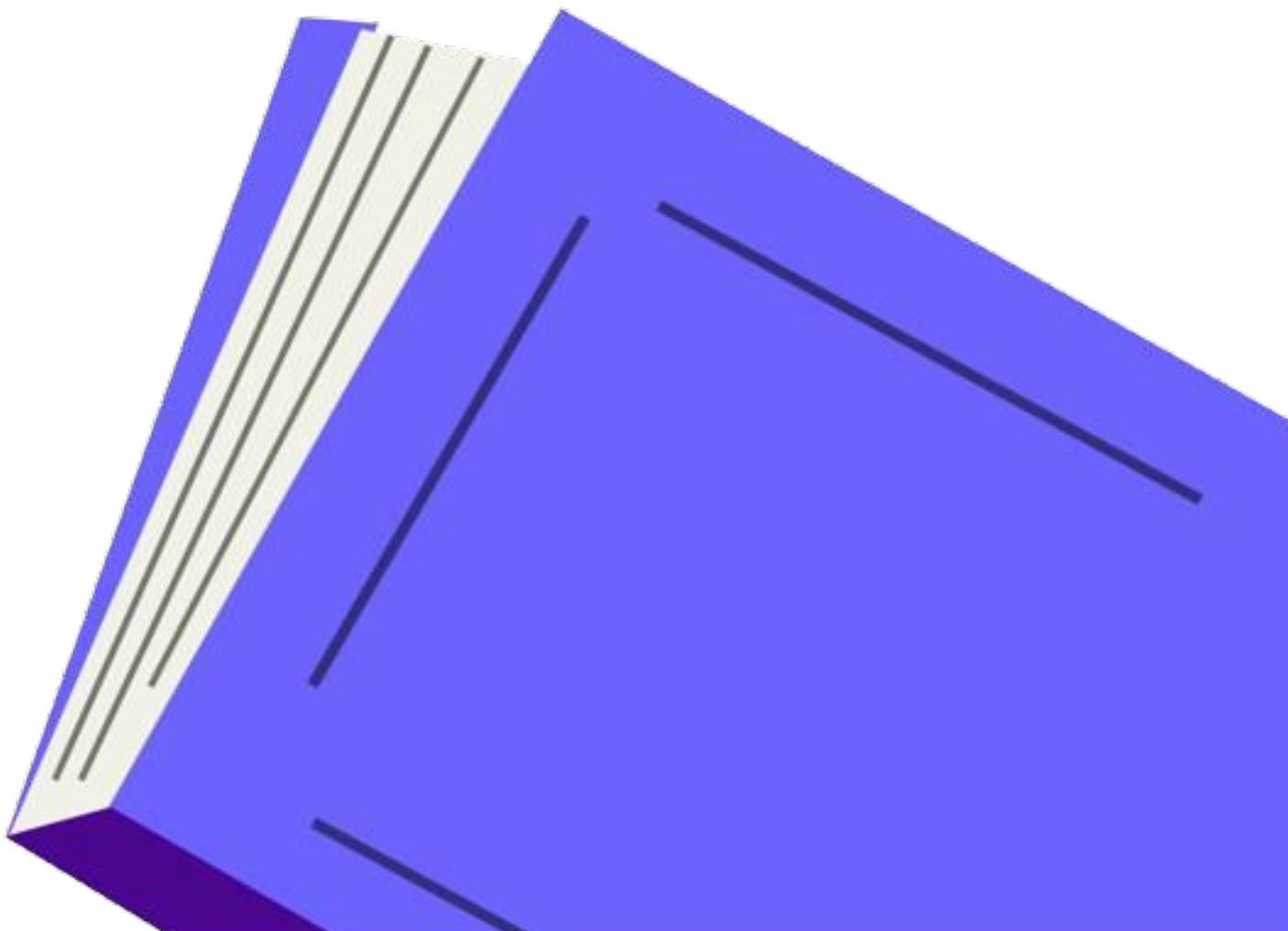


INTERVIEW GUIDE

The Ultimate Interview Casebook



CONTENT

- **Standard Chartered**

- CV Overview and Project Discussion
- Problem-Solving Round
- HR Round

- **HiLabs**

- Round 1
- Round 2
- Round 3
- General Tips

- **Media.Net**

- Round 0: Online Assesment
- Round 1
- Round 2
- Interview Tips

- **TATA 1MG**

- Pre-interview
- Round 1
- Round 2
- Round 3

- **GROWW**

- Introduction And Guesstimate
- Problem-Solving and Case Discussion
- Analytical and RCA-Based Discussion
- Tips and Recommendations

STANDARD CHARTERED

-By Soham Parundekar

Standard Chartered

Hey guys, I hope you're having a great preparation time for your placement season. To encourage and help you further, I Soham Parundekar, a graduate of the EEE department batch 24 from IIT Guwahati, and I would like to share with u my interview experience. I had the opportunity to interview with Standard Chartered last year during my placement season, and I am here to help you guys by sharing my experience.

Spoiler Alert: It was a super interesting process, and I picked up some valuable lessons along the way, which I will share as we proceed.

Round 1: CV Overview and Project Discussion

It was a 40-minute interview that started with my resume, where the interviewer focused heavily on my machine learning (ML) projects. It's important to know the ins and outs of your projects – what you did, the concepts you applied, and how they worked in practice. They'll dig deeper into your thought process here.

Data Structures and Algorithms (DSA)

For DSA, they didn't ask me to code but just wanted to understand my approach to the problem. They were more interested in the thought process behind Dynamic Programming (DP) and how I would use it to solve certain problems. So, keep your concepts clear and be ready to explain how DP fits into the big picture.

Structured Query Language

Similar to DSA, no actual SQL queries were asked; the primary focus was on the approach. I was tested on my knowledge of SQL clauses and joins. If you have the fundamentals down (like what joins are and how they work), you should be fine. It's all about showcasing a solid understanding rather than writing queries on the spot.

