



Indian School of Business

# Consulting Casebook

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2020 Edition



# Introducing Consulting Clubs Co'20

## Mohali



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# From the President's Desk | Mohali

Dear Consulting Club of 2021,

The Consulting Club Co2020 at Mohali successfully played a pivotal role in helping students decode the complex world of consulting and prepare for placements in a structured and efficient manner. The Club, which housed over 250 members in Mohali through the academic year, started out with a simple 3 point agenda; Firstly, ensuring a high degree of engagement with alums from different consulting firms (across tenures and practices) to enable a steep learning curve and exposure for the members. Secondly, following a simplified calendar, curated with the help of industry experts, which focuses on only the most important parts of placement preparation and does not overburden aspirants. And thirdly, ensuring personalised attention and focus for all students and instilling confidence in every aspirant.

As I reflect on the last 12 months, it gives me great pride to say that we were able to engage with 50+ alums over the course of the academic year, conduct 10+ case/guesstimate workshops, 600+ one-on-one resume reviews and successfully achieve among the highest conversation rates (of shortlist to final offers) during final placements!

This Consulting Casebook has been put together after careful thought and guidance from numerous people. I would strongly urge all fellow aspirants to start their prep journey using this casebook; please do go through the case examples collated towards the end to help understand how interviews work at ISB and what your level of prep needs to be. Also, please follow our thoughts on how you should space your prep out over the course of the year. Remember, consulting prep is all about smart prep and little about the number of hours you put in! Have a great year ahead and we wish you the very best!

Best,

Aditai Puri

President, Consulting Club'20, Indian School of Business, Mohali Campus

## Hyderabad



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# From the President's Desk | Hyderabad

Hi Everyone!

Firstly, best of luck to you all for your future consulting interviews. This book has been drafted keeping in mind that the reader has limited or no prior knowledge about consulting cases while wanting to prepare for consulting or other interviews where such cases are asked.

This gives me great pride to present to you the **Consulting Case Book of Class of 2020**. As the name suggests, this book aims to provide a glimpse into how ISB Co'20 students prepared for and cracked interviews.

I couldn't emphasize more on Aditai's points on focusing on the interview section and being smart about the prep, starting at the right time is key. I would want to add that use this book as a guide along with the workshops the Consulting Club would do year-round, which in turn would be in tandem with your progress. We would also request the reader to access other informative portals provided by SEAL such as the KM Portal and multiple other interventions conducted by them.

Times at ISB can get tough, so always focus on the process, by that I mean, first few months focus on stuff that can help you build your CV, then focus on the messaging that would drive your story and once the shortlists start coming in, prepare for the interview accordingly, but do not try to jump any step.

Always remember the greatest assets you have are your friends at ISB and all the alums. So feel free to connect with any of us if any help is required, the class of 2020 would always be available!

Best wishes,

Rachit Jain

President, Consulting Club'20, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad Campus

# Table of Contents

From the President's Desk   Mohali.....	2
From the President's Desk   Hyderabad.....	4
SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING GUESSTIMATES.....	0
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.1.1 What are guesstimates?.....	1
1.1.2 Companies that have asked guesstimate problems in their processes before .....	1
1.1.3 Important evaluation parameters in a guesstimate-based interview .....	2
1.2 Types of Guesstimate Problems and Common Structures .....	2
1.2.1 General “ <i>Estimate the number of..</i> ” type problems .....	2
1.2.2 Market sizing problems.....	3
1.2.3 Abstract estimations .....	3
1.2.4 Data driven problems .....	3
1.3 Common Dos and Don’ts of guesstimates .....	3
1.4 Links to Mock Case Interview Sessions .....	5
1.5 Practice Questions with Solutions .....	5
1.5.1 Estimate the number of schools in Delhi.....	5
1.5.2 Estimate the number of burgers sold at a McDonalds .....	6
1.6 More guesstimate Practice Questions.....	6
1.7 Appendix: Guesstimates Cheat Sheet .....	7
SECTION 2: (PART A) TYPES OF CASES .....	9
2.1 Profitability .....	10
2.1.1 Framework.....	10
2.1.2 Goals/Objectives.....	10
2.1.3 Breaking down the problem.....	11
2.2 Market Entry.....	16
2.2.1 Framework.....	17
2.2.2 Goals/Objectives.....	17
2.2.3 Part 1: Go/No Go – Whether to enter.....	17
2.2.4 Part 2: How to enter.....	20
2.3 New Product Launch .....	21
2.3.1 Framework.....	21
2.4 M&A .....	21
2.4.1 Introduction .....	21
2.4.2 Framework.....	22
2.5 Pricing .....	25
2.5.1 Introduction .....	25
2.5.2 Framework.....	25
2.6 Growth.....	26
2.6.1 Introduction .....	26
2.6.2 Preliminary questions .....	27
2.6.3 Framework.....	28

2.7 PE Investment.....	30
2.8 Value Chain Analysis.....	31
2.8.1 Demand Forecasting .....	31
2.8.2 Sourcing.....	31
2.8.3 Warehousing.....	32
2.8.4 Manufacturing.....	32
2.8.5 Logistics.....	32
2.8.6 After Sales Service .....	32
2.9 Sales Force Effectiveness .....	32
2.10 Other Types of Cases.....	33
2.10.1 Game theory, auctioning .....	33
2.10.2 Abstract/Open Ended Cases.....	33
2.10.3 Prioritization Cases.....	33
2.10.4 People – Process – Technology Framework (Org. Structure).....	34
<b>SECTION 2: (PART B) PREPARING FOR CASE INTERVIEWS.....</b>	<b>36</b>
2.1 Preparing for the Case Interviews .....	37
2.1.1 An introduction to Buddy Programs.....	37
2.1.2 Forming and effectively using Case Groups .....	37
2.2 Common Dos and Don'ts while approach cases .....	38
2.2.1 Dos and Don'ts while during preparation .....	38
2.2.2 Dos and Don'ts during the Case Interview.....	38
<b>SECTION 3: UNDERSTANDING PERSONAL EXPERIENCE INTERVIEWS .....</b>	<b>40</b>
3.1 Breaking down a personal interview.....	41
3.2 Evaluation parameters in a personal interview.....	41
3.3 Preparing for a personal interview.....	41
3.4 STAR Framework .....	42
3.5 Sample personal interview questions .....	42
3.5.1. Personal.....	43
3.5.2 Management / Leadership Style.....	44
3.5.3. Strengths / Weaknesses and Skills.....	44
3.5.4. Interpersonal Skills .....	44
3.5.5. Education .....	44
3.5.6 Extra Curricular.....	45
3.5.7 Job/ Company/ Industry.....	45
3.5.8 Location .....	45
3.5.9. Functions .....	45
3.6 Questions to Ask.....	47
<b>SECTION 4: CONSULTING PREPARATION TIMELINES .....</b>	<b>48</b>
June: Understanding Consulting .....	49
July: Understanding Consulting, Resume .....	49
August: Resume .....	49
September: Resume, Case Group, Guesstimates .....	50
October: Resume, Guesstimates, Industry Primers .....	50

November: Guesstimates, Cases, Industry Primers .....	50
December: Guesstimates, Cases, Industry Primers, PEI Preparation .....	50
January: Revision .....	51
<b>SECTION 5: CO20 INTERVIEW EXPERIENCES WITH SOLUTIONS .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>5.1 Guesstimates .....</b>	<b>53</b>
5.1.1. BCG .....	53
5.1.2 Kearney .....	54
5.1.3 McKinsey & Company .....	55
5.1.4 Parthenon .....	55
5.1.5 Roland Berger.....	57
<b>5.2 Case Interviews .....</b>	<b>61</b>
5.2.1 Accenture.....	61
5.2.2 Alvarez & Marsal.....	64
5.2.3 Bain.....	65
5.2.4 BCG .....	80
5.2.5 Dalberg .....	91
5.2.6 Deloitte.....	96
5.2.7 Ernst & Young.....	103
5.2.8 EY-Parthenon .....	103
5.2.9 Kearney .....	110
5.2.10 McKinsey & Company .....	115
5.2.11 PricewaterhouseCoopers DIAC .....	135
5.2.12 ZS Associates.....	139
<b>5.3 Personal Interviews .....</b>	<b>142</b>
5.3.1 Kearney .....	142
5.3.2 McKinsey & Company .....	145
5.3.3 Shell Strategy Consultancy Insights.....	147
All the best! .....	148

## **SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING GUESSTIMATES**

## 1.1 Introduction

### 1.1.1 What are guesstimates?

A guesstimate, as the word suggests, is guessing the estimate. But rather than simply guessing the answer, one has to solve a guesstimate problem in an interview using a rational and structured approach.

Just like any other case problem, a guesstimate has to be solved together with the interviewer through a free-flowing conversation. The interviewee is expected to draft a structured approach to reach the solution, communicate the same effectively, verify assumptions, work the math and reach a sensible solution. And always remember, when it comes to the evaluation of a candidate by an interviewer, the process of arriving at the final number always holds more bearing than the number itself.

A guesstimate is a common tool used in not just consulting interviews, but across industries and functions. Hence, being comfortable with guesstimates is essential as a first step to your interview preparation.

### 1.1.2 Companies that have asked guesstimate problems in their processes before



BOSTON  
CONSULTING  
GROUP



Roland  
Berger



BAIN & COMPANY

matrix  
PARTNERS

Deloitte.



McKinsey  
& Company



KPMG



Hindustan Unilever Limited

KEARNEY



accenture



### 1.1.3 Important evaluation parameters in a guesstimate-based interview

These seemingly complicated one liner problem statements are typically used to assess a candidate's ability on multiple fronts. Hence, candidates are expected to be well prepared on all of the aspects listed below.

The hygiene factors essential for the candidates are:

- Structured thought process
- Logic and rationale
- Coherence
- Comfort with basic math and numbers
- Communication and soft skills

Other important factors to be kept in mind are:

- Clearly calling out assumptions
- Stating your sources for the assumptions (personal experiences and things you have generally observed are completely acceptable as sources, but calling that out clearly and upfront is always better than being prompted for your source)
- Ability to think on one's feet, take a step back and course correct when necessary
- Creativity and use of multiple approaches
- Sanity check after arriving at the solution
- Use of common sense at all stages (again, course correct if you think something is glaringly wrong)
- Taking the interviewer's help when stuck
- Calling out industry specific knowledge, along with its source (be careful to use industry knowledge to your advantage; i.e. solve for most numbers and use your industry knowledge only as a verification tool)
- Confidence and attitude towards problem solving

Interviewers will evaluate you on all the parameters listed above. So, make sure you are well prepared to showcase your command over all factors. Practice, accordingly, so as to play by your strengths and work on your weaknesses. Ace the hygiene factors first, and then build your aptitude on the other important factors.

## 1.2 Types of Guesstimate Problems and Common Structures

While some case interviews have specific problem types and frameworks to approach them, there are no standard frameworks for approaching guesstimates. In this section, we have still bucketed different types of guesstimate problems and have listed some approaches you can use to tackle them.

Don't bind your problem-solving approaches to the structures listed here. This is just to guide your thinking process, and not to limit it.

### 1.2.1 General “*Estimate the number of..*” type problems

This is the most common problem type, wherein you will be asked to estimate the number of schools in a city or cars at a traffic signal or people at an airport. These can be asked as standalone problems or as a part of a larger case.

Based on the problem statement, you either take a top-down or a bottom-up approach to solve these problems:

- **Top-Down (Start Big) Approach:** The whole can be used as a starting point, which can be split and segmented as per certain criteria/assumptions to reach the desired subset. For example, to estimate the number of schools in India, the total population can be used as a starting point.
- **Bottom-Up (Start Small) Approach:** Estimate the number for a specific segment or unit and extrapolate the number to get the whole. This approach is most commonly used when there are constraints on the number you are estimating. For example, to estimate the number of people at an airport, start with finding the number of runways or waiting gates and see if any of these is the binding constraint.

## 1.2.2 Market sizing problems

Another common problem type which is similar to “estimating the number” type problems, wherein candidates are expected to estimate the dollar or rupee value of the market size of a product or service. Typical examples are estimating the market size for biscuits in India, cars in Delhi, newspapers in a tier-2 city, luxury watches in Mumbai, etc.

The most common approach to solve these problems is the volume-price approach. In this approach, you estimate the volume using the start small or start big approaches listed in section 1.2.1 above and you estimate the product’s/service’s price separately. Then you multiply the two get the market size. Writing an equation for the same upfront, and then drilling down on each part of the equation separately is a good approach to solve these problems.

In some cases, you may have to use both start small and start big approaches simultaneously. To estimate the market size of wall paint in India, you’d use the start small approach to estimate the demand for one house and the start big approach to estimate the total house that are painted in a year, and finally multiply both to get the market size.

## 1.2.3 Abstract estimations

Abstract problems, as the name suggests, are random and don’t follow a particular structure. Some common problems are estimating the number of basketballs that can fit in a Boeing 747 or grains of grass on a cricket field.

Although these problems are not asked very frequently, you should still practice some of them so that you are not taken aback in an interview. There is no set formula or structure for these. So, sit back, relax and think about how you can break the problems into smaller pieces and try framing an equation upfront. Thereafter, rely on pure logic and common sense to solve for each part of your equation.

## 1.2.4 Data driven problems

This is rather a subset of the three problem types mentioned above, wherein the interviewee is handed over a dump of data tables which he/she is expected to use to solve the problem.

Common things to keep in mind while solving these problems are:

- Analyze and absorb all the data given to you before you start solving
- If any data point is given to you, don’t make assumptions for the same and use the given information as is
- In all likelihood, you will be given all the data you need. So simply frame an equation, substitute the data and solve the math. Suggest alternate approaches still, that you feel can work better with the problem.
- If you use any data not given (assumption or well-known numbers), call it out upfront.
- Take hints for segmentation from the data given
- You don’t have to use all the data given. So, don’t force fit things and overcomplicate your approach.

## 1.3 Common Dos and Don'ts of guesstimates

We have divided the common do's and don'ts into the following three broad categories:

1. **Structural:** this includes the do's and don'ts with respect to breaking the problem statement down into its many levers; any problem statement needs to be simplified first before any numbers can be used and this header covers hygiene factors related to the same
2. **Communication:** almost as important as the structure is the use of soft skills to communicate the solution effectively; this header talks about how to hold an interviewer's interest and ensure he stays on the same page
3. **Analytical:** no guesstimate is complete with the basic use of math and numbers and this header talks about how to organize numbers effectively and how to simplify their use

We will attempt to explain each of the three categories ahead in detail:

### 1. Structural Dos and Don'ts

- Each guesstimate can be solved using multiple approaches – understand that there is no one single approach to solving a guesstimate and the interview is mostly open to any logical approach
- Use the approach that you feel most comfortable with and where you can justify the assumptions with maximum ease
- To ensure your approach is well structured and thought through, ask for 2-3 minutes upfront after hearing the problem statement; use this time to draw a structure on your A4 sheet
- Post this, before getting into any numbers or details around the solution, take 2 mins to walk the interviewer through your high-level approach and seek feedback (this allows the interviewer to course correct you)
- All assumptions made must be elucidated to the interviewer. Sometimes the interviewer might ask you to use a different assumption than what you suggest. No assumption is right or wrong, it just needs to be sellable
- There should be a logical backing to each assumption you make (even personal experience counts). E.g., 'I would assume that 30% of Indians are veg – In my class of 50 people, there are close to 15 vegetarians'
- Don't look to solve the guesstimate as one big guesstimate – break it into 3-4 smaller guesstimates and make a funnel in your head. For e.g if asked to estimate the number of Red Hyundai i20s in Delhi, first guesstimate the total number of cars in Delhi and the move forward
- Don't be fixated on your structure – if an interviewer tries to change it around or suggests another path, hear them out and see if it makes logical sense
- Use your rough sheet smartly – draw an issue tree very neatly at the beginning so that both the interviewer and you are very clear on how to approach the guesstimate and how to proceed

### 2. Communication Dos and Don'ts

- Whenever stuck, request the interviewer for time; there is absolutely no harm in asking the interviewer for a few minutes to gather your thoughts
- After you reach every important number, take 15-20 seconds to summarize where you are in the guesstimate to the interviewer – this will allow the interviewer keep pace with you and is also a good hygiene practice of letting an interviewer know the ground you've covered. You should ideally summarize where you've reached at least 2-3 times in a guesstimate at strategic points
- Clearly communicate to the interviewer at the start or during one of your summaries how you plan to use the next 3-5 minutes; it's very important that an interviewer knows where you are headed with things
- There might be several points in the guesstimate where you feel stuck on how to proceed; in such occasions it's always a good idea to take a step back. For e.g. if you don't know what's the next step you can always say, "Am not sure of how to proceed from here, how about I summarize our findings till now and then we take stock of what comes next?"
- Minimize verbosity – be sharp and start with the message always. Don't move in circles. For instance, never say "In my opinion, and this is based on the approach I just described and looking at the population per capita income we have just arrived at, I believe that the smart phone market, again very roughly though, will grow at XX%"; be sharp and say "The smart phone market will grow at XX%, based on two assumptions X and Y"
- As shown above, always be message first! And explanations later
- Always remember – the setting of a guesstimate is such that you and the interviewer are jointly trying to arrive at a solution! Don't feel burdened into believing that you need to have all answers, ask for help!!
- Given the above, while your communication should be formal and crisp, always keep it conversational 😊

### 3. Analytical Dos and Don'ts

- Always round off your numbers to closest multiple of 5 or 10 for simplicity. State that you're doing that. Sometimes the interviewer may want you to use the number as it is
- While doing your calculations, it is a good practice to keep voicing them and talking about them – it helps an interviewer if you're walking your interviewer through your math while at it
- Write your numbers and math very neatly on your rough sheet – this will help an interviewer keep track and course correct if needed

- In case you are dealing with heavy math, don't get ruffled. You can take your time, making no mistakes is always better than being fast!

## 1.4 Links to Mock Case Interview Sessions

This section has the YouTube links to mock interview sessions led by the Consulting Club core team at Mohali. Please read the following guidelines before viewing the videos:

- All the videos have two parts to them. In the initial bit, we talk about how to approach guesstimate problems, how to prepare and what the common do's and don'ts of guesstimates solving are. In the later halves, we conduct mock interviews which are meant to give you a sense of how an actual interview runs.
- Read up and absorb all the material in Sections 1.1 to 1.3 before viewing the videos. The initial halves of the videos will emphasize on the most important bits of the same.
- The latter halves of the videos are mock interview simulations, in which we break after every few minutes to discuss what went right and wrong. You should pause the video at such points and think about these yourselves before continuing. This will maximize your learning from the videos.
- Practice mock interviews with your case group after watching these videos and revisit them later to see if you are following the learnings from it.

**Link 1:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpxhvTY4CFU>

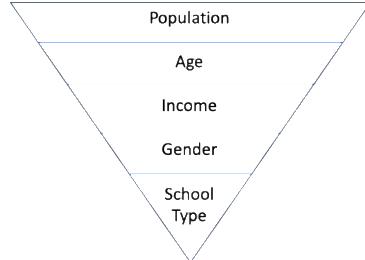
**Link 2:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cMVwwf02L2w>

## 1.5 Practice Questions with Solutions

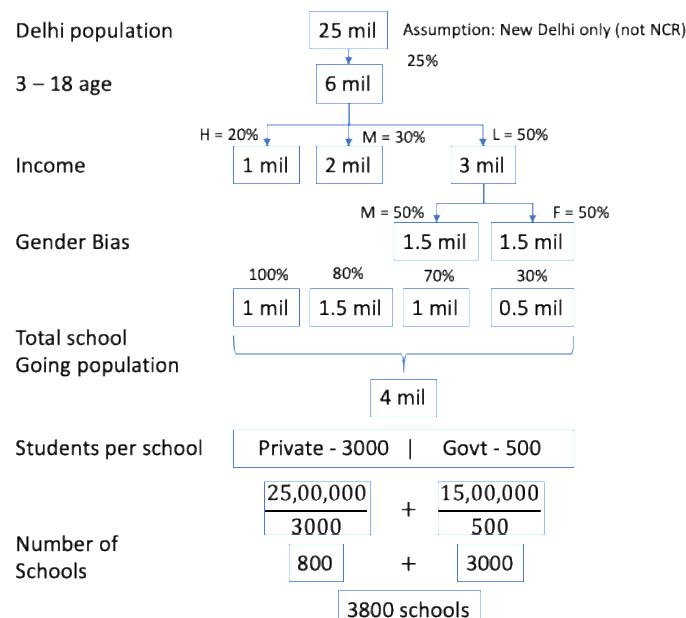
### 1.5.1 Estimate the number of schools in Delhi

We take a Top-Down or Start Big approach to solve this because we have to estimate a very broad scoped number, which is not bound by a constraint as such.

This approach can also be described as an Inverted Pyramid approach as we slice and dice a big number based on certain criteria to drill down to our required subset. The pyramid we use particularly in this problem is as follows:



Replicating the same with numbers, we get to our solution:



## 1.5.2 Estimate the number of burgers sold at a McDonalds

We take a Bottom-Up approach here as the number of burgers sold is constrained by the number of available counters and the traffic each counter can handle.

The assumptions (to be stated upfront to the interviewer) are:

- Timeline – A single day
- Day – Monday
- Location – Metro or Tier 1 city
- Size/Capacity – Average sized with 4 counters

Henceforth, the solution is as follows:

Time of the day	8 AM – 12 PM	12 PM – 5 PM	5 PM – 10 PM
Counters Open	1 counter	2 counters	4 counters
Orders / Counter / Hour	5	10	30
Total Orders	$4 \times 1 \times 5 = 20$	$5 \times 2 \times 10 = 100$	$5 \times 4 \times 30 = 600$
		720	
80% orders with burgers = $720 \times 80\% = \sim 600$			
30% orders with 1 burger on average	$600 \times 30\% \times 1 = 200$	70% orders with 2.5 burgers on average	$600 \times 70\% \times 2.5 = 1000$
Total Burgers Sold = $200 + 1000 = 1200$			

## 1.6 More guesstimate Practice Questions

We have collated a set of guesstimate questions which have been asked in prior interviews. Further, we have divided these questions into 4 categories

- L1 (for beginners and those starting out on their guesstimate journey)
- L2 (for those who have practiced 5-10 guesstimates and have a basic understanding of how to approach them)
- L3 (for more advanced preparation; target these preferably after you get your respective shortlists only)
- L4 (for those who are extremely comfortable with guesstimates and have received very strong feedback on their preparation)

S. No.	Questions
<b>L1 (For beginners and those starting their guesstimate journey)</b>	
1.	Estimate the number of students in your previous school
2.	Estimate the number of employees in your previous organization
3.	Estimate the total calories you intake in a day
4.	Estimate your monthly expenditure on online food ordering
5.	Estimate your salary potential 10 years from today
6.	Estimate the total budget of a 3-day trip with your friends to Manali
7.	Estimate the total budget of a 3-day trip with your friends to Manali
8.	Estimate the total expenditure/cash outflow you've made in the last 2 years
9.	Estimate the number of ISB alums
10.	Estimate the number of infants in Asia
<b>L2 (For intermediates looking to improve)</b>	

1.	Estimate the number of schools in Delhi
2.	Estimate the number of cars in Delhi
3.	Estimate the number of Red Hyundai I20's in Mumbai
4.	Estimate the revenue of ISB
5.	Estimate the revenue of Sarovar
6.	Estimate the number yearly sale of 2 wheelers in Bangalore
7.	Estimate the number of coke bottles sold in India annually
8.	Estimate the number of B-schools in India
9.	Estimate the number of B-schools in India
10.	Estimate the revenue generated by Apple from sale of iPhones in India every year
11.	Estimate the number of notebooks used in ISB every year
12.	Estimate the number of children served under Delhi's Mid-Day Meal scheme
13.	Estimate the revenue of Vistara from sale of flight tickets only
14.	Estimate the number of units of Ponds Fair & Lovely sold each year
15.	Estimate the number of metro users in Delhi
16.	Estimate the size of the smartphone market in India
17.	Estimate the size of the console gaming market in India
18.	Estimate the number of Netflix accounts in India

**L3 (For experts looking to level up)**

1.	Estimate the annual revenue of HUL personal care business – top down & bottom up
2.	Estimate the annual revenue of Patanjali
3.	Estimate the number of foreign visitors visiting Agra annually – use two approaches
4.	Estimate the number of flights taking off from Delhi each day
5.	Estimate the number of Indians travelling abroad each year
6.	Estimate the number of Starbucks outlets in the world
7.	Estimate the total number of delivery boys employed by both Dominos and Pizza Hut
8.	Estimate the number of delivery orders placed through Swiggy+Zomato/ month
9.	Estimate the number of auto's parked at MG Road metro station right now
10.	Estimate the number of cars parked in CP right now
11.	Estimate the number of female executives earning 1 Cr+ in India as of 2020
12.	Estimate the number diet Pepsi cans consumed in corporate offices in India each day
13.	Estimate the number of consultants recruited by MBB each year
14.	Estimate the revenue of Tropicana Mixed Fruit juice every year
15.	Estimate the revenue Times of India annually
16.	Estimate the number of students joining IIT coaching classes/year – two approaches
17.	Estimate your total savings by the age of 50
18.	Estimate the total revenue potential of your organization by 2050
19.	Estimate the number of law enforcement personnel in India – use two approaches
20.	Estimate the number of light bulbs in ISB
21.	Estimate the number of Autos in Delhi

**L4 (For masters looking to perfect)**

1.	Estimate the number of grains of rice that can cover the ISB football field
2.	Estimate the number of videos on YouTube
3.	Estimate the number of streetlights in Delhi
4.	Estimate the GDP of India
5.	Estimate the cost of painting the entire ISB campus again
6.	Estimate the number of planes in the Indian Airspace at this point of time
7.	Estimate the potential revenue Indian Railways can generate from advertising
8.	Estimate the total capacity of Maruti Suzuki plants in India
9.	Estimate the effect of COVID-19 on the Indian GDP

**1.7 Appendix: Guesstimates Cheat Sheet**

This section has some numbers you are expected to know on your fingertips when you appear for consulting interviews.

