BPO which is looking to reduce costs without laying off employees.
Candidate	<i>Clarified the problem statement. Asked a few questions about the client and the market</i>
Interviewer	Client is based in India while its customers are major firms across the world. Assume that the market is growing at a healthy rate. Their customers are big companies in USA and Europe.
Candidate	May I take a minute to come up with a structure?
Interviewer	Yeah Sure.
Candidate	<i>Drew a structure on paper.</i> In order to reduce costs, I would first like to know about the cost streams. I believe the costs can be segregated into salaries, rent, equipment cost, electricity cost, telephone costs and some other overheads. Can you tell if I am missing anything?
Interviewer	No, go ahead.
Candidate	Ok, can you tell me the percentage contribution of different costs?
Interviewer	<i>Provided the contributions of the different cost components. Major areas were employee salaries, land and equipment costs</i>
Candidate	Since major costs were employee salaries, I want to first explore how these costs can be reduced. Employee salaries can be divided into the number of employees and the average salary. Can I assume that all employees have similar salaries?
Interviewer	Yes, go ahead.

Candidate	Since laying off employees is not an option, I would like to explore the possibility of reducing their wages.
Interviewer	The client pays the industry standard which cannot be reduced.
Candidate	Perhaps we can explore the variable pay structure.
Interviewer	Yes, this can be done. But let's move on.
Candidate	Since laying off is not possible, and the market is growing, we can work on making our current set of employees more productive so that we do not need to hire more people for increased work.
Interviewer	Good point. Go ahead.
Candidate	In this case, should we measure productivity by the number of calls answered or by the number of queries resolved?
Interviewer	Number of queries resolved.
Candidate	Okay, number of queries resolved is equal to number of hours in a day * number of calls per hour * query resolution rate per call. Can we increase the number of working hours per day?
Interviewer	No, the number of hours is fixed. We can move to increasing the number of calls per hour.
Candidate	Sure. There are calls which require manual help while some calls are pretty standard. We can employ IVR system to answer the standard problems so that our workforce mostly works with the non-standard calls. This would increase the total number of calls we can handle.
Interviewer	Assume that the company already has a good IVR system in place.
Candidate	Okay, in order to increase the number of manual calls, we need to reduce the idle time of each agent. Also we need to reduce the time spent on each call. We can work on a call routing system which reduces the idle time. We can work on distribution of workforce by specialization so that the query resolution time can be reduced.
Interviewer	The company already has used the best practices in routing an IVR. Now let's move on to equipment and land costs.
Candidate	<i>Discussed that we can look at leasing the equipment and land, look at cheaper suppliers etc.</i>
Interviewer	What else?
Candidate	<i>I was pretty confused at this point and the interviewer had understood.</i>
Interviewer	Most of the customers who call are centered in US. What can you make of that?
Candidate	<i>Was still confused.</i> May I take a minute to think.
Interviewer	Sure
Candidate	<i>Took some time then started thinking out loud.</i> I am thinking on the lines of the time difference.
Interviewer	Go ahead.
Candidate	If most of our clients are in US, then most of our resources would be used in the nightshift. This means that most of our resource utilization would be something like this. <i>Drew a diagram on the paper showing low utilization in day hours while high at night.</i>

	So if we try to diversify our clients and work with Asian and European clients as well, we can use our resources during other hours as well.
Interviewer	Yes, this is what I was looking for.
Candidate	Since the land and equipment costs are fixed costs, increasing the shifts would increase the utilization and reduce the unit costs.
Interviewer	Yes, we can close the case now. The interviewer then asks me to wait for a minute while he goes out of the room to bring in the other interviewer.
Interviewer	Hi, in the interest of time, I would just introduce myself and then we will quickly start with a guesstimate. <i>Introduces himself.</i> Now let's start with the guesstimate. Estimate the number of taxis in a city of your choosing.
Candidate	I am from Delhi, so can I do it for Delhi?
Interviewer	Yeah sure, estimate the number of taxis in Delhi.
Candidate	So before I start, I want to clarify whether I should consider just passenger taxis like Ola, Uber etc. or also the shared company cabs as well.
Interviewer	No need to look at shared cabs. You can just find out the number of regular taxis.
Candidate	Great. Can I have a minute to come up with a structure.
Interviewer	Sure.
Candidate	<i>Drew a structure on paper.</i> So in order to calculate the number of taxis, I would calculate the demand of the taxis. For this I want to start with calculating how many taxi trips are required in Delhi. With that and the average number of trips per taxi, we can calculate the number of taxis in Delhi. We can also consider a demand satisfaction percentage since not all taxi demand will be fulfilled.
Interviewer	Okay, so how would you calculate the total demand.
Candidate	For that, I will calculate the number of people in Delhi who use a taxi and their average number of trips
Interviewer	Okay, go ahead.
Candidate	I will start with the population of Delhi. I will first like to calculate the number of people who have a regular need for transportation. Then I will calculate that among these people, how many can actually afford the taxis since they are quite expensive. Finally among these people, some people might still use other modes of vehicles. So I will calculate the percentage of people who will use a taxi.
Interviewer	Hmmm, sounds good.
Candidate	<i>Segregated people with age, gender, profession type to establish the need of transportation. Then segregated further on the basis of income to establish the number of people who have a need and can afford a taxi</i>
Interviewer	So now how do you differentiate in mode of transport?

Candidate	Firstly I will establish the different modes of transport - buses, metro, private vehicle, taxis. People belonging to different income segment would opt for a different mix of vehicles. For example, a middle income segment might oscillate between metro, private vehicle and taxi while a rich person might oscillate between private vehicle and taxi. So I would like to build on the previous income based segregation to have a mix of transportation modes.
Interviewer	Interesting, go ahead.
Candidate	<i>Did my calculations, came up with a number.</i>
Interviewer	Is this the demand? Isn't anything missing?
Candidate	Yeah, the average frequency of travel is still missing. For average travel I will distribute between weekdays and weekends. Assuming that a person requires to travel everyday on weekdays, hence two trips on every weekday. And on weekends, can I take one travel a week, thus making 12 taxi rides a week? There will be other trips as well, but I think they will be rare enough to be ignored. Should I include those as well?
Interviewer	No, this sounds good. Now what is left?
Candidate	Yeah so now we have the total demand. We need to figure out the number of trips per taxi. We can calculate that by taking average number of hours a taxi operates, utilization rate of the taxi and the average trip duration.
Interviewer	Yeah, I think you have it covered. We can stop now. Please wait outside for some time. <i>They gave the offer after a couple of minutes.</i>

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Stay calm. Listen to the interviewer clearly and ask for clarity or help wherever you are stuck. Explain what you are trying to do so that the interviewer is on the same page as you. Try to keep the conversation going and confirm your assumptions with the interviewer.

Relax for at least a couple of days before Day 0. Last minute prep will not be beneficial in this case.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Nikhil Hegde
Interviewing Firm	Bain & Co.
Interviewer	
Under-graduate College	Topiwala National Medical college and B.Y.L. Nair Ch. Hospital , Mumbai
Stream	M.B.B.S
Work-experience (Months)	Nil.
Firm	
Sector	
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	Your client is a manufacturer of consumer durables , currently facing low profitability and has come to you for help
<i>Candidate</i>	From what I understand our client is facing a low profitability and he is the manufacturer of consumer durables , could you please clarify what consumer durables imply? What is the product spectrum
Interviewer	Refrigerators , washing machines , microwaves and other general appliances
<i>Candidate</i>	Is there any specific segment in which the client is facing a decline?
Interviewer	No, it a general trend across all products. Further , only our client is facing it and no other competitor in the market
<i>Candidate</i>	(Realising Ive forgotten to ask duration) How long has the profitability been declining?
Interviewer	1 Year.
<i>Candidate</i>	Typically I look at profitability as profit divided by revenue. Should I look at revenues specifically or is it a cost side issue?
Interviewer	We seem to be incurring higher costs than our competitors.
<i>Candidate</i>	Drawing the Porters' value chain , we can benchmark our costs with those of competitors and specifically see where we are incurring higher costs. Do we have a higher cost of raw materials than our competitors?
Interviewer	What do you mean? There would be multiple components which would be required
<i>Candidate</i>	Right, before I actually get into the value chain , I want to understand which parts of the value chain our client operates in (shouldve asked this early on) if our client manufactures from scratch or if he sources parts , assembles them and handles the distribution and marketing

Interviewer	This is typically how the players in the Industry operate, they source parts from OEMs and handle the downstream value chain
<i>Candidate</i>	So , in understanding this sourcing I would like to benchmark the quality, location of the source and quantity - since this would influence bulk discounts , with that of our competition
Interviewer	We source higher quality parts from OEMs in Japan , our competition sources it locally
<i>Candidate</i>	This could be a reason of disparity since higher quality parts would cost more and shipping charges would also be higher, perhaps import duties might also be applicable, if the customers arent price sensitive we could perhaps increase our price , or else we could source locally as well if theyre inelastic to quality (realising Ive given recommendations too soon) , but we should analyze the rest of the value chain before we can make any definitive conclusions. Should we analyze the manufacturing costs next?
Interviewer	What would you include in manufacturing costs?
<i>Candidate</i>	Under manufacturing we could look at - direct labour , other employee costs and overheads - like utilities , electricity , rent of facility and depreciation of equipment
Interviewer	These seem to be inline with industry standards
<i>Candidate</i>	How do we distribute our products ? Also do we have our own showrooms or do we sell to third party retailers?
Interviewer	We have our own showrooms
<i>Candidate</i>	Is this similar to our competitors?
Interviewer	No, they rely on third party retailers , and handle only their own marketing
<i>Candidate</i>	So, our client could possibly be incurring selling expenses in the form of hiring salesman , renting out facilities , and advertising expenses in excess of those of the competitors , is there anything further that I should explore in value chain for example - after sales service?
Interviewer	Yes , go ahead.
<i>Candidate</i>	Costs that I cant think of which would be incurred would belong to the following categories - returns and warranties , installation and technical support , repairs and maintainance.
Interviewer	We incur all of those costs , our competitors outsources it to a third party. What are your recommendations?
<i>Candidate</i>	Our client , a consumers durable manufacturers had a profitability below that of the competition. We identified 3 main difference from that of the competition. Aftersales service , retailing and sourcing of parts. We seem to be highly forward integrated and should look at each individually. 1st we should analyze if the aftersales service is generating enough revenues to be sustainable ie. how many free services we are offering as opposed to chargeable service and charge them accordingly. 2nd we should look at outsourcing most of the retailing to large supermarket chains which could help us drive down rental costs of standalone stores. 3rdly we could look at sourcing parts locally or backward integrate and manufacture it ourselves to help drive down costs.
Interviewer	The case was primarily to check my structure and though I did not have the time to write down a lot of things I communicated everything that I was thinking of and how I was planning to proceed which kept the interviewer in conversation and helped me get more clues and directions

Candidate	Because I did not practice too many cases without writing them down I kept moving back and forth in my structure. Shouldve asked a lot of preliminary questions before proceeding into the case a lot of which I realised later. I couldve used the profit & loss statement approach to list down costs which wouldve covered a lot more things included fixed and variable costs which wasnt well demarcated using the value chain approach
Interviewer	GTM
Candidate	Dinkar Ayilavarapu - Partner - Delhi office
Interviewer	Was a bit intrigued about my background , asked about my internship and a bit of small talk to get me comfortable.
Candidate	We have a pharmaceutical case with us , that I worked on back in 2007. So basically , its this chain of pathology labs , you've probably heard the name or figured it out by now, that wants to expand into the US and you've to give me a market entry strategy
Interviewer	Asking preliminary questions - What is the main objective of our client wanting to enter the US?
Candidate	You tell me, what could be the possible reasons?
Interviewer	profitability , diversification , growth
Candidate	Yeah so growth and hedging against risk , that's primarily why companies would think of expanding
Interviewer	Are we looking to start from scratch or a JV or acquiring any players? I want to understand if we have enough capital.
Candidate	that's what the client is trying to figure out
Interviewer	(Tried my basic framework of GTM) So primarily we will look at the following factors before deciding whether to enter the market. 1. Barriers to entry...
Candidate	What could be the barriers to entry?
Interviewer	there could be legal regulation and possibly even patent protection for certain procedures and tests
Candidate	How do you think the synergies would play out? I mean the diseases arent common between India and the US
Interviewer	Yes , so we'd analyze the capabilities of the company - 1. The scale it enjoys in terms of numbers and size of labs 2. The capital 3. its current profitability 4. lead time between testing and the results and check if we could use any of these capabilities to while expanding abroad...
Candidate	What else would you look at ?
Interviewer	The market size and market share - In the market size I would typically look at incidence of disease, the number of blood tests being conducted annually , the number of specimens tested annually , average ticket size and in market share I would look at number of competitors , the geographies they cater to , the customer segments
Candidate	The interview ended as we were running out of time.
Interviewer	It was an industry I had an idea about so I could give insights about it
Candidate	Because I did not write down my structure initially , it became a free flowing conversation and