Tips: To practice more on SQL, check out [50 leetcode SQL questions](#).

Puzzles, Probability, and Math

Lastly, there were a few brain teasers, probability questions, and some quick math problems. Nothing too complex, but you need to be able to think on your feet and reason logically.

Round 2: Problem-Solving Round

This one-hour round was more of a real-world problem-solving discussion with a senior employee. The goal was to evaluate how you think and approach different kinds of challenges.

Case 1: Loaning to Students

The first 30 minutes were spent on a problem where the scenario was: a bank wants to loan out to students. They asked what information I would gather and how I would analyze that data. It's important to keep your logic structured and organized. I also tried to bring in ML concepts where possible to show how data-driven insights could improve the process.

Case 2: Pre-ordering for Westside

For the next 30 minutes, we shifted gears to retail. The situation was: you're a manager at Westside, and you need to pre-order stock for the next year. The approach was similar to the first case — collect data, analyze trends, and predict future demand. Again, having a structured, logical approach is key, and incorporating things like predictive modeling or past data trends can help boost your answers.

Round 3: HR Round

This was a super 5-minute quick round where HR asked about my background, plans, and general career goals. It was more about making sure I was the right cultural fit for the company. Keep your answers honest and show enthusiasm for the role and the company.

Key Takeaways:

- Know your ML projects inside and out.
- For DSA and SQL, focus more on explaining the approach rather than actual coding or querying.
- Be ready to handle puzzles and probability questions logically.
- In problem-solving rounds, always have a structured approach
- The HR round is quick; just be yourself and be clear about why you want the role.