**Population Split**

By City : India | Metros (Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai) | Hometown

By Geography : Urban | Rural

**Demographic Split**

By Age : 0-18 | 19-30 | 31-60 | 60 +

By Gender : Female | Male

**Income Split** : Low | Middle | Upper

We have not included any industry specific data here, as you aren't expected to know that, but you may want to note down some broad numbers pertaining to your previous industry (market size in volume and rupee terms, market share split among the top players, etc.).

So, add on to this list accordingly to make your personalized cheat sheet.

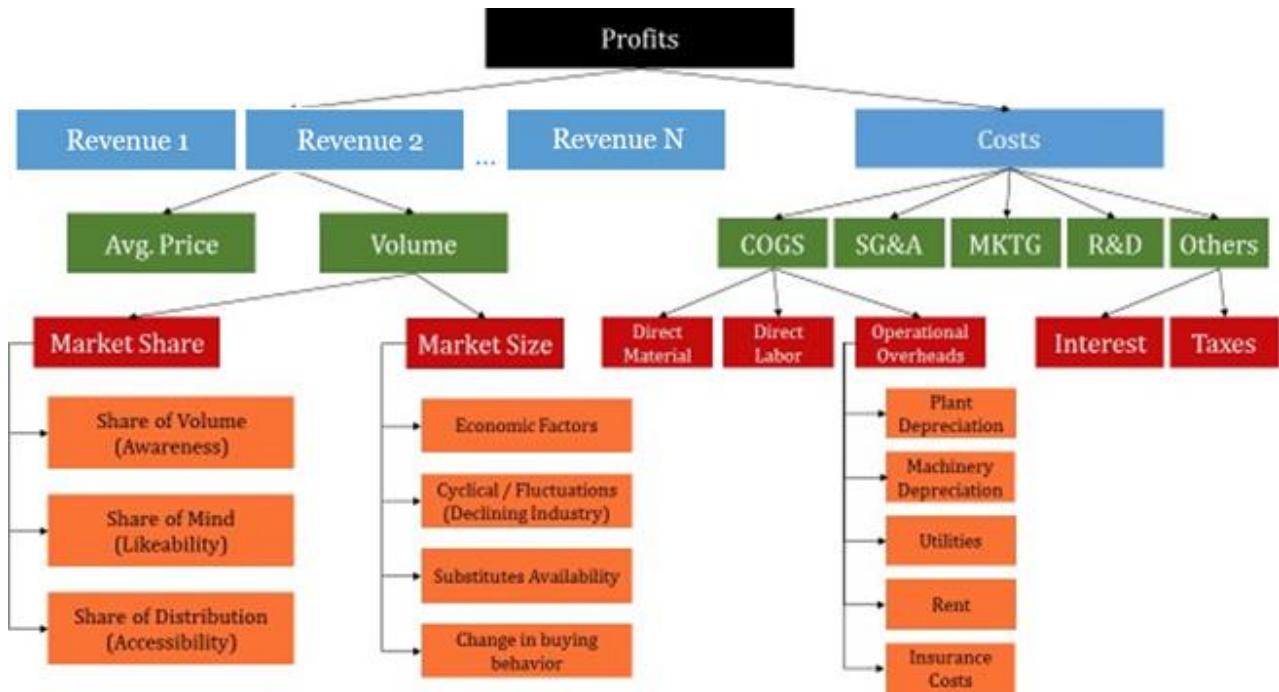
## **SECTION 2: (PART A) TYPES OF CASES**

This case book includes cases on Profitability, Market Entry/Go-To-Market (GTM), New Product Launch (NPL), Pricing Strategy, and Growth Strategy, among others

## 2.1 Profitability

### 2.1.1 Framework

A typical profitability problem would require one to use the below framework:



### 2.1.2 Goals/Objectives

The profitability problem comes in varied dimensions, thus, scoping of the problem becomes very important to make a structured headway in the case. This could be done by asking a sequence of logical questions.

The **idea behind these questions is two-fold**

- To define (scope) the problem
- To gather relevant information

#### 2.1.2.1 Defining the problem (Scoping)

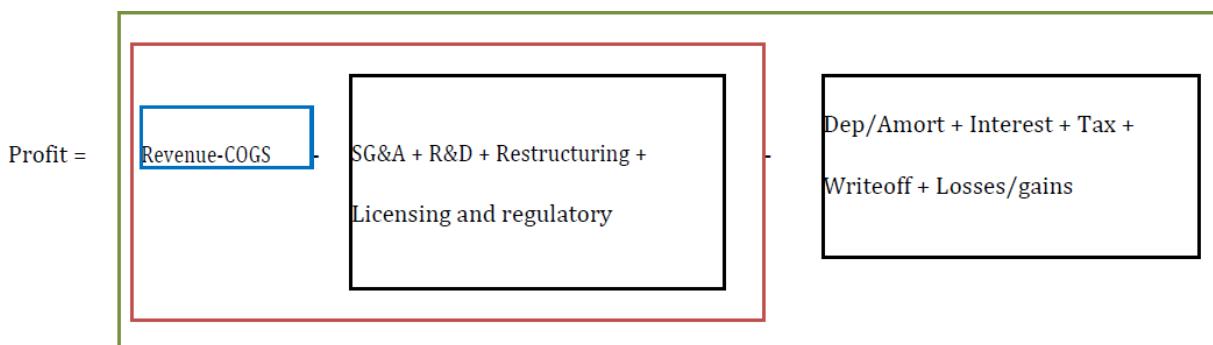
Before one starts gathering information for a problem, one needs to understand, on a high level, what one is looking for. This also helps one understand which side of the framework (Revenue or Cost) would be an ideal starting point. A general framework, as the one drawn above, should be followed.

#### 2.1.2.2 Information gathering

##### A. Clarify Objective and Industry Trends

- Define and reiterate the statement: Improve Profits in X product from A% to B% by n years.
- What is the profit/profitability target(s)? Secondary objectives (e.g. market share)? Is there a timeline that the company wants to solve the problem in?
- What is the magnitude of loss/profit? Since when has the trend occurred?
  - Note: profits declining, or profitability affected are two different things. Profit implies a difference in Revenues and Costs, while Profitability is a measure of profit margin.

- Is the profitability problem across the industry and trends for the product? If the problem is across the industry, ask for context
  - Demand, Macroeconomic factors, etc.
- If gross margin/operating margin or net margin which is facing the decline?



Blue: Gross profit

Red: Operating profit

Green: Net profit

## B. Gather information about 5Cs (Company, Collaborators, Customers, Competitors, and Context)

- **Company:**
  - Gather information regarding the *product mix and revenue streams* of the company
  - Gather data on *trends of each product and ascertain the product(s)* which is/are leading to the problem
  - Gather information about the company's customers and suppliers
- **Customer:**
  - Changing the priority of customers – change in demographics?
  - Increase in fragmentation (high supply, low demand) – leading to commoditizing the product
- **Competitive landscape:**
  - No. of competitors, market share and its trend
  - Any new entrant into the market or a substitute product launched
- **Other:**
  - The problem may lie in two areas - revenue and costs. What are the trends of revenues (up or down) and costs (up or down)?
  - Depending on the response, choose which one to go in first and take the buy-in of the interviewer

### 2.1.3 Breaking down the problem

#### 2.1.3.1 Revenues

Revenues are dependent on two factors – **Average Price & Volume**:

##### Average Price

Thus, if the revenue side has been affected then either Average Price across the product mix has decreased (majorly due to competition or company policy).

Quantitatively, we can see that

**Average Price** = Price of all the products / Total number of products

Here, the advice is to stick to first principles and be aware that the *price* of the products in the *product mix* and the *total number of products* could also affect the revenues.

- **Internal factors:**
  - The company tried to reduce price to increase revenues, but it backfired
  - Increased price because costs increased
  - Transfer pricing (may be relevant if the problem is limited to a division of a company)
- **External Factors**

- Price war
- Other stakeholders demanding more in value chain e.g. – increased distributor margin
- Government regulation (price cap)
- Customer preference changed so had to reduce the price

## Volume

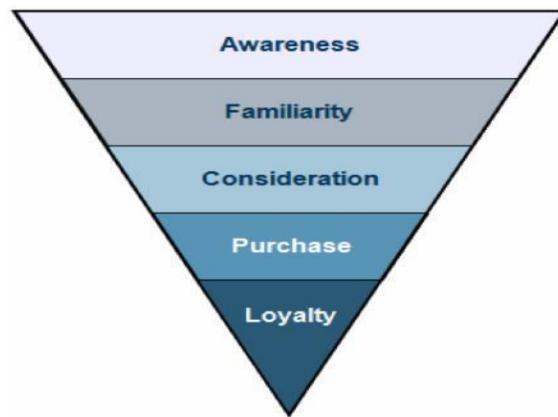
Ascertain changes in the number of units sold. The two potential reasons for a volume decline are –

- A. Market share decline
- B. Market size decline

### **A. If Market share declines**

**Market Share** = %Aware X %Preference Buyers X %Available X % Time for adoption X %Repeat Purchase

- **Price**
  - Have these increased? What is the elasticity?
- **Product**
  - Share of Mind (Likeability)
    - Poor quality: Network effect with other products, Substitutes, Product mix, Better product in the market, Quality of service
    - Perception of poor quality but good product
      - Check perception and preference map
      - If there is a problem in the perceptual map, check for accuracy in positioning
- **Promotion**
  - Have we changed existing tools of promotion?
  - Has the contribution percentage of any of these tools changed?
- **Training adequacy** (curriculum or frequency of training)
- **Share of Voice (Awareness)** – how to increase awareness. Check for failures in each of the following stages.
  - Promotion schemes for enabling purchase – e.g. financing options, discount coupons, etc.
  - SOV \* SOM \* SOD = Availability \* Product Offering (Likeability) \* Accessibility One must think in terms of the purchase funnel:



- **Place**
- **Share of Distribution (Accessibility)** – Penetration, trade mix, lead time, distributor margin (agency problem), salesforce (less or not trained), Skill and will of salesforce

### **B. If market size declines**

**Issue A: Due to issues in Demand (mature stage in PLC)**

- Check product life cycle
- Demographics change
- Product obsolescence
- Usage rate has gone down

**Solution A: Ansoff Matrix**

<b>Same Product – New Market (Geographic Expansion)</b>	<b>New Product – New Market (Diversification)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Which geography?</b> Consider risks such as           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attractiveness of the overseas market</li> <li>Can the firm establish competitive advantage by replicating the strategy?</li> <li>Identify the right geographies</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>What Price?</b> Play with elasticity (skim vs penetration)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Related diversification</b> – developed market</li> <li><b>Unrelated diversification</b> – developing market</li> <li><b>Look at synergies</b> (asset utilization)</li> </ul>
<b>Same Product – Same Market (Market Penetration)</b>	<b>New Product – Same Market (Product Development)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Capture market share</b> - 4P, Product Mix</li> <li><b>Increasing the pie:</b> New target segment (user), different application (uses), per customer consumption (usage). This is more applicable in the mature/declining phase of the industry life cycle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Vertical integration</b></li> <li><b>New Product development</b> based on attractiveness, capability (asset utilization)</li> </ul>

**Issue B:** Due to issues in Supply (still in the growth stage of PLC)

- Are you the only supplier and constrained by supply?
- Are the SKUs being offered being liked by the consumer? Change in consumer preference for another SKU?

**Solution B:**

- Short term**
  - Increase distributor margins
  - Target new segments
- Long term:** Launch new SKUs

**2.1.3.2 Costs**

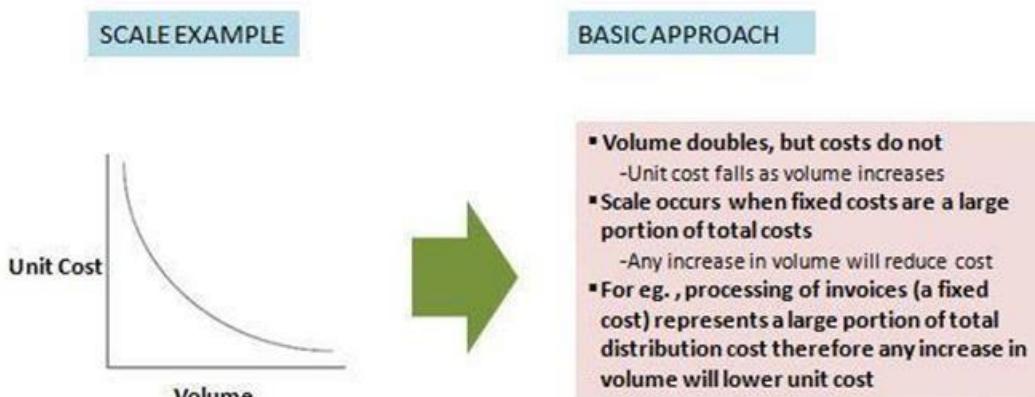
There are two types of approaches to solving cost problems:

- Fixed cost and variable cost analysis
- Value chain analysis

**1. Fixed costs and variable cost analysis****A. Fixed Cost**

In a high fixed cost business, there is a very high temptation of price wars (Remember MADM fundamentals). For Fixed Costs, following considerations need be made:

- Capacity Utilization
- Increasing the scale of business/manufacturing – What causes it?



- **Complex Product:** What causes it?
  - Complexity arises from additions to the number of different products produced or activities managed
    - Often without an increase in overall volume
    - That cannot be added at low marginal cost or minor adjustments in production/staffing
  - Complexity can arise in numerous parts of the cost structure
    - Manufacturing: machine change-over and setup; increased inventory
    - Sales/distribution
    - Administration

## B. Variable Cost

*Costs income statement wise (COGS, SG&A, Interest, Depreciation, Tax)*

What is the percentage split of costs across these different processes?

- In case one particular head has the highest % say 50% or more then you can ask the interviewer that you would want to look at this head to start with.
- Many a time there might not be one major head and there could be two heads with 30%-30% split. In these cases, you'll need to explore both heads and also see that the profitability decline could be partly because of one and partly because of another.

## 2. Value Chain Analysis

Albeit simpler, FC and VC approach is considered limited in considering the entire set of costs related problems. Here Value Chain analysis helps us to consider all the costs in detail



The value chain depicted above represents a manufacturing setup. However, thinking on first principles one can easily construct a value chain for any business mentioned in the case. For starters, think of Suppliers, Distributors (inbound/outbound), storage/warehouses, end-customers (VERY IMPORTANT)

### A. Raw Material Cost

- Start by asking the *type of good* (Perishable/durable)?
- Where does Competitor source from – does it get better prices?
- If the interviewer says the *same price*, ask about the *efficiency of utilization* – conversion ratio/wastage/efficiency for us. If efficiency is improved => less RM lead to reduced costs
- If the problem is a *higher price or higher overall procurement cost*, then:
  - Specification
  - Substitution (Different Raw Material)
  - Cheaper material - indigenization/rationalization?
  - Quantity
  - Value engineering (Use lesser Raw Material)
  - Per unit price

If the issue is with suppliers, use the following approach

- **Same Supplier**
  - Better Negotiation/Bulk Order – Can you provide something in return for a better price?
  - Time of Sourcing (Opportunistic) – Buying when prices are low
- **Alternate supplier**
  - Currency Hedging – Use forwards/futures if prices are expected to rise. Also, use call or put options for the variable part of future demand.
  - Standardization of Parts– ordering more of the same type of good

## B. Inbound Logistics

- Backward Integration
- Do you and your competitor use the same Mode of Transportation?
- Do you incur the same rates and the same overall cost?
- Explore Distance Travelled – could be that the rates are the same, but your factory is further away from the supplier base.
- Are you ordering at the Economic Order Quantity (EOQ) – Trade off between Set up cost, holding cost and expected demand

## C. Production/ Operations (Warehousing/ Manufacturing)

- Explore *Labor cost and efficiency* vis-a-vis competitor.
- *Inventory Cost (EOQ)*
- *Overheads* such as Electricity/Rent the same or higher?
- *Machine Utilization:* % Downtime - High?
  - Is the machine broken?
  - Maintenance/spare cost Power outage?
  - Labor unavailability?
  - Total availability will be a function of (% of time labor, % time machine available, % Idle time)
- *Resolution – additional dimensions:*
  - Outsource
  - Economies of Scale/Learning curve
  - Labor cost arbitrage

## D. Outbound Logistics/ Distribution

After exploring Inbound questions, explore the following questions

- Post Sales Cost:
  - Installation
  - Service or Warranty cost?
- Gross margin is the same but Operating margin has reduced:
  - Marketing & Administration – SG&A
  - R&D cost
  - Restructuring cost
  - Licensing and regulatory costs
- If NOPAT is down
  - Depreciation & Amortization
  - Interest Expense
  - Tax rates – which geographies (VAT) does our company operate in?
  - Inventory Write off
  - Gains/losses or external investment
  - Loss due to some catastrophic event

### 2.1.3.3 Additional Points to Consider

#### 1. Product Differentiation

- Better brand
- Better features
- Better packaging

#### 2. Innovative Pricing Methods

- Loss Leader Pricing/ Captive Pricing (Razor Blade)
- Bundle Pricing
- Value-based Pricing (Premium Pricing & Price Skimming)
  - Aspirational value of a similar product
  - The opportunity cost of not getting the product/service
  - It is also a function of the size of the target customer segment. As larger size would allow us to charge lesser than the maximum aspirational value to penetrate the new market

- Cost-plus Pricing
  - R&D Costs
  - Manufacturing/servicing/construction costs – Fixed and Variable Costs
  - Break-even costs, WACC
- Comparable (Parity) Pricing
  - Existing products with similar features => Marked Price + Mark-up
  - Existing products with superior features => Marked Price of the existing product + Value of additional feature to the customer
  - If no similar product exists, then consider => NPV of a substitute product
- Bundling & Cross-selling
- Consolidation: Acquire other markets players – Charge premium price, have more units sold.

### 3. In case the Product/Service mix – volume has changed

Identify which product's relative volume increase has led to overall revenue decrease. For that product, the following parameters could be assessed –

#### **Product-Related Problem**

- Poor product quality
- Problematic product mix
- Inadequate breadth of product line
- Depth of product line
- Network effects with other products/complementary products

#### **Service-Related Problem**

- Poor service quality
- The high cost of service
- Training adequacy
- Curriculum
- Frequency of training
- Depth and Breadth

## 2.2 Market Entry

### Introduction

Market entry cases tend to fall into two broad categories:

- A. Entering a *new geography*: For e.g. Uber entering the Indian markets
- B. Entering a *new product category*: For e.g. Canon launching a smartphone

The interviewee is typically expected to answer market entry cases in 2 parts:

#### 1. Go/No-Go: Should the client enter the market?

To answer this, one can analyse the following broad areas

- The strategic intentions: Geographic expansion, diversification, pre-empting competition, increased profits etc (mostly qualitative)
- The Industry attractiveness: Market sizing, Porter's 5 forces, life cycle, 4Ps & 5Cs, barriers, Risks etc (combination of quantitative & qualitative)
- The finances: Current finances, Cost of entering & operation, target revenue/ profits, ROI etc (mostly quantitative)

If the analysis reveals that the client should enter, then we look at part 2

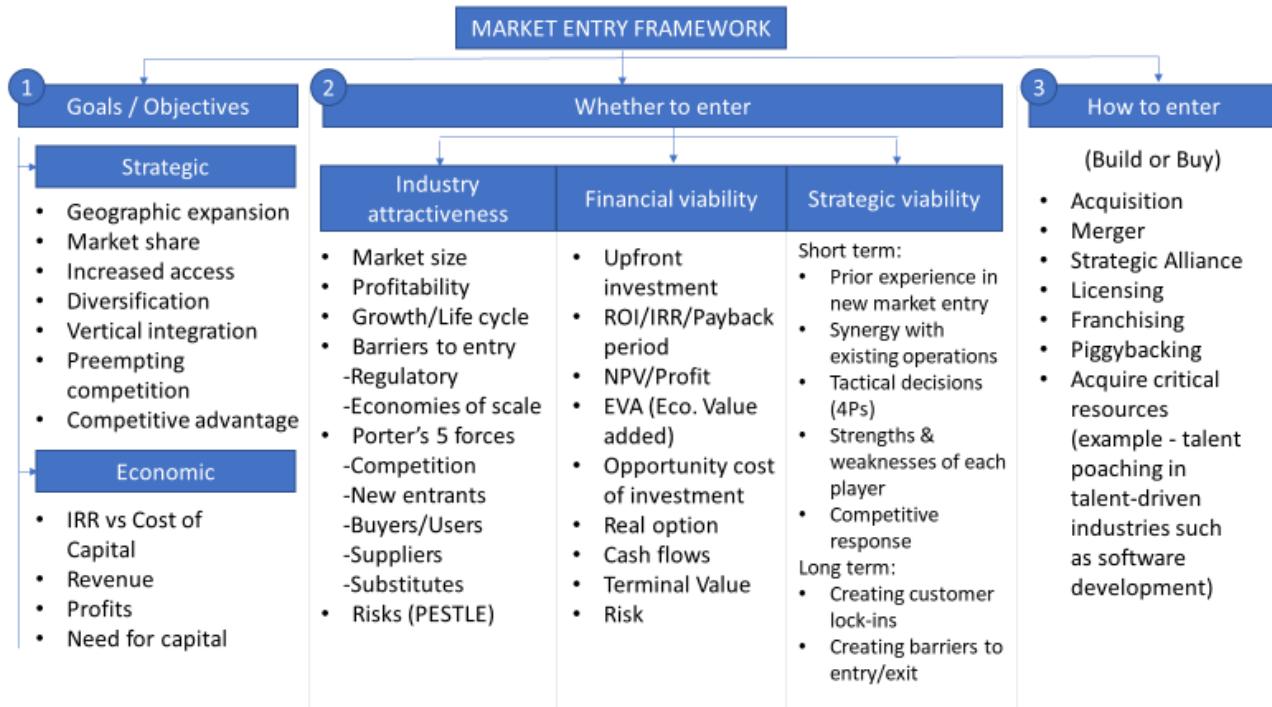
#### 2. How to enter

The 3 most common ways of entering a new market are

- **Starting from scratch** (Greenfield Investment)- Full ownership, high risk, high investment
- **Joint ventures**- Partial ownership, low risk and low investment

- Acquisition of an existing player** (brownfield investment)- full ownership, high risk, high investment. Depending upon the levels of risk, investment and ownership required, one of the 3 could be selected. Additionally, for JVs and Acquisitions challenges to integration and possibility of synergies (operational & financial) maybe looked at. Other methods could include exports, licensing or franchising

## 2.2.1 Framework



## 2.2.2 Goals/Objectives

This section mainly comes under scoping where the candidate has to understand the core objective of market entry. For example: A garments manufacturer in India wants to enter Middle East. You cannot proceed with the case unless you know why the company is evaluating this move. If the interviewer does not give you a reason explicitly, you can broadly classify them as follows

1. Strategic goals – geographic expansion, market share, access, diversification vertical integration, preempt competition, competitive advantage
2. Economic goals – increase revenue, higher profits, access to capital

Once you have a general idea of the objective, there are 2 more things you need to ask

1. Are there any constraints? – timeline, capital constraints, manpower etc.
2. What metric should we use to guide our decision? – this question is related to the objectives questions but if you get a clear answer on this one, it's easier to lead the case forward. E.g. 'the client wants a market share of 10%, we'll enter if that's possible'

## 2.2.3 Part 1: Go/No Go – Whether to enter

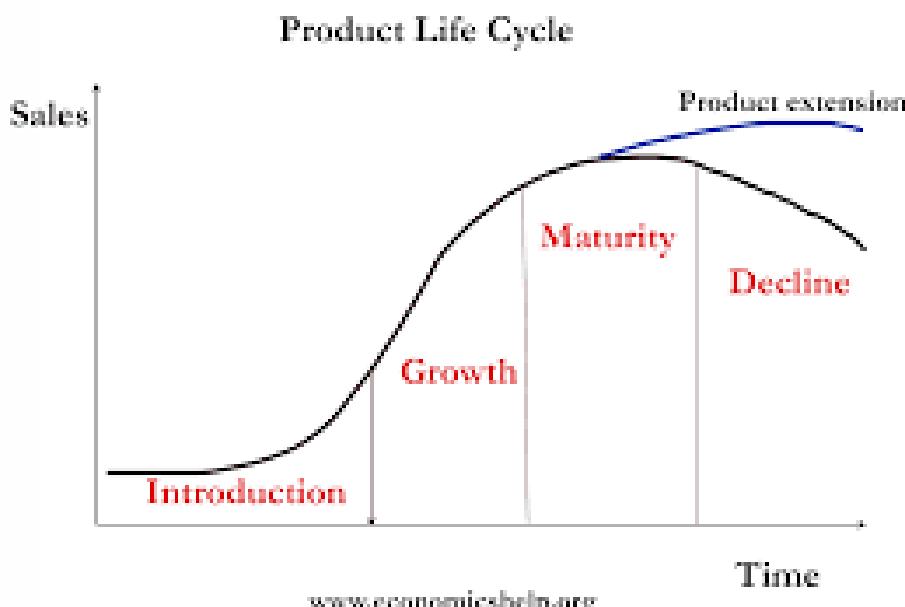
Here we work along with the interviewer(client) in helping them decide whether entering the particular market is a good idea or not. This section mostly ends up being the chunk of discussion in a market entry case and can be further broken down into three parts

### A. Industry Attractiveness



1. **Market Size** – This is a typical guesstimate. We need to find out the market that is attainable by the client. And then if this fits into the objective of the clients.
2. **Profitability** – Some industries are more profitable than others. It is important to determine since it will affect the net profits from entering.
3. **Growth / Product life cycle** – Since we are entering a market, it's important to understand what the future scenario of the market will be. Hence, we need to understand growth to figure out the net pay off by entering the market.