	I missed out a lot of preliminary questions like - what is the company's business , what is its India presence , do they have any experience expanding abroad , what are its competencies , which customer segment does it cater to.
	Profitability (Schedule optimization)
Interviewer	Sriwatsan Krishnan (Watsan) - Bain and Co.
<i>Candidate</i>	Tell me about yourself...
Interviewer	Your client is a BPO located out of Gurgaon , they have had a steady growth of about 10% over the last 5 years , but since the last quarter they have seen a decline in profits and have hired you to figure out why and help them fix the issue
<i>Candidate</i>	So , to clarify our client is a BPO , seeing decline in profits over the last quarter and has hired us to figure out why. Could you tell me about the operations of the client in detail?
Interviewer	They mainly handle international clients , they are a subsidiary of an IT company and the working hours are inline with those of the clients. The employees mainly handle the calls , resolve the issue or transfer it to the appropriate authority.
<i>Candidate</i>	I typically look at profits as revenue minus costs. Do we know if there has been a decline in revenues , increase in costs or both?
Interviewer	There has been both a decline in revenues as well as an increase in costs
<i>Candidate</i>	Should I begin with declining revenues which would be the price charged per customer multiplied by the number of customers , since this would be a more pressing matter
Interviewer	We are actually losing customers because of decline in quality of service.
<i>Candidate</i>	I'd further like to analyse why the quality of service is declining , also since the number of customers are declining our cost per customer would increase. I'll trace out the customer journey from placing the call , to the hold time, to the service time , to the resolution time.
Interviewer	Yes, there has been an increase in the service time, the hold time is practically zero since the number of customers have declined
<i>Candidate</i>	Do we know why there has been an increase in service time?
Interviewer	The requirements are becoming more complex, the issues are taking longer to resolve. How can we tackle this?
<i>Candidate</i>	(Drawing reference from a case that I had read in a casebook about an interview being about employee motivation and organizational culture) We could hold training programs for the new recruits and also make them familiar with common issues and rehearse the typical responses beforehand and also familiarize them with the various redirects they can give for various issues. Further we can also motivate the employees by linking their incentive to reduced response time and rewarding them proportionally.
Interviewer	Don't you think this would affect the quality even further as employees would try to reduce time at the cost of service quality? I was looking for a more hard approach. Work them overtime and in breaks to meet client needs fully. If you work the employees overtime or in breaks because of the decreased number of customer there would be free employees. So how would you reduce costs?
<i>Candidate</i>	We could look at diversifying the business , probably assign the employees to other services and even a few to training to improve the quality of training.
Interviewer	I was looking for a more simple answer , the growth is at 10% right? So just stop hiring new candidates and lay off the old ones.

Candidate	Asked preliminary questions properly other than that nothing
Interviewer	Was trying to draw references from past cases that I had done. There the interviewer had led the candidate down a different path. This interviewer was expecting simple analytical approach and drawing reference from the other case hardwired my brain to think in a particular way. Sometimes the easiest answer is the most apt.
Candidate	Profitability
Interviewer	Vibhor Gupta - Manager - New Delhi office
Candidate	Straight to the case
Interviewer	Your client is a cement manufacturer , who has seen a decline in profitability
Candidate	Company - Where is the client located , which all parts of the value chain does he operate in , since when has there been a decline in profitability? Is it an industry wide issue? How many competitors are there? Does he have a single product range or multiproduct range? Who are the customers?
Interviewer	Client is located in North India near Haryana, UP. Procures raw material in the form of limestone etc manufactures cement and distributes it to the end customer which are usually construction companies. He has a single product line. The decline has been since 3 years
Candidate	I typically look at profits as revenue minus costs. Do we know if there has been a decline in revenues , increase in costs or both?
Interviewer	There has actually been an increase in revenues
Candidate	That must mean that the cost has disproportionately increase. Since revenues are prices multiplied by number of customers , do we know if either have contributed to increase in revenue?
Interviewer	Obviously prices have increased as per inflation but the important contributor to the growth has been increased demand
Candidate	Since we are talking about disproportionate increase in costs I would specifically like to focus on that , If that's alright?
Interviewer	Sure, Go ahead.
Candidate	Costs would typically be fixed and variable. Fixed costs would include - Rent , Depreciation expense , insurance , interest expense. Could any of these have increased since we have new added capacity to serve additional demand?
Interviewer	No , none of these have increased. We haven't added new capacity
Candidate	Under variable costs , I would typically look at per unit costs , in case of cement perhaps per kg costs?
Interviewer	Okay.
Candidate	Variable costs would fall under various headers like Raw-Materials -Inbound logistics - Manufacturing (Direct labour , utilities , electricity) - Outbound logistics - Sales and general admin - After-sales service
Interviewer	You seem pretty calm for a guy on his 4th interview but are you missing something?
Candidate	(Realising I should've clarified) So I have actually dubbed storage and transportation costs under the header of inbound and outbound logistics

Interviewer	Yes , so our outbound logistics cost has actually increased
<i>Candidate</i>	Since we are located in only one central location , my hypothesis would be that we have increased demand from a far off location that could possibly increase transportation cost.
Interviewer	and?
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes , even storage costs would increase as we would have to keep inventory on hand if there is fluctuating demand, possibly even increased toll charges for multiple trips
Interviewer	What would recommend they do?
<i>Candidate</i>	They could employ 3 approaches. 1. Outsource the transportation to a 3rd party or ask the client to bear the transportation costs 2. Rent out additional storage facilities for handling enough inventory and preventing frequent restocking 3. JV with another manufacturer based on the demand from the particular region

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Kept calm even though my previous cases didn't go quite as well. Made sure I did not repeat the mistakes I made in the previous cases. Structured my answers properly and took the time to write them out clearly. Made sure I was walking the interviewer through everything I was writing

Should have clarified what each component of the value chain had under it. Should've structured the recommendations a little better by doing a cost benefit analysis

Interview Experiences	
Name	Nishit Misra
Interviewing Firm	Bain & Co.
Interviewer	Mahima (Principal) , Vibhor Gupta (Manager), Dinkar Ayilavarapu (Partner)
Under-graduate College	IIT Roorkee
Stream	Metallurgical & Materials Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	22 months
Firm	Axtria, EXL Service
Sector	Analytics, Consulting
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	Profitability
Interviewer	Hi, we would start off with a case straight away - Our client is an FMCG firm for which the revenues have increased over the past few months but the EBITDA has decreased. Can you help the client out with it.
Candidate	<i>Sure. If I understand the problem correctly, the revenues have been increasing yet the EBITDA has decreased over the past few years. I would like to ask a few clarifying questions to understand the problem better - What geographies does the plant operate in and what are the major categories in which the FMCG firm has products</i>
Interviewer	The firm operates across India and it has products in the Skin care and Hair Care categories.
Candidate	<i>Ok. Has the firm been experiencing declining EBITDA across both the categories or is it a category specific problem?</i>
Interviewer	The firm has been experiencing issues specifically in the Skin Care category
Candidate	<i>Ok. Also, has this been an industry wise issue specifically in the Skin Care category or is it specific to our client only?</i>
Interviewer	The issue has specifically been with our client. The industry has been showing growing EBITDA trends over the past few months.
Candidate	<i>Ok. Since the EBITDA has been decreasing despite increasing revenues, I can safely assume that the costs have increased over the past few months. I would like to investigate the products and I would go through the value chain and analyze the cost involved at each step and check in which part of the value chain the costs have increased. Before that can I get some clarity on what part of the value chain does the client control.</i>
Interviewer	The client controls the entire value chain from R&D to Marketing itself. Go ahead with the value chain analysis
Candidate	<i>Described the value chain. Asked about each of the components of the value chain for an increase in costs recently. Figured out that the Raw Material costs had increased over the past few months. Inquired about the products that the firm has in the Skin Care category and if the</i>

	<i>trends are consistent across all the products in the category?</i>
Interviewer	The firm has different categories of soaps - However, for this one specific type of soap, the raw material costs have increased.
Candidate	<i>Asked about the different raw materials required in making this specific soap. Came to know that it is made up of animal fats, oil and other ingredients for fragrance. Asked if the costs had increased due to increase in the costs of a specific raw material or due to change in the composition of the raw material.</i>
Interviewer	The latter
Candidate	<i>Ok. So in this case, one of the components out of the 3 have been increased, which are relatively higher in price and thus have resulted in increasing the costs and thus decreasing the EBITDA of the firm.</i>
Interviewer	Correct. The oil used in making these soaps have been increased due to which the manufacturing cost of these soaps have gone up. Let us assume that the soap was initially sold at Rs. 15 to the customers and the margin of the shopkeeper was 20% on it. At what price should we price the product now, considering the costs have gone up by Rs.2 so that we maintain the same margins over our sale.
Candidate	<i>For doing these calculations, we would like to know more about the margins that the firm used to earn earlier from the sales of these soaps.</i>
Interviewer	Good. The firm used to earn 33% margins on the sale of the soap
Candidate	<i>In that case, assuming, the soap was sold to the final customers at Rs.15 with 20% margins, the shopkeepers would be buying the soaps from the firm at Rs.12. Considering 33% margins, we can safely assume that the cost in making the soaps initially was Rs.8</i>
Interviewer	Right
Candidate	<i>Now, since the costs have increased by Rs.2 due to the increase in the quantity of oil added in the soap, the costs of producing these soaps would now be Rs.10. Assuming we still want to earn 33% margins on the soap, we would have to price the soap to the shopkeepers at Rs.15. instead of Rs. 12</i>
Interviewer	Good. Thanks Nishit, that would be it. You can wait in the room, have some cookies and wait for further communications.
Candidate	Increase Revenues
Interviewer	Hi Nishit, is this the first firm you are interviewing? You seem to be a bit nervous. Have some water and relax down a bit.
Candidate	<i>Calmed down a bit and shared my experience in the previous interview when asked about it</i>
Interviewer	So, let us get started with the case. So, your client is Delhi Metro - DMRC who wish to increase its revenues. What would you suggest our client to do?
Candidate	<i>Sure. If I understand the problem correctly, our client DMRC wishes to increase their revenues and we need to suggest them a method to do so. I would like to ask a few scoping questions before I approach the problem statement. I would first like to know more about the client. What is the business model of the firm like?</i>
Interviewer	DMRC runs the metro in Delhi and earns revenues through various sources. IT has been running the metro for around 10 hours now
Candidate	<i>Ok. I would like to understand the current revenue streams for DMRC and see how can we increase the revenues for the firm. As per my understanding the revenues for DMRC would</i>

	<i>primarily be from 4 basic revenue streams: Ticket sales, Kiosks and stalls, Parking lots and Advertisement. Would you want me think about any more revenue streams?</i>
Interviewer	No, that is it. How would you go about increasing the revenues then.
Candidate	<i>I can either add a new revenue stream or try to increase the revenues from the existing streams itself. Which one would you want me to take up</i>
Interviewer	Let us see how you can increase the revenues from the existing sources itself.
Candidate	<i>I would like to investigate each of the 4 revenue streams one by one: Ticket Sales, Kiosks and stalls, Parking lots, Advertisements. For increasing the ticket sales we can either increase the #customers or the Avg. ticket size or the price of the ticket. For increasing the number of customers I would look to understand the occupancy of the metro</i>
Interviewer	The metro usually stays occupied during the peak office hours. Infact the metro stays overcrowded during the office hours and apart from the office hours the occupancy of the metro is usually around 60-70%
Candidate	<i>Is the occupancy the same for both the genders. Since we know that females have specific seats and coaches for them, is there any difference in the occupancy of the two genders? I would also like to know if the occupancy data remains the same throughout the metro network or is there any specific part of the metro which has a significantly higher occupancy rate than the others.</i>
Interviewer	No. The occupancy remains same for the two genders. The occupancy doesn't usually remain the same for all the metro lines - Specifically on the blue line stays heavily overcrowded.
Candidate	In that case, specifically during the peak hours we can either add more coaches to the metros - Have more metros with 8 coaches rather than 6 coaches or have more metros running (increasing the frequency of the metros)
Interviewer	Ok. Which plan according to you would be more effective?
Candidate	<i>Increasing the frequency of the metros during the peak hours would be more effective since the same metros would be running during the non-peak hours as well and having an 8 coach metro in the non peak hours would mean lower occupancy during the non-peak hours since during those hours we have a demand constraint and not a supply constraint.</i>
Interviewer	Ok. Assuming we go ahead with the plan to increase the frequency of the metros during the peak hours, would you run the metros for the entire length of the blue line which stays overcrowded.
Candidate	<i>Depends. We will have to see if the metro stays overcrowded for the entire length of the blue line. Because if we extra metros for the entire length and the demand is specifically between some 10 stations then the metro would go unoccupied for the rest of the distance unnecessarily adding onto the fuel costs. So, it would be recommended to add more metros only for the overcrowded section of the blue line</i>
Interviewer	Ok. What else would you suggest?
Candidate	<i>We can increase the #customers by improving the customer experience quality apart from reducing the crowds in these metros, like reducing the queue lengths at the ticket counter, baggage counter or security counters. We can also increase the ticket revenues by increasing the prices of the metro, but ensuring that it does not have an impact on the demand of the metros due to significant competition. Can I know more about the competitors of DMRC?</i>
Interviewer	Ok, fine. Can you summarize the case for me now.