That's about it based on my experience with Standard Chartered. Hope this helps, and good luck to everyone preparing for interviews

HiLABS

-By Mansi Gunwat

HiLabs

Hey everyone! Mansi Gunwat this side, I am a graduate of IIT Guwahati batch'24 and recently got placed as Associate Product Manager at Hi-Labs. In this article, I will be sharing the interview process at HiLabs. It was a mix of technical deep dives, project discussions, and personal questions, so here's how it went:

Round 1:

Duration: 40 mins

Interviewer: Associate Product Manager (2022 batch)

The first round started with the interviewer asking me to introduce myself. We quickly got into the core of the conversation, and he asked me to pick an internship where I felt I learned the most. Since this was a product interview, I talked about one of my PM/Analyst internships, where I worked on a feature implementation that was both challenging and insightful. He followed up with some cross-questions, digging into the features I'd implemented. It wasn't too difficult since I'd spent time understanding the work thoroughly, so answering his questions felt natural.

Then, we moved to discuss the deck I'd submitted earlier. He asked me to walk him through it in detail, and thankfully, I was allowed to open it on my laptop. Since my solution involved blockchain, he tested my theoretical knowledge of blockchain tech. At one point, he offered feedback, pointing out a part of my solution that he thought wouldn't be feasible in a real-world application. It was constructive feedback, and I didn't let it discourage me; in fact, it gave me insight into practical constraints, which was valuable.

The conversation then veered toward my resume. He noticed I didn't have many Data Science projects listed and asked if I would be comfortable working with Data Science teams. I took this as an opportunity to explain my experience with the C&A Analytics Module (through projects like Summer Analytics and Techevince) to demonstrate my familiarity with analytics.

Data Science Questions:

He asked me a few foundational questions on Data Science:

- Classification Matrix: I explained the basics and its purpose.
- Bias-Variance Trade-Off: I discussed how it impacts model accuracy and generalization.
- Supervised Learning: Gave an example and explained how it works.
- Linear & Logistic Regression: Shared quick examples of both.

Then came a guesstimate question: "Estimate the number of tea cups sold on campus in a day." He wanted to see my thought process, so I walked him through my approach and calculations. I made sure to do a quick sanity check to confirm my estimate was reasonable.

Toward the end, he asked me to share my screen, then dictated a schema with employee details (ID, name, salary, etc.). My task was to write a query to find the name of the employee with the third-highest salary. I typed it out and explained my logic, though he didn't ask me to run it.

Round 2:

Duration: 25-30 mins

Interviewer: Senior Product Manager

Round two was more relaxed, and it felt like a friendly chat. After the introductions and a brief resume walkthrough, we focused on my experience as a PM intern. He asked me to elaborate on the projects I'd handled there.

The main part of this round involved two cases:

1. How to improve the security of healthcare data: I shared some ideas, focusing on access control and data encryption methods.

2. Designing a food delivery app for Amazon: He wanted me to create a basic product design and suggest a go-to-market (GTM) strategy. I aimed for simplicity, discussing the app's core features, user flow, and ideas on positioning it for Amazon's customer base.

Before wrapping up, he asked how the interview experience had been so far and if I had any questions. It was a really comfortable round that left me feeling more confident.

Round 3:

Duration: 35 mins

Interviewer: Senior VP of Strategy and Growth

The final round had a formal tone since I was speaking with the Senior VP. After introductions, he took me through my resume with a fine-tooth comb. He asked me to go into detail about my PM internship and pointed out specific metrics I'd included. He wanted to make sure I could justify every number or impact figure, so I was glad I'd prepared these answers in advance.

He then shifted to my KPMG internship. His questions were insightful; he asked if I'd seen any of my recommendations implemented and what I felt was my value-add during that tenure. Next, we discussed my role as Secretary of the Consulting & Analytics Club, where he wanted to understand my contributions and leadership approach.

The case question in this round was interesting and specific to HiLabs' work. He asked: "HiLabs' primary customers are 'Health Plans', and we often rely on them for patient data. However, some data points are extremely sensitive and can't be shared. As a PM, how would you substitute for this data alternately?" I shared some ideas, discussing possible data partnerships, anonymized data collection, and leveraging predictive analytics to bridge data gaps.

He ended with a couple of personal questions: why I was interested in product management and, specifically, why HiLabs. I shared my motivations and excitement for the role. Finally, he asked if I had any questions for him, which led to an insightful conversation about HiLab's future direction.