Also, to understand future scenario, we need to look at what stage is the market in. Is it going to be viable in the future or not? If yes, for how many years to come.



4. **Barriers to entry** – In this section we need to understand how difficult it will be to enter market. We need to discuss, what will be the barriers and how can we go around them?
  - a. Regulatory – differs from industry to industry
  - b. Economies of Scale – Some industries are based on cost advantage where economies of scale is indispensable, hence it becomes a barrier to entry (for e.g. Manufacturing commodities like steel, cement etc.)



## 5. Porter's 5 forces –

### I. Threat of new entry (Barriers to Entry)

Government Regulation, High Capital Requirements, R&D – IP/Patent, High Brand Equity, Human Capital, High Costs, Economies of scale/scope, Switching costs – Network Effects, Distribution Network

### II. Competitive Rivalry

Consolidated/Fragmented Market, Market Share distribution among competitors, Supplier/Distributor, Channel – Strength & Weakness, Contractual customer lock-ins define market trends

### III. Buyer Power

Segment Growth, WTP – f(demand), Distributor Channel Preference (Outbound Logistics), Demand-Supply Gap (Important), Price Sensitivity – Ascertain whether to go for Premium Pricing or not, Threat of forward integration – VERY HIGH SUPPLIER POWER, Needs w.r.t current product mix being offered in the market

### IV. Threat of Substitution (Value Chain & Substitute products)

Switching cost of buyers/suppliers, Threat of backward integration – Competition might acquire vendors to control its supplies of RM et al., Manufacturing Resources – Talent/Expertise availability, Availability of substitute products, Consumer Behavior evolutionary trends

### V. Supplier Power

Number of suppliers relative to buyers, Dependence of a supplier's sale on a particular buyer, Switching costs of buyers, Forward integration

## B. Financial Viability

Once you've established that the industry/geography is an attractive enough to enter i.e. there is business/revenue to be gained, you need to now assess whether it makes financial sense. To do this, we further divide it into 2 parts

1. Opex viability – What are the variable cost? How is the contribution margin? What is the breakeven volume required? Does this volume is in line with the market size estimate we did? How are the costs projected to grow?
2. Capex viability – What is the upfront investment? What financial metric are we chasing – ROI, IRR, payback period, NPV, EVA? What is the opportunity cost? Cost of capital? How are the cash flows?

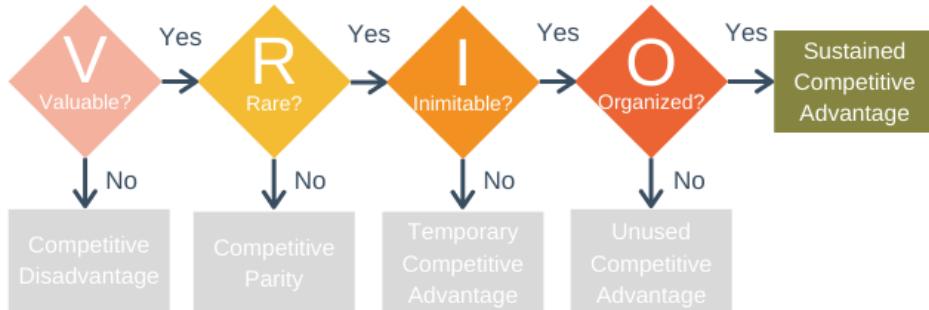
## C. Strategic viability

Let's assume that all the financials look good from the previous step. Now we need to understand whether we can pull this off and how would this decision impact the company in the long term. This analysis primarily leads to the next section of 'how to enter'

1. Short term – Do we have prior experience in market entry? Are there any synergies that we can drive from our existing business? How will the competition react in short term and what will be our response?
2. Long term – How will we build a loyal customer base? How do we create sustainable barriers to entry?

How do we know if we will have sustained competitive advantage? For this we can use the **VRIO framework** which analyses the resources and capabilities of the company

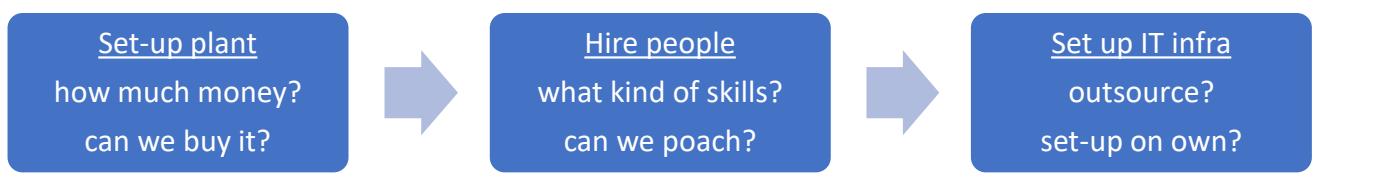
## VRIO Framework Process



### 2.2.4 Part 2: How to enter

There are many ways in which the company can enter the market which can be divided into two main buckets

- A. Buy – Acquire a company, merge with an existing player, do an alliance etc. You would do this if one of the two conditions satisfy
  - i. There is time constraint and you cannot build on your own
  - ii. You do not have the capability to build it on your own
- B. Build – If you decide to build, there are many other decisions you need to take in terms of how you are going to do it. We can analyse this in following way
  - i. Revenue driver decisions – What product, price, place, promotion to opt for? (do the 4P framework)? How will you acquire customers? How will you retain them?
  - ii. Cost driver decisions – Here we try to understand how are we going to set up the business? A simple way to do this is through value chain approach. You need to decide how each stage of value chain will be set up. Below is an example. You can set up a value chain basis the type of business and requirements.



## 2.3 New Product Launch

### 2.3.1 Framework

- **Understand the company** and its objectives
- **Understand more about the product:** value proposition, targeted customers, substitutes, cannibalization, disadvantages
- Ask about the **Market/Product segment** where the new product will be launch
- Conduct an **in-depth industry analysis** (Growth, size, competition, entry barrier, distribution)
- **Conduct Market Sizing** (Apply guesstimates fundamentals) [Rank if multiple segments are present]. Does it make financial sense to launch the product?
- **Identify costs associated with the product:** Cost of producing/launching the product (Variable Cost, Fixed Cost, etc.)
- **Pricing of the Product** (Refer to Pricing Framework): Calculate break-even volume, ROI, the break-even period
- Give a **crisp summary** to the interviewer whether numbers make sense or not and then move on to **strategic reasons** considering **strategic fit, potential risks, competitive response**. Some examples of strategic fit could be Existing Product line, Resources/Capabilities, Distribution, Risks, Competitive Response, Implementation related, Future economic outlook, and Technology changes in the future.

## 2.4 M&A

### 2.4.1 Introduction

M&A cases can be as an extension to market entry/ growth cases or can feature as standalone cases. The purpose of M&A is to create value and that can be of 2 types-

- 1) Value of Control
- 2) Value of Synergy

The actual value of how the acquirer benefits will depend upon the premium paid for the target.

Some key points to note before delving into the framework for M&A cases are:

#### A) Analyse the client's company

1. What are the possible reasons behind the client's desire for acquisition? These can be Strategic reasons such as growth opportunities, diversification etc and/ or possibility of Synergies, these could be financial or operational synergies
2. In which industry does the client operate
3. Client's key customers
4. Other business

#### B) Analyse the target's company

1. What sector does the target operate in. How big is the target's market, Market growth figures, the key competitors, possible threats etc.
2. The company's market share, growth figure, profitability, possibility of synergies, valuation etc

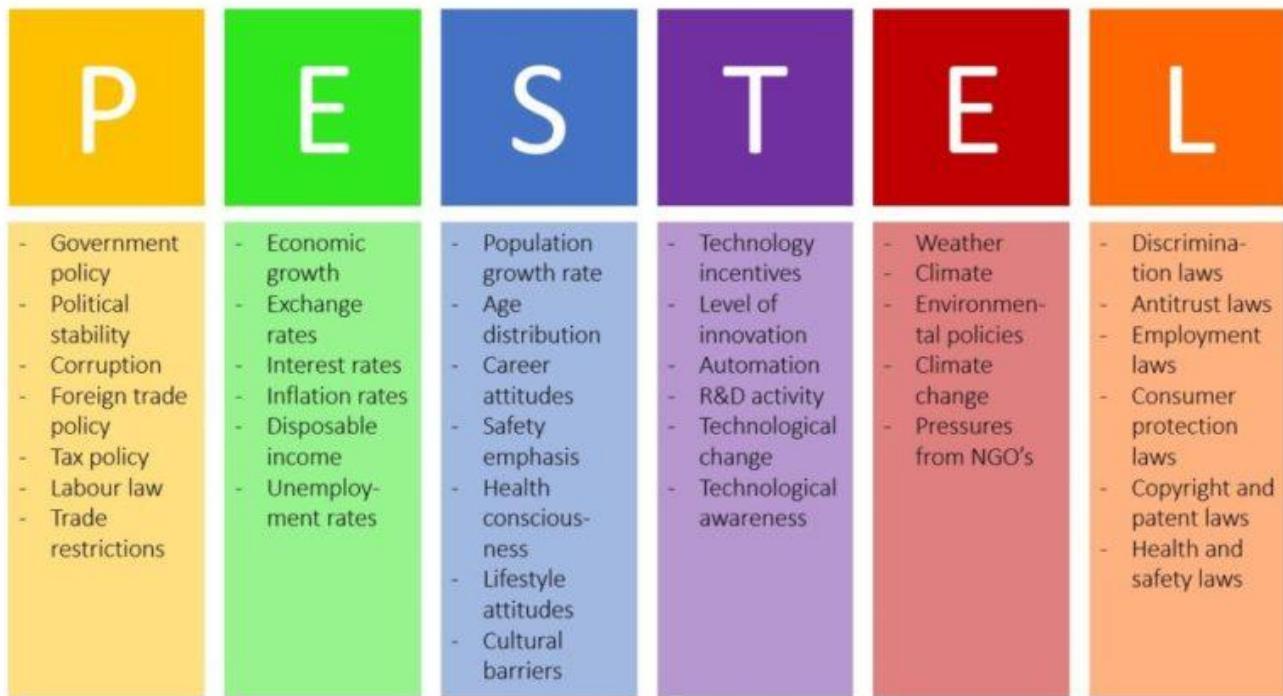
#### C) Identify Synergies from the transaction

Synergies refer to expected cost savings, growth opportunities and other financial benefits that occur as a result of the combination of two businesses. These synergies can be

1. Financial
2. Operational

**D) Analyse the cultural, strategic & organisational fit for the two entities**

**E) Analyse the risk involved with the M&A using the PESTEL framework**

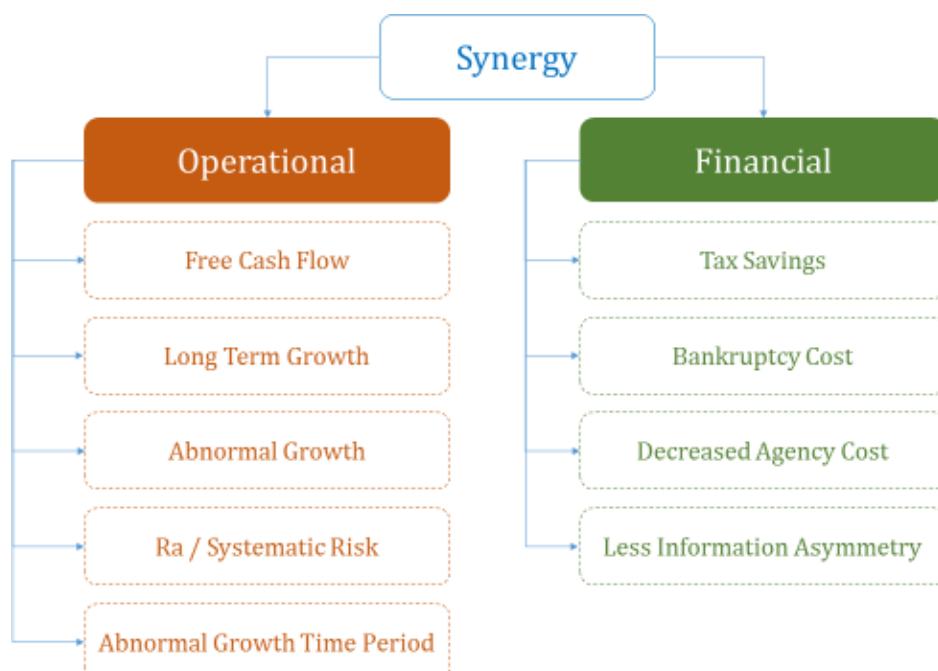


**F) Opportunity Cost**

One important but overlooked factor is the **opportunity cost**, which means what will be the spill over if the competition, instead of you, goes through with the M&A in question.

#### 2.4.2 Framework

The case will be majorly focused on the synergies that can be derived by the Merger or the acquisition. Standalone valuation of the companies is not the KEY question of the case. But to reach to the synergies, the first two steps – of understanding the acquirer and the target - are very important.



### 2.4.2.1 Operational

$FCF = EBIT (1-Tax) + Depreciation - Change in WC - Capex$

Where:  $EBIT = Revenue - Cost$

#### i. Free Cash Flow

##### a) Revenue = $P * \Delta Q + \Delta P * Q + \Delta P * \Delta Q$

- Delta Q: Ability to sell more
  - Better Product
  - Combining Strengths: Examples: Distribution network + Sales force, Access to cheap funds, better geographical reach – say more offices, Increased Management Bandwidth, Combining Sourcing capability with Distribution Reach
  - Cross Selling: Doing this is very risky though
  - Bundling
  - Up Selling
- Delta P: Ability to price higher
  - Low Competition
  - New products or better quality
  - Increase pricing power in case of strategic acquisition

##### b) Cost

- COGS decrease
  - (Dis) Economies of Scale/Scope: There can be losses as well if there are coordination problems or management bandwidth issue.
  - IT budget streamline
  - Pooling of technology
  - Reduction of overhead
- SG&A reduction
  - Remove duplication of Sales force
  - Promotion Streamline
- R&D cost reduction
  - Linking innovative capability
  - Sharing technology
- Reduction in threat of Hold up cost
  - Future Price Increase
  - Not in time supply
  - Not appropriate quality product

##### c) Depreciation Tax Shield

Asset write up: One-time gain as assets are market up to market value on acquisition

##### d) Change in Working Capital

One-time gain in case acquirer has better receivable management practice

##### e) Capex Investment

If Asset Turnover (Sales/Assets) increases, then less Capex investment required in future

#### ii. Growth

- Long term Growth doesn't change generally
- Look for opportunities that enable permanent competitive advantages

#### iii. Abnormal Growth

$G_a = ROC * Reinvestment\ Rate$

ROC can increase due to higher EBIT or higher Asset turnover

RR can increase due to availability of more positive NPV project

#### iv. Ra / Systematic Risk

Refer to PESTEL framework on **Section 2.4.1 E**

#### v. Abnormal Growth Time Period

- Can increase due to erecting barriers to entry
- Beta or systematic risk can reduce in case you combine:
  - Cyclical (Corporate Banking) + Counter Cyclical (Bankruptcy Advisory)
  - Cyclical (Luxury Business) + Non-Cyclical (Tobacco)
  - Vertical Integration sometimes reduces risk

#### vi. Opportunity Cost

It means what will be the spill over if the competition, instead of you, goes through with the M&A in question.

For that, we need to understand the industry, our long-term strategy, and the industry (one or multiple) that are in question.

Do the entire analysis from the competitor's PoV and see if their synergies can squeeze your bottom-line or even push you out of business in the long run.

### 2.4.2.2 Financial

#### i. Tax Savings

- Tax loss carry forward from a winding business
- Ability to take more debt – hence more tax shield

#### ii. Bankruptcy Costs

- As per MM, if Bankruptcy costs exist (that is there is destruction of value) then this adds value
  - Lost Customers
  - Lost Employees
  - Lost Supplier relationships
- Reasons for default:
  - Cyclical business
  - Cash Flow volatility
  - Competition
  - Technological obsolescence
- If Bankruptcy costs exist, then savings happen due to merger

#### iii. Reduced Agency Costs

- Debt brings discipline

#### iv. Reduced Information Asymmetry

- Internal capital markets (use of most economical source of funds)
- Exploit any mispricing in the markets

### 2.4.2.3 Analysis of Fit

#### 1. Cultural Fit

- Are the cultures of the merging entities coherent? for e.g. both are entrepreneurial orgs
- Are the cultures complementary? For e.g. an entrepreneurial design org and a highly organized sales org
- Do we expect significant cultural clashes on merger? For instance, formal vs. informal

## 2. Strategic Fit

- Are the long-term strategies of the merging firms in tune?
- Will the merged firm evolve a new long-term strategy?
- Costs associated with percolating new strategies through the merged org.

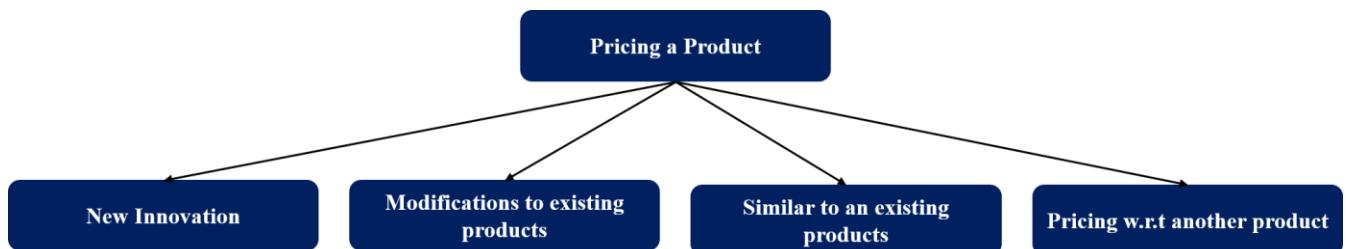
## 3. Organizational Fit

- Degree of similarity in org structures. Matrix, functional, divisional etc.
- Management overlap and talent

## 2.5 Pricing

### 2.5.1 Introduction

Pricing strategy cases usually have problem statements about how to price a particular product in order to obtain market share from its competitors or to launch a new product. To proceed further, the candidate's primary objective should be to understand the company's objective and the product completely to determine which pricing methodology should be used. The cases can fall under the following categories:



### 2.5.2 Framework

Below are few of the preliminary questions that will help scope the pricing strategy case effectively.

#### 2.5.2.1 Preliminary questions

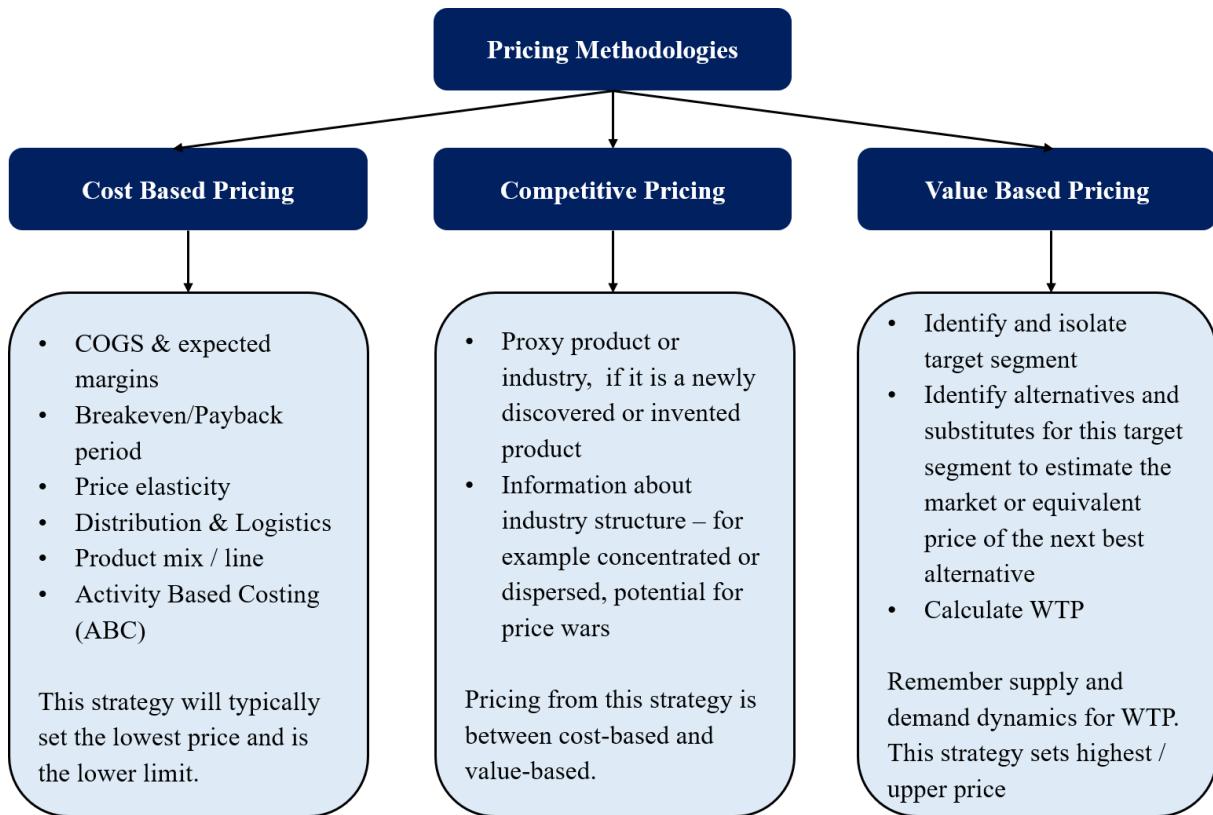
- Identify if it's a bidding, auction or a straightforward pricing problem
- Get a clear picture of the product and the target customer segment
  - Single product or product line?
  - Commodity or differentiated product? Identity what value the client is adding to the customers?
  - Is the product luxury or necessity? Is the product patented? Is it imitable easily?
- Get a clear picture of the firm and their objective with this product
  - First time entrant? Does the firm want to grow the market share or top line or bottom line?
  - Does the firm want to push the competitor out? Does the firm want to play price war?
- How big is the market? Does the client have any target segments in mind?
- Who are all the key suppliers for our product in the supply chain?

#### 2.5.2.2 Structuring the Case

Once the relevant background information is obtained, any of the below pricing methodologies (picture) can be used to price the product in question. The framework to solve pricing problems is relatively easy one –

- Once the framework is laid, start getting in-depth in each bucket (Cost, Competitive and Value based

- Establish the border constraints (e.g. policies & regulations etc.)
- Once you calculate the lower and upper ends of the pricing, offer a rational explanation which price range you would choose
- Price lower than Value based pricing and above Cost based pricing calculations. Reason: Customer switching costs, fluctuations in WTP etc.