Candidate	Summarized the case(Started with the primary recommendation of increasing the frequency of trains during the peak hours between the 2 stations having overcrowded metros)
Interviewer	Unconventional - Personals
Candidate	Hi Nishit, how many interviews have you had till now? (Was sitting with my CV in his hand)
Interviewer	<i>I've had 2 rounds of case interviews till now. This is my third round.</i>
Candidate	OK. So you are from Bareilly. I think I have passed through Bareilly, probably when I was visiting Nainital. Is it correct?
Interviewer	<i>Yes, Bareilly is pretty close to Nainital. I visited Nainital quite often during my childhood. (Had a small discussion over that)</i>
Candidate	Ok, so you worked with Atria and EXL Services. What exactly was your job profile?
Interviewer	<i>We did business analytics for US and UK based clients. I specifically worked for three different sectors - Pharma and life sciences, Banking and financial services and retail sector. We used to take key decisions based on the various analytical tools.</i>
Candidate	So, you basically built models for financial services and pharms clients?
Interviewer	<i>Yes, we used logistic regression models or machine learning algorithms to build models for the client - Building a promotion response model for the a retail client, building a default prediction model for a leading US based bank etc</i>
Candidate	Ok, so how exactly do you predict the probability of default for a Bank?
Interviewer	<i>We use historical data to identify what are the variables which are able to predict the delinquencies of the customers. We use that logistic regression model then to predict customers have a high probability of default in the future.</i>
Candidate	How do you find out the strength of your model, do you check it using the DW statistic?
Interviewer	<i>Had a long discussion about GINI coefficient of the models, DW statistic etc</i>
Candidate	In that case how do you identify which of the customers are False positives and False negatives, do any of these Indices help you out with that?
Interviewer	<i>Talked more about KS Index and some more metrics.</i>
Candidate	Ok Nishit, that would be it. Thanks a lot!!
Interviewer	<i>Thank you!!</i>

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

1. Structured approach - Follow the MECE structure as much as possible, avoid speculations
2. Focus on solving the cases and do not worry too much about the slot in the interview. DO NOT get tensed or freaked out.
3. Take time and go slow when doing the numerical part

Interview Experiences	
Name	Nishtha Manchanda
Interviewing Firm	Bain & Co.
Interviewer	
Under-graduate College	Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University
Stream	BA (Economics)
Work-experience (Months)	33 Months
Firm	ZS Associates, Gurgaon
Sector	Consulting
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Market Sizing</i>
Interviewer	Estimate the market size of cabs in a your city
<i>Candidate</i>	# of cabs? Delhi?
Interviewer	Yes
<i>Candidate</i>	I will take the population approach (started estimating while still thinking through it..)
Interviewer	Are you sure you want to take this approach?
<i>Candidate</i>	(Taken aback) Umm actually I would divide the problems in two parts. First, I would make an estimate for app affiliated cabs. Second, I would look at major train and bus stations, and look for cab usage from those sources
Interviewer	Okay let's look at the second part then
<i>Candidate</i>	There are two main railways station in Delhi, and two main bus stations. I think we could start with the railway station as that will form the bulk of the traffic
Interviewer	Fair enough
<i>Candidate</i>	I'll divide the train station traffic into low and peak hours. Then I would look at number of trains arriving in an hour, number of AC coach passengers (slicing for affordability), split into different mode of last minute transport metro, pick ups or cabs. (Did the estimate and arrived at a number).
Interviewer	okay
<i>Candidate</i>	Do you want me to pick up the first part?
Interviewer	No, that'll be all. Thanks

Candidate	Cost optimization
Interviewer	Hello. Lets get started quickly. So there's this call center client they want to reduce their costs. We need to tell them a way forward. (Gave a lot of information on revenue, size , location etc, almost covered all basic questions)
Candidate	Let me chalk down the main cost streams. After listing, we eliminated almost all and started looking at increasing the productivity of the employees. I started a bit of guesswork here. Talked about giving employees a checklist to ensure quick responses and reduce call time. Spoke through the day of the employee but couldnt arrive at anything considerable.
Interviewer	Well don't you think, we could cut off the lunch time a bit.
Candidate	Yes, that could be a way.
Interviewer	Thank you
Candidate	Market Entry
Interviewer	Hi Nishtha! Tell me about yourself. Why consulting? Why Bain?
Candidate	Answered satisfactorily
Interviewer	Okay, lets get started. There's a Chinese medical implant manufacturer who wants to enter India. The implant is for knee surgery. Two types of implant X and Y. We need to gauge whether to enter the Indian market.
Candidate	What is the objective for the client? Maximize profits/revenue/market share?
Interviewer	Profits
Candidate	Thank you. I am going to divide this problem into three parts: Pre Entry, At Entry and Post Entry considerations. Within the first part, I would like to look at the market size and growth of the knee implants industry and if there are any barriers to entry. In the second part, I would estimate the profits that can be expected and the mode of entry (JV/Organic/Acquisition) and finally, I would look sustainance and barriers to exit.
Interviewer	this looks good.
Candidate	So starting with the first part can you tell me a little bit about the market size and growth in India and China?
Interviewer	Chinese market is roughly \$1.5 Bn and India is a fraction of it but it is a sizeable market. Indian market is growing at 15% and China at 5%.
Candidate	Can you tell me a little bit about the knee implants available in India? Who are our major competitors?
Interviewer	There is one knee implant which is comparable to ours in terms of quality. It has 40% market share. Rest is fragmented
Candidate	okay. Are there any regulatory barriers to entry to the Indian market? If not, we can move on to estimate the profits expected
Interviewer	No there are none. Sure, go ahead and estimate the profits.
Candidate	Estimated the market size, took buy-ins at each points. Took input on margins of each product. After estimating, recommended one of the product to be launched as flagship

	product and the other as alternative to cater to relatively low income customers.
Interviewer	Okay, what next? Anything else?
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes, do our existing plants have manufacturing capacity to meet the Indian demand we estimated just now?
Interviewer	Yes, we would like to import our implants than manufacture in India. Does that affect anything in our analysis?
<i>Candidate</i>	umm (thinking) Yes, we need to pay import duty now so that could affect our margins and in turn the profits because our margins were comparable to China right now
Interviewer	Cool, so then should they enter the market?
<i>Candidate</i>	Oh yes, as per our analysis, they should
Interviewer	Thank you

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Case 1: The interviewer was looking for an approach which is structured. It was an easy guesstimate but I had not done a lot of guesstimates before, it was slightly rough in the beginning. I was able to find a way through it. Write down the estimate info clearly as the interviewer is looking at your calculations, while you are on them. For me, this was really a structured thinking + basic math check. This round was a clear yes.

Case 2: The interviewer was a little intimidating and my thought process was not clear. I tried to go about it in a structured manner but failed to look at obvious things as reducing lunch time. Probably felt it was too harsh to do such a thing. Went for a third round after this..

Case 3: Interviews at Bain don't cover Personals in depth but basics should be very clear. Since my work ex was in pharma consulting, it's possible that medical implant case was given because of that. My case prep structure was really helpful here and I was able to work through it for this case. This was a yes and was given an offer after this round.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Priyal Motwani
Interviewing Firm	Bain & Company
Interviewer	
Under-graduate College	IIT Delhi
Stream	Civil Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	Fresher
Firm	-
Sector	-
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Open ended</i>
Interviewer	Delhi Metro wants to increase their revenues. How should they go about it?
<i>Candidate</i>	Listed down the various sources of revenue and was asked to focus on passenger fare
Interviewer	How can you increase the total passenger fares?
<i>Candidate</i>	<p>Broke it down into (Average total number of daily passengers * average daily passenger fare/ pax). Further tried to break down each element into further parts.</p> <p>Average daily passengers was divided into no. of routes and average no. of passengers / route. Talked about the type of routes it was targeting, frequency about each route, no. of trains and coach size. Talked about targeting the routes where occupancy ratio or capacity utilization was high and opening new routes where business hubs/ commercial areas and residential areas were being targeted. Talked about the occupancy ratio with respect to the peak/ non peak hours. Talked about how different customer segments can be targeted for non peak hours (house wives, non office goers) by providing them with an incentive scheme. Further break down into people not using the metro because of issues like- accessibility, convenience, income segment etc. and talked about how each issue can be handled.</p> <p>Average daily passenger fare/pax- Increasing average fare/ each customer using dynamic pricing, changing pricing scheme, penalising for shorter distance trips, monthly trip packs or metro cards</p>
Interviewer	Guided along each branch and told me to focus on only specific elements. Was testing for MECE structures and how innovative the ideas were
<i>Candidate</i>	Profitability
Interviewer	A consumer products (FMCG) company has been facing a decline in its profits lately. Figure out why.
<i>Candidate</i>	Asked preliminary questions on its location, business model, part of the value chain, products, industry, competitors and the reason of decline, market share

Interviewer	It's operating in India. Facing decline only for the soaps segment and since the last 12 months. The decline is uniform across all the regions of operation. Only our client has been facing the decline.
Candidate	Profits can be written as revenues - cost. Which element has changed with respect to the past figures and competitors' values.
Interviewer	The costs have been increasing but please state the entire structure
Candidate	Stated the entire structure, while stating the possible reasons for decline in revenue and increase in cost. Focused on the supply demand dynamics
Interviewer	Let's focus on the costs now
Candidate	Broke down the cost on the basis of the value chain and enlisted the G&A, finance costs involved. Tested each part of the value chain and if the cost specific to that part has increased in the past year and how it has evolved for the competitors as well (Have to focus on only the company specific cost increases). Talked about the raw material cost, inbound cost, manufacturing cost (input output efficiencies), outbound logistics, wastage/spoilage, G&A costs, marketing/ trade promotion costs etc. Was told the costs have remained the same. Talked about the raw material (quantity* quality) and how the no. of units being manufactured per unit of raw material could have declined due to quality of raw material. Talked about the efficiencies of manufacturing processes. (For each element of the value chain, try to break down the cost quantitatively in a MECE manner and list down the possible scenarios that could have taken place. Be as exhaustive as possible)
Interviewer	She asked me to stop and told me that the quality of raw material has deteriorated
Candidate	Gave recommendations for reducing cost
Interviewer	Gave margins of 3 processes and asked me to calculate the cost price, based on the market price
Candidate	Made a silly mistake while calculating and took time to figure out the mistake.
Interviewer	Was sent to the partner and had a 2-3 mins chat about my CV and was given an offer.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Follow a MECE structure and try to break each element into more components in an exhaustive manner. Be enthusiastic while solving the case and try to provide your analysis at each step.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Rishabh Bararia
Interviewing Firm	Bain & Company
Interviewer	Srikumar Ramanathan(Manager), Sriwatsan Krishnan(Principal)
Under-graduate College	SRCC
Stream	Economics
Work-experience (Months)	11 months
Firm	Co-founder, PocketAd
Sector	
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Unconventional (Short and quick case)</i>
Interviewer	Interviewer told about himself. Asked me to introduce myself.
<i>Candidate</i>	Introduced.
Interviewer	You are the manager of a supermarket and your sales have been coming down. You are considering whether to launch this new advertising scheme or not. The scheme involves asking a person to toss ten coins if his purchases exceed Rs. 1000. If he gets all tails or all heads, he would be allowed to do a "floor sweep".
<i>Candidate</i>	Clarified the problem statement and the objective. Asked about "floor sweep".
Interviewer	In a floor sweep, a consumer can pick up as many items from the supermarket in 5 minutes.
<i>Candidate</i>	Asked some quick preliminary questions like how much worth of goods could be picked up by an average consumer in 5 minutes?
Interviewer	2 lakh
<i>Candidate</i>	Explained the approach. I would analyse two aspects- viability(quantitative) and scheme attractiveness(qualitative). Should I proceed?
Interviewer	Fair enough. Go ahead.
<i>Candidate</i>	For viability, I'll calculate the probability of consumer winning. It is $1/512$. After this I would do a cost-benefit analysis. So in order to ascertain benefits, we need average profit per customer. (per annum)
Interviewer	Just to confuse me, asked a couple of questions about probability. Asked me to proceed further and assume 10% average profits.
<i>Candidate</i>	Do we have data for other costs like promotion or recruitment for execution of this scheme?