General Tips:

Looking back, here are some key takeaways:

- **PM Experience Matters:** Having a PM internship on your resume is invaluable for these roles.
- **Be Confident and Clear:** How you speak can make a huge difference. A confident, calm tone goes a long way.
- **Prepare Your Deck and Tech:** If you've included a technical solution, be ready to explain it thoroughly.
- **Ask Questions:** Always clarify when needed and engage with the interviewer.

Overall, it was an insightful and rewarding experience!

MEDIA.NET

-By Advaith Krishna A

Media.Net

I'm Advaith Krishna A (B.Tech in Chemical Science and Technology, Class of 2024), currently working as a Senior Product Analyst at Media.net. Today, I'd like to share my interview experience to assist you in your placement preparation journey.

My interview was divided into 3 major rounds:

Round 0: Online Assessment

This round included six sections: SQL, Quantitative Aptitude, Logical Reasoning, Data Interpretation, Verbal Aptitude, and General Coding. Each section had 6 to 8 questions.

Tip: The SQL questions were similar to those found on InterviewBit and LeetCode (SQL50).

Round 1

The interviewer was friendly and made sure I was comfortable. The interview was divided into four major segments:

Internship Experience Questions:

- Discussed the project I worked on, explaining the problem statement and our solution.
- Evaluated the metrics I used to validate the proposed solution.
- Addressed the most challenging aspect I encountered during the project.
- Answered questions related to Inter-IIT projects I had been involved with.

Guesstimate:

- Estimated the number of Zomato orders placed weekly in Guwahati.

SQL Questions:

- Tackled easy to medium-level SQL questions:
- Basic SELECT and AGGREGATE FUNCTIONS
- Usage of INNER JOIN
- Advanced SELECT techniques
- Solved a puzzle similar to those on GeeksforGeeks (GFG).

Root Cause Analysis (RCA):

- Analyzed the reason for a gradual 20% decline in Amazon orders over two weeks during the end of 2022.
- After posing clarifying questions and my suggested approach, I was asked to focus on the user journey.
- Determined the root cause: RBI's implementation of card tokenization.
- Presented a conversion funnel to pinpoint the root cause.

In the end, she asked if I had any questions. I asked about how newer technologies were being used at Media.net

Tips: If you don't have any questions in mind, ask about giving advice to you as a fresher.

Round 2

This round was with a Director and lasted one hour. It felt more like a stress test.

- He asked me questions based on recommendation systems, using Hotstar as an example. I was tasked with finding parameters used to construct a decision tree.
- The job offer was extended within 20–30 minutes post-interview.

Interview Tips

- Be as confident as you can — even if you stutter, continue as confidently as you can with a smile.
- Review your projects a day or two before the interview, noting key points that may arise.
- Highlight your contributions and the impact of your work.

TATA 1MG

-By Sahil Nizam

TATA 1MG

Hey! I'm Sahil Nizam working as an APM at Tata 1mg. Having been a part of E-Cell, IIT Guwahati, from my first year to being the Overall Coordinator in my 3rd year, I've always been fascinated by startups. Further, a PM internship at Aspire (YC18) and a VC internship at Better Capital really inspired me to pursue Product Management as a career.

Here's a brief note of my interview experience at Tata 1mg:

Pre-interview rounds

1. Resume shortlisting: Focus on highlighting the impact of your projects and internships with numbers. Have seniors review your resume.
2. Deck submission: We had to submit a slide deck on improving conversion by 10% for users landing on the 1mg app to a successful purchase. Business and consulting case competitions, like Creative Shock and Inter IIT Tech Meet, helped me get comfortable with slide decks.

Further references:

- Flipkart/HiLabs/Groww APM decks on LinkedIn
- Winners of PM challenges like The Product Folks and PM School for inspiration
- [This blog](#) by Vishesh Soni for planning.