### 2.5.2.3 General Tips

- Many pricing problems are masked ‘market size’ estimation problems. When the conversation goes in that direction, ensure you specify that you’d calculate the market size before pricing the product.
- There’s no single price – Always offer a price range. Mentioning the sensitivity metrics in calculations would fetch additional brownie points.
- Think about competitive reaction in the market.
- Topics like bundling and other innovative prices (discount scheme etc.) will fetch brownie points

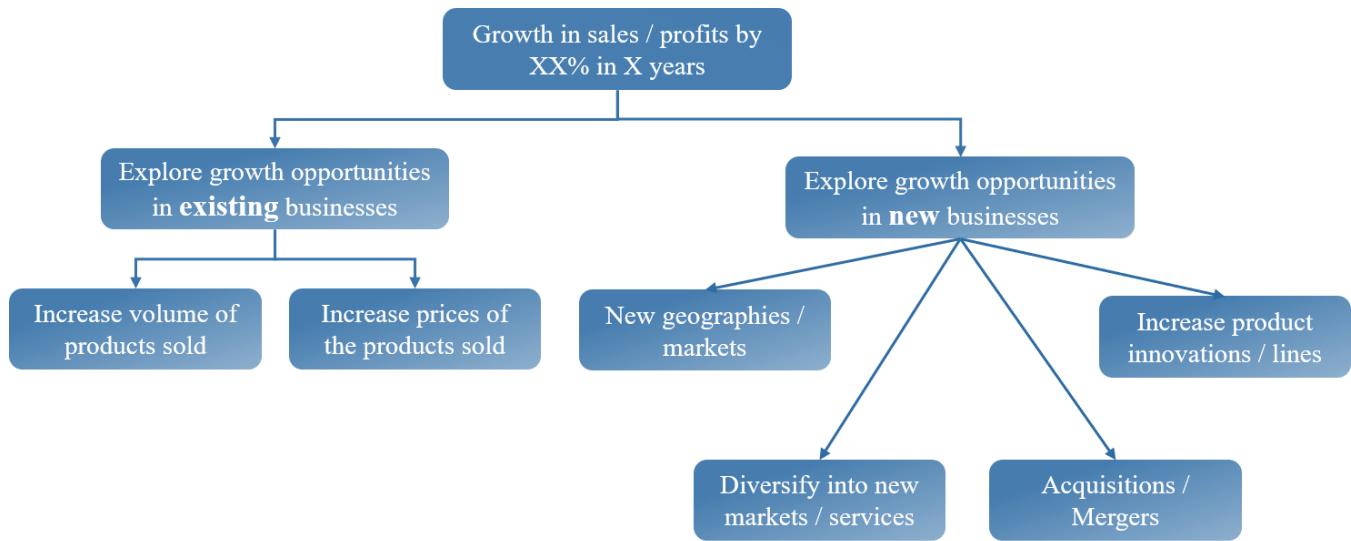
## 2.6 Growth

### 2.6.1 Introduction

Growth strategy cases usually have problem statements about how to increase the sales/profits/market share of a particular firm by X% in Y years. Once identified, growth strategy cases usually fall under one of the below categories:

- Exploring growth opportunities in existing businesses i.e. growth opportunities in existing markets with existing products/services.
- Exploring growth opportunities in new businesses i.e. growth opportunities both in new and existing markets with same or different products/services respectively.

Below is a broad framework covering the growth strategy case. Going forward we will deep dive into a conclusive framework for the same.



Below are few of the preliminary questions that will help scope the growth strategy case effectively.

### 2.6.2 Preliminary questions

#### A. Current business:

- Current customer, product and geography segments
- Current position of the firm given competitive scenario
- Current revenue and historic growth trend; how was growth being fuelled (organic / acquisitions)
- Current production capabilities (whether expansion of supply is possible in required timeline)

#### B. Growth required:

- Objective of growth (value of growth needed, rate of growth required and whether it is in line with industry growth rate, growth in revenue or profits, growth from a specific revenue stream)
- Timeline in which to achieve growth. If growth rate required exceeds the industry's, client would need to eat away in other players' market share or increase the market size and capture this increase disproportionate to its current market share.

#### C. Industry:

- Relative product positioning of all competitors or what differentiates the offerings? (To see if demand can be expanded for our product basis product features)
- Current and expected growth rate in industry (understand cause of significant change, if any)
- Size and maturity of industry (stage in industry life cycle)
- Price elasticity in the industry (to see whether an increase in prices is an option or not)

## 2.6.3 Framework

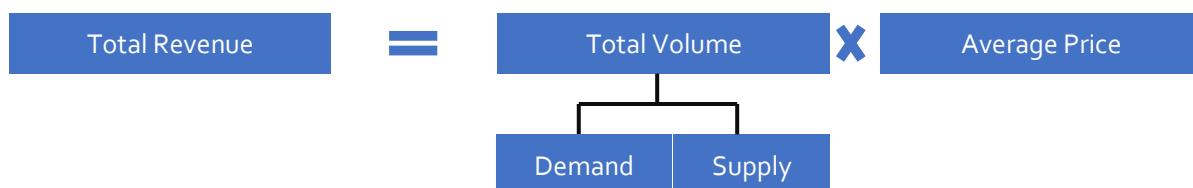
Post the initial scoping, we can analyse the **Ansoff matrix** to identify the key growth opportunities and where to drill down further.

		MARKET	
		EXISTING	NEW
PRODUCT	EXISTING	MARKET PENETRATION STRATEGY	MARKET DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
	NEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase market share</li> <li>• Increase market size</li> <li>• Increase basket size</li> <li>• Increase frequency of use</li> <li>• Increase product amount usage</li> <li>• Identify new applications/usage for the products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify new markets / geographies for products / services at home or abroad</li> <li>• Explore different sales channels</li> <li>• Target different customer groups by using market segmentation</li> <li>• Reposition the products by analyzing marketing mix</li> </ul>
		PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY	RELATED / UNRELATED DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGY
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend the product by developing new product modifications or repackage existing products</li> <li>• Produce different product variants</li> <li>• Develop related products / services</li> <li>• Develop new products to cater to a wider customer base</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vertical diversification</li> <li>• Horizontal diversification</li> <li>• Concentric diversification</li> <li>• Conglomerate diversification</li> </ul>

If the case objective falls under **market penetration** strategy, then the below framework might solve the objective.

### 2.6.3.1 Market Penetration Strategy

To increase revenue from the current product sold in the current market, we must boost total quantity of goods sold or the average price or both.



#### A. Total Volume

##### I. Boosting demand:

- Can increase the market share or increase the market size itself.
- To boost demand, try to increase the number of users and the frequency of usage.
- Understand value chain and decision-making process of customer. Consider the 4As of Awareness, Acceptability, Availability and Affordability to boost demand for the product.
  - Awareness (Share of Voice): sales force or marketing expenditure – Efficiency and Total Expenditure comparison with competitors
  - Acceptability: Complete value proposition of the offering in terms of
    - Commodity or differentiated
    - EVC, Service, warranty etc.
    - Has the competitor erected any switching costs, network effects or brand loyalty?

- Availability / Distribution network:
    - a. Comparison of outlet density with competitors (are our rivals present in more number of retail outlets?)
    - b. Comparison of types of retail outlets with requirement of target customers
    - c. Checking incentives of distribution partners and any particular reason they prefer to stock other products over ours
  - Affordability / Price: Why does the competitor offer a lower price?
    - a. Cost structure (can we more efficiently utilize our production capacity to reduce cost?)
    - b. Economies of scale
- II. **Boosting supply-** Check for regular stock outs in retail outlets or other distribution channels to gauge if there is a supply-side constraint.

## B. Average Price

Use profitability framework to understand customer segment contributions and whether prices can be raised, or a greater proportion of the costlier product can be sold to raise average price (preliminary question on level of differentiation and price elasticity of product can be used here).

### 2.6.3.2 Market Development Strategy

If the case objective indicates that we have to pursue any one the below, then we follow the market entry framework discussed earlier as the below mentioned categories fall under the broader spectrum on market entry.

- Identify new markets / geographies to launch the products / services both at home or abroad in order to expand the firm's business
- Identify alternative sales channels i.e. setting up online channels, or increase primary customer agents
- Identify different target customer groups other than ones already served by the firm based on demographic, geographic, behavioural and physiographic segmentation
- Identify loopholes in the marketing strategy by analysing the marketing mix to reposition the product to cater to a wider / newer target customer group

### 2.6.3.3 Product Development Strategy

This is a very basic framework of approaching such questions in a consulting interview. However, if you are preparing for Tech companies you should refer to various other sources for an exhaustive framework. By this point, the interviewee would have the details on the company's current capabilities, product lines and desired objectives. Based on the facts, the below is a broad guideline how to trickle down.

- Understand more about the product/products to identify scope for modifications / innovations.
- Analyze the value proposition, targeted Customers, any substitutes, cannibalization possibilities, and disadvantages if product developments are carried out.
- Do a detailed industry analysis i.e. market growth rate, industry cycle, market size, competition, competitive response, entry barriers, distribution difficulties
- Do Market Sizing (Apply guesstimates fundamentals and rank if multiple segments are present). Does it make financial sense to launch the product?
- Delve deeper -> Cost of producing/launching/modifying/improving the product (Variable Cost, Fixed Cost etc.)
- Pricing of the Product (Refer to Pricing Framework) Calculate break-even volume, ROI, break-even period

Now give a summary to interviewer whether numbers make sense or not and then move to strategic reasons considering strategic fit, potential risks, competitive response etc.

- Strategic Fit
  - Existing Product line
  - Resources/Capabilities
  - Distribution
  - Risks

- Competitive Response
- Implementation related
- Future economic outlook
- Technology changes in the future

If the case objective falls under **diversification** strategy, then a conclusive framework is not present, and the framework depends on case to case based on the problem statement and the desired objective.

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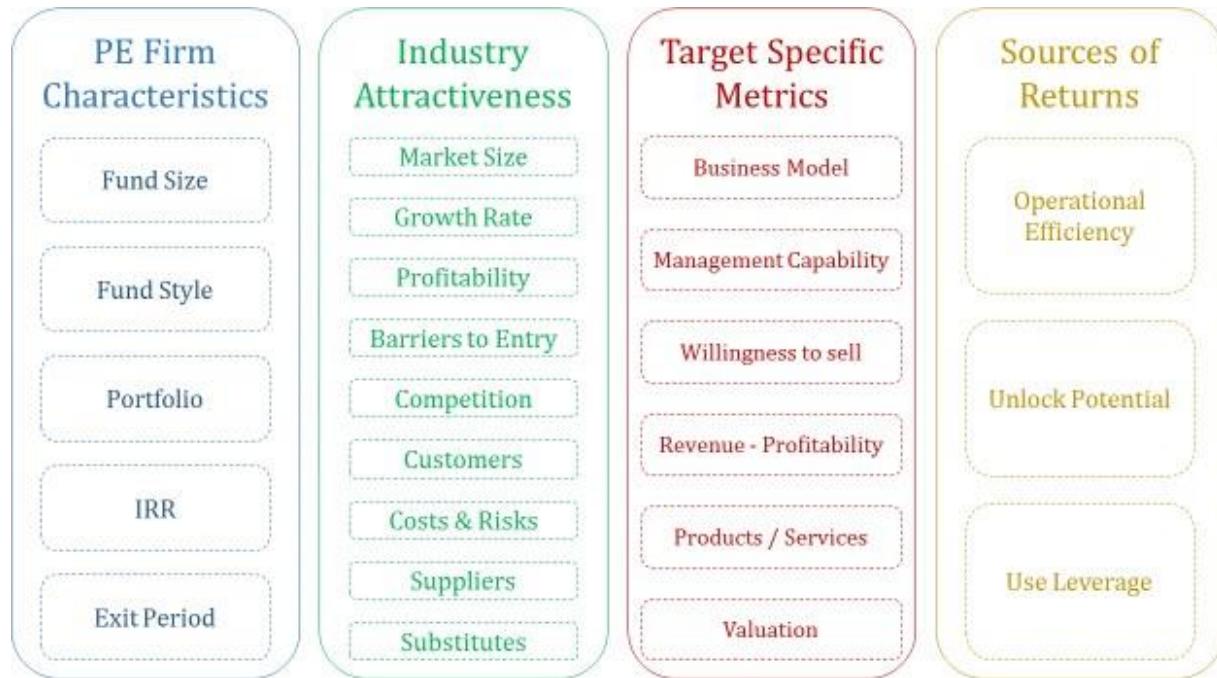
## 2.7 PE Investment

This section discusses investment into a business for financial gain.

Whenever asked to evaluate an investment it is essential to understand the objective first.

- **Why?** – Objective of investment: direct return from investment, incentives in the current business, synergies, etc.
- **What?** – What is the target rate of return from investment
- **When?** – Timeline of investment

Once the expectation setting is done, rationale to make an investment can be evaluated as follows:



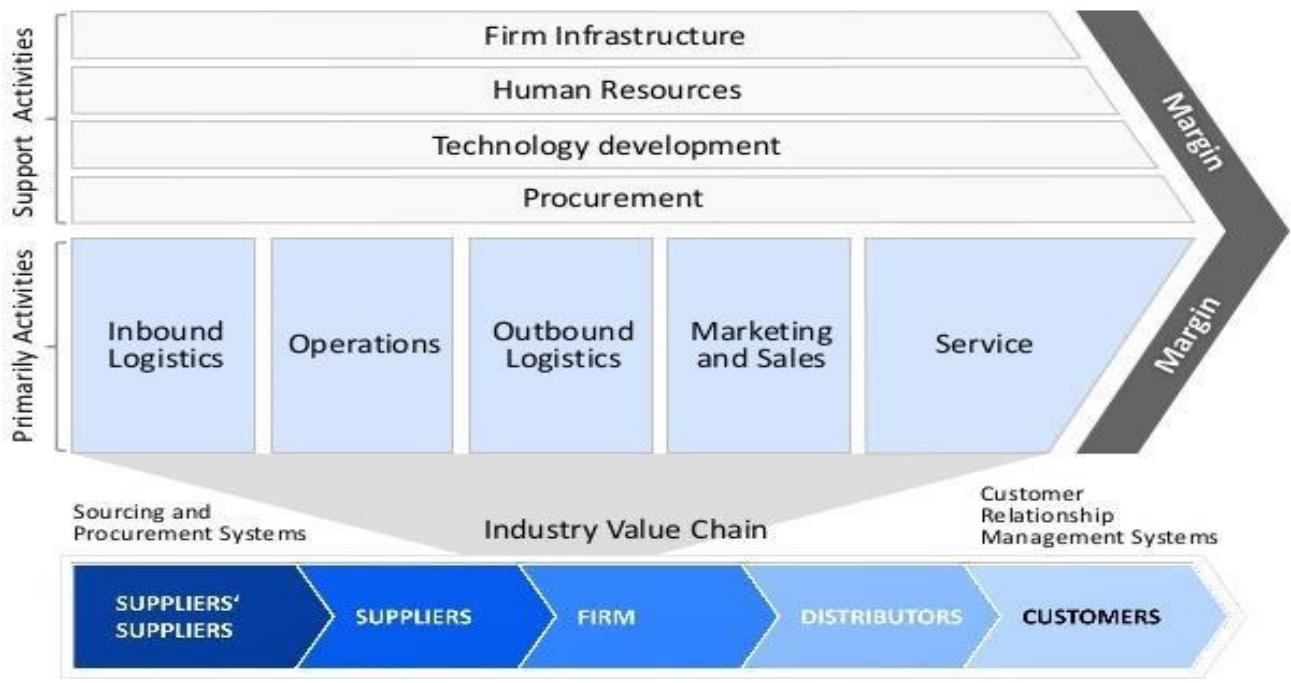
Only if the industry is attractive, target has high potential and expected return from the investment (from all sources) exceed target ROI, investment is justified.

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## 2.8 Value Chain Analysis

Value chain analysis is an extremely useful tool to solve many business problems.

The basic idea here is to understand different parts of the value chain and look for abnormalities/inefficiencies at each leg of the value chain.



A general value chain structure is as follows (some parts may not be relevant for certain industries):

### 2.8.1 Demand Forecasting

- How volatile is demand?
- What is the method used for high demand and high volatility raw materials?
- What are demand forecasting methods used? What is the confidence limit of the forecasts?
- What are costs of understocking vis-à-vis costs of overstocking?

Recommendations: Careful estimation of raw material quantities for high profit margin and high variability products

### 2.8.2 Sourcing



### 2.8.3 Warehousing

Are warehousing costs significantly higher than the industry average?

- Warehouse capacity sufficient?
- Is warehouse optimally utilized?
- Visibility of SKUs?
- Automated vs Manual operations

Recommendations: Apply EOQ to reduce inventory costs, manpower rationalization, layout modifications etc.

### 2.8.4 Manufacturing

Benchmark all costs with industry average

- Direct Labour
- Direct Material
- Overheads

Reason for higher costs?

- Process (process parameters, sequence of operations, utilization etc.)
- People (Incentives, skill, motivation etc.)
- Technology (obsolete, inefficient etc.)

Recommendations: **Make vs buy** (outsource?), Consolidate manufacturing capacity (Economies of Scale and Scope), upgrade technology, people management and training, process redesign etc.

### 2.8.5 Logistics

Benchmark with industry average

- Price (Negotiation, LTC/ futures etc.)
- Network optimization
- Supplier rationalization (consolidation, alternate suppliers etc.)

Mode of transport

- Efficiency of transport (TAT, load factor, quantity transported per trip etc.)

Distribution

- Penetration (no of distributors)
- Shelf space (% of own items vs % of other's items)

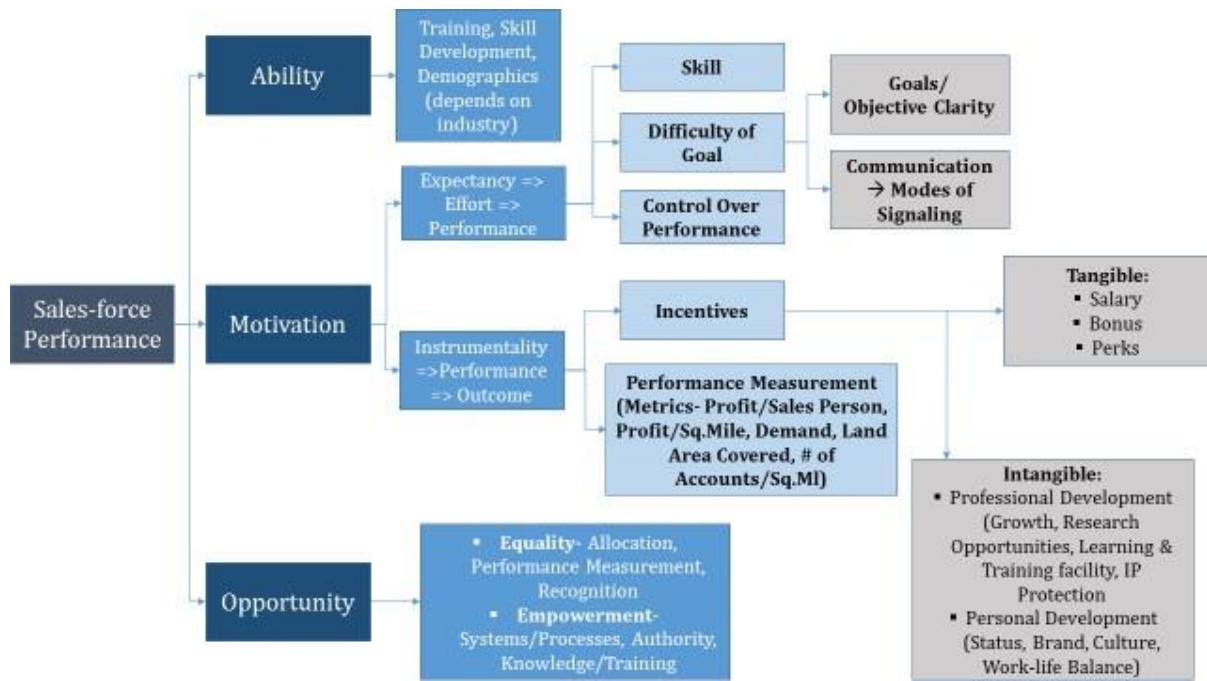
Recommendation: Look at distributor commission structure (push), discount schemes (pull), expand distributor network etc.

### 2.8.6 After Sales Service

- Service time, quality and cost
- Variety of services
- Accessibility/Availability
- Benchmark with industry average

Recommendations: Improve the metric (time, cost and quality) which is most important to the customer, open more service centers, relocate centers, acquire other service centers, outsource etc.

## 2.9 Sales Force Effectiveness



## 2.10 Other Types of Cases

### 2.10.1 Game theory, auctioning

(Revise Economics)

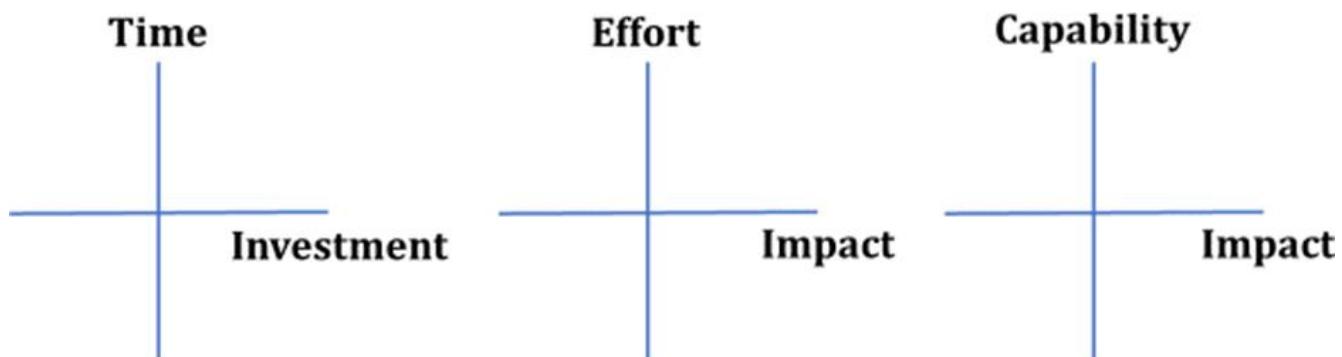
### 2.10.2 Abstract/Open Ended Cases

Example - 'Swatch Bharath', Political Campaign etc.

- Always Scope, Structure, Summarize
- Try to create a flow of process and then analyse each piece
- When providing solution again follow the same structure and flow
- This will ensure that even in abstract cases the thought process is structure.

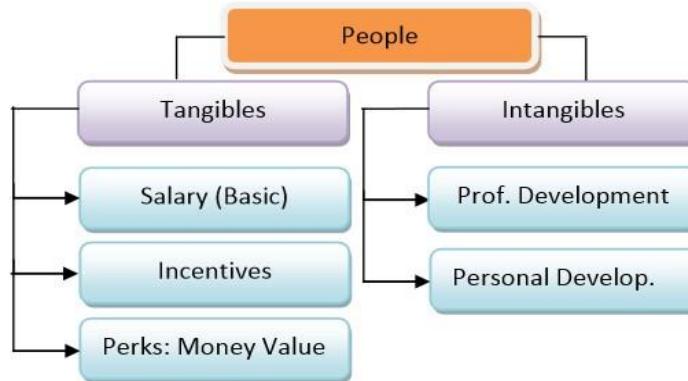
### 2.10.3 Prioritization Cases

Use prioritization matrix (2 x 2s). There are multiple ways of approaching this; some are given below:



## 2.10.4 People – Process – Technology Framework (Org. Structure)

### People:



- **Professional Development**
  - Growth
  - Research opportunities
  - Learning and training facility
  - IP (Doctors, Engineers and IT guys may need this)
- **Personal Development**
  - Status within the company
  - Brand of the workplace
  - Culture
  - Work life balance

### Process:

The following are the first few steps:



After identification of the Bottleneck, explore the following for improvement:

- Utilization improvement
  - Reduce idle time - Scheduling (*Trucks to port case*)
  - Batching /De-batching (*Grouping examples from factory examples in operations class*)
  - Setup time/Run Time (*Complete solution will depend on combination of the two*)

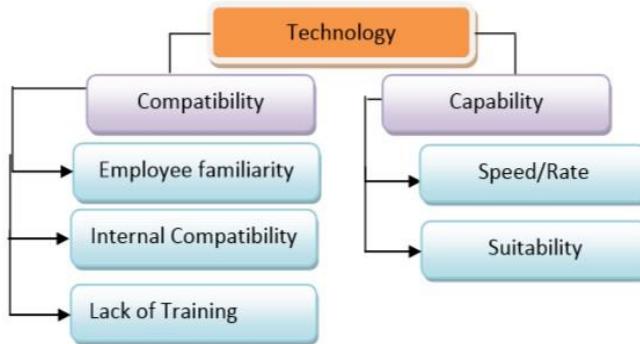
- Re-Design
  - Process improvement
  - Capacity Expansion (units of flow rate)
    - Reduce time
    - Add additional machines

$$\text{Capacity} = \frac{X}{\text{Setup time} + \text{Run time} * X}$$

$$= \frac{1}{\frac{\text{Setup Time}}{X} + \text{Run Time}}$$

- As X increases, Flow Time increases (bad) and capacity increases (good)

- As X decreases, Flow Time decreases (good) and capacity decreases (bad)

**Technology & Infrastructure:**

Sometimes it may not be clear where the issue is then use: (this is good from understanding how the business runs)

- 1) Man
- 2) Machine
- 3) Method
- 4) Materials
- 5) Measurement
- 6) Mother Nature (Environment)

## **SECTION 2: (PART B) PREPARING FOR CASE INTERVIEWS**

## 2.1 Preparing for the Case Interviews

### 2.1.1 An introduction to Buddy Programs

Buddy programs are programs through which each consulting firm interacts with the prospective candidates by conducting mock case interviews, organizing interactive sessions with senior management of the firm, and organizing meet and greet sessions (high-tea, lunches, and dinners). The buddy program is a two-way street through which firms can get to know you, and you can understand the firm's culture and work in detail. The detailed process through which the buddy program works is

1. Post the job application phase, firms typically take anywhere between 2 weeks to 4 weeks for releasing the shortlists.
2. Each shortlisted candidate is assigned a case buddy from the prospective firm.
3. From that point onwards till the interview day, the case buddy is a one-stop-shop for you to practice mock case interviews, clarify any queries concerning the interview process, and understand the firm's work nitty-gritties and culture.
4. Weekly or biweekly, you will have a buddy call in which you will practice different consulting cases (profitability, market-entry, M&A, etc.). Post the buddy call, the case buddy will point out areas in which you have performed well and areas that require development.
5. Through this interactive and iterative buddy program, you can strengthen your case interview preparation.