Interviewer	Ignore these expenses for now.
<i>Candidate</i>	Did a quick break even analysis.
Interviewer	Asked a couple of counter questions. Now, lets move on to qualitative analysis.
<i>Candidate</i>	Scheme attractiveness has two parts external and internal. External includes number of people attracted and internal includes handling of the scheme. These depend on how the scheme is promoted (are customers actually attracted by such a scheme) and then internal logistical issues (whether a consumer plays the game after coming in)
Interviewer	The scheme is being promoted properly. Lets look at the logistic issues in detail.
<i>Candidate</i>	Used 3Ws for logistic analysis. When, where and who - timing of the scheme(before billing or after billing), which part of the store would be used and personnel (training and quality of people to handle crowd).
Interviewer	Good. Quickly summarise the case
<i>Candidate</i>	
Interviewer	Unconventional (Cost cutting)
<i>Candidate</i>	Your client is an Indian BPO. They want to reduce costs by 60 lakhs. However, you cannot fire labour. How would you go about it?
Interviewer	Reiterated the problem statement. Clarified the business model. Asked about major clients, number of offices and their location etc.
<i>Candidate</i>	Regular BPO business model. Alongwith this, sales pitches made to potential clients. Two major clients and 1 office.
Interviewer	Stated overall approach and listed down the various cost heads for a BPO. (salary, rent, training, utilities, depreciation etc.)
<i>Candidate</i>	Asked me to write approximate percentages for each of the cost heads.
Interviewer	Salary - 50-60%, Rent - depends on location, Training - 10-15%, Utilities: 10-15%.
<i>Candidate</i>	Asked a couple of questions about rent and then asked to deep dive into salary.
Interviewer	Since we cannot fire people, we will have to increase the productivity of workers.
<i>Candidate</i>	How would you increase productivity?
Interviewer	Did a quick analysis of number of calls per employee, time taken per call, fixed vs variable part of the message etc. Found utilisation was only 60%. Hence needed to increase utilisation.
<i>Candidate</i>	How can we increase utilisation?
Interviewer	Suggested 3 methods - Improve efficiency of employees by training of employees (so that they understand the problems quickly and therefore providing solutions quickly). Use of IVR for standardisation. Expertise development by sub-dividing problems into groups.
<i>Candidate</i>	Discussed all three quickly. Well done. Offered internship.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

This was a very fast case. The key was to remain calm and take the interviewer's cues appropriately.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Sanket Shah
Interviewing Firm	Bain & Co.
Interviewer	Dinkar Ayilavarapu (Partner) for round 1, Vibhor Gupta (Manager) for round 2
Under-graduate College	IIT Gandhinagar
Stream	Mechanical Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	10 Months
Firm	Synersoft, Toppr
Sector	IT, EduTech
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	Market Entry
Interviewer	<i>(Looking at my CV) I see they have an IIT in Gandhinagar too, now! (Asked a little about myself, extra-curriculars and internships)</i>
Candidate	<i>(Told him about my experiences, roles and responsibilities - mostly answers that I had prepared)</i>
Interviewer	Let's start the case?
Candidate	Sure
Interviewer	Your client is one of the biggest Pathology players in the world. They would like to enter India. They've come to you for recommendations
Candidate	<i>(Rephrased the problem statement and verified whether there was any other objective to be considered)</i> I'd like to know a little about our client, it's business and the kind of industry it operates in
Interviewer	Sure!
Candidate	What does our client do? Why are they considering to enter India? What geographies are they currently present in? What about our primary competitors in those regions?
Interviewer	Our client is based in the US and runs Pathology chains - which means they mainly do medical testing. They are the leading chain in the world with ~80 % market share. However, their presence is mainly in US and UK, and they're looking to enter India as their next market to expand their global presence. They want to break even in 5 years
Candidate	If they have ~80 global market share, can I assume that there are no other major competitors and that the rest of the market is fragmented? Also, do you want me to evaluate the prospect of entering India, or have they decided that, and they just want a roadmap?
Interviewer	You can assume that the rest of the market is fragmented. For your second question - yes they have decided to enter India. You need to plan their entry strategy.

Candidate	Before I start with the solution, I'd like to understand how the Indian pathology market operates. If it is similar to the UK market in any way, we can utilize our experience of entering UK
Interviewer	The markets are not similar. What do you think would be happening in India?
Candidate	Are we looking at both urban and rural areas?
Interviewer	Assume that we are only looking at urban areas for now.
Candidate	What about the different kind of services we offer. In what way are our services different? What is the customer base we cater to?
Interviewer	You can assume that we offer generalized medical tests - common to typical pathology chains. However, the quality of our service is significantly better than the existing services in India. What kind of customers, you think, will be present in India?
Candidate	I would say that pathology chains of India have three major segments - Customers coming for checkups on their own, customers being referred by local GPs (General Physicians) and other local doctors, and customers being referred by hospitals). There would be some commissions involved in the latter two. I do not know about the major players in the industry though
Interviewer	That's precisely what the case is. What kind of data would you need to evaluate the market and major players?
Candidate	<i>(I realized that the preliminary questions were over and the solution had started)</i> While evaluating any industry, I typically look at market size, market share, margins and growth rates
Interviewer	Here's some data to help you out <i>(Gave me some numbers telling me about each revenue source's market size, market share (competition) and growth rates)</i>
Candidate	It is evident that the "Customers being referred by local doctors" segment was the biggest and most attractive (in terms of competition and growth rates)
Interviewer	That is correct. Proceed with your analysis considering that we have decided to cater to that segment first
Candidate	<i>(Confused that the case was moving too quickly)</i> There are three typical ways to enter - we could choose to establish our own facilities and start from scratch, or we could acquire an existing player, or enter into a joint venture. Since there are no all-India existing players, could we rule out the third option? Are there any budget/funding constraints that I need to be aware of?
Interviewer	That seems fair. We have no budget constraints
Candidate	<i>(At this stage, I fumbled around with a few questions to identify the proper metric to evaluate the methods to enter. Eventually, he hinted me towards the aspect of industry drivers, and then helped me zero-in on customer trust and loyalty)</i>
Interviewer	Considering the disproportionate importance of customer trust and loyalty, I am inclined towards the acquisition approach - acquiring local players throughout the country and streamlining operations. However, I need to look at its feasibility first and whether this satisfies our overall objective of breaking even in the next 5 years.
Candidate	In the interest of time, let's close this case here. Do you have any questions for me?
Interviewer	Was this a live case? What did they do?
Candidate	Of course this was a live case! Your suggestion was similar to what we recommended, and they eventually ended up following it!

Interviewer	<i>(Introduced himself, asked me to introduce myself, and directly started the case)</i> Let's do a guesstimate first?
Candidate	Sure! <i>(Mentally thanking the OCR)</i>
Interviewer	Guesstimate the number of marriages happening every year in India
Candidate	Before we begin, I'd like to clarify that we are considering only human marriages. I've read about people marrying cows as well.
Interviewer	That's quite a controversial statement though. Let's consider human marriages only.
Candidate	<i>(trying to think of more clarifying questions to narrow down the problem)</i> Is it safe to assume that we're considering marriages above the age of 18?
Interviewer	You're making a lot of controversial statements today. Yes, we will be considering only legal marriages.
Candidate	<i>(I had become visbly nervous at this point, and decided to proceed)</i> Okay. I would like to propose that marriages mainly happen between the age group of 21-33.
Interviewer	For the sake of simplicity, assume marriages happen from 20-30.
Candidate	Okay. Can I also assume a uniform distribution of population in this age group?
Interviewer	Yes.
Candidate	Are we looking at both urban and rural markets?
Interviewer	Consider only the urban market
Candidate	I'll take a moment to make calculations. <i>(Assumed a percentage of people in every age group to get married every year, and came up with a number based on standard demograhic assumptions of population, urbal/rural split, age bracket and sex ratio)</i>
Interviewer	I can see that you're not confident with your number since you are sweating.
Candidate	<i>(He was right - I was sweating hard)</i> . The number does look slightly off. I'll take another look at my assumptions and calculations.
Interviewer	Never mind. You missed out a few factors like re-marriages etc. Anyway, can you think of another approach to solve this?
Candidate	Maybe we could look into the supply side of things - marriage halls and grounds?
Interviewer	I'm looking for something that you can measure easily - a data point which you can obtain through a simple search. <i>(At this point, I was really nervous and sweating continuously. He even told me - "You don't need to worry, you're doing fine")</i>
Candidate	How about birth rates?
Interviewer	Okay interesting. How would you use birth rates to extrapolate the number of marriages?
Candidate	Obtain data about the overall percentage of births being the "first child", and obtain information about the average difference between marriage and childbirth to arrive at an estimate. <i>(We deliberated over this for a while. After that, he did not have much time left)</i>
Interviewer	Let's do a quick case. Because we do not have time, I do not want you to solve it for me, but just outline the approach you would use.

Candidate	<i>(After this point, I have no memory of what happened in that interview)</i>
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DOs and DONTs/Important Tips	<i>1. Try to communicate whatever you are thinking - so that the interviewer can follow your line of thought. 2. Ensure that you're structures and frameworks are rock solid, and try to be MECE at all times. Always attempt to break things down, even towards the end of the case. 3. Smile and be confident (or at least try to :P) 4. Do not ignore your Personals</i>
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Interview Experiences	
Name	Saurabh Siddhartha
Interviewing Firm	Bain and Company
Interviewer	Manager
Under-graduate College	Delhi College of Engineering
Stream	Environmental Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	10 months
Firm	ZS Associates
Sector	Sales and Marketing Consulting
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Market Entry</i>
Interviewer	I see you have worked at ZS Associates. I'm assuming that you are familiar with the pharmaceutical industry.
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes, I am.
Interviewer	Okay. So, your client is medical device manufacturer in China. They are exploring the possibility of entering into the Indian market.
<i>Candidate</i>	What are the devices that our client manufacturers? Have they decided on the products they want to introduce in India?
Interviewer	Our client produces 3 medical devices. But we can limit the discussion to just 1 product. It is a knee replacement implant.
<i>Candidate</i>	Has the client decided on any parameter to base their decision on?
Interviewer	Profits
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. Could you tell me a bit about the pharmaceutical industry of China? I'm aware about the pharmaceutical industry in India, but I'm not familiar with the market conditions of China. In particular, I want to know about the process through which people buy their drugs. Is the majority of the expense covered by insurance, as in the case of US or do you people have significant out-of-pocket costs?
Interviewer	Medical expenses in China are mainly taken care of by government-controlled insurance firms. People have very insignificant out-of-pocket costs. It is somewhat like Medicaid in the US.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. (Took a minute to absorb all the information) Here is how I would like to proceed. I would first like to analyse the Indian Pharmaceutical industry, relevant for our product, on the following parameters - Size, Growth, Margin, Competitive Landscape and Barriers. Then I would like to do a comparative analysis with the existing competitors in India to identify a cost advantage or a product advantage. Then I would like to map the identified advantage with a segment that values it to estimate our market share. This would answer the question of

	entering Indian market or not. Next, I would like to look at ways in which we can enter the Indian Market. (At this point, I took his buy-in before proceeding)
Interviewer	Seems fair. The current margins in China is 10%, while it is 20% in India. The market for the implant is growing at 15%, compared to 5% in China.
Candidate	Interesting. So the Indian market seems to be a very high growth and high margin market. May I know the price at which our competition is selling their implant in India?
Interviewer	The price of a implant varies on the quality. In terms of quality, currently there is only one implant in the Indian market which comes close to matching our implant. Price of that implant in India is \$1200.
Candidate	That would put the production cost to around \$960. May I know what is our production cost as of now?
Interviewer	\$800
Candidate	Okay. While we can look at how we want to enter the Indian market later, may I know what will be the costs involved in importing the implant from China itself and if we have enough capacity in China to cater to the demand from India?
Interviewer	The entire cost of importing from China, including import duty, transportation and other transaction chargers would be \$200. As far as capacity is concerned, we have unused capacity at our manufacturing unit in China
Candidate	That brings our total cost of importing an implant from China to about \$1000. Even if we price our implant at \$1200, we get a better margin in India. And given that our implant is our superior quality, we have a product advantage and can price our product in excess of \$1200. So far, the Indian market looks promising. I would like to look at the size of the Indian markets and any barrier to entry.
Interviewer	I would like you to estimate the market size in India. There are no regulatory issues or barriers to enter the market.
Candidate	Estimated the market size. Understood about the disease first to segment the population in India. Took a lot of inputs from the interviewer to arrive at an estimate.
Interviewer	Seemed satisfied with the estimate
Candidate	So, we looked at the Indian market. Given the size of the market, the margins, the growth rate and the lack of any regulations prohibiting entry, I would suggest that we make an entry in the Indian market. Do you want me to look at the various modes through which we can enter?
Interviewer	No, that should be all. Thank you
Candidate	Thanks!
	Optimization
Interviewer	Hi Saurabh. How are you doing today?
Candidate	I'm fine. How are you?
Interviewer	I'm doing good too. So how is IIM Calcutta treating you.
Candidate	Talked about my experiences at IIM Calcutta. During our conversation, I found out that she graduated from IIM Ahmedabad. I asked her about her experiences.

Interviewer	Okay Saurabh. So lets do a small case. Our client is into the business of manufacturing steel sheets. These sheets are packed in small containers and send to various customers. I want you to just focus on the packaging aspect. You need to analyze what can the client do to optimize the process.
<i>Candidate</i>	Thank you. I would like to know more about the process of packaging. What is the process that the kind is following currently?
Interviewer	Currently, the steel sheets are stacked together and put in wodden cartons. There is a layer of a cardboard-like material between two sheets to preserve the quality of sheets.
<i>Candidate</i>	Thanks for the clarification. Can we do anything to alter the dimensions of the steel sheets.
Interviewer	Unfortunately, you can't. You just need to focus on the packaging aspect itself.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. So, I see there are a few steps involved in the entire packaging process. One would be the manufacturing of the wodden carton and the cardboard layer, the inventory of these items and then the process of packaging itself. I would like to analyze all of them.
Interviewer	Go ahead.
<i>Candidate</i>	Starting with manufacturing, we can explore the possibility of changing the dimensions of the wodden carton to pack more number of sheets in 1 carton. This would allow us to pack more number of sheets in the same space as less space will be occupied by the carton itself. As for the cardboard layer, we can look at other materials, which will preserve the quality of the sheets, but is thin compared to the cardboard layer.
Interviewer	Makes sense. Do you think there will be any impact on our customers if we change the size of the cartons?
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes, we will have to see if our existing customers have the required capabilities to handle carton of larger size.
Interviewer	Okay. What else do you have in mind?
<i>Candidate</i>	I would like to look at the inventory system used by our client. Is there any wastage of cartons when they are kept in the warehouse?
Interviewer	Yes, around 20 percent of the cartons are rejected due to defects.
<i>Candidate</i>	What is the primary cause of the defect?
Interviewer	Termites!
<i>Candidate</i>	Interesting! I have some recommendations here for the client. The client opt for regular termite control program to reduce the wastage of cartons. Additionally, we can explore other materials which can be used to make the cartons. Of course, the new cartons will have to be termite resistant and we will need to look at the costs involved.
Interviewer	Okay. So the average customer order is of 100 cartons. The overall cost of packaging is \$50 per carton. Out of the \$50, the cost of carton is \$10. If you are able to solve the issue of termites, can you calcuatue the overall savings per customer order?
<i>Candidate</i>	Calculated the overall savings both in absolute dollar terms and percentage terms.
Interviewer	So, would you recomment our client to go for the termite controll program?
<i>Candidate</i>	If the cost of the termite control program is less than the savings, then definitely yes!