Make sure you have a timeline for the brainstorming + content + design of the slide deck. Be prepared to pull some all-nighters as your end-semester exams will mostly coincide with multiple pitch deck submissions ;)

Interview rounds

Round 1

- Introduce yourself
- Internship, my personal contribution in each, how I managed the internships with academics and finally the impact of the internship on the company/business.
- Position of responsibility (PoR), why that specific PoR, what was the responsibility, what did I achieve in it, which stakeholders (admin/startups/professors) did I work with, team management and personal contribution
- Why Product Management as a career? Why not other streams like consulting?
- Estimation of the number of houses in India. Always clarify the question, define a structured approach to the guesstimate, get buy-in from the interviewer before jumping to the calculation.

Tip: Before the interview, be prepared with the key points you want to highlight about your internship/project. I tried to define the problem statement + solution + impact for each project in a concise manner and discuss the relevant point in detail when asked. Anticipate and prepare for incremental questions, such as how you could improve your project with ongoing tech trends like GenAI.

Recommendation: To learn and solve more such problems on guesstimate, check out E-Cell IITG's [Product Guide](#)

Round 2

This round was quite conversational and descriptive about my undergraduate experience (academics and extracurriculars), internships, and projects.

- Internship experience: Discussed the company context, the specific problems I worked on, the users affected, and the solutions implemented. I also explained the use cases and why these solutions were important for the company at that time (Why was the company focusing on this problem at that time?).

- Project: The interviewer delved into project details, asking about the market, user personas, key pain points, problem statement, proposed solution, and any shortcomings. Follow-up questions included:
- Is the market size significant enough?
- What factors might make a customer or user hesitant to download the app?
- Beyond an app, what other forms could this solution or product take?
- Academics and College life: What courses I enjoyed and why? How I got into Product Management? What was the most enjoyable activity beyond college in the 4 years at IIT Guwahati?
- Extracurriculars: As I volunteer with a startup newsletter called AJVC, the interviewer asked about my contributions and why the work is meaningful to me.
- RCA: Orders on an E-Commerce fashion app are down by 30%. Why? Have a structured approach. Refer to mock interviews by Exponent and [this blog](#) by Manas Saloi. Also, spend more time practicing instead of reading.

Round 3

This was the most engaging round, with an unconventional question and a lot of cross-questioning on personality-based questions. Having reflected on these questions before stepping into the interview room definitely helped.

- Metrics and Strategy: Your state's Chief Minister wants to digitize the agriculture sector. Your task is to help them understand the agriculture industry by designing a dashboard. I began by clarifying the purpose of the project and defining the CM's requirements, including their need for concise, actionable insights given their limited time. I then outlined the relevant metrics for the dashboard, identified the North Star metric, and explained the data collection pipeline. We discussed various methods for collecting real-time data and evaluated each option based on cost, time, and accuracy.

More individual-specific questions like

- Why product management? Why not consulting? Why not MBA?
- If I could work anywhere, which sector/company would I like to work in?
- What motivated me to join AJVC?
- Why did I take on an unpaid internship?

- An instance when I experienced failure and what I learned from it.
- What is my favorite startup? Do I see myself starting up?

For product management-focused questions (e.g., Guesstimates, Product Design, RCA, Metrics, Strategy), read one framework, watch one mock interview (Exponent on YouTube), and practice a lot by doing mock interviews. After every mock interview, reflect on how you could have improved on:

- 1. Your product sense:** Structured thinking, accuracy and breadth of pain points, creativity of solutions, business and implementation feasibility, time taken, etc
- 2. Your soft skills:** Greeting the interviewer, sharing your approach, constantly checking in if you're on the same page, and getting buy-in from the interviewer before proceeding to the next steps, keeping it a two-sided conversation.

For questions related to the role, resume, and personality, have well-defined responses before the interview, and you can even practice them in front of a mirror or with a friend. Make your answers concise, clear, and engaging (read the STAR method) to keep it conversational and story-like.

Remember, interview season can be intense, with a lot of doubt and stress. Keep going, stay consistent, stay hydrated, take it one day at a time, and trust the process. All the best! Feel free to reach out on LinkedIn for any help.