Through conversations with several students across the two campuses, we identified few key important points concerning the buddy programs.

1. Even though the consulting firms mention the buddy programs are not evaluative in nature, it is always good to put our best foot forward by – preparing for mock case interviews, asking thoughtful and insightful questions about the firms; questions that cannot be answered just by going through the firm's website, conducting ourselves professionally.
2. The frequency of the mock case interviews or buddy calls vary from firm-to-firm. However, the ownness of interacting with case buddies for mock interviews and queries lies with us and not the buddy.
3. Many candidates will have shortlists from multiple firms and will have multiple case buddies. Strictly behave professionally while interacting with the case buddies by not passing interview process details or type of practices cases done by firm to another.

### 2.1.2 Forming and effectively using Case Groups

Forming case groups is one of the most important steps in effectively preparing for the case interviews and the D-day. Forming and effectively utilizing case groups to practice mock case/normal interviews is paramount not only to consulting industry prospects but also to other industry/function prospects.

The best way to form and utilize case groups –

- Ideal case group should consist of 3 to 5 students from diverse backgrounds/industries/functions. Having a diverse case group will help students equip themselves with diverse industry business acumen and concepts that might come handy during the interview day.
- Case groups should be formed 45 to 60 days prior the D-day/interview day. Ideal time to start practicing cases within the case group is also 45 to 60 days prior the D-day.
- Each student should try to form 2 to 3 case groups encompassing students with shortlists from diverse firms to ensure they practice the depth and breadth of consulting cases.
- Case groups should be used to practice and discuss approaches towards guesstimates.
- In cases where students could not form strong case groups, try to schedule 30 to 60 minutes slots with your friends and solve cases.
- Share/discuss the mistakes made during the mock case interviews to enrich each other's case interview experience.

## 2.2 Common Dos and Don'ts while approach cases

### 2.2.1 Dos and Don'ts while during preparation

#### Dos

- Start at the appropriate time (just before the first shortlists are out)
- Do your research: Learn the key concepts and fundamentals of the case interview
- Practice with peers:
  - Form a good study group of 3-4 people (you can have multiple groups meeting at different schedules)
  - Each person prepares 1 case and asks another, so in total the takeaway for the group would be 3 cases in one sitting (but a person should only count the one he/she solves towards his/her number of cases solved)
  - After everyone has solved the case, the case can be discussed as a group to see how best to improve. Ask inputs from any person from the same industry [Buddies, Peers or Alums etc.]
- Write the cases & the workings you do in a separate notebook
- No. of Cases: The total does not matter, rather the depth and breadth of cases covered are important. If done diligently, 50-60 cases should be sufficient.
- Write down the mistakes you have made in the case and where you can make improvements. A notebook just for the errors & insights will be a great asset before the D –day.
- Buddies: Many of you would be allotted buddies from different companies. Make sure you leverage that! The cases you do with them are genuinely invaluable because they are in the industry and can give you accurate feedback. Share those feedbacks and cases with your peers and vice versa.

#### Don'ts

- Do not read the cases. All this does is waste a case that could have been better utilized in a simulated interview format with your case group
- Don't prepare alone - Case interview prep is best done in groups

### 2.2.2 Dos and Don'ts during the Case Interview

#### Dos

- Bring a pen and a pad of paper. It helps to jot down your thoughts/ decision trees while thinking through and presenting your analysis
- Feel free to pause. After being presented with the case, feel free to tell the interviewer that you need a minute to structure your thoughts
- Make it a two-way discussion/problem-solving session rather than a Q&A
- Structure your analysis before you begin. Before discussing your analysis, outline what you are going to say by presenting what you think are the key issues.
- Effective Communication is critical – Listen (take notes if you wish) and explain your thought process. State your assumptions. Remember the journey is more important than the destination
- There is never a reason to panic. Do not panic if you know nothing about the industry the case deals with. If you get stuck at any time during the interview, do not hesitate to ask for clarification
- Sanity check your assumptions and conclusions. If you feel your analysis has led you to contradict something you assumed or said earlier, do not be bashful about admitting it. Incorporate the new information and proceed
- Make insightful observations; it's an intellectual discussion – Organize your thoughts and stay structured. Be creative and push for conclusions
- Silence can be golden. It is better to be silent and think than it is to ramble pointlessly or ask irrelevant questions.
- Finally, while synthesizing the case try to state crisp recommendations with three supporting reasons
- There is usually time at the end of the interview to ask questions. The best advice is to know your audience. If you have time for two questions, try to make one about the firm in general, and make one about the interviewer's experiences

#### Don'ts

- Resist force-fitting a framework or defending impractical solutions. Interviewers value original thinking tailored to the case situation rather than a force-fit framework.
  - Don't be hasty and jump to conclusions. Everything should be logically thought through and concluded. The interviewer will be dropping hints throughout the interview – never forget to pick them up. If you ignore suggestions, it will be considered an inability to be open-minded and receptive
  - Don't lose your calm and maturity – imagine you are presenting to a client
  - Don't interrupt the interviewer. If you don't listen, the interviewer won't either.
  - Don't get bogged down in the details and miss the forest for the trees
  - Don't go on tangents
  - Don't be arrogant or disrespectful
  - Do not shy away from numbers. Embrace them! The calculations will be simple, write them down, and avoid mental arithmetic
  - Don't lie. Answer questions truthfully
-

## **SECTION 3: UNDERSTANDING PERSONAL EXPERIENCE INTERVIEWS**

Personal interview questions form a critical segment of the entire interview process. If you would go through case experiences of people, you will find that this portion of the interview sets the tone for the case-interview portion. Its purpose is to break the ice in the interview room, know the interviewee's background better, assess a candidate's confidence and composure, and it can be a great tool to ease the tension in the room. Remember, you never get a second chance to make the first impression so prepare well, and you will go a long way in a successful consulting career.

### 3.1 Breaking down a personal interview

- Your consulting interview usually kicks off with a 5-7 minute personal interview that is mostly based around your CV
- This is the best time for you to connect with the interviewer. Many alumni will tell you that if you handle the PI well, the case is usually easier to tackle
- Be original in your answers and be truthful. Interviewers are mostly Partners and Principals and they can quickly make out if your responses are genuine or not
- Try to engage the person – Remember, they are interviewing for as long (if not longer) as you are and they are humans too! Maintain eye contact and sit/talk confidently
- Regardless of which interview in the day it is for you, stay peppy and smile
- Brevity is important

### 3.2 Evaluation parameters in a personal interview

The idea behind the personal interview is to know the candidate better and to answer a few questions:

- *Will the candidate be able to handle the pressure of the consulting world-* this is reflected by assessing the candidate's demeanour, which should be confident and comfortable
- *Is the candidate agile and can he/she take up challenges-* this is reflected in the candidate's ability to portray leadership skills and he/she can take up initiatives
- *Can the candidate work in teams-* this is reflected either in prior experience of the candidate or questions asked in the interview process
- *Can the candidate hold a sensible and interesting conversation-* This is also called the Airport Test, wherein the interviewer tends to assess that if he/she is stuck with the candidate at an airport, how easy would it be to kill time with the candidate
- Lastly, it is difficult to survive in the consulting world without showing some *drive, passion, aspiration, energy and of course morals and ethics*

At every stage in the process, remember you are being tested on several factors including teamwork, leadership, and ability to handle failure, level of gumption, persuasion skills, and strong communication skills.

### 3.3 Preparing for a personal interview

**What is your story:** Every individual is different (just like everyone else) and hence it is important to have a story that is yours, completely.

- This must be a continuation of your CV. The story that you wove together in your CV must come to life during the interview. Although you won't have too much time, get every strand of your story in place.
- The interview could touch any part of your CV, and hence it is extremely important to know every word on your CV in an out.
- You must know your strengths, weaknesses, your fit as a consultant and more specifically your fit with the firm
- Do not neglect the PI to the very end. Keep working on it from Term 6 – Keep playing your story repeatedly in your mind

**The firm:** If you know about the 'dream' firm you want to join, you will find yourself more convinced and your voice will have more conviction when you tackle the personal interview questions.

- Equally important to an interviewer (besides your analytical horsepower etc.) is why you want to join a firm. They don't expect you to parrot the usual (what you will find in the —'About Us' section of their website). They want you to go deeper and understand the true nature of the firm
- Spend the last few weeks before the interview in de-constructing each of the firms you are interviewing with. Visit websites, check out their profiles on vault, speak to alumni, read case studies (HBS has case studies on unique aspects of all firms).

- Attend all the sessions that firms keep organizing throughout the year. You will get to listen to interesting aspects of the firm that you will otherwise not know

**Where do I start:** This is a question that haunts everyone – where to start and when to start. When you go through the repository of the questions attached, you might feel these are questions you can handle with a blink of the eye once you know ‘your story’ and ‘the firm’. However, this isn’t completely correct. These questions need their own sweet preparation time for you to make the first impression you want to.

There are several categories in which we can divide the personal interview questions and some of the lines between the categories might be blurred but it does not hurt to over-prepare just a little bit. While you go through these, always remember two things – what is going to take you a long way is clarity in what you want, conviction in what you speak and being truthful to your story.

1. **Personal:** This is primarily ‘your story’ which includes who you are, what are your goals, and how does consulting fit into your goals and in bigger scheme of things. This is where your values, what you believe in also becomes important. The interview tip here is to know yourself in and out, know what you stand for, what are your goals and be true to them.
2. **Management/ leadership style, and interpersonal skills:** This ties back to knowing your leadership and management style. Are you a leader who believes in leading by example, or are you a collaborative leader. Remember, no leadership style is right or wrong but knowing your style is critical. It is ok to have multiple leadership styles, which can change with situation but what is your core style is important to answer all questions – situational or direct.
3. **Strengths, weaknesses and skills:** Know yourself. This should not be easy. I am sure by the time you would have started preparing for these questions, you would have built on what you would have already known while preparing for ISB interviews and other job interviews.

**Special note on weaknesses:** Focus on strengths and don’t ignore your weaknesses. One tip, look for real weaknesses and not the ones that look good. Be genuine in recognising your shortcomings and don’t sugar-coat weaknesses as strengths.

4. **Extra-curricular:** This again forms a part of your personality but serves independent mention primarily because it communicates whether the candidate has passion and interests outside studies. This is a direct reflector of passion, dedication, and a well-rounded personality. Important thing to note here is not how much you can blow out, but how passionately can you speak about it

Personal interview preparation process will not just help you in the job but to understand yourself better as a person. Go through the process diligently.

### 3.4 STAR Framework

Interviewers look for structure in the way you tackle personal interview questions too. Throughout an interview, they would be assessing if you have a general tendency to structure your thoughts before you speak or not.

Hence, try to frame all your answers related to any work that you have done in the past (in office, college or otherwise) in the STAR framework as follows:

**S (Situation)** – Start with a quick synopsis of the situation and why the story is relevant in the first place.

**T (Task)** – Within the broader situation, describe the tasks you were personally responsible for. Go specific this point onward.

**A (Action)** – Describe how you carried the task out, what difficulties you faced, where and how you sought help, and mention the kind of leadership qualities you displayed.

**R (Result)** – Finally, and very importantly, mention the result of your efforts. Try to quantify things as much as possible. At every step, ask yourself “so what?”. For example, running an online marketing campaign is not a result, it’s the action. The result would include quantifiable parameters like leads generated, unit sales, revenue increase, etc.

### 3.5 Sample personal interview questions

We have listed a few commonly asked personal interview questions below. These are only indicative, and in an actual interview you could be faced with any random question.

But broadly, if you are prepared with structured answers for these, you’d be able to answer most other questions too.

### 3.5.1. Personal

#### A. Background

1. Tell me about yourself.

*Note: This is one question that you will certainly be asked in the beginning of each and every interview. Have a crisp one to two minute answer prepared for this (don't overshoot two minutes). Broadly, cover your education, work experience and your interests (mention special achievements, if any). Within the two minutes as well, dedicate the lion's share to your work experience. Make sure you can speak for at least five minutes on anything that you mention when you introduce yourself, because most interviewers will pick queues from this to lead the rest of the interview. Hence, measure each word well and prepare thoroughly for this one.*

2. What would you like me to know about you that is not on your resume?
3. What are the three most important events of your life?
4. What were you doing during this gap of time I see here on your resume?
5. Where did you grow up? What are your three major accomplishments?
6. What was an experience in your life that you would want to go back and change?

#### B. Self-description

1. How would your friends describe you?
2. Give me three words to describe yourself.
3. Enlist your top three qualities

#### C. Goals

1. What new goals have you established for yourself recently?
2. What are your five to ten year career goals?
3. What are your career and educational goals?
4. What are the attributes of an ideal job for you? If you could do "it" all over again, what would you do differently?
5. What are you looking for from this role?
6. How long a commitment do you plan to give me?
7. What is your ideal job?
8. What other types of positions are you considering?
9. What kind of boss would you prefer?
10. Why are you pursuing this field?
11. What would you like your lasting impression to be?
12. Do you have a final statement?
13. What are your career options right now?
14. How could you have improved your career path?
15. What salary are you expecting? In addition to salary, what benefits would most interest you?

#### D. Values

1. What does "success" mean to you?
2. What does "failure" mean to you?
3. Which is more important to you: money or the type of job?
4. Who do you admire? Why?
5. What do you get passionate about?
6. Who is your hero, and why?

#### E. Previous bosses

1. Do you have an offer from the firm you worked with before doing your MBA?  
If yes, what are your thoughts on the offer?  
If no, why do you think do they not want you back?
2. Do you have other offers? Why would/wouldn't you take our offer over one of the others?
3. What can you tell me about your past bosses?
4. How do you think a former supervisor would describe your work?
5. What did you enjoy most about your last employment? Least?
6. How did you find your internship experiences?
7. Describe the job or the activity, which has had the greatest impact on your career goals.

### 3.5.2 Management / Leadership Style

1. What is your management philosophy?
2. Define leadership
3. Tell me about a time when you successfully resolved a conflict or disagreed with your boss.
4. Give me an example of a leadership role you have held when not everything went as planned.
5. What qualities should a successful manager possess? Do you have these attributes (of a good manager)?
6. What two attributes are most important in your job?
7. Give an example of a situation in which you provided a solution to an employer.
8. Give an example of a time in which you worked under deadline pressure.
9. Name a point in your life where you turned a negative into a positive.
10. Tell me about a decision you have made that you later regretted.
11. How do you feel about working overtime?
12. Give me an example of how you manage multiple projects.
13. What would you say to a boss that has a sub-par idea?

### 3.5.3. Strengths / Weaknesses and Skills

1. Are you creative? Give me an example. What have you done that you consider creative?
2. What are your strongest abilities?
3. What is your biggest weakness?  
*Again, we'd stress that do not sugar-coat your weaknesses as strengths. Be genuine and recognise your shortcomings. Never say that being a perfectionist is your biggest weakness. Some applicants think that this makes you look better, but it seems that you not secure. Also, mention what you are doing to overcome the weakness.*
4. Why should we hire you?
5. Give me an example of something that you have done that shows initiative.
6. What makes you stand out among your fellow students?
7. What makes you different from the other candidates for this position?
8. What can you do for us that someone else cannot do? What was the most important thing you learned from your previous experience/internship?
9. How do your skills relate to our needs? What can you offer us?
10. What have you disliked in your past jobs?
11. How long before you can make a contribution? In the past year, what have you been dissatisfied about in your performance?
12. What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?
13. Have you ever had any failures? What did you learn from them?
14. How do you feel about working in a structured (or ambiguous) environment?
15. Are you able to work on several assignments at once?
16. In what kind of work environment do you do your best work?
17. What kinds of tasks and responsibilities motivate you the most?
18. What has been your greatest challenge?

### 3.5.4. Interpersonal Skills

1. How competitive are you?
2. How do you work under pressure?
3. Give me an example of a time when you successfully worked within a team.
4. What types of people seem to rub you the wrong way?
5. Define cooperation.
6. What kinds of people do you enjoy working with?
7. What kinds of people frustrate you?
8. Have you ever managed a conflict? How?

### 3.5.5. Education

1. Why did you decide to pursue an MBA?
2. Why this Institute?
3. What made you decide to major in\_\_\_\_\_?
4. What have you learned at this B school that will help you on this job?

5. Do you hold any leadership positions?
6. What electives have you taken? Which did you enjoy the most?
7. What college classes did you like the least? Why?
8. Why didn't you attend (another school)?
9. How do you balance the different priorities MBA student life presents?
10. Did your grades accurately reflect your ability? Why/Why not?
11. Describe the course that has had the greatest impact on your thinking.
12. Did you ever have conflicts with your study group? How did you resolve them?
13. What are your five biggest takeaways from your MBA?

### 3.5.6 Extra Curricular

1. What extra-curricular school activities are you involved in?
2. What have you learned from your activities?
3. Were your extracurricular activities worth the time you put into them?
4. How did you become involved in your extracurricular activities?
5. What do you enjoy doing outside of work-in your free time?
6. What is your favourite book/movie/song/painting-or author/actor/singer/artist?
7. Which magazines/newspapers do you read regularly? Which books have you read recently?
8. Have you ever done volunteer activities?

### 3.5.7 Job/ Company/ Industry

1. Why are you interested in \_\_\_\_\_? / Why do you want to work for us?
2. What makes you want to be a \_\_\_\_\_?
3. What makes you think you would be successful in \_\_\_\_\_?
4. What do you think this job requires?
5. Given that you have no background in this field why are you interested in it?
6. What do you predict is going to happen in this industry in the next 5 years?
7. How would you go about evaluating a business?
8. What do you know about our company?
9. Do you know who are competitors are? How do you assess them?
10. What interests you most about this position? What parts of the job do you think you would find the least satisfying?
11. You have five minutes to describe the most relevant and specific items in your background, which show you are uniquely qualified for this position.
12. What would you change about our firm?
13. What particular expertise do you have that would lend itself well to this position?
14. Demonstrate/illustrate skills that you can transfer from past experience.
15. What concerns you about our company?
16. What do you believe are the key issues and problems in our industry today?

### 3.5.8 Location

1. Why do you want to relocate to \_\_\_\_\_?
2. Are you willing to relocate every two years or so?
3. How do you feel about travel?
4. Are you familiar with how taxing travel can be?

### 3.5.9. Functions

#### A. Consulting

1. Why consulting? Why this firm?
2. What does a consultant do? What are the three most important qualities of a successful consultant? How is our practice different from other consulting firms?
3. How do you rank in relation to your peers?
4. Imagine we are reviewing your performance at our firm after working with us for six months. What do you think our evaluation would be?
5. Highlight your top achievements/accomplishments?
6. What has been your biggest setback?
7. With what other firms are you interviewing? How have you fared?
8. What is the most important thing that you have learned in the past year?

9. Give me an example of a situation in which you had a problem, how you identified the problem, the methods you used to solve the problem and discuss the resolution.
10. If given an offer, how will you decide whether or not to accept it?

## B. Marketing

1. Why ISB? Why not IIM?
2. What is marketing? Define the difference between marketing and advertising.
3. What does it take to be successful in marketing?
4. What are the attributes of a successful marketing campaign? How do you motivate others, particularly those over whom you have no direct authority?
5. How have you developed your interpersonal skills?
6. Give me a specific example of a time you solved a problem creatively?
7. What is the most important thing that you've learned about managing people from your previous work experience?
8. Rank order characteristics important for brand management.
9. Scenario: Create a plan to market Brand X in Bangalore.
10. What did you dislike about your former employer?
11. Give me a 30 second commercial about yourself.
12. Pick a good and bad ad campaign and discuss them.
13. Give an example of a well/managed product.
14. Pick a product and position it.
15. Give me an example of a leadership role you have had. Give me another one, give me another one, give me another one.....

## C. Corporate Finance (Investment Banking)

1. Why investment banking? Why this bank?
2. Why corporate finance as opposed to sales and trading? What are your outside activities? Why would you be willing to give them up for such a demanding job?
3. What role do you play in group situations?
4. What would you do if offered drugs as part of the deal? (or other ethically focused questions.)
5. How smart are you? How do we know how smart you are?
6. Sell us on your quantitative skills.
7. If we made you an offer today, would you take it?
8. What did the Dow, S&P or NASDAQ close at yesterday?
9. What stocks do you follow and why?

## D. Sales and Trading

1. What other firms have you talked to?
2. What makes you think you can sell?
3. Would you like to do sales or trading? Why?
4. Tell me what you think a trader (or salesperson) does.
5. Why selling debt vs. selling equity?
6. Why not corporate finance?
7. What do you think having an MBA does for you in this field?
8. What particular markets or instruments are you interested in?
9. Describe an instance where you persuaded someone to do something they initially didn't want to do.
10. What about your personality will make you a good trader?
11. How will you motivate yourself to make the calls you hate to make?

## E. Strategic Planning & Corporate Finance

1. What do you hope to gain by working for our firm?
2. Where do you see yourself five years from now?
3. How do you see your career progressing in our firm?
4. What do you know about our industry?
5. Our \_\_\_\_\_ division is thinking of introducing a (such and such) new product. How would you go about determining if this is a good idea?
6. How does M&A activity in banking affect our industry?
7. We are having trouble managing our (division.) What do you think the key performance metrics might be and how might you go about improving them?
8. How would you go about valuing our (division) for a potential sale, spin-off, and liquidation?

### 3.6 Questions to Ask

*Before you read the questions below, we'd recommend you come up with your own set of questions that you would want to ask interviewers. Picking up questions from question banks like the one below (especially if you don't find the question relevant yourself) can make you come across as someone who is reciting a well-rehearsed script and is not genuine.*

*Use this list only as a guide, and don't pick questions directly from here. Understand that all other candidates also have access to this list.*

#### A. Company

1. What are your company's strengths and how do you capitalize on them?
2. What are your company's weaknesses and how are you dealing with them?
3. How have you strategically responded to the competition?
4. Where will the major sources of your business be in the next 5 years?
5. What challenges are facing this company? Do you think your company is reacting to them?
6. Do you have plans for expansion?
7. Have you cut your staff in the last three years?
8. What is the largest single problem facing your staff/department right now?

#### B. Industry

1. What changes do you anticipate in the industry?
2. What risks will your company face due to industry changes?
3. How does the industry react to recessions (or events like the COVID-19 pandemic)?

#### C. Career Opportunities / Path / Training

1. What are the best opportunities at your firm for new hires?
2. How is worker performance measured and reviewed?
3. Do you have a mentor program? How about formal training programs?
4. Why do people leave?
5. Why have you stayed with the company?
6. Describe my initial assignments?
7. If you hire me, what are the three most pressing issues you need resolved?
8. What kinds of assignments might I expect during the first six months on the job?
9. Are salary adjustments geared to the cost of living or job performance?
10. In what ways is a career with your company better than one with your competitors?
11. Please describe the duties of the job for me.
12. Does your company encourage further education?
13. How often are performance reviews given?
14. What is the usual promotional time frame?
15. Has there been much turnover in this job area?
16. Is there a lot of team/project work?
17. Where does this position fit into the organizational structure?
18. Do you fill positions from the outside or promote from within first?
19. What skills are especially important for someone in this position?
20. What qualities are you looking for in the candidate who fills this position?
21. Will I have the opportunity to work on special projects?
22. What is the next course of action? When should I expect to hear from you, or should I contact you?