Interviewer	Okay Saurabh. That should be it. Thank you
<i>Candidate</i>	Thanks a lot!

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

DOs:-

- 1) Don't be hesitant to take inputs from the interviewer.*
- 2) Always take the interviewer's buy-in before proceeding.*
- 3) Be confident and stick to structures. If you come across a type of case that you have not practiced before, try to understand the context and scope of the case and then structure your approach*

DONTs

- 1) Don't rush into solving a case.*
- 2) Long gaps between conversations should be avoided.*

A.T.Kearney

Interview Experiences	
Name	Oishee Dutta
Interviewing Firm	A.T.Kearney
Interviewer	Partner
Under-graduate College	St. Xavier's College, Kolkata
Stream	Economics Hons. (B.Sc.)
Work-experience (Months)	Sales & Marketing (26 months)
Firm	Reckitt Benckiser
Sector	FMCG
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Unconventional Interview</i>
Interviewer	Hi. How are you doing today?
<i>Candidate</i>	I'm doing well - How are you?
Interviewer	I'm okay but you seem to be abit nervous. Are you?
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes, I am definitely slightly nervous
Interviewer	Why are you nervous?
<i>Candidate</i>	I tend to place people on a pedestal due to pre-concieved notions and then
Interviewer	If you want to be a consultant and place a client on a pedestal you will get chewed alive.We are all mere mortals. What do you want to do in life?
<i>Candidate</i>	I want to help people people improve their lives through whatever I do.
Interviewer	Then why become a consultant - why don't you become a social worker?
<i>Candidate</i>	I believe consultancy can improve business practices, increase efficiencies and have a huge impact on people's lives. As an individual one of my core strengths have been my problem solving and communication skills and I believe consultancy is one profession where I can truly use my skills to analyze a business problem and then communicate and present ideas and strategic solutions to different stakeholders that will help them understand the positive impact the changes can make on their business.
Interviewer	That's great - communication and changing people's lives - why don't you become a motivational speaker?
<i>Candidate</i>	Well a motivational speaker can just speak about their ideas - as a consultant I can help businesses implement the solution once the stakeholders are convinced with the idea and actually observe as well as quantify the degree of change that our solution has brought to the

	business and thereby the people associated with it.
Interviewer	Great. So we've heard a bit about your strengths - tell me about your weaknesses.
<i>Candidate</i>	One of my weaknesses are - I tend to sometimes have strong opinions which I always stand by and tend to avoid opposite viewpoints that may be brought forth...
Interviewer	So tell me an instance when this has been a hindrance
<i>Candidate</i>	There was this one time where I insisted that we must plan a social responsibility led marketing campaign in such a way that the evaluation parameter should only be the social impact and increase in perceived brand equity and not on the monetary return on investment. When the plan was presented to a director he wanted a component that measured the expected increase in sales and certain specific return on investment targets as a parameter to track and judge the success of the campaign. We had to rework the entire plan and this was a setback for the team as I had enforced my opinion and insisted on a viewpoint which on hindsight was counterproductive.
Interviewer	Okay.... So let me get your opinion on something...
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes. Sure!
Interviewer	<i>Interviewer draws 3 overlapping circles like a venn diagram - If the intersection of these 3 circles is "What makes a Perfect Career?" what are each of these circles</i>
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Thought for 30 seconds. Completely confused but did not allow it to reflect on my face. If I break it down - I would look first at what the job gives me, second what I am able to give to the job and thirdly what else I can get from outside of the job that is intrinsically linked to my job</i>
Interviewer	Interesting... could you elaborate?
<i>Candidate</i>	Spent 5 minutes explaining that what the job gives us should fulfill us, how we should be able to do the job well and give much more than an average individual would contribute in the same position and how the job should be also the conduit for us to be able to indulge in other things in life that make us happy
Interviewer	That's very close to what I was looking for. I read once that the intersection of what you love, what you're good at and what pays well makes for the perfect career. Does that make sense.
<i>Candidate</i>	That makes perfect sense
Interviewer	Are you calmer now?
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes - I am very much at ease
Interviewer	Thank you for your time - You could wait outside
<i>Candidate</i>	Oh! Thank you so much.
Interviewer	Thank you !

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Don't be too hard on yourself. Don't second guess yourself or be nervous - if you are prepared, hard working and you feel that you are a good fit for the company, there is no need to be under confident. Do be well prepared with your personals. Do be genuine. Do smile, maintain eye contact and show an attitude that you are ready and eager to take on and answer any kind of questions/cases/problems that any interviewer may throw at you.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Rushikesh Bhagat
Interviewing Firm	ATKeamey
Interviewer	Arpit Mathur - Manager
Under-graduate College	IIT Madras
Stream	Dual Degree - Automotive Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	2 Years
Firm	Urban Ladder
Sector	Business Analytics and Development, E-commerce
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>No specific format - 20-25 mins</i>
Interviewer	<i>(The process started around 8.20 which was behind schedule. The interviewer was waiting for me to arrive at the location. As soon as I arrived I was called in)</i> Lets straightway get into the case, we have lost some time.
<i>Candidate</i>	Sure
Interviewer	<i>(looking at my resume)</i> So you worked at Urban Ladder?
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes
Interviewer	Okay. So the Amazon wants to set up a new headquarters apart from the one they have in Seattle and are looking for a new location. What all things you would look for while choosing a new location? <i>(This must have come from my relevant work ex in e-commerce industry)</i>
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay, before we go into defining different parameters in order to evaluate different locations I want to clarify some things.
Interviewer	Sure, go ahead.
<i>Candidate</i>	Why are we looking for an another headquarter?
Interviewer	Why do you think?
<i>Candidate</i>	I think, Amazon is growing very rapidly in different business segments and the current headqurters is not able to handle the increasing strength of the employees required at the headquarters and sustain supporting functions.
Interviewer	That is correct.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay, though I have a general sense of how a headquarter works I would like to know more in detail about how exactly it functions and what all tasks it undertakes

Interviewer	Fair enough. Before I tell you about it, you can tell me what's your understanding of a headquarter
Candidate	It is generally the place where the leadership operates from. Maybe the initial location from where the business started in its early days. It will also have HR, IT, Catering apart from the strategic leadership team comprising of middle and higher level managers and C-suite executives.
Interviewer	That is true. By and large you have correctly mentioned who all works in a headquarter. There will be a large legal team also. Also fair bit of support staff like cleaners etc but that would not be too relevant.
Candidate	Alright, what geographies are we looking at? Anywhere in the world?
Interviewer	No really, we are looking in United States only.
Candidate	Okay, any particular reason for this? It seems little counter intuitive considering they are present almost everywhere in the world, a location away from home would seem strategically important.
Interviewer	Good point, but let's stick to the USA for some reasons.
Candidate	Okay. Can I take some time to gather my thoughts ?
Interviewer	Sure
Candidate	<p>(After a minute or so) I have tried to identify some of the major factors that should be considered while deciding a location.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connectivity (Road and Air Transport, distance from frequent visiting destinations) - Tax advantages - Synergistic for all the business segments - Hiring (Easily available talent pool nearby to the location + people should prefer working there) - Availability of modifiable real estate (Build or Rent - design of the workspace) etc (dont remember all the points now)
Interviewer	Okay. Let's go into each one of these one by one.
Candidate	<p>Sure.</p> <p>(so I spent some time on each of these aspects explaining what details we should look for in these aspects especially the tax and legal parts and synergy among the different business segments - exploring what other businesses Amazon just entered or will enter and how that should affect the location of the headquarter)</p>
Interviewer	Okay, thank you.
Candidate	Thank you. (The case was very unconventional and tested how you can think on your feet putting aside the frameworks that you have learnt in the prep so far. I took some time initially from the interviewer to understand what exactly has been asked of me and what should be the line of thinking. Could not think of any framework that could fit the bill so just listed all the relevant factors. Interviewer was happy about the tax and hiring ease points)
Interviewer	
Candidate	Partner Round - 10-15 mins

Interviewer	Hello Rushikesh
<i>Candidate</i>	Hello Sir
Interviewer	So you are from Maharashtra?
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes Sir
Interviewer	Where in Maharashtra?
<i>Candidate</i>	I belong from Sangli District and also have completed my higher secondary education in Pune.
Interviewer	Ohh, nice. Whats so special about Sangli?
<i>Candidate</i>	It is known for the Sugar factories, one of the largest sugar producing districts in India also one of the largest exporter of grapes.
Interviewer	okay, nice. So who all are there in your family.
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>(Told)</i>
Interviewer	So you worked in Urban Ladder, what did you do there?
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>(Explained in detail about my work and achievements)</i>
Interviewer	Tell me your 2 biggest learnings from Urban Ladder
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>(again I had prepared for this question, so gave that answer)</i>
Interviewer	Alright, how is Urban Ladder doing now financially?
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>(Explained in detail about my work and achievements) I think it is doing really well to hang on to its margins in the current state of the e-commerce industry.</i>
Interviewer	Is it profitable?
<i>Candidate</i>	No, not right now. But I am quite sure it will get there in near future.
Interviewer	Why are you so sure? What do you mean by near future?
<i>Candidate</i>	By near future I meant a 3-5 years time period. Also the business model followed in UL is not based on discounting. The biggest competitor to UL is pepperfry is nothing but a amazon like marketplace for furniture which just aggregates the furniture retailers and its growth is fueled by discounts to a great extent. Contrary to that UL is building its own aspirational brand sustainably and it is not too far from breaking even. Also the scales are not too different, Pepperfry is about 1.5 times larger than UL. <i>(You should have the basic knowledge of the industry that you worked in and not just limited to your job profile)</i> In the long run, UL is going to win over its competition. Also IKEA is entering into the Indian market and if they decide to go online no one can compare with their prices no matter how big a discount you offer. In this case UL is more insulated than Pepperfry. Also the NPS score of UL is above 0.75 consistently which is unheard of in any industry let alone the e-commerce, which is again a clear indication of the strength of the brand. And I also believe that the leadership at the helm is very able who are the seasoned experts having more than 10 years of exposure in different industries unlike lot of young CEOs we see these days. So I think UL has bright prospects in the

	future and looking forward to the day it goes public.
Interviewer	okay, good to hear. <i>(Asked some questions about my extra-curriculars, don't remember exactly now)</i>
<i>Candidate</i>	okay, good to hear.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

(the second round was mostly personals and work ex, be thorough with your prep using basic and advanced personals. Communication skills and your general attitude is tested. Before going in for the partner round, I was told by the first interviewer that my interview had gone well and just be normal and calm and you should get through)

Interview Experiences	
Name	Shalini Sharma
Interviewing Firm	A. T. Kearney
Interviewer	Manager
Under-graduate College	NIT Hamirpur
Stream	Electronics & Communication
Work-experience (Months)	23 months
Firm	Verizon
Sector	IT
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Profitability</i>
Interviewer	Hey Shalini. How are you doing?
<i>Candidate</i>	I'm doing good. How are you?
Interviewer	I'm doing good too. So, lets start the case. Your client is in the business of manufacturing pumps. They are facing dedining profits. So, you need to find the reason for the same.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. Before we proceeed, I have some questions.
Interviewer	Go ahead.
<i>Candidate</i>	I would like to know since when has the client been facing this problem and if this is just restricted to our client or is it a industry wide problem? I would also like to know about the type and usage of the pumps.
Interviewer	We are facing this problem since the past 6 months. This is a client-specific problem. The client manufacturs water pumps. Are you aware about its usage?
<i>Candidate</i>	As far as I know, a water pump can have various uses depending on the sector in which it is used, such as domestic, agriculture, commercial, military etc.
Interviewer	Yes are correct, though there are additional uses. For simplicity, you can stick to these 4 sectors. Let me give you some data and I would like you to calculate our overall market share and sector-specific market share.
<i>Candidate</i>	Calculated the market shares based on the data provided. Asked if the dedining profits was limited to any one specific sector.
Interviewer	The problem is specific to domestic sector.
<i>Candidate</i>	Thanks. I would like to understand the value chain of the industry and where we lie in it.
Interviewer	Okay. So, we are the manufacturers of the pumps. We then sell our products to wholesalers. The pumps reach the customers through retailers. We do not have exclusive contracts with

	these wholesalers and retailers. Even our competition uses the same wholesalers and retailers.
Candidate	Thanks for the information. So I would like to look at revenues and costs and how they have changed in the past 6 months.
Interviewer	The revenues have declined. Costs are pretty much the same.
Candidate	Have we seen a decline in the number of units that we sell?
Interviewer	You are correct.
Candidate	So, the decline in sale could be a result of the decline in supply or a decline in demand.
Interviewer	Supply does not seem to be a problem.
Candidate	Coming to demand, it could be a result of a lack of push from our distributors end or due to lack of customer pull. I would like to look at both these factors and benchmark our process with the competition.
Interviewer	Makes sense. Go ahead with the distributor push issues.
Candidate	Distributors push could be a result of monetary and non-monetary factors, like margins that we provide, the length of contracts, buy-back policies etc.
Interviewer	The margins that our competition provide is better. They revised their margins 6 months back.
Candidate	Better margins to the distributors is a big incentive for the distributors to push the product of our competition. I would like to further analyze why they have revised their margins but we did not. At this point, I would like to look at customer demand for pumps. It will depend on the awareness of the products, prices, quality etc.
Interviewer	Let's look at awareness. The client uses TV commercial as its primary source of advertisement.
Candidate	Has our competition changed its strategy as far as awareness is concerned?
Interviewer	They hired a popular movie star for their TV commercial.
Candidate	Do we have any information to analyze the impact of this new commercial?
Interviewer	Yes, we did conduct a market survey. The new advertisement has been received very well by the customers and have created a positive image of the competitor's product.
Candidate	Okay, so it seems that the advertisement has done the trick. It has led to increased demand for the competitor's product. Because of this increased demand, they are able to provide better margins to the wholesalers.
Interviewer	Okay.
Candidate	Do you want me to look at other factors which could have impacted our profits?
Interviewer	No, that will be all. Thank you!
Candidate	Thanks!