GROWW

-By Krish Rajpal

Groww

Hey there! I'm Krish Rajpal, an IIT Guwahati graduate of batch 2024. Here I will be sharing my interview experience with Groww for the Business Analyst role.

Round 1: Introduction And Guesstimate

The interview started with some introductory questions, where the interviewer asked me to talk about my college projects and internships. I focused on the consulting projects I worked on during my third year, which helped guide the conversation in a positive direction.

Next came the guesstimate question: "**Can you estimate the daily active users of Instagram?**" I broke down the question by thinking about Instagram's global user base, and how often people use the app, and tried to come up with a reasonable estimate based on those factors.

Then, the interviewer asked a follow-up question: "**How would you estimate the churn rate in different user segments, and what could cause it?**" I thought about how some users might stop using the app over time, considering factors like app changes or competition, and provided possible reasons for churn.

The interviewer gave me helpful tips, like rounding off numbers when needed and not worrying too much about exact details. They also suggested using general estimates and trusting my instincts for some parts of the question.

It was a good exercise in problem-solving, and I felt that my approach was on the right track.

Tips: To practice more on guesstimate questions check out the [Ultimate Product Guide by E-Cell IIT Guwahati](#)

Round 2: Problem-Solving and Case Discussion

Round 2 of the interview was more focused on problem-solving and case discussions. We started with a discussion about a project I had worked on regarding a market entry strategy for a company looking to enter the Indian market. The interviewer wanted to understand how I would approach the unique challenges in the Indian market and decide on the most feasible market entry strategy. This round was different from the first one, as it was more analytical and number-driven, whereas Round 1 had been focused more on qualitative aspects.

After the project discussion, the interviewer shifted gears and asked me a couple of puzzle questions. One was related to cricket, a sport I'm passionate about, and the other was based on binary search. Both puzzles were abstract and non-technical, meant to test my logical thinking and problem-solving skills more creatively.

Then, we moved into a Root Cause Analysis (RCA) case. The scenario involved a company facing a high churn rate and a significant drop in average order value. I was asked to identify the possible reasons behind these issues. I took a systematic approach, considering factors like customer satisfaction, changes in product pricing, or shifts in market trends that could contribute to these problems.

Finally, the interviewer asked me to explain how I would typically approach problem-solving in such cases. I shared my strategy of breaking down the problem into smaller, manageable parts and analyzing data to uncover insights. This structured approach is something I've found useful in tackling complex issues effectively.

Round 3: Analytical and RCA-Based Discussion

Round 3 of the interview took a deeper dive into Root Cause Analysis (RCA), with a focus on understanding the churn rate and the drop in average order value. The interviewer asked me to explore possible causes behind these issues, urging me to look closely at the data and identify insights that could lead to actionable solutions.

As we discussed the case, I followed my usual structured approach to breaking down problems. First, I clarified the **objective** of the analysis: understanding why the company was facing high churn and lower order value. Next, I defined the **problem**, diving into potential factors such as customer dissatisfaction, market trends, or changes in the product offering. Then, I outlined my **approach**, which involved analyzing customer feedback, reviewing transaction data, and looking at industry benchmarks to understand the root causes. Finally, I explained the **results**—the insights I gathered, and the steps I would recommend to address these issues, such as improving customer engagement or adjusting pricing strategies.

The interviewer appreciated my methodical way of thinking and how I approached problem-solving systematically, making sure each step led logically to the next. It was a good exercise in taking complex issues, breaking them down, and finding data-driven solutions.

Tips and Recommendations:

- **Puzzle Preparation:** Practicing 5- 6 puzzle questions daily will be helpful. Attention must be given to understanding different types of puzzle questions.
Tips: To practice more such questions refer to [GFG puzzle questions](#)
- **Consulting Approach:** For the case and project-based questions, emphasis such be given to structuring thoughts and analyzing problems from a data-driven perspective, particularly for roles that involve market analysis or consulting.