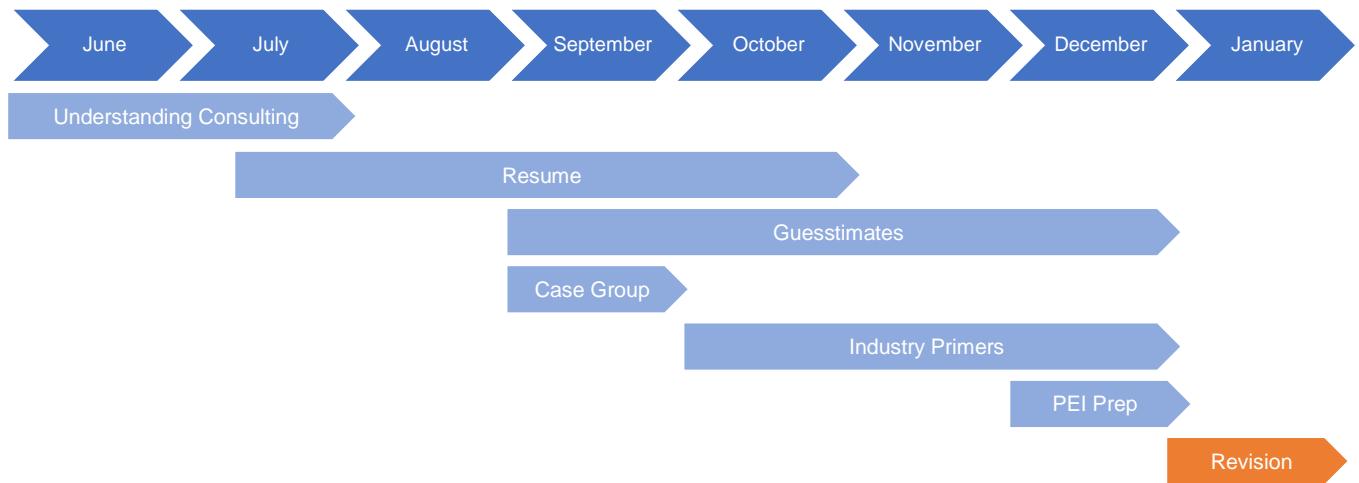
#### D. Culture

1. What is your company's management style?
2. How do you feel about creativity and individuality?
3. What do you like best about your job/company?
4. What characteristics do the achievers in this company seem to share?

## **SECTION 4: CONSULTING PREPARATION TIMELINES**

**Please note that this section was created on the assumption that placements would be conducted in Jan'21. Please use this only as a reference point given the limited clarity on placement timelines**

This section is meant to cover how you should ideally plan your preparation for Consulting firms. There is a ton of ambiguity around which activities should be undertaken by when and how to go about them. We've spoken to multiple consulting aspirants over the years and come up with this list of to-do's; do note though – **no single formula works for everyone and there is never a one fit all solution**. This is just our guidance, feel free to modify it according to whatever works best for you. We've tried to cover the critical activities you should undertake on a monthly basis:



## June: Understanding Consulting

- **Understand what consulting really is and whether it is meant for you.** Attend all Consulting 101 workshops (organized either by your peers or consulting firms) held on campus and speak to alums about the work they do in consulting firms
- Make a list of alums in Consulting firms and start reaching out to them to introduce yourself; **these alums would be extremely helpful going forward**

## July: Understanding Consulting, Resume

- **Ensure you attend all Consulting Club events diligently;** these events will cover a range of important topics and will help bring you up to speed on several dimensions
- Start making a **list of different consulting firms that visit campus** and evaluate them on based on their core competency and Industry expertise and whether or not you would fit into the kind of work involved
- **Form a small group of people who mostly come from similar backgrounds as you,** preferably 3-4 students. This will be your resume review group & will provide the first line of feedback on your CVs
- **Take the first pass on your resumes** with your review group; show them your CV and ask them to critically evaluate the same. Also, look at the way they have explained different sections in their CV

## August: Resume

- Once you have debated your CV with your review group, **share the same with 2-3 relevant alums and take their feedback;** incorporate their suggestions and make a new version. Take this version again to your review group and ask them to do the same
- **Push your Consulting Club to start planning on-campus 1-1 resume review** workshops with alums from different firms; ensure you attend each of these workshop sessions
- Companies will start doing resume deep-dive sessions during this time – **use them to the fullest!** Attend them and ask questions, clarify all your doubts during these sessions
- **Ensure you are editing and revising your resume after each such 1-1 resume workshop** based on the feedback you receive; **avoid sitting for reviews with alums from the same firms;** e.g. if your first review was slotted with someone from McKinsey, make sure you ask the Consulting Club to slot the next with Kearney
- You should ensure that through August, based on your network of alums, friends and the Consulting Club, **you show your resume to anywhere between 5-10 people** and take their feedback to put a broad structure together

## September: Resume, Case Group, Guesstimates

- **Start going extremely aggressive on your resume now;** tap into the entire ISB network and reach as many alums as possible – **send your CV across to them and ask them for a 15-20 min slot over video call**
- While working on your resume in parallel. Few guidelines while forming a case group are as follows:
  - Ideal size of a case group is 5-7 members
  - Ensure that there is diversity in your case group to ensure that different perspectives are being brought on the table
  - Ensure that at least 1 person in your case group has had some exposure to cases in the past**Your case groups will be extremely important, so make sure you choose wisely!**
- **Start pulling consulting material together** – collate casebooks, video series, any other material that might be helpful
- **Read through the ISB casebook** – this is a good starting point and will help you understand how consulting interviews typically work
- Push your Consulting Club to **host as many Guesstimate and Case workshops** with alums, to help familiarize you with how case interviews work and the broad do's and don'ts
- Start with basic case prep – **we suggest you should start with guesstimates.** This will give you a flavor of problem solving, without you getting too overburdened. **Try and go through the L1 and L2 problem set from the ISB Casebook guesstimate section in your case groups**

## October: Resume, Guesstimates, Industry Primers

- Given your placements are scheduled for January, **we expect the first set of resume submission deadlines to be Early November**
- **Use October to close your main resume out for good;** this is also the month where you should make **versions of your resume** (other than a single master version) – for different companies or functions, based on what suits best
- Ideally, you **should have undergone at least 20-25 resume reviews**, either through Consulting Club or through your own network of alums and friends
- **Continue with your guesstimate prep** and start approaching the L3 problem set; by now you should be comfortable with basic to moderate guesstimates
- **Start reading up on different industries and sectors;** make broad notes on size of different industries, trends, future prospects etc – this will aid your case prep immensely

## November: Guesstimates, Cases, Industry Primers

- As your shortlists start coming in, **reach out to as many alums from those companies to understand the culture of the firm** and what they look for in potential candidates
- **Start working on business cases now;** work in your case groups and do anywhere between **1-3 cases every day.** One person in your group should play the role of an interviewer and the other should play the role of an interviewee, rest can be observers. At the end, everyone pools their feedback in
- **Avoid reading cases from case books in silos, try and do as many mock interviews as possible.** For now, stick to doing mock interviews in your group and ensure different people interview you
- Focus your case prep at this stage to mainly **Profitability and Market Entry cases** and ensure you start getting comfortable with these before moving to other types
- **Tailor your resume based on the shortlists released;** learn from your mistakes and see if you need to make any tweaks for the next set of applications
- **Finish the L4 guesstimate problem set in your case groups;** by now you should be able to solve any guesstimate with complete ease

## December: Guesstimates, Cases, Industry Primers, PEI Preparation

- **Leverage your assigned consulting buddies to the fullest** (either assigned by the Consulting Club through their alum network or from the companies you have a shortlist with); ensure you do anywhere between 3-5 mock interviews with each of your assigned buddies during this month
- **Reach out to alums placed at Consulting firms and request them for help with mock interviews;** start trying to do mocks now outside only your case group and leverage other people
- Start moving beyond Profitability and Market Entry, and approach Pricing, M&A etc
- **Ideally, by the end of this month, you should target at least 20-30 mock interviews** with as many different interviewers as possible

- **Start your PEI (personal experience interview) preparation;** make a list of 40-50 HR questions (you can use the ISB case book for reference on this) and think of your answers to these questions
- **Be extremely thorough with your resume** – ensure you can justify everything you have put there and make sure you have a backup prepared for every number stated on it

## January: Revision

- Revise everything you've done till now and **drop all your prep 3-4 days prior to placements** – you have no idea how much this can help! 😊 Stay calm and hope for the best!  
Don't speak to too many people on their prep levels and don't compare how many cases they've done compared to you!

## **SECTION 5: CO20 INTERVIEW EXPERIENCES WITH SOLUTIONS**

The Co'20 cohort collectively participated in well over 300+ Case Interviews across different firms, interview types and formats, which required us to combine and apply a diverse range of frameworks, management concepts, structured thinking, quantitative abilities, critical reasoning skills, qualitative and creative thinking, stress resilience and pure common sense to navigate complex challenges, and to present fact-based and actionable recommendations, based on coherent thinking.

The key takeaways from this section shouldn't be the exact solutions proposed by the candidates, but rather, an appreciation of the diversity of Cases, application of concepts shown by the candidates, and the structured processes followed by them.

## 5.1 Guesstimates

### 5.1.1. BCG

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	BCG
<b>Candidate name</b>	Vaibhav Parekh
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	Guesstimate
<b>Duration</b>	25 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	NA
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Estimate the number of cricket balls sold in Hyderabad in a year
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	General Discussion around the interviewer's career trajectory and my travel stories
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NA</li> </ul>
<b>Structure/Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I broke down Hyderabad's population into:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Age groups</li> <li>b. Gender</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Identified the % playing cricket in those age brackets</li> <li>• Introduced:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Sharing factor:</b> how many people would be sharing a ball</li> <li>b. <b>Replacement factor:</b> to account for lost/damaged balls</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>[The interviewer said that I could also have considered businesses like cricket academics separately, but seemed satisfied with my process]</i></p>
<b>What went well</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviewer had created some comfort by personal discussions</li> <li>• He seemed satisfied with my process for solving the guesstimate.</li> </ul>
<b>What could have been done better</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid rushing through things when the interview is waiting for an answer</li> </ul>

- Important to maintain cool.

### 5.1.2 Kearney

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Kearney
<b>Candidate name</b>	Achuth Arun Resmi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	NA
<b>Round No</b>	NA
<b>Type of Round</b>	Guesstimate
<b>Duration</b>	NA
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	NA
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Estimate the market size for a retail fuel company in India

#### Scoping Questions Asked

- NA

#### Structure/Analysis

- Focused on identifying the number of vehicles in India first by using following structure:
  - a. Population
  - b. Households (/4)
  - c. Rural vs Urban (70%/30%)
  - d. Income split – High/Medium/Low
    - i. Rural - (10%/30%/60%)
    - ii. Rural - (20%/30%/50%)
  - e. Vehicles
    - i. 2 wheelers
    - ii. 3 wheelers *[The interviewer asked me to ignore this section]*
    - iii. 4 wheelers
  - f. Factor for % of households owning vehicles in each income segment
  - g. # of vehicles of each type by income category and rural/urban
- Once I arrived at this figure, I then spoke about my experience and:
  - a. Assumed an average of 15,000km per 4-wheeler per annum and 5000km per 2-wheeler per annum
  - b. Divided this figure by average mileage for each category to arrive at the liters of fuel used in a year in India
  - c. Multiplied this with INR 70/liter to arrive at annual revenue

#### What went well

- Laid down the structure for him first before jumping into the analysis - this made a difference, because I made a couple of math errors while calculating the final number

#### What could have been done better

- Should have been more careful with my calculations

### 5.1.3 McKinsey & Company

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Gurveen Kaur Ghai
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Guesstimate
<b>Duration</b>	35 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Saurabh Mishra, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Guesstimate
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Guesstimate the number of foreign tourists arriving in India on a given day
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Reasons behind joining McKinsey, work-experience related questions

#### Scoping Questions Asked

- I asked a few clarifying questions
- Made standard assumptions and began the guesstimate with the four metro cities
- Delhi was the starting point.

#### Structure/Analysis

To estimate the requisite number, I went ahead with the following two approaches:

##### **Boarding gates approach:**

- Based on the number of boarding gates for international airlines, estimated the number of flights that were landing.
- Used best judgement to estimate the number of Foreign Tourists vs Indian Nationals deboarding from an aircraft.

##### **Immigration counter approach:**

- Based on immigration counters and the turnaround time for immigration per passenger, used OPMG to arrive at an answer.
- This answer significantly differed from my answer from the first approach, and thus was asked to reconcile and come forward with a final number and approach.

#### What went well

- Staying conversational throughout worked in my favor
- Did not get baffled or show any anxiety and stayed calm even when I got stuck in my first approach.
- Being able to think on my toes when asked for an alternate approach

#### What could have been done better

- Should have thought through my first approach end-to-end before starting it.

### 5.1.4 Parthenon

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Parthenon
<b>Candidate name</b>	Himanshu Punjabi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	4
<b>Round No</b>	4
<b>Type of Round</b>	Guesstimate

<b>Duration</b>	30 mins
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Sriram, Partner
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NA</li> </ul>	
<b>Structure/Analysis</b>	
<p><b>Q:</b> There are two glasses of wine - one red, one white. Both are equally filled. You take a spoon of red wine, put it in the glass of white wine and mix the glass of white wine. Now the glass of white wine has a heterogeneous mixture of white wine and red wine. You now take a spoon of wine from the glass of white wine and put it in the glass of red wine and mix it.</p> <p><b>Does the glass of white wine have more red wine or does the glass of red wine have more white wine?</b></p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I assumed that both glasses have 10 spoons of wine and solved it.</li> <li>• Defined constraints explicitly that both glasses had similar sizes, both glasses were more than half full, the process was done only once etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Final answer:</b> Equal percentage of red wine in glass of white wine and white wine in red wine.</p> <p><b>Q: If we let go of the constraints then what is the maximum percentage of red wine in glass of white wine and % of white wine in glass of red wine?</b></p> <p>A: Assumed that the glasses are less than half full which means you can take one glass and pour it in the other glass.</p> <p><b>Final answer:</b> This results in a 50%-50% mix</p> <p><b>Q: If I were to try to draw a graph which showed the content of red wine in a glass of white wine, what would the graph look like?</b></p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Had the two ratios from the above levels - 50% and 91%</li> <li>• Took another instance of mixing four spoons and found the % of red wine in glass of white wine and the result was a convex graph</li> </ul> <p><b>Final answer:</b> Convex graph</p>	
<b>What went well</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important to accept you have made a mistake and open to the idea of changing your answer</li> </ul>	
<b>What could have been done better</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important to build a stamina of doing 8-9 cases in a day</li> </ul>	

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Parthenon
<b>Candidate name</b>	Vedant Purohit
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Guesstimate
<b>Duration</b>	45 min
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Rutvik, Senior Manager
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Choose an industry that EY Parthenon works in. Give me a detailed

	analysis of that industry in India.
<b>PI/ Introduction Questions Asked</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NA</li> </ul>	
<b>Structure/Analysis</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chose consumer industry and picked dental care since I remembered the case from Marketing and had worked on a case competition for Colgate.</li> <li>• Covered over all segments             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Market share of different brands</li> <li>b. Colgate's market share</li> <li>c. New regulations in India</li> <li>d. Risks</li> <li>e. Future improvements</li> <li>f. Scope for acquisition</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Also discussed how to increase revenues.</li> </ul>	
<b>What went well</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broke the problem down in steps so interviewer can see it is logical.</li> <li>• Used approximation and proxies.</li> <li>• Did not panic and kept answering in my area of comfort and knowledge even when the interviewer pushed me and tried putting me under pressure</li> </ul>	
<b>What could have been done better</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NA</li> </ul>	

### 5.1.5 Roland Berger

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Roland Berger
<b>Candidate name</b>	Abhishek Bhattacharya
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Guesstimate
<b>Duration</b>	40 Minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Rijul Bharadwaj, Project Manager
<b>Problem Statement</b>	<p>Our client has come up with a novel machine that converts US dollars to INR (1-way conversion).</p> <p>The client is thinking of how to go about installing this machine at Delhi International Airport. Keeping this in mind, calculate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The number of machines that needs to be placed at the airport</li> <li>2. What would be the capacity of each machine?</li> </ol>

#### Structure/Analysis to solve the Guesstimate

- Started by calculating the demand of USD or INR that will be exchanged each day at the Delhi airport assuming that the refilling will happen at the end of each day.
- Solution had the following structure:

#### **Estimate no. of flights and passengers**

- Estimated the number of flight landing at Delhi airport every day by using:
  - a. The runway constraint
  - b. Assuming there is a flight landing every 15 mins.
- Further segment flights as domestic and international, since people using the conversion machine will

mostly be international passengers

- From the number of flights, estimated the number of international passengers landing in Delhi.
- Further segmented the nationality of these passengers to identify the fraction of passengers who would be using the machine

#### **Estimate no. of ATM users**

- Calculated the USD amount that would be transacted by each of these users.
- Assumption used was that the exchange rates at airports are high. Hence, people will be using converting smaller amounts.
- I segmented the users into two groups:
  - Higher value
  - Low value
- Took appropriate splits for each group

#### **Estimate no. of machines and capacity of each machine**

- Identified potential competition from the current exchange kiosks
- Assumed a 50% market share for our machines
- Assumed/ used proxy for the size of the machines then divided the size by the demand of currency to obtain capacity.
- The total volume of the machine will depend on the exchange rate (corresponding INR notes to USD notes)
- Finally, summarized the entire activity in 2 mins and since I didn't arrive at the final number

#### **What went well**

- Structured the guesstimate well - even though didn't arrive at a final solution
- I was sharp with my calculations

#### **What could have been done better**

- Missed a couple of factors (e.g., denominations and the length of stay of the users) which would drive the capacity of the machine and the demand for the notes respectively

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Roland Berger
<b>Candidate name</b>	Abhishek Bhattacharya
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Guesstimate + PI
<b>Duration</b>	40 minutes
<b>Interviewer</b>	Saumitra Sehgal, Managing Partner
<b>Name/Designation</b>	
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Calculate the market size of ties sold in India. <i>[Ties will be professional ties and not school ties]</i>
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Why consulting? One strength & two weaknesses, One reason to not join Roland Berger, Two reasons why you would not recommend Roland Berger.

#### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Guesstimate**

- Calculated the number of ties currently in India
- Multipled it with a replenishment rate per year

#### **Current no. of ties**

- Started from the demand side with the population of India and then segmented it based on:
  - Locality

- b. Gender
- c. Age
- d. Income
- e. Profession

#### **Replenishment Rate**

- Considered of the number of ties per person as well.
- Assumed that the ties are replaced every 5 years and based on that came up with the market size (volume)
- Assumed an average price of INR 1000, to calculate the revenue potential per year

#### **What went well**

- Remaining calm
- Being structured with thoughts and PI questions

#### **What could have been done better**

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Roland Berger
<b>Candidate name</b>	Meha Mathur
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI+ Guesstimate
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Bharat Shanker, Consultant
<b>Problem Statement</b>	How much currency should be deposited in a currency exchange machine (Any currency to INR) at an international airport in India?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	<p><b>Q: Tell me something about yourself?</b>  <b>A:</b> A brief walkthrough of education, work experience and accomplishments at ISB. I highlighted one of my project experiences in the financial services function as I knew that RB was expanding into financial services. Also spoke about 1-2 leadership opportunities/experiences outside of work.</p> <p><b>Q: Why consulting and why RB?</b>  <b>A:</b> I spoke about how I had prior experience in technology consulting and had enjoyed the client interactions and dynamic problem solving and would be thrilled to now shift to strategy consulting after having learnt business and strategy at ISB. Also said that Roland Berger's values resonated with me and I was from the financial services function – an area RB was venturing into in India.</p>

#### **Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: What currencies are allowed to be inserted into the machine?**

**Q: Which airport are we considering?**

**Q: What time of the year are we looking at?**

#### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Guesstimate**

**Calculate no. of passengers**

- Took an approximate capacity and percentage occupation (assuming the average time of the year)
- Arrived at a figure for number of passengers and segmented passengers into:
  - a. Returning NRIs
  - b. Backpackers
  - c. Planned travelers
  - d. Business travelers
- Computed the amount each of these segments would spend in India in a day

#### **Calculate average withdrawal amount per passenger**

- Allocated a percentage of currency each segment would withdraw from an exchange machine (depending on the type of traveller- for example, an NRI would not avail this facility because his/her residence is in India, hence the availability of INR)
- Since there was one currency exchange booth at the airport (Eg Centrum), assumed that only 50% currency demand would be required to be met by this currency machine
- Conducted a sensitivity analysis, taking into account the variable factors in this computation such as:
  - a. Composition of passengers depending on the season
  - b. Absence of a reverse exchange machine
  - c. Macroeconomic factors such currency exchange rates and inflation in India

#### **Synthesis:**

- Was asked to synthesize the case after the interviewer thought I had arrived at a satisfactory figure.
- Concentrated on the levers that could change this figure and provided a range based on that

#### **What went well**

- The case was conversational and interactive, and I maintained a good rapport with the interviewers

#### **What could have been done better**

- Need to be prompted to take approximate estimations

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Roland Berger
<b>Candidate name</b>	Meha Mathur
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Guesstimate + PI
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Saumitra Sehgal, Partner
<b>Problem Statement</b>	What is the yearly revenue generated by a shoe polish seller in Mumbai? Answer within exactly 5 minutes.
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Resume overview, Why consulting? Why RB? How do you handle conflicts with your peers?

#### **Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: How many shoe polish sellers there are in Mumbai?**

**Q: Does the seller sell more than one kind of shoe polish?**

#### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Started with the population of Mumbai and created demographic segments according to age and gender
- Made the assumptions that women do not use shoe polish except school-going girls and that certain age groups do not use polish at all

- Allocated a percentage to every segment and assigned a frequency of use per year.
- Assuming a reasonable cost for a polish, I calculated the annual revenue of the seller
- Asked to conduct a sensitivity analysis on the factors, if varied, would change the final value the most

### What went well

- Able to establish a rapport early in the interview that helped throughout

### What could have been done better

- NA

## 5.2 Case Interviews

### 5.2.1 Accenture

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Accenture Strategy
<b>Candidate name</b>	Apaar Goel
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	25 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	NA
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market sizing through Guesstimate
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Estimate the production levels for potato chips manufacturer expanding to Gujarat
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Introduction questions, Profile walkthrough and questions around technologies disrupting the current market scenario

### Scoping Questions Asked

#### **Q: Can you provide me more insight about the client's business?**

A: The client is a B2C potato chips producer, currently supplying to majority of states in India. They are looking to expand their business in Gujarat, and hence, wanted to estimate the market accordingly to ascertain the production levels.

#### **Q: Could you please provide more clarity on the following aspects:**

- Company's current product portfolio,
- If currently serving Gujarat in any way,
- Supply chain network details,
- Type of potato chips produced (Premium or Economical),
- Product details such as USP, advantages, disadvantages, and shelf life,
- Consumer profile and buying preferences (Supermarket or Small retail outlets), and
- Competitive landscape.

### Structure/Analysis to solve the Case

- Presented market sizing assumptions and explained the reasonings by taking examples from similar states. These helped the interviewer to understand my thought process.
- I worked through the assumptions and estimated the market size.
- However, the interviewer did not want the final answer in numbers and asked me to just explain what it entails.

- Explained the distribution of the number that I came up with and brought in the angle of service level to substantiate the costs involved in the process.

### What went well

- Examples given to support assumptions
- Included the service level aspect.

### What could have been done better

- Paused during the PI and structured my thoughts

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Accenture Strategy
<b>Candidate name</b>	Apaar Goel
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	45 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Paras Mehta, Managing Director
<b>Type of Case</b>	General strategy case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Recommendations to increase the EBITDA of Sheela Foams (Sleepwell) Developing unorganized sector through technology post GST implementation
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Profile walkthrough

### Scoping Questions Asked

- With respect to the case around unorganized sector, the interviewer conveyed that since GST has helped the organized sector in many ways but pushed the unorganized sector further down, we need to provide ways in which digital technology can be used to bring the unorganized sector at par with the organized sector.
- I started to ask my scoping questions, but he stopped me and responded that I can assume whatever I want and directly tell him the recommendations.

### Structure/Analysis to solve the Case

[Since the interviewer had asked me to directly provide the recommendations, proceeded as follows]

- EBITDA improvement for Sleepwell**
  - Bucketed the recommendations for improving EBITDA into:
    - Increasing revenue
    - Decreasing costs.
  - Since Sleepwell is a legacy brand, presented a lot of recommendations to enhance its competitiveness and bring it at par with the current market scenario.
- Developing unorganized sector through Technology**
  - Identified the inherent problems currently faced by the unorganized sector, both pre- and post-GST implementation.
  - Identified how the problems can be solved using the current set of technology

### What went well

- Number of recommendations helped me as this was a stress interview, with the interviewer asking for

more alternatives at each stage

#### **What could have been done better**

- Covered my finance trail better as I could not answer a question on Dupont analysis

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Accenture Strategy
<b>Candidate name</b>	Apurv Bajaj
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	4
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	NA
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market entry and expansion case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Evaluate the proposal to open a gym in Bangalore and provide recommendations to scale-up nationally
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	None

#### **Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: Can you provide details around the locality's demographics and the type of gyms currently in operations?**

A: The locality already has three other gyms at low and high price points.  
There is 70:30 gender ratio in favor of females, however, none of the gyms catered to them.

**Q: Could you please provide some clarifications on the following aspects:**

- Income levels of the target segment, and
- Consumer's buying preferences and expectations from a gym.

#### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Recommended the client to open the gym and specifically target the female segment.
- Provided the following recommendations to enable market expansion for the client:
  - a. Provided options with respect to the level of decentralization. Hence, I benchmarked the alternatives basis:
    - i. Pace of scale-up,
    - ii. Standardized customer experience, and
    - iii. Risk of failure.
  - b. Suggested a hybrid approach wherein marketing activities are decentralized
  - c. Customer experience is standardized through technology

#### **What went well**

- Energy and intuitive approach over applying a force-fitted framework.