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

(DOs:-

- 1) Ask as many questions as you want to understand the problem.*
- 2) For quant heavy cases, take your time. A wrong calculation can do more harm than a slow calculation.*
- 3) Structure your thoughts well. It is quite possible that you won't reach the end of the case, so solution/recommendations are not that important.*

DONTs

- 1) Don't take too long to respond. (More than 40-45 seconds)*
- 2) Don't be nervous. Cases are very easy compared to what you have practiced.*

Interview Experiences	
Name	Surabhi Agarwal
Interviewing Firm	AT Kearney
Interviewer	Partner, AT Kearney
Under-graduate College	ISM Dhanbad
Stream	Electronics Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	
Firm	Analytics Quotient
Sector	Analytics
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Profit Loss Case</i>
Interviewer	There is a company that provides srvcies for vacation/holiday. It hasn't been making as much revenue as expected. Find out why?
<i>Candidate</i>	Sure. Since hhow long has the company existed? And has there been a dedine in revenues?
Interviewer	Company has existed for the past 4 years and no dedine in revenues, nearly constant but less than industry average.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. Do you want me to look only on the revenue side or the costs side as well?
Interviewer	Only the revenue side.
<i>Candidate</i>	Sure. Do we have information about he geographies we are spread in?
Interviewer	We have offices in 7 major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Ahemdabad, Pune, Kolkata and Bhopal.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. And what are the travel destinations we offer?
Interviewer	Anywhere in India and all the famous destinations in South east Asia and Europe.
<i>Candidate</i>	Great. Do you want me to focus on all the offices or is there any particular office where there has been relatively declining or stagnant growth?
Interviewer	Good question. The problem exists with the numbers of sll the offices. However, looking at possible problems in Ahemdbabad and Hyderabad can help.
<i>Candidate</i>	I think I have enough information to start with. Revenue for a travel company would be number of customers * average income per customers. I would first like to look at the average income per customer. It would depend on the travel destinations, the kind of facilities we are providing and the cost we are charging for those activities. Is our average income per customer less than the industry average?

Interviewer	No
<i>Candidate</i>	So, we have an issue with the number of customers?
Interviewer	Yes.
<i>Candidate</i>	So, with customers we can either have a problem in attracting new customers or in retaining them or both. Do we have any information on whether we are able to retain our customers?
Interviewer	Good insight. We are having problem with both attracting new customers and retaining them.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. So first, I would like to look into attracting new customers. For that I would like to understand the whole process how a customer makes a booking with us starting from who are our target consumers and how do we reach them?
Interviewer	We target the middle class and upper middle class people. And our customers come to our office when they are interested to go for a vacation.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. But how do they come to know about our company?
Interviewer	Mostly banners and posters.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. Where are these posters displayed?
Interviewer	Near the offices.
<i>Candidate</i>	And where are the offices located in the cities. Is it somewhere where the target consumers can be reached.
Interviewer	No, they are located in the residential areas but not of our target consumers.
<i>Candidate</i>	Oh, okay. So this seems one of the problems. Don't we do any digital marketing for reaching the customers?
Interviewer	No, it is just the banners and posters.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay, that means we need to work a lot on ways to reach the proper target segment.
Interviewer	Yes, you can move on to the issues with retaining the customers and then give all your suggestions at once.
<i>Candidate</i>	Sure. For understanding why we are not able to retain customers, I would like to look at the whole customer journey starting from the way they make the booking, the kind of service we provide them during their trip and the post trip experience.
Interviewer	Okay. So once they decide they want to go for a trip, they come to our office. All the bookings are done over there. We provide them both travelling and accommodation services. Based on customer demand, other services are provided.
<i>Candidate</i>	Interesting. Do we provide individual tour packages or group packages or both?
Interviewer	Both
<i>Candidate</i>	Which is our main source of revenue in these two types of packages and is there any one that you would like me to concentrate on?
Interviewer	Our main source of revenue are the group packages and would like to concentrate on that
<i>Candidate</i>	So, is it that the experience that we provide in the group packages isn't satisfactory enough because of lack of individual focus.

Interviewer	That is right. There are people from various cultures in the group and the kind of services like the cuisine they expect is very different and we haven't been able to cater to that.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay, so we should focus on solving this issue as well as our main promotion in this industry is word of mouth and for that we should offer a distinguished and satisfactory experience. Is there something else you would want me to look at?
Interviewer	No. Just summarise the case for me and provide your recommendations.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. We looked at a holiday tour client whose revenue was not at par with the industry. We identified it is neither able to attract new customers nor retain them. For attracting new customers, it should shift its offices to locations where it is more visible, office areas and the residential areas of the target population. Digital marketing can be one means of reaching the target customers. For retaining the customers, individual focus should be maintained. Customized packages to accommodate the various cultures of the country.
Interviewer	Great. Is there anything you want to ask?
<i>Candidate</i>	I just wanted to know whether clients implement the suggestions provided by us and are we get the chance to be involved in the implementation process?
Interviewer	Yes, with some projects you can see the implementation while working on the project itself
<i>Candidate</i>	Guestimate
Interviewer	Do a guestimate for the demand of number of electric vehicles by 2050
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. Which geography should I do it for?
Interviewer	India
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. Give me a minute to structure my thoughts.
Interviewer	Sure
<i>Candidate</i>	There are three aspects I would start with. 1 The number of potential customers for electric car 2. Assumption for the percentage of the potential customer who would shift to electric car 3. Average Frequency of the replacement of the cars
Interviewer	Okay
<i>Candidate</i>	So to start with the potential customers, do we have any information of the range of price for these vehicles around 2050s?
Interviewer	It will vary from around 10 Lakhs to 40 Lakhs
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. So, the income class that will have the capacity and the willingness to buy the electric vehicles will be upper middle class and the rich people.
Interviewer	Yeah. You can move ahead to the assumption of the percentage of potential customers who would shift. On what factors would that depend on?
<i>Candidate</i>	1. Infrastructure for the electric vehicles as in the number of charging stations and the average distance between these stations 2. Push from the government in terms of discount, exchange schemes, etc 3. Ease of use of electric vehicles, facilities compared to the normal petrol/diesel vehicles.
Interviewer	Okay. This is fairly a difficult guestimate but you have mentioned the relevant factors. Is there any question you want to ask?

<i>Candidate</i>	What kind of media and communication project does the company gets as I am particularly interested in that domain
Interviewer	Why are you interested in this domain?
<i>Candidate</i>	I related it with my graduation

Interview Experiences	
Name	Vidhi Mukhija
Interviewing Firm	A.T. Kearney
Interviewer	Siddharth Jain - Principal Consultant
Under-graduate College	V.I.T. University - Vellore
Stream	B.Tech - E.C.E.
Work-experience (Months)	26 months
Firm	Z.S. Associates
Sector	Sales and Marketing Consulting
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	We have tested your case solving skills already. You have done pretty well in buddy cases and your resume is really impressive. Don't take it as a case. Let's just chat on the current client situation I am working at. Your client is a major Indian soap manufacturer who wants to know the impact of their promotional campaigns on the sales of the soap. How would you go about it ?
<i>Candidate</i>	I am assuming our client is a big player and operating PAN India and they want to understand the impact of promotional campaigns to know the ROI and plan for future campaigns. Is there any other reason and What kind of promotional campaigns are we looking at ?
Interviewer	You are right. Client wants to know the effectiveness of their promotions. You can take any Indian soap brand as a proxy and our client uses similar promotional channels.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay then it would be advertisements through mass media (celebrity endorsements etc.), sponsoring events, offers at retail stores like bundling and discounts.
Interviewer	Yes you can consider those and social media promotions.
<i>Candidate</i>	Right. Given my past experience with sales analysis I have a bias to go for regression if we have enough data.
Interviewer	You have monthly sales data for past 5 years. How would you go about it ?
<i>Candidate</i>	In that case the steps would be to understand the data, clarify any doubts we have, generate hypothesis, test data for correlations using scatter plots and then try to form a regression equation. Another important step would be to relate the right data, i.e. at finding the relevant granularity of geography and time period of sales.
Interviewer	Which factors would you consider for testing the impact on sales?
<i>Candidate</i>	Let me take a minute to list down. Took a pause. I will look at different promotional channels, carry-over sales (if we do not do any promotions then also there will be some sales carried over because of past), growth of the industry, competitor sales/market share growth, any

	other economic factors and error term. There could be as many variables added given the industry's internal and external factors, but these would be the primary ones. Also i will cluster similar geographies and to analyze together.
Interviewer	Can you elaborate more on the grography clustering part ?
Candidate	Yes. So there could be one region which has less population than the other, or there are more local player competing in one geography. So the impact of same promotional activity would be different in different geographies. It would be best to do the analysis at lowest granularity and roll-up. But if we have certain geographies which are similar, those can be clustered.
Interviewer	Let's come back to the client situation. I will make it easier for you. Let's say we are looking at only one geography and there is only one type of promotion done, i.e. discounts and we have the sales data available. Which factors you think we should consider ?
Candidate	Alright. We will look at the sales before and during the discount period. The hypothesis would be that when we are giving discounts there would be increase in sales primarily because of two factors, customers switching from competitors and new customers who weren't using soaps earlier.
Interviewer	Any other detail you should have in your hypothesis ?
Candidate	I took a step back and re-iterated crisp of discussion till that point but couldn't come up with anything new.
Interviewer	Think about the soap industry would the consumption increase because of discounts ?
Candidate	Okay. Yeah, there will be people who will buy in bulk and that would affect our sales in future when the discount period is over. So there is a shift in demand on the time axis but the overall consumption would be same per customer. It will definitely increase for us considering the customers switching. In this industry brand loyalty is less and customers would switch back to a compitetor when they offer a lower price.
Interviewer	Let's close the case.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

My interview was based more on my CV as I had done a lot of analytics projects in the past. One thing which eased out the entire process was the fact that the Principal (interviewer) remembered me from both company ppt and formal dinner and we had a good chat eearlier. Also, I had done well in my buddy cases as well as the manager case. So Day 0 was more on grilling my CV. I had another round of interview with a Partner which was mostly HR and fit questions.

Dos : Go with a positive attitude. Don't try to force fit frameworks everywhere. Structuring you thoughts and articulating your ideas is important. Take the hints your interviewer is giving. Ask for time to think whenever required rather than just blabbering every idea which comes in your mind.

Donts : Don't panic. Don't take the interview as your last chance in life. Remember the bigger picture, it will help take off stress and stay confident.

Accenture Strategy

Interview Experiences	
Name	Abhinav Agarwal
Interviewing Firm	Accenture Strategy
Interviewer	Abinil Mukherjee, Vinod Kumar
Under-graduate College	IIT Delhi
Stream	Electrical
Work-experience (Months)	4 years
Firm	PwC, Kiranamanager, Shadowfax
Sector	Consulting, e-commerce, logistics
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Guesstimate</i>
Interviewer	Which subjects do you like the most in IIMC curriculum?
<i>Candidate</i>	Organizational Behavior. I explained the reasons why that is so and how is it important in any business setting
Interviewer	Can I ask you something about product life cycle?
<i>Candidate</i>	Sure.
Interviewer	If your startup has products in the growth phase, how would you ensure that you keep your employees on track and not loose your focus on the core values
<i>Candidate</i>	Gave the answer from my experience with a startup
Interviewer	If your startup is in a dedine phase, how would hold the morale high of your team?
<i>Candidate</i>	Used a few theories to answer this but could not satisfactorily answer
Interviewer	In which phase of the product life cycle do you think the role of a leader is more important?
<i>Candidate</i>	Opted for 'growth' phase and gave the reasons for the same
Interviewer	Which sector would you choose to work for if you join a consulting company?
<i>Candidate</i>	Agriculture, preferably agri-tech
Interviewer	Why would you do that? It is a politically sensitive area and has low attractiveness
<i>Candidate</i>	I explained how it has not been able to receive sufficient attention from the techies around the world and how new technologies like aquaponics and hydroponics promise a better

	future for the sector
Interviewer	You have been hired by Government of India to design a communication method for the farmers, providing them with information on prices, monsoon or anything that you would consider appropriate. How would you do that?
Candidate	Would it be monetized or is a free service?
Interviewer	It is a free service
Candidate	(I started drawing a diagram to list down some of the services that can be provided, method of doing so, etc)
Interviewer	Don't write it, just share whatever ideas you have and try not to repeat
Candidate	I spoke about 5-6 services and various modes like daily SMS, IVRS calls, manned computer facilities in a cluster of villages to provide assistance.
Interviewer	Thank you. Do you have any questions about Accenture?
Candidate	Asked about the assigning of candidates to IB and CN teams. Also the projects that Accenture is working on in agri-tech space

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

I did not get any case where a standard framework had to be applied. I think I answered the questions with a good reasoning and kept calm. I had another HR round after this and a partner call too. They asked me things like my career plan, some of my weaknesses, etc.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Chitransh Agrawal
Interviewing Firm	Accenture Strategy
Interviewer	
Under-graduate College	BITS Pilani
Stream	Civil Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	3 yrs.
Firm	Capgemini, Tesco
Sector	Consulting, Analytics
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	Tell me about yourself --->>> how come you worked in this sector?
<i>Candidate</i>	Talked about internships leading to interest in the field.
Interviewer	Elaborate on a project mentioned in the CV, how did you get the leadership to agree for the change in offering?
<i>Candidate</i>	Explained
Interviewer	Suppose our client is in organized retail domain, how will you identify opportunities to implement digital strategy?
<i>Candidate</i>	Basically told examples from different stages in value chain and then was able to identify that primarily the link is that these tasks were repetitive in nature.
Interviewer	Tell me about a time when you showed leadership qualities?
<i>Candidate</i>	Told something from personals prep.
Interviewer	What other consulting calls do you have? ----->> Why not?
<i>Candidate</i>	Told whatever I believed to be the reason. Talked a little about my weaknesses here.
Interviewer	A few more questions about projects mentioned on CV, whatever caught his eye (workex only).
<i>Candidate</i>	Simply elaborated using CAR framework (roughly)
Interviewer	How do you think you did in your previous interview?
<i>Candidate</i>	I think it was fine. Could have been better.

Interviewer	Okay, tell me about yourself. (remained silent probably hinting me to tell more)
<i>Candidate</i>	Told the long version from the personals prep. Nothing fancy simple education background, work ex. and hobbies etc.
Interviewer	Tell me about demonetization and your opinion about the issue.
<i>Candidate</i>	Told facts and remained unbiased.
Interviewer	Asked specifically about my 'opinion' about shortcomings of the same, and how to resolve it.
<i>Candidate</i>	Something about using the PAN data and analytics on anomaly detection (quoted example from workex). Few other generic ideas.
Interviewer	Guesstimate (Number of cigarettes smoked in India), did not let me do it on paper, told me to just tell the approach.
<i>Candidate</i>	Told everything to his satisfaction except for one. Took 10-15 seconds to point out the assumption that men will smoke more than women.
Interviewer	You forgot that easy assumption. (smiled)
<i>Candidate</i>	Casual apology.
Interviewer	I don't think you will be a good fit in a consulting role. I don't see the passion.
<i>Candidate</i>	Put up an argument about analytical abilities, tangible results and client satisfaction in previous roles.
Interviewer	Tell me three things that are different from others. And stark differences please.
<i>Candidate</i>	Answered with a few qualities I truly believed were different about myself.
Interviewer	Seemed partially convinced. If I tell you lack of passion is your weakness, how will you try and fix that?
<i>Candidate</i>	Talked about how I thought passion was overrated and maybe I will change that thought process to start with. Will try to have people around me who are passionate about similar things.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Jayaditya Sirasani
Interviewing Firm	Accenture Strategy
Interviewer	Multiple Rounds(6-7 with a telephonic MD round)
Under-graduate College	Indian Institute of Technology(Benaras Hindu University)
Stream	Electrical Engineering
Work-experience (Months)	22 Months
Firm	Cisco Systems Inc.
Sector	Information Technology(Computer Networks)
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	I see that you've directed a short-film in your college days. Been a member of an international organization, head of marketing for a departmental fest, joined Cisco, helped client averts losses of millions of dollars. So tell me are you Superman or are you lying ?
<i>Candidate</i>	Everything on the CV is the complete truth so I'm definitely not lying, but I don't think doing them makes one a Superman.
Interviewer	I've directed a short-film myself, it was screened at the Sundance Film Festival.
<i>Candidate</i>	Wow, that great. What was your film about ?
Interviewer	You've heard of Sundance ? So tell me what was your short-film about ?
<i>Candidate</i>	Mine was a formulaic romantic comedy of a guy in a college.
Interviewer	Okay. Let's get into the interview, give me an estimate of the yearly attendance to the Eye of London.
<i>Candidate</i>	So I just want to clarify, the Eye of London is the Ferris Wheel in London beside Thames
Interviewer	Yes, let move this fast, there are 10 boxes which can fit 10 people and it takes 1 hr for the ride to be completed and they're open for 10 hrs.
<i>Candidate</i>	Okay. So that just leaves us with the occupancy %age for each box. I'm assuming they're open 52 weeks, 7 days a week.
Interviewer	Sure, that seems like a fair assumption. So just give me the structure in a formula, you don't have to do the calculations.
<i>Candidate</i>	Sure, so I'd like to divide this up into weekdays and weekends. And then the 10 hours into peak and non-peak hours with more peak hours during weekends.
Interviewer	Why do you think peak hours are higher in weekends ?

Candidate	During the weekends, the local population would also be coming to visit, while the weekdays would have more tourists.
Interviewer	Fair enough.
Candidate	Oh also, I've made a mistake in the calculations I need to multiply the weekend figure by 5 and weekend figure by 2. (5 weekdays and 2 weekends)
Interviewer	Good, I was gonna point it out. Tell me how you'd handle seasonality variation ?
Candidate	Instead of putting it into 52 weeks, I can divide it in 12months*4.33 weeks per month. And for each month I can add a seasonality factor out of 1.
Interviewer	Okay. So what are the factors you would price the tickets on ?
Candidate	Supply and Demand. If the demand is low like during the winter months I'd reduce the price to improve the sales. And I'll look at my supply costs, like if they're higher in Winter or if electricity rates are varying.
Interviewer	No I don't think you understood, I mean if you're pricing differentially what factors would you base it on ?
Candidate	Oh okay, in that case I can look into different prices for locals vs tourists. I'd do this because I'm assuming the local demand doesn't have much variation compared to tourists.
Interviewer	Are there any other ?
Candidate	There might be but I'm not able to come up with in such a short time.
Interviewer	Sure, so we can price them differently for children vs adults; lower prices for someone doing advanced booking; lower prices if they're buying in bulk.
Candidate	Yes, we can do that but bulk discounts might lead to arbitrage and London Eye is a world-famous location, doing bulk discounts might hurt their premium brand value.
Interviewer	Yes, that could be a possible side-effect. So tell me about yourself.
Candidate	*Talked about school, college, work experience*
Interviewer	So why did you leave Cisco, it's a great name in it's field. I'm sure they paid well enough.
Candidate	Yes, it was a great place but I didn't want to be limited to just technical consulting. I want to be more generalist which is why I think consulting is the perfect place for me.
Interviewer	Great. I think that's it we'll let you know.
Candidate	
Interviewer	I'm looking at the comments from the previous interview. So tell me what were the things you had discussed there?
Candidate	*Reiterated the whole thing.*
Interviewer	So do you remember the factors he had mentioned in the end ?
Candidate	Yes, they were age, advance booking and bulk discounts.
Interviewer	Tell me something about your background.
Candidate	*Gave the same answer as the last interview. Told him I was from Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh.

Interviewer	Okay. So tell me something about your job what exactly is the job of a Network Consultant.
<i>Candidate</i>	*Explained how technical consulting works. Explained my department and the organizational structure.*
Interviewer	*Tried to build a market estimation case for networking devices for the upcoming capital city of Andhra Pradesh.*
<i>Candidate</i>	It's not a simple estimation case as it's a B2B domain, so we'll have to take into account the future growth model of population and infrastructure demand. Tried to give a basic structure.
Interviewer	I guess it's too complicated to be solved now. That would be it for now. Thank you.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Do not try to rush into the answer. Ask questions before giving the structure Better to clarify things instead of solving the wrong problem. Also keep asking if they're okay with your assumptions and structure. They're looking for a personality and will ask questions which will throw you off-balance. The way handle criticism/accusation and how you perform the case analysis is what they're looking for. Also any CV points can be probed, be prepared with a minute of talking points for each line.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Komal Agarwal
Interviewing Firm	Accenture Strategy
Interviewer	
Under-graduate College	IIT Guwahati
Stream	CSE
Work-experience (Months)	3 years
Firm	Samsung R&D bangalore
Sector	Health Sector (Technology)
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	First few intro questions and their general answers. Do you follow any specific industry?
<i>Candidate</i>	Frankly, I had no idea about any industry at that point in time. Neither had I mastered in any one of them. But I had to answer one. So I answered Health industry because I had work-ex in that domain where I thought I would be able to answer few of the questions.
Interviewer	He asked me about the health industry which I wasn't aware of as I was working in the technical side of the Health industry. Then he asked me to come up with an analysis of a diabetic patient and what will you recommend to him.
<i>Candidate</i>	At first, I didn't understand that he is asking me a case whichs need to have some specific framework. I thought it was a general question so was not following any specific framework. Then he asked me to follow some structure as I lack one. After that, I gave a structure to the question from analyzing whether a patient is a diabetic or a potential diabetic patient. Whether there is any evidence of the hereditary.
Interviewer	Conside patient is suffering from diabetic.
<i>Candidate</i>	Gave the structure related to patient's food habits, medication and his glucose level etc.
Interviewer	He was convinced with my approach and my overall understanding about how to go about undertanding the regime of a diabetic patient. Finally he asked me to condude and the recommendation which you can give to them.
<i>Candidate</i>	Gave recommendation regarding what should be the schedule of a diabetic patient. Smartly understand his medication schedule and give an alert message whether he missed on his medication. Recommendation about his work out habits etc. I also mentioned how we need to take care about not giving the wrong information to the patient as in health industry it involves a lot of legal as well as medical assurance before giving any recommendation to any patients.

Interviewer	He asked few repetitive question as that of Round 1. Then he asked me whether I will be able to make applications for proof of concept.
<i>Candidate</i>	I had done this before for which I confidently answered yes. I felt they were looking for a manager who is a developer where a manager need not wait for a developer to convince the client about the proof of concept and a task can be done without involving the third party.
Interviewer	Then he asked me what the future potential scope for health app was.
<i>Candidate</i>	I could answer this very well as I had worked in the proof of concept and research field before where I had to research the potential field where health sector can venture into.
Interviewer	
<i>Candidate</i>	Case: I have a smartwatch having the best feature available but its sale is very less. I have to convince the interviewer what could be the probable reason why the sale is so low and what can be done to bring up the sale. Should we even go with the sale of the smartwatch or call off the same.
Interviewer	I tried convincing them with all the probable reason about what could be reason for low sale where I targeted the female customers which consisted about majority of the section of our society where the sale depends mostly on fashion (Psychological factors) rather than on technology. Somehow I was able to convince them though not completely.
<i>Candidate</i>	After which the discussion went on Accenture strategy where they specifically grilled me on the fact that I was sitting there for the strategy role and not for the technology role. They mentioned 3 times that there is another branch of technology where you would be willing to work more than this branch. They asked me to specifically mention what is written in the JD and what does strategy mean.
Interviewer	I was somehow able to convince them that I can work in this domain as well. *Went for about an hour.
Interviewer	MD interview where he asked me about my intro and my international work experience.
<i>Candidate</i>	A well-prepared answer where I had to mostly talk about my international learnings and work experience. He didn't ask many questions (Went around for half an hour)

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

First two rounds were basic screening round conducted by their associate managers where they would select the candidates whom they would like not to reject.

3rd round was the stress round conducted by the main panel who especially came for recruitment (HR and the main managers) to understand whether you can handle the stress or not.

4th round is the MD round. If you are called for the MD round where the rejection rate is close to zero.