#### **What could have been done better**

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Accenture Strategy
<b>Candidate name</b>	Apurv Bajaj
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	4
<b>Round No</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	NA
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market entry case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Strategize market entry for a pizza player in Mumbai
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Profile walkthrough, Reasons behind moving to consulting
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	

**Q: Can you provide client's intended outcome from the expansion?**

A: The client is a pizza player aiming to capture 10% market share from this expansion.

**Q: What is the competitive landscape?**

A: The market currently has 2 B2C players and 1 B2B player dominating the landscape.

**Q: Could you please help provide context/ clarity on the following:**

- Target geography
- Number of outlets
- Potential price points
- Promotion strategy
- Operations strategy

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Basis the scoping questions and case facts, I understood that both the B2C players catered to a high-volume, low-margin market.
- Recommended the following:
  - a. Since the other players were after the lower margin part of the market, the client should focus on capturing the premium-end of the market through low-volume, high-margin dine-in restaurants.
  - b. I put forth my arguments stating that having a market share as a north star metric is not the best way to assess business' success
  - c. We must coach the client on chasing margin share as a metric to benchmark its success.

**What went well**

- Held my ground during counter questioning and did not get intimidated

**What could have been done better**

- The scoping part could have been better structured

## 5.2.2 Alvarez & Marsal

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Alvarez and Marsal
<b>Candidate name</b>	Swaraj Panda
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No.</b>	Quick summary of all rounds
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case Interview
<b>Duration</b>	Rounds ranged from 15-40 mins
<b>Interviewer Information</b>	Multiple Directors/Managing Directors

<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Standard PI questions, why A&M, alignment to previous roles
<b>Brief Summary of the Interview</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Round 1</b> (15 mins)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Mainly tested the operational and financial accounting skillset.</li> <li>b. Generic easy case focused what needs to be good practice vs areas to avoid</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Round 2</b> (40 mins)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Case involved was a quant heavy one based on a textile company</li> <li>b. Format followed a bit like stressed interview.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Round 3</b> (30 mins)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A small case on a manufacturing company with issues in operations</li> <li>b. Focused on working on the company's value chain to find the drivers for improvement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>What went well</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handled PI questions well</li> <li>• Past work experience helped me while in working cases which involved both operational and financial issues.</li> <li>• Adapted as per the needs of the interviewer</li> </ul>	
<b>What could have been done better</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kept asking questions to the interviewer to understand the scope of the problem</li> <li>• Mention what roadmap you plan to adopt to solve the case</li> <li>• Speak out loud to the interviewer</li> </ul>	

### 5.2.3 Bain

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Rachit Jain
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	40 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Prateek Majumdar, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Attrition reduction
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Devise a strategy to reduce employee attrition at an IT company
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	NA

#### Scoping Questions Asked

[The interviewer explained that the IT company was suffering from high costs due to the attrition and wanted to mitigate this]

#### **Q: Can you please provide more context on the following?**

- Local vs international,
- Size of the firm,
- Type of business,
- Time since the issue has accentuated, and
- Any new developments

A: Mid-Level \$1B IT company, does not have a brand like TCS or Wipro, based out of Hyderabad only, does outsourcing and most of the employees are in India

**Q: How does the company hire? (Campus vs lateral, how is the salary decided for laterals?)**

**Q: How does one grow? (Promotional metrics, Salary jump, on-site vs offsite opportunities)**

**Q: What are the major reasons stated in the exit interview?**

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Broke down the case into two main buckets – Recruitment and Opportunities:

a. **Type of recruitment:**

- i. With respect to lateral vs campus, responded that the current employees may not think the people coming from outside are equally good and are paid more.
- ii. He responded affirmatively, saying that due to the attrition, we have to get people on higher salaries and that creates a difference.
- iii. Provided the solution of benchmarking salary at each level and if we have to pay a new guy, get him at a senior level so that the pay is equal at every level.

b. **Opportunities:**

*[The interviewer said that everyone wants to work in the new AI team they have, but when employees are sent there, they develop a higher value and leave even sooner to other startups. So, shouldn't we stop that division?]*

- i. Responded that in such a scenario, no one would ever invest in any upcoming tech.  
*[The interviewer smiled and asked for my solution]*

c. **Recommendation:**

- i. Discussed the steps the company had taken and how creatively we can find an answer to that problem.
- ii. Overall recommendation was to:
  - Keep salary at par
  - Provide stock/ growth bonuses to high performers
  - Invest in new tech with people who are given a bond to stay for x years.

### **What went well**

- Despite the interviewer giving me a hard time, I always found a creative way to answer

### **What could have been done better**

- Could have been more structured

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Arushi Dhupia
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	35 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Gustaf Ericson, Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	PE Case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Evaluate the investment for a PE firm looking to invest in an OSV wire manufacturer
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	None

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

- Was shown a few data points such as:
  - a. Number of active and inactive Oil Support Vehicles (OSVs)
  - b. The demand for each type
  - c. Capacity of each OSV

- d. Revenue generated for each type.

**Q: What is an OSV?**

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Explained my understanding of the data points and presented the framework for the go/no-go decision.
- Dissected the analysis into market analysis and company analysis, both including qualitative and quantitative aspects
- The interviewer suggested to initiate the quantitative analysis of the industry - which led to the market sizing using the given data points.

**Market sizing:**

- Arrived at a market size based on:
  - Wires required for the number active and inactive OSVs present in the market
  - Took growth % into account and did a revenue calculation.
- Because the size I had calculated was higher, decided it was a go decision for the PE firm

**What went well**

- Quantitative skills - was quick in calculating the market size.

**What could have been done better**

- Was slightly nervous
- Missed reading some of the text on the slides initially and that impacted my calculations

[Went back to the slide again as soon as I realised I was missing a piece of info and used that eventually]

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Arushi Dhupia
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Rachna Bahadur, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	PE Case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Evaluate investment for a PE firm in the food and beverage sector
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	None

**Scoping Questions Asked**

N/A

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Broke down the sector into various business models such as
  - Fine Dining
  - Cafes
  - QSDs
  - Cloud kitchens.

[The interviewer then prodded me to explore the customer base of each type of model and we delved deeper into the cloud kitchen model]

**Customer behavior:**

- Explored user behavior on online ordering apps to identify customers and why they will order from the target company
- Suggested the creation of various brands catering to different needs:
  - a. Different cuisines within cloud kitchens
  - b. Different price points
  - c. Different CVPs

**Market entry strategy:**

- Laid out a few market entry considerations and suggested to pilot in a Bangalore/ Mumbai type of city, before expanding to other cities.

**What went well**

- Brought up the different models in the food business
- In depth discussion on user behavior - what impacts a customer's decision when they are browsing on Swiggy/ Zomato

**What could have been done better**

- Could have been structured better

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Arushi Dhupia
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	40 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Shuvabrata Nandi, Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market entry case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Strategize the market entry for a telecom company into retail to expand its customer base
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	CV walkthrough and questions with respect to my education

**Scoping Questions Asked**

*[Asked the interviewer if I could imagine the client as Jio to put things into context, to which the interviewer agreed]*

- Clarified that 'retail' meant ecommerce as well as brick and mortar.

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Introduced the following a revenue equation:
  - a. **Revenue** = Number of customers \* Average spend per customer, and
  - b. **Average spend per customer** = Price per product \* Number of product lines/ business

*[The interviewer suggested to start off with the Average spend per consumer]*

**• Business Lines:**

- a. Explored groceries and analyzed the models of Big Basket and Grofers.
- b. Asked the interviewer if he would like me to get into the various delivery models to which he suggested to go ahead.
- c. Discussed whether a hyperlocal delivery would make sense for delivery of fresh produce versus a fulfilment center/ dark store model for packaged items

**• Pricing and Customer Spend:**

- a. Discussed discounts and user engagement on apps/ customer retention
- b. Discussed the importance of a good UI, smart baskets, use of technology etc.
- c. Brought up cases of Myntra doing very well, while Amazon failing in the fashion category.  
*[The interviewer asked for my views on what made Myntra successful and I came up with a 3-point answer]*
- Asked him if I should proceed to the Number of customers and was told that the client has a 200 million user base and is a market leader

### What went well

- Confidently drove the case in a structured manner
- Got the interviewer's buy-in at every stage

### What could have been done better

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Neelambara Lahori
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Not Available, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	PE Case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Evaluate the investment for a PE firm in a diagnostics equipment company and estimate the revenue targets
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Profile-related questions

### Scoping Questions Asked

- The interviewer shed further light on the problem statement that the firm is:
  - a. Planning to invest in a diagnostics equipment company which supplied to 10% of customer base in North America
  - b. Rest of the market was captured by two dominant players
- Moreover, it is important to estimate if the revenues of the target can be projected to be XX in XX years.
- To further scope out the case, I asked the following questions to the interviewer-
  - Q. What have been the market share trends for the company over the years and what is the point of differentiation between the three players?**
  - A.** The interviewer responded that the target was a subsidiary and the parent had business ties with their current customers, hence, the 10% market share was not changing. It was not expected that any more share could be captured through business ties

### Structure/Analysis to solve the Case

- I analyzed the relevant information given by the interviewer and other sources of revenue for this firm.
- I further split them basis time horizon and singled out on a revenue source that fit the investment metric.

### What went well

- The PI segment was helpful in establishing a connect.
- The interviewer made sure I get comfortable and that helped me to get into a conversational tone
- The initial scoping and clarifications were running too long but I managed to unearth some critical drivers by keeping at it, before jumping into the case analysis.

**What could have been done better**

- I was too nervous at the start

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Purvi Saraf
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	1
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	60 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Not Available, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Profitability
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Improve the profitability of a BPO company
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	N/A

**Scoping Questions Asked**

- N/A

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- To solve the case, broke it down into a cost and revenue issue to uncover the critical issues in the case.
- Further broke down the Revenue metric into: Revenue/ Employee \* Number of Employees. This helped me in identifying the main cause affecting the firm's profitability – Attrition.
- The high level of attrition contributed to the high costs and low revenues for the firm,
- Correlated and discussed measures which could help reduce the attrition in collaboration with the interviewer

**What went well**

- The interviewer was impressed with the problem breakdown and intuition about what the problem could be.
- Going through mid-sized industry primers and making brief notes to revise before the D-Day

**What could have been done better**

- N/A

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Abhinav Gupta
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	60 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Samyuktha T, Principal
<b>Type of Case</b>	PE Case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Evaluate the investment for a PE firm in e-pharmacy sector in India
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Reasons behind joining Consulting, motivation behind joining Bain

**Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: What is the total market size of the e-pharmacy sector in India?**

A: The total market size of pharmacy is \$12bn. The penetration is 2-3%.

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- To solve the case, I broke it down into four areas – Scoping, Industry attractiveness, Business viability, and Competitive strategy.

**Scoping:** I broke down the problem statement as per the stakeholders and their key focus areas –

- PE firm: The firm has many profitable investments and was majorly focused on the Healthcare space. It is looking for a 3 to 5-year returns.
- Industry: The e-pharmacy industry has four major players, and each of them has a 20% market share.
- Business model: People order on the phone (through call or app), and the e-pharmacy delivers it.
- Customers: The focus is primarily on B2C, as B2C customers contribute towards 70% of revenue.

### **Industry attractiveness:**

- Developed the Porter's 5 forces, and post discussion/ scoping questions with the interviewer, wrote down the information under the specific force.
- Barriers to Entry: Considered to be High owing to Investment, Registered pharmacist, High marketing costs, and Government regulations.
- Competitive Rivalry: Taken as High owing to a lot of regional players.

### **Business viability:**

- Post ascertaining the average discounts for the industry (15% to 25%), enquired whether the players preferred a hyperlocal (sourcing from nearby pharmacies) or a warehouse inventory model.
- Discussed the advantages and disadvantages of both models and determine which one to go forward with.
- Post ascertaining the average margins, drew out the entire supply chain, with the interviewer providing me with margins of different intermittent players.
- Calculated the expected margin of the e-pharmacy players and whether they are profitable post the discounts.
- Evaluated all the competitors that will be encountered, such as ecommerce players, hospitals, hyper local players such as Dunzo, and pharmacies.

### **Competitive strategy:**

- To compete against the existing players, laid out the two set of frameworks that could be deployed by the firm:
  - a. Cost Advantage
  - b. Product Differentiation.
- Recommended the firm to leverage product differentiation, since we do not manufacture medicines and supply chain efficiencies can be realized later.
- I subsequently extended upon the strategy and made the following recommendations:
  - a. Exclusive tie-ups with hospitals for medicines
  - b. Provide consultation services on the app
  - c. Subscription-based model for chronic patients
  - d. Loyalty program for non-chronic patients
  - e. Return and replace facility post-sales

### **What went well**

- Application of the PE framework and familiarity with e-pharmacy as a sector
- Wherever stuck, did not panic and thought out loud.
- Made a conscious effort to share my thoughts before asking any question to the interviewer. For example, "I think that the e-pharmacy generally follows a hyperlocal model. What do most players follow in this space?"

### **What could have been done better**

- Was not completely prepared with questions for business viability.
- Evaluating industry attractiveness can be challenging since there are a lot of areas to cover. It is a good idea to focus on growth, market size, barriers to entry and competitive rivalry in general, and later detail them out further, if required.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Dhairya Aggarwal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	1
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	45 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Lalit Reddy, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Sales Improvement Case, including guesstimate
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Improving the sales of a medical equipment manufacturer
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Past work experience
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the onset, the interviewer asked me to assume that the client makes just one equipment – ‘Bear huggers’, which are aluminium sheets used to prevent hyperthermia during operations.</li> <li>Following are the aspects that I enquired about to scope out the case further-           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Product details</b> including raw material, product usage and alternates available (if any), and side effects,</li> <li><b>Client details</b> including manufacturing locations and distribution network, and</li> <li><b>Sales strategy</b> including information around current sales, target sales and expected timelines</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

To diagnose the problem statement, I focused on three focus areas- Market sizing, Sales strategy, and Geographies.

#### **Market sizing:**

- Given the product price at INR 15,000, and that it would be used only for one operation, developed a blueprint from the supply side - number of hospitals and their capacity.

*[The interviewer said that the approach made sense but would be easier to go through the demand side]*

- Subsequently, the demand side market sizing included aspects such as –
  - Population of the country
  - Income segments - Removed the lower income segment and part of the mid-income segment because they would usually go to government hospitals owing to being uninsured and the government not investing in such a high-end product, and
  - Age groups – Divided the identified segment into number of times people would need an operation, per age group.
  - Moreover, counted two levers for operations – natural illness and accidents/ injuries.
- Hence, subsequent calculations helped us to get a market size number of around 10 lakhs, which seemed reasonable to the interviewer.

**Sales strategy:** Since the current sales accounted for only 3% of the total market, we needed to develop a sales strategy around the following aspects-

- Composition of sales team – Imperative to have educated and well-trained sales staff as they had to deal with Doctors,
- Targeting sales through doctors and hospitals, through incentives and relationship building.
  - Incentives were key in the pharma industry to push sales for drugs and equipment. Doctors would only shift to other drugs if they had no side effects and not in the case of fewer side effects.
  - Relationships can be established with Doctors through events and frequent communication.
  - Conveyed that it would be more difficult to build relationships and easier to provide incentives since the product was a high margin product and we could afford to do so.

**Geographies:**

- The interviewer wanted me to identify the three countries to start exporting the product to
- Basis aspects like purchasing power, patent protection and competition, eliminated the developed countries first and suggested to expand to Thailand, and smaller countries like Nepal and Bhutan.

○

**What went well**

- Not trying to force any structure in the case

**What could have been done better**

- Should have asked him if supply side made sense in the guesstimate.
- The interviewer mentioned that demand side was easier and I should have asked him why

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Mayank Khurana
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Prabhav Kashyap, Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	Cost optimization case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Reducing the costs for a Steel manufacturer by INR 150 crore in 12 months
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Introduce yourself, Reasons behind joining Bain

**Scoping Questions Asked**

- N/A

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

To solve the case, I focused on first breaking down the costs into value chain, and subsequently identify possible cost optimization opportunities.

**Cost breakdown:**

- Broke down the costs into value chain, that is, Raw material > Inbound Logistics > Processing Costs > Outbound logistics and Warehouse.

*[The interviewer wanted me to evaluate the Raw material and Inbound logistics costs further and relayed that the company procured the material from China in a single lot for the year]*

*[He also communicated that the company had a 95% yield on their projects, which enabled them to order raw material accordingly]*

- Compute that the company would need to order 100% to 95% of the quantity

**Cost optimization opportunities:**

- The company could look at ordering multiple times to save on finance cost.

*[Got to know that 95% order of the quantity was not standard across all projects, and hence, they were over-ordering for projects with a higher yield (say 99%)]*

- Thus, it was imperative to order according to the project and not one shot at the beginning of the year.

*[The interviewer said that with this approach, you can order with 2% more efficiency however it will increase*

*[the inbound cost as you will now order on per project basis]*

- Was given the numbers of cost per inbound order and asked to compute the savings
  -

### **What went well**

- Led the case as a discussion and showcased my problem-solving process to ensure that the interviewer corrects anything that was assumed wrong

### **What could have been done better**

- Incorrect maths in the inbound cost savings computation at the first attempt but kept my composure and got it correct in the second one

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Mayank Khurana
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	20 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Gaurav Nayyar, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market share estimation case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Estimate the market share for a flooring services provider's new service
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Questions around work experience and reasons behind joining Bain
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	

**Q: Asked the interviewer to shed some more light on the company.**

**A:**

- The client provides flooring services such as putting marble and tiles in houses,
- It had developed an innovative method to speed up the process, reducing the time and costs by 50% of the overall process.

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- To estimate the market share, I started by computing the market size, however, the interviewer relayed that he only wanted the market share number.
- Proceeded to offer the option to undertake a market survey and check the interest levels from potential customers.

*[The interviewer liked the approach, thus, identified that he wants the principles and overall approach on how I think. He also asked of an alternate approach, if possible]*

- Offered the approach to understand how previous technologies have been adopted and drew out the standard marketing chart of Innovators, Early adopters, and Laggards, and told him we can take the market share percentage if no other data is available.
- Was probed for another approach, and as I ran out of options, the interviewer relayed that we can also look at global trends as well as if someone had done this innovative service globally.
- Added that we can adjust for changes from the economy to bring it into the Indian context through parameters such as income levels.

### **What went well**

- Kept calm and led the discussion.

- Even if a few points were missed, kept it like a discussion and added to the points which the interviewer had provided, like the global trends.

### What could have been done better

- Revised the notes from few of the subjects.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Garima Gupta
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	60 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Marzi Patel, Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	Customer adoption case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Strategize to switch customers to in-built payment service for a cab aggregator company
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	N/A

### Scoping Questions Asked

The interviewer asked me to consider the case as an Ola or an Uber, trying to switch its customers to Ola Money type of a payment service, as they believe the customer using it is a better customer.

Hence, I enquired about the following aspects to further scope out the problem –

- Q: What is meant by better customer and how to define it? (Parameters such as retention, higher revenue per trip, ratings etc.)**
- Q: What are the different customer personas and their splits?**
- Q: Which are the major cities in which the company operates?**
- Q: What is the average number of trips taken by a customer per month?**

### Structure/Analysis to solve the Case

- Recommended to first test the hypothesis about the better customer and if the hypothesis stands correct, we need subsequently to look at ways in which adoption of payment services can be increased.
- Suggested the following ways to test the hypothesis –
  - Leverage past data and evaluate its correlation with future data,
  - Set up an experiment for A/B testing, and
  - Use competition or industry data to see if there is merit in the argument.

*[The interviewer gave me an experiment scenario and asked if that would be good for the A/B testing. Leveraging my experience, I was able to identify that we need to keep control set as it is]*

- To increase adoption of payment services, we discussed on enhancing the User Experience design (UX), ensuring that the wallet is loaded with money (apart from when the user is availing the trip), resulting in increased adoption of wallet services for other services.

### What went well

- Having known the interviewer from the pre-placement talk helped establish a quick rapport.
- The case was more of a Product Management (PM) case than a consulting business problem. I approached the case the way a PM would do, rather than force fitting a consulting framework and that really flew off with the interviewer

### What could have been done better

- Could have been more structured.
- Was slightly nervous because the problem did not look like a business one

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Garima Gupta
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	60 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Radhika, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Growth strategy case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Strategize if Dunzo should aim to achieve unit profitability or build customer loyalty in the next three years
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Reasons behind joining consulting

#### **Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: At what stage is the company in currently?**

**Q: What are the current revenue and profitability levels?**

**Q: Which are the key service areas and biggest markets for the firm?**

**Q: What are the investor targets and subsequent market scenarios in the next three years for the company?**

#### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Tried to come up with a framework for competitive response and customer behaviour that could help them take a decision.

*[However, the interviewer was more focused on knowing my recommendation than a framework which could be open to interpretation.]*

- Recommended going for customer loyalty, even though she seemed to have unit profitability in mind and suggested the same given investor pressure.
- I offered an alternate view that –
  - A fast-changing market is prone to attack from big firms like Amazon and thus, the company should focus on building a differentiated service even if it means burning money and losing profitability in the short term.
  - This will enable the company to build a bouquet of services and get customers hooked to develop competitive edge that could be later encashed for profitability.

#### **What went well**

- Had a comfortable rapport with the interviewer owing to my past experience and her understanding of the start-up world.
- Since I came from the start-up domain, my answers were grounded in experience which clicked with her and she pushed me to pick a side and give recommendation.

#### **What could have been done better**

- My analysis and structuring of my case answer could have been slightly better.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Monu Chandak
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	4

<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Gaurav Nayyar, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Unconventional + Market Entry
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Recommend if a real-estate developer should invest in a concrete tech
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Introduce yourself, questions around work experience, and reasons behind joining consulting.

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

The interviewer opened the case by giving an overview of the problem statement.

- The client is a real estate developer in India, who saw a new patented concrete in Dubai, which takes less time for curing process and in turn expediting the entire construction process.
- He is thinking of buying the license for this new concrete formula and bringing this tech to India.

To scope out the case, I asked the following questions to the interviewer –

**Q: What are the Licensing fees and agreement?**

**Q: What are the costs of the new advanced concrete, compared to the regular concrete?**

**Q: What are the major advantages of using this concrete?**

A: The new concrete took half the time for curing as compared to regular concrete, substantially reducing the total time required for completing any construction project.

**Q: Is there anyone else using similar concrete in India?**

**Q: What are the ongoing or past projects in client's portfolio?**

**Q: This would help in understanding what kind of construction projects it usually undertakes (residential vs commercial vs industrial, high end luxury project vs low end)**

**Q: Are there any additional benefits or any potential disadvantages of this new concrete?**

**Q: Is there any regulatory consideration that needs to be adhered to, while bringing such a tech to India?**

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- To recommend the investment to the client, I worked on assessing and evaluating the following aspects to make an informed choice:
  - a. Is faster construction valuable for the client? How much does the reduction in project completion time impact the client's cash flow and profits?
  - b. Does the value surpass the increased cost of construction material, since the advanced concrete is twice as expensive as regular concrete?
  - c. Is there any customer segment who is willing to pay extra for faster possession? Can we find a market or customer segment who values this characteristic more than others?
  - d. Will this be positive NPV project for the client after considering the value additions, additional material cost & licensing fees?
  - e. How successful has the adoption of this new concrete been in Dubai and is there any specific construction project where this concrete adoption has been faster?
- Assessed these factors and mentioned that if the decision is Go, then we need to consider how we will market this faster construction offering to customers in India.

*[Thus, the interview then became more like a discussion as we talked about each of the aspects mentioned above in detail]*

- As per analysis, recommended that the client should not invest in such a technology as faster construction is not valued that much in India.
- Closed the case by giving an example of limited use of steel framing in India despite it being faster than RCC.

**What went well**

- Laying out my structure elaborately kept the interviewer engaged and thus, he could understand the approach

**What could have been done better**

- Could not think about any conventional framework during the interview and solved the case by first principles, which might have limited my ability to structure the case.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Ashutosh Rai
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	35 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Lalit Reddy, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market entry case including guesstimate
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Develop a Go-to-market strategy for a new Pharma product
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	None

**Scoping Questions Asked**

The interviewer detailed that the pharma product is used only in operations involving complete anesthesia.

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

To solve the case, I broke down the problem statement and identified three focus areas to base my analysis upon:

- **Market sizing:** Estimated the market size for the product.
- **Sales & Marketing strategies:** Discussed the different launch strategies we could go for. The critical part here was to identify that the only sales channel for this product is going to be B2B (i.e. Hospitals).
- **Potential challenges:** Discussed about the challenges we may face while launching the product.

**What went well**

- The interview turned into more of a discussion that made me comfortable.
- Asked the relevant questions and my guesstimate number was also close to reality, resulting in a discussion on its validity.