Be thorough with the JD and the role for which they are recruiting. Have a thorough understanding of at least one industry (better if it is related to your work ex). An edge if you have an international work ex as you can lead your interview towards that direction.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Meghabarna Das
Interviewing Firm	Accenture Strategy
Interviewer	
Under-graduate College	IIT Madras
Stream	Electrical Engineering (DD)
Work-experience (Months)	
Firm	Eaton Corporation
Sector	Energy Solutions, IoT, Digital Transformation
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	Asked questions related to CV, work experience and personal background
<i>Candidate</i>	Read out the case statement - Summary : a retail bank in northern India wants to launch a digital banking system. How should it go about it?
Interviewer	Asked clarifying questions regarding current size, locations, no of branches
<i>Candidate</i>	Answered relevant data
Interviewer	Calculated current spread of operations. Asked whether to approach based on consumer segments or location
<i>Candidate</i>	Go ahead with with consumer segments
Interviewer	Based on three tiers of cities, assumed different segments and customers
<i>Candidate</i>	Approved the same. Gave relevant numbers for each segment
Interviewer	Estimated the size of each segment. Asked about potential revenues from each segment
<i>Candidate</i>	Provided relevant numbers
Interviewer	Estimated the profitability of each segment, and suggested which customer segment to target first, as a result
<i>Candidate</i>	Agreed with the answer, and asked what possible solutions could I suggest
Interviewer	Gave two options based on the relevant segment
<i>Candidate</i>	Any other questions?
Interviewer	Asked her two questions

Candidate	Answered them in detail, and seemed to be ok with the overall interview. (She was supportive throughout)
Interviewer	
Candidate	Asked a few questions about my work experience, my time at IIT Madras, about my CGPA and progress over semesters. He had a friendly approach and was impressed by my composed and honest answers. I was relaxed the whole time, which helped in building a positive image throughout the interview.
Interviewer	The profitability of a bank is going down in the past few years. What could be the problem?
Candidate	Asked questions regarding the size, location and current customers of the bank.
Interviewer	Gave relevant data.
Candidate	Estimated size and asked further questions regarding customer segments
Interviewer	Expansion in recent years - gave data
Candidate	Calculated sizes of customer segments across geographies prior and post expansion
Interviewer	Approved, and asked to further think
Candidate	Asked about the type of solutions offered, asked for relevant data and did calculations based on that. Standard offering was not viable post expansion, and led to declining profits.
Interviewer	Two partners of the firm took the interview. It was a general interview where they asked questions about my CV and my projects related to IoT and digital transformation during my work-ex period. They further asked futuristic ideas which can bring about positive macroeconomic impacts. They also asked what kind of career do I expect in Accenture, and what is it that I'm expecting to gain out of it.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

1. Be very thorough about the firm - its structure, nature of projects and associations.
2. Stay calm and composed. Adopt a friendly approach; portray to be at ease even when under stress.
3. Be very thorough with personals, as they delve deep into it.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Meghana Duvvuri
Interviewing Firm	Accenture Strategy
Interviewer	
Under-graduate College	NIT Trichy
Stream	Computer Science
Work-experience (Months)	
Firm	Samsung R&D
Sector	
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	Telecommunication
Interviewer	Would you like to do a case first or talk about your CV?
<i>Candidate</i>	I would like to do the case first
Interviewer	Okay, I want you to estimate the price of a ride on the Big Ben. (He explained what Big Ben was, a giant wheel-like structure in London)
<i>Candidate</i>	I first estimated the cost of maintaining the ride and then the average prices of attractions in London(I assumed a ballpark figure after confirming with the interviewer). I also estimated the average number of customers during a typical day and was able to come up with the answer. He seemed more interested in the approach than the final figure.
Interviewer	This is good, now I want you to tell me what could affect the prices of the ticket.
<i>Candidate</i>	I gave three factors, the age of the customers, the seasonality of demand and in case of bulk bookings
Interviewer	That's good, now what else could affect the ticket prices? Think along the lines of flight tickets.
<i>Candidate</i>	I said that pre-booking the ticket could be offered at a lower price.
Interviewer	That's it with the case, he then looked over my CV and said that it was hard to believe that I could have done everything in there
<i>Candidate</i>	I said that I was always organized and even as a kid would manage my time between playing, studying and reading books and this habit stuck on throughout my life.
Interviewer	Why do you want to join Accenture?
<i>Candidate</i>	I explained how the reason to do an MBA was because I thought technology could be used to make our lives much easier than it already is and I wanted to make it more accessible to everyone. And Accenture does that providing the complete package, providing the strategy and also implementing the same.

Interviewer	No further questions, thank you.
Interviewer	(He had a brief discussion with the previous interviewer and also went through the guesstimate I had done). He started by asking me to tell me about myself.
Candidate	I gave a 30-second answer.
Interviewer	What is your biggest failure?
Candidate	I gave an example of a situation at work
Interviewer	What is your biggest personal failure?
Candidate	(I had an answer prepared but I asked for a minute to think because he said it was a tough question) I gave an answer and he said that I had answered well.
Interviewer	He then explained the different sectors that Accenture was hiring for asked me what I would choose
Candidate	Initially I said I was open to any sector, but on being pushed I said I would like to work in the Median domain on a whim.
Interviewer	He asked why
Candidate	I explained about it was a growing industry and also something I had no experience in so I thought that it would be a great learning opportunity
Interviewer	He asked me what kind of problems I thought there would be
Candidate	I gave a few examples and he picked up on the one on hotstar and asked me what their marketing strategy was
	Luckily I had attended the STAR ppt where they had explained the same so I rattled it off from memory while adding my own spin to it
Interviewer	He then asked me why I wanted to do consulting when he thought I would be great at marketing
Candidate	It took some convincing from my side he was satisfied with my answer.

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

My interviews did not involve a single case and only one guesstimate. While they made the offer they told me that they liked my confidence and positive body language. It's important to smile and not be flustered even when things don't well.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Prateek Bansal
Interviewing Firm	Accenture Strategy
Interviewer	
Under-graduate College	DTU, Delhi
Stream	B. Tech, ECE
Work-experience (Months)	33 Months
Firm	Airtel, Design Domain Corporation(Entrepreneurial Venture)
Sector	Telecom, Home Interiors
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
	<i>Guesstimate</i>
Interviewer	Walk me through your profile.
<i>Candidate</i>	You want details mentioned in CV or something not there?
Interviewer	Both
<i>Candidate</i>	Gives a quick 1-2 minute answer
Interviewer	It did not have anything which is not on CV.
<i>Candidate</i>	repeated the points to highlight them.
Interviewer	Lets do a quick guesstimate in your sector itself. What would be the total 4G revenue in 2020. take your time to think.
<i>Candidate</i>	a few basic questions on the assumptions to take, region to consider, of a particular player or all companies combined.
Interviewer	PAN India, all users combined
<i>Candidate</i>	thinking and then starts to write down explaining to the interviewer, we can do by taking current 4G revenues and then taking an expected growth rates of telecom, internet and handset penetration, inflation, and we can find it
Interviewer	Jot down 4-5 different methods to calculate this revenue (interviewer stopped me from doing any calculation or even taking numbers, just wanted to know the components I'll consider)
<i>Candidate</i>	could think of only 2 more ways there.
Interviewer	That's all, Next guesstimate, find the number of new mobiles bought in India every year.
<i>Candidate</i>	Basic questions on smartphone or any phone, any specific location.

Interviewer	Smartphones, whole India. Share 3-4 methods
<i>Candidate</i>	Method 1 - calculate from supplier side, phones brought = phones sold
Interviewer	He asked me to go into more details, break up into various factors.
<i>Candidate</i>	Split into rural, urban, first time purchases/replacements/extra handset
Interviewer	That'll be all.
<i>Candidate</i>	You have decent case skills, lets talk about the vertical you want to join.
Interviewer	Mentioning telecom or Media based on interest and past experience. However I am open to experience other fields since I have little knowledge about them.
<i>Candidate</i>	But these are dying fields. I am from telecom myself and would not want to stay in it.
Interviewer	But sir, it is evolving rapidly, I am it is the future.
<i>Candidate</i>	Yes, but more as a commodity, very little genuine work. You should go for insurance industry (based on my actuarial course)
Interviewer	I am open to all the industries, I was telling you from my first instinct only.
<i>Candidate</i>	(Rest of the interview was based on how he tried to convince me to join Insurance field in Accenture)

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

Be confident, try to give as many as possible ways to solutions, they are looking at the breadth of possibility and an open mind. They are not looking for numerical values. They want analytical mind, keen to learn. If they tell something and you genuinely feel is right, accept the mistake and incorporate in the next question, I was given opportunity to fix my mistake.

Interview Experiences	
Name	Shefali Agrawal
Interviewing Firm	Accenture Strategy
Interviewer	
Under-graduate College	NIT Surat
Stream	Electronics & Communication engineering
Work-experience (Months)	13 months
Firm	Mu sigma Business solutions Pvt Ltd
Sector	Analytics
Preliminary/ Personal Questions	
Round 1	
Interviewer	Friendly conversation initially. Tell me what you did in your company
<i>Candidate</i>	Told him about the two project that I did. One on Insurance, other on retail
Interviewer	Told me he was from insurance as well. Asked me what I did in the project. How could you improve it further. How did it help the client
<i>Candidate</i>	Told him about the recommendations we gave to the client. I basically had to detect the fraudulent claims in the insurance project. SO told him how my team did that, how we could have improved the efficiency of the claims handling team by developing fraud detection mechanism. What factors could possibly be taken into consideration while developing the mechanism, etc
Interviewer	Gave a market entry case of a telecom provider entering in Gujarat for the first time and estimate the customers
<i>Candidate</i>	Explained through market entry framework. For estimation, calculated approx no of mobile phone users by taking into consideration factors like penetration, no. of users already using some other network willing to switch to a new network, etc
Interviewer	Asked about the recent trends in retail industry and my opinion on it
<i>Candidate</i>	Told him about omnichannel retailing, technology like Augmented reality (gave example of some companies like Tesco who are using it), Boutique + Café trend, Amazon go, Walmart's "scan & go" app. Explained how brick & mortar stores can make customer journey better by offering a smooth experience, reducing checkout time, inventory forecasting, etc. Had a

	pretty chill discussion on these topics
Interviewer	Thanked and asked me to wait outside for another round
<i>Candidate</i>	
Interviewer	Greeted well and asked how was the previous interview. Tell me about yourself
<i>Candidate</i>	
Interviewer	Guesstimate the revenue of London Eye (Ferris Wheel)
<i>Candidate</i>	Asked him basic Qs like per annum, how are seats arranged in London Eye, if I can assume ticket price on my own for people across ages
Interviewer	Mentioned that there are say 20 cabins in London eye, each cabin having a capacity of 5 people. Told to assume ticket price to be 100. He wanted to see the approach and what all factors to consider while calculating ticket prices
<i>Candidate</i>	Tried telling him step by step approach with calculations taking into consideration factors like weekends, public holidays, festive seasons, a day off for maintenance, ticket prices for children, adults, etc.
Interviewer	Some other factors that you can think of that can affect London Eye's revenue ?
<i>Candidate</i>	Location (whether it is located at a far off place or in the city), other public attractions nearby like movie theatres, museums, parks, etc because people quite often come out to visit several places of attraction at once, F&B facilities inside the park where London eye is located, other infra facilities like parking etc
Interviewer	What suggestions can you give to the London eye in the context of ticket pricing ?
<i>Candidate</i>	They can keep promotional offers timely, raise ticket prices on festive seasons, form ticket packages (eg. science city offers packages for the no. of activities), also based on number of people coming together, say for ex. They can keep an offer for 10+ people coming as a group
Interviewer	Ok thank you. You can wait outside for further communication
<i>Candidate</i>	
Interviewer	Greeted warmly. How were the other 2 rounds. Asked about my hostel, recent changes in Joka (He was an alum), about how Mohan da was doing, etc
<i>Candidate</i>	Had a friendly interaction
Interviewer	Asked about the projects I did in my company and the marketing internship at IIM Ahmedabad. What difference did you feel in IIMA & IIMC. What can IIMC do to improve its ranking
<i>Candidate</i>	Answered. Regarding IIMA & IIMC, I mentioned how the Incubation centre of IIMA (CIIE) stands out for me and why I think it is renowned, what can C do in similar ground, etc
Interviewer	Tell me what is going on in the Insurance industry
<i>Candidate</i>	Explained about recent news that I read and recollected for Insurance industry, mentioned about the players who are performing well and others who are struggling, government insurance policies, crop insurance etc.
Interviewer	How lucrative is Insurance industry in general? Tell me in the context of Porter's five forces if

	you know what it is
Candidate	I read about the Porter's five forces during prep so was able to answer it
Interviewer	What does an Underwriter do ?
Candidate	Explained the primary work of an underwriter
Interviewer	Last question. Tell me 3 things about you that will leave an ever lasting impression of you in my mind
Candidate	This was sudden and came as a surprise (because I had just been discussing cases, guesstimates and insurance all this while). But I asked for some time, thought about it for 2-3 minutes and answered
Interviewer	Thank you. It was nice talking to you. We will communicate the results to you shortly

DOs and DONTs/Important Tips

~ Be friendly and confident. These are the most important thing that they are looking for. They want people who can be the face of the company in front of their clients

~ Admit if you have made a mistake. Don't be adamant. They won't like if you keep arguing with them after they have stated that you are wrong. Admit and acknowledge that you missed the point and it was good to know it from them

~ Know in and out about the sectors you have worked in. Recent trends, improvements that you can suggest, how is the industry performing, major players, key competencies of the players, technology trends, future of the industry, etc

~ Be prepared with basic frameworks like profitability, market entry, value chain, porter's five forces to analyze the industry, etc