**What could have been done better**

- Should have asked more questions to narrow down the problem.
- At one point of time, was completely lost while doing a simple calculation and had made a few silly mistakes. Asked for some time to compose myself

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Vaibhav Parekh
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	25 minutes

<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Samyukktha T, Principal
<b>Type of Case</b>	Media platform development and implementation
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Strategize on how to build a news platform to maximize scale
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	None
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	

- N/A

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- After discussing the problem structure, I detailed out the overall strategy for solving the case around the following four focus areas –
  - a. Content genre & format,
  - b. Target customers,
  - c. Distribution, and
  - d. Monetization
- Discussed some of the options for the buckets discussed previously, and enlisted 'white spaces' in the ecosystem to enter

### **What went well**

- While the flow or the problem statement was not typical, having a structure to guide the discussion helped throughout the interview
- Was expected to have a reasonable view of the trends in the industry, which helped in finding what works & what does not work in the space

### **What could have been done better**

- Might have taken slightly long pauses in between, but believe it is better to have your thoughts in place before answering

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Srivatsa Yeluripati
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Mahadevan Seetharaman, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Cost optimization
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Reducing the costs of a pharmaceutical manufacturing unit
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	None

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

- N/A

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- To solve the given case, broke down the costs into the major headers, starting with fixed and variable costs and targeting each header with possible solutions to reduce costs.
- Was presented with more numbers regarding the case half-way through the interview.
- All the calculations were basic, focused on parameters such as COGS, Utility costs, people cost etc.

**What went well**

- I was able to break down the costs well, covering all the major heads needed for the case

**What could have been done better**

- I missed a few hints given by the interviewer which would have helped me reach the solution as bit faster.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Bain & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Srivatsa Yeluripati
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Samyuktha T, Principal
<b>Type of Case</b>	PE Case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Analyzing the attractiveness of an e-pharma company in India
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	None

**Scoping Questions Asked**

- N/A

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- To address the problem statement, broke down the case into two main buckets

**Market entry:**

- Started with a regular market entry framework involving industry attractiveness, operational constraints, and financial viability.

**Stakeholder assessment:**

- Then proceeded towards analysing the customer profile and possible competitive scenario in the future.
- The case then transitioned into a regular conversation about e-commerce industry and potential risks.

**What went well**

- The initial market entry structure that was developed worked well
- Was able to cover a wide range of considerations and the interviewer looked satisfied with the same.

**What could have been done better**

- Could have made the analysis crisper by avoiding some long shot considerations.

## 5.2.4 BCG

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	BCG
<b>Candidate name</b>	Kushal Dalal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2

<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case Interview
<b>Duration</b>	30 Minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	NA
<b>Type of Case</b>	Growth Strategy
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Your client is the Government of India and they want to boost Indian exports by 20 percent in one year
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	NA

**Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: What is the motivation for increasing the exports?**

**Q: What are the geographies we are targeting?**

**Q: What are the industries we want to look at?**

**Q: What scales and timelines?**

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- There are broadly two ways of increasing exports:
  - a. Sell more of the same products to current and new geographies
  - b. Develop export capabilities for new kinds of products
- The interviewer told me to look at the first kind since we were looking at a one-year horizon and there was limited time to develop new capabilities
- I then moved to clarify my approach forward:
  - a. **Selection of Geography of focus** - laid down factors of importance such as scale, trade barriers, current political relationships, current position of exports, mobility and logistics etc.
  - b. **Selection of product to sell**- need of the economy, magnitude of sale possible, opportunities to cut price or improve quality
  - c. **Other factors**- such as policy boosts, barter deals, setting up manufacturing locations and helping Indian companies export and compete globally
- Discussed how we would help Indian companies compete in terms of price and in terms of quality. For instance, if we were to improve sales of diamond, how do we help the industry improve quality.
- Here we looked at parameters such as
  - a. HR development
  - b. Infrastructure facilities
  - c. Skill development through reforms etc.

**What went well**

- Able to maintain a calm and free flowing conversation with the interviewer

**What could have been done better**

- Breadth of thinking could have been better a few obvious points were missed in trying to stick to the broad structure laid out upfront

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	BCG
<b>Candidate name</b>	Namrata Rajagopal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case + PI
<b>Duration</b>	30 - 40 minutes

<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	NA
<b>Type of Case</b>	Growth Strategy
<b>Problem Statement</b>	A television manufacturer has been facing declining sales over the last few months – discuss and give recommendations
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Detailed questions around my previous work experience
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	

**Q: How many product lines do we sell?**

A: One

**Q: What are the channels we use?**

A: The product is sold across two channels - self owned stores and retail stores like Croma. What is the motivation for increasing the exports?

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Drew out a structure for declining sale: supply and demand side, and segmented it across the two channels
- Turns out the issue was only faced by the retail stores.
- Upon further solving, I discovered that the sales force team was not incentivized to push the product
- Drew a graph of motivation vs ability on x-y axis (similar to the Fogg behavior model).

*[The interviewer provided additional information at this point that the television manufacturer has faced a severe cash crunch and hence is unable to incentivize the salesforce]*

- Brainstormed on ways of pushing a product with limited funds including:
  - Selling at retail stores
  - Exploring new channels

**Retail Stores**

- Explored ways of selling both with/without the salesforce team
- Covered some non-standard ideas like using the television displays itself to explain the product instead of just playing pretty videos

**New Channels**

- Discussed new channels that can be tapped into
- Beyond e-commerce, there could be different sales models like Amway
- This got the interviewer excited and he asked me to think about a similar model in India that worked really well. He wanted me to talk about the Eureka Forbes door-to-door sales model

**What went well**

- Remaining calm, being structured with thoughts and PI questions

**What could have been done better**

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	BCG
<b>Candidate name</b>	Namrata Rajagopal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI+ Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes

<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	NA
<b>Type of Case</b>	Growth Strategy
<b>Problem Statement</b>	A company had two sources of revenue, one-time sale and annual maintenance contracts (AMCs). The company had 80% market share but believes its AMC sales is too low, what should they do?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	NA
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	
<b>Q: What is the operating model for the AMC?</b> A: AMC was free for one year and then they ask customers to pay in the second year	
<b>Q: What is the life of the product?</b> A: 7 years	
<b>Structure/Analysis to solve the Case</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divided the problem into two branches:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The product that doesn't require maintenance (because it is of superior quality),</li> <li>b. The product that requires maintenance</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If the product requires maintenance, drew out the customer journey across the product lifecycle</li> <li>• Calculated:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The amount of revenue the company should ideally get each year of the products lifecycle</li> <li>b. % the customer spends on AMC vs the product itself</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Discussed why customers are not willing to spend so much on AMC which included the following:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Customers who are not repairing the product at all (replacing it quickly)</li> <li>b. Repairing it through other means (possibly the unorganized sector)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Elaborated about the unorganized sector - since replacement parts are easily available in the market; often the unorganized sector can repair it at a much cheaper rate</li> </ul>	
<b>Dealing with the unorganized sector</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended some ways including:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Providing a better customer experience</li> <li>b. Changing the product so that parts are not easily available or cannot be replaced by an untrained technician</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Finally, summarized the case</li> </ul>	
<b>What went well</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gone through all the past year consulting casebooks which included an example of the unorganized sector repairing products, so was able to apply that learning in this interview.</li> <li>• Kept my cool and smiled throughout</li> </ul>	
<b>What could have been done better</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I misinterpreted his style of communication initially</li> </ul>	

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	BCG
<b>Candidate name</b>	Aishwarya Shetty
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case + PI
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes

<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Saurabh Verma, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Profitability
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Company was facing 2 issues (1) Unable to meet their forecasts (2) Lower profits in comparison to competition
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	None
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	

**Q: Can you explain the product and its value chain to me?**

*[Unable to understand the product they dealt in, so kept asking for explanation. To ensure that I understood it, he made me draw it out]*

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Used a basic profitability framework.
- Was then told there's an issue in the pricing. The client followed a cost-plus pricing approach.
- With no framework in mind, stuck to first principles and broke down the entire cost structure
- Asked to draw a parallel with the gold industry and said that the pricing was like the pricing of gold.
- Iron was the only raw material and prices were fixed based on that. The interviewer then drew a graph of an inverted yield curve like curve, which showed that prices of iron increased and then declined
- Discovered that the client bought raw material one month in advance while competitors bought it 10 days in advance.
- Due to the accounting standard on inventory valuation, inventory bought at a higher price was valued lower, thus, costs were higher while closing inventory value was lower
- Forecasting errors were due to the bumpy fall in prices of iron

### **What went well**

- I got a complete understanding of the product before diving into the case.
- Ensured that the entire interview was interactive

### **What could have been done better**

- Could have tried to take lesser time in understanding the product.
- Reading through industry analysis on KMP would help here

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	BCG
<b>Candidate name</b>	Tej Vaidya
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case Interview
<b>Duration</b>	30 mins
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Vineet, Principal
<b>Type of Case</b>	Profitability
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Your client is a mid-tiered TV manufacturer and is experiencing declining profits for past one year.
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	NA
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	

**Q: Where does the client operate?**

**Q: Position of the client in the supply chain?**

**Q: Number of products?**

**Q: Performance of competitors?**

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- I broke down the problem to identify it was a units sold issue
- Used the Likability, Affordability and Accessibility framework
- Modified framework to better fit the problem and reached the conclusion that the issue lay in the retail stores
- Interviewer tried to help by hinting towards accessibility. I went ahead and drew the customer purchase journey
- Finally, realized that the client did not have enough display pieces and had reduced the costs for display units a year back

**Recommendations**

- Increase display units.
- In-store branding, if feasible.
- Innovative trial options

**What went well**

- Could structure the problem to arrive at the root cause effectively

**What could have been done better**

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	BCG
<b>Candidate name</b>	Purvi Saraf
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	45 mins
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	NA
<b>Type of Case</b>	Growth Strategy
<b>Problem Statement</b>	A utility company supplies Natural Gas with exclusive presence. They supplied to vehicles and homes and saw high profits and strong growth. 1. They wanted sustainability in growth and possible changes in trajectory 2. They had no debt and a huge treasury surplus 3. Wanted to see possible new investment opportunities
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	NA

**Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: Number of cities in which the company operates?**

**Q: Time constraints?**

**Q: Expected ROI?**

**Q: Which part of the supply chain do they operate in?**

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- I broke down the New Business possibilities as follows:

### **Leveraging current capability**

- Discussed market attractiveness of new geographies through size, growth and barriers to entry

### **Acquiring New Capability**

- Complementary – Vertical integration – only going downstream was allowed
- Substitutes
- Qualitatively discussed the different industries and how they looked as investment opportunities given the current economic scenario and industry trends
- The interviewer told me to use another part of my framework which discussed entering related (energy) and unrelated businesses
- Discussed how I would go about picking a possible lead from all possible unrelated businesses step by step.
- Cited how Reliance had acquired Hamley's and the possibilities are endless. So, would use databases like CapIQ, set parameters like:
  - a. Size
  - b. Growth
  - c. Margins required
- Further discussed how we would then group by industries and decide which to enter

### **What went well**

- The interviewer seemed impressed with my discussion and insights on the current economic trends and status of different target industries
- Approach of breaking down the problem and filtering through the unrelated industries

### **What could have been done better**

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	BCG
<b>Candidate name</b>	Tej Vaidya
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case Interview
<b>Duration</b>	35 – 40 mins
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Rajeev Gupta, Senior Partner and Managing Director
<b>Type of Case</b>	Profitability
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Identify any customer segment for Swiggy and evaluate its current profitability
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key highlight of my undergraduate college life</li> <li>General conversation about consulting</li> </ul>

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

- NA

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Chose middle-aged working professionals in Mumbai. Was recommended I look at Hyderabad instead
- I then proceeded with a guesstimate pertaining to the revenues side and broke it:
  - a. Down to market size

- b. Order ticket size
- c. Order frequency
- Was asked several questions to catch me off-guard like:
  - a. How many degrees does the hour hand move between four to four twenty-five?
  - b. Some speed-distance-time questions, etc.

*[The interviewer was concerned majorly about the approach rather than the answer]*

### What went well

- Asking crisp scoping questions really helped in visualizing the problem and solving the case.
- Ability to relate to real-life example and get to the root cause of the problem

### What could have been done better

- Recommendations lacked creativity and could have been better

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	BCG
<b>Candidate name</b>	Abhinav Gupta
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case Interview
<b>Duration</b>	30 mins
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Akshit Shah, India HR Director
<b>Type of Case</b>	Profitability
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Your client is in office equipment space. It manufactures and sells office furniture. Its profit/unit is going down.
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Basic PI questions

### Scoping Questions Asked

**Q: Where does the client operate?**

**Q: Who are its competitors?**

**Q: What are the product lines?**

**Q: What are the clients' profitability goals?**

### Structure/Analysis to solve the Case

- Divided profit into revenue and costs.
- Decided to focus on Cubicle Systems

### **Revenue**

- Decided to focus on revenue first
- Divided revenue into Price \* Volume. Discovered that volume had gone up and decided to focus on price
- The interviewer said that we charge a premium. When I enquired about the reason, he said that we follow a palette-based system for laminated woods and offered 60 colors.
- Since revenue was not driving the decline in profits, I switched to the cost side

*[This reminded me of a similar case from the 2019 casebook, where an issue was around too many colors with some other type of furniture]*

### **Cost**

- Continuing on the 60 colors thought process; I asked how we procure this raw material. He said we import it from Malaysia.
- Asked about how competitors procured the raw material. He said they import from China and is 20% cheaper
- I further enquired about the demand distribution across these 60 colors and discovered that:
  - 10 colors drive 80% of the demand
  - The remaining 50 colors drive 20% of the demand

### **Final Recommendations**

- We can charge a premium for the colors
- We can bundle low selling colors with high selling colors. This can help us to stabilize demand

### **What went well**

- Kept sharing my thoughts from time to time
- Was able to defend myself with conviction when the interviewer pointed out that I had forgotten a critical recommendation

### **What could have been done better**

- Kept sharing my thoughts from time to time
- Was able to defend myself with conviction when the interviewer pointed out that I had forgotten a critical recommendation

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	BCG
<b>Candidate name</b>	Abhinav Gupta
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 mins
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Ankush Wadhera, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Miscellaneous
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Our Client is the PM Office, Government of India. They are planning to design a Govt. e-marketplace (Amazon equivalent of Amazon Buying). They are already ready with a beta version. They have hired us to tell the 5 most important things required for the success of this platform.
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Why BCG? Why consulting?

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

#### **Q: Why we are not using Amazon itself?**

A: The interviewer appreciated the question - he said that Amazon is a private entity and the government doesn't want to be linked to any private players

#### **What is the vision of this platform?**

A: The platform should be Cashless, Contactless, Paperless and should lead to savings

#### **Q: Can you elaborate on the savings aspect?**

A: The interviewer pointed out the presence of middlemen and corruption

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Divided the case into 3 sections: People, Process and Technology, and proceeded with each one by one

**People**

- Divided People into:
  - Buyers** - The main buyers were the procurement department. To prevent corruption gave recommendations including:
    - i. Training of the buyers
    - ii. Enforce legislations, etc.
  - Sellers** - As I moved to 'Sellers',
    - i. Asked me to evaluate which has more power buyer (government) or sellers.
    - ii. A little scoping of sellers revealed that:
      - o The seller market is extremely competitive, comprising of 100+ sellers and commodity products.
      - o Given the order size of the government, the buyer had even more power

**Process & Technology**

- I talked about infrastructure requirements and standardization of processes
- At this point, the interviewer asked me to stop and asked if I had any questions

**What went well**

- Was able to quickly establish connect with the interviewer since he knew a lot about my hometown
- When stuck, kept thinking out loud and kept suggesting him ideas

**What could have been done better**

- There can be a tendency to rush through things when the interview is waiting for an answer, so it is important to be calm

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	BCG
<b>Candidate name</b>	Vaibhav Parekh
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case Interview
<b>Duration</b>	25 mins
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	NA
<b>Type of Case</b>	Growth Strategy
<b>Problem Statement</b>	The case was based on a bank facing issues with 2 initiatives it had implemented: 1. A field force to sell more home loans and 2. A captive/ central facility to process loan applications faster and more efficiently. However, number of loans approved had not grown as per expectations
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	NA

**Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: What is the breakdown of the journey of a sales rep? [This is to understand why loan applications hadn't grown]**

**Q: What is the process of approving a loan application before and after this initiative was implemented?**

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case****Sales Force**

- Analyzed the sales rep journey to realize there were issues with targeting of customers/homes for these pitches
- Discussed a couple of solutions including:
  - a. Identifying new real estate developments and their buyers
  - b. Really old apartments who would be more likely to shift)

### **Loan Processing Facility**

- The breakdown of the process revealed that the staff was untrained and didn't apply any personal judgment while assessing applications.
- To be safe, they approved a very low % of applications, leading to unmet business goals

### **What went well**

- The journey and process breakdowns of the problems gave the case a good structure

### **What could have been done better**

- Unable to clearly articulate the human angle of the issue with the captive center

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	BCG
<b>Candidate name</b>	Harsh Bajaj
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case Interview
<b>Duration</b>	30 Minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Shivaprasad Raja, Principal
<b>Type of Case</b>	Profitability
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Our client is a port and they have been seeing a decline in profits. They need our help to understand what can be done.
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	NA

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: Since when have we been seeing this decline?**

**Q: Is it just us or all ports in the nearby areas?**

**Q: Who is our customer?**

**Q: Is the objective of the client long term or short-term profitability?**

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Started with the standard profitability framework where we can either:
  - a. Increase revenue
  - b. Decrease costs
- The interviewer suggested we look at revenue
- Mentioned that revenue = number of customers\*revenue/ customer.

*[Was asked to focus on number of customers]*

- Divided number of customers into Market size\*market share.

*[Was suggested we should look at increasing market share in the commercial segment]*

- Suggested we look at this in terms of changing things on the:
  - a. Supply side
  - b. Demand side

*[Interviewer gave me further information saying that there are 2 more nearby ports on the supply side and that they are taking up the entire share in the commercial segment]*

- Was asked what else might be needed on the supply side apart from infra and the port itself.
- Took the analogy of an airport and said that we need ship operators to come to our port
- Realized that the port wasn't listed on the rosters of ship operators and hence commercial customers weren't being able to ship through our port

### **What went well**

- Kept making conversation with the interviewer throughout because he kept dropping clues here and there which I might have missed otherwise

### **What could have been done better**

- Pace could have been better

## **5.2.5 Dalberg**

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Dalberg
<b>Candidate name</b>	Kinshu Sultania
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	5
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Guesstimate + Case + PI
<b>Duration</b>	60 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Patrick, Project Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	Guesstimate: Market sizing Case: Profitability
<b>Problem Statement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clients owns a chain of budget health centres operating in Mumbai Slums and only a quarter of them are profitable. If you only had 15 mins with the client CEO what are questions would you ask.</li> <li>2. Estimate the number of patients need for a clinic to reach break even point</li> </ol>
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Tell us something not on your resume, Resume discussion, Why Dalberg, Skills needed to succeed at Dalberg, Idea that you heard recently and liked

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

Broad questions on:

- Client
- Business
- Competition
- Customers
- Revenue
- Costs (Fixed and Variable)

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

**Case**

*[The interviewer shared a lot of price and cost data to draw insights from]*

- Proceeded to do a break-even analysis (using concepts from FADM)
- Proceeded to answer why only a quarter of centers were meeting the BE by mapping out the customer value chain. Broadly, the process is as follows:
  - a. Fall sick- decide to see a doctor (awareness about our clinic)
  - b. Choose which clinic to go to (preference)
  - c. Actually, go to the clinic (accessibility)
  - d. Get treatment (any supply constraints, already clarified that this is the same across clinics and not a concern)
  - e. Make payment (affordability, already clarified that WTP is not a problem)
- Discussion about some of these factors affecting performance of the different clinic

**Guesstimate**

- Assumed that one clinic has 100,000 people near it, so would they be able to reach their daily break-even number of patients
- Took the same value chain drawn above and the case boiled down to estimating the number of people who would fall sick on an average day

*[This was too abstract especially since the clinic had no specialization and would treat every disease, and so I struggled a bit here. The interviewer was very patient and guided]*

- Took an age cut, made frequency assumptions, and reached a number which said the client can reach a break-even assuming zero competition.

**What went well**

- PI went well and helped establish a rapport with interviewer
- Well structured (BEP and Value Chain)
- Struggled during the guesstimate. Kept calm and took hints from the interviewer
- Used the interviewer as a sounding board
- Not losing confidence when the number of patients didn't match – instead checked my assumptions and corrected them (made the assumption of center being open 7 days a week when in fact it was just 6 days)

**What could have been done better**

- Mental math could have been faster and more accurate

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Dalberg
<b>Candidate name</b>	Kinshu Sultania
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	5
<b>Round No</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	Guesstimate + Case + PI
<b>Duration</b>	60 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Keshav Kanoria, Sr. Project Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	Guesstimate: Market sizing Case: Market Entry
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Client already has XX acres of land in Gurgaon with plans to open a premium school. Should they go ahead?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Resume discussion, detailed discussion on my experience in McKinsey

**Scoping Questions Asked**

Broad questions on:

- Client's Motivations
- Competition
- Consumer Segment
- Regulation
- Costs

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- **Market Sizing:** Started by applying the standard market entry framework, which first required me to estimate the market size and calculate whether the school will be able to recover its costs
- **Estimating Number of High Income Households:** Since the school was a premium offering, the discussion got anchored on Income; estimating #households in the area which have incomes above a certain level (assumption made on #children at schooling age per HH). Was asked several approaches to figure out someone's income

**What went well**

- PI allowed me to bring out my strengths and my experiences while working at McKinsey and share my high motivations for joining Dalberg
- Thinking of different approaches to the problem statement
- Remaining calm when I got stuck
- Being structured in problem solving

**What could have been done better**

- Should have customized my approach instead of using a standard framework to solve the case

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Dalberg
<b>Candidate name</b>	Kinshu Sultania
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	5
<b>Round No</b>	4
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case + PI
<b>Duration</b>	60 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Dayoung Lee, Associate Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Abstract
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Client has \$XX Million to invest in improving primary school enrollment from XX% to YY%. How should they go about it?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Resume discussion, detailed discussion on my experience in McKinsey

**Scoping Questions Asked**

Standard scoping questions generated important insight that the region/geography had not been decided

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- I started with a 3 step approach:
  1. Identify Region(s) to invest in
  2. Identify causes for lack of enrolment currently

### 3. Solutions and Stakeholder identification to aim in Implementation

#### Region Identification

- For region identification, I made a 2X2 matrix with Enrollment rate and Infrastructure
- I wanted to identify those regions that already have primary school infra because it is easier to fill built schools than make new schools and then fill them
- After some discussion here, the interviewer provided me with India, Kenya, Ivory Coast, and other country as the new scope

#### Causes for lack of enrolment

- I proceeded to identify causes for lack of enrollment in these countries using the People, Process, and Technology approach
- Under people, I was looking at both student angles and teacher angles
- Due to lack of time, she told me to assume that cause has been identified and to move to step 3

#### Solutions and Stakeholder Identification for Implementation

Here, discussion involved around finding NGOs or entities that would bring about the change. My structure for identifying such NGOs was:

1. Willingness (they should be willing to work for the cause)
2. Capability (they should have the capacity to bring about widespread change)
3. Need (whether they need the funding or not, eliminate if already well-funded)

A little more qualitative discussion here post which I was given some numbers which I had to use to calculate cost per student per year. The numbers seemed straightforward but were not, I got a little stuck here but the interviewer was extremely calm and helpful.

#### What went well

- The case was a standard one from their website and I had already practiced cases along similar lines (**Tip:** Do go through their website and look at projects- try and make cases out of them)
- Having confidence during PI round also helps. Try and cover as many things as you can

#### What could have been done better

Numbers. Take a moment to structure your thoughts even during the middle of the case.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Dalberg
<b>Candidate name</b>	Kinshu Sultania
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	5
<b>Round No</b>	5
<b>Type of Round</b>	Guesstimate + Case + PI
<b>Duration</b>	60 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Gaurav Gupta, Regional Director (Asia)
<b>Type of Case</b>	1) Case: Abstract 2) Guesstimate: Market Sizing
<b>Problem Statement</b>	1) What are the social costs associated with a pothole on a road in Gurgaon? 2) What is the 5 year (not annual) market size globally for Solar Lanterns (imagine lamps which charge during the day and run during the night)?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He already seemed to have detailed notes from my previous PIs and asked me to elaborate on a few points I had mentioned in earlier interviews</li> <li>• I already had another offer so discussion around that company vs Dalberg and what motivated me to join Dalberg</li> <li>• The feedback (both positive and negative) I received</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• during my 2 years at McKC</li> <li>• My experiences in school, college, ISB and how I have evolved and whether I expected it, etc.</li> </ul>
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**Scoping Questions Asked**

NA

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case****Case**

Very abstract case that didn't really have a structure to begin with, it was about exploring as many angles as you can think of and structuring them. Post continuous guidance from the interviewer, the following are some of the points I came up with:

- 1. Opportunity cost of time (salary forgone by spending that extra 15 mins on the road due to congestion caused by pothole)
- 2. Health: Direct costs (say backpain caused due to pothole when the car goes above it), and Indirect costs (during monsoons, water can fill in it and cause Dengue in the neighborhood)
- 3. Vehicle costs: Depends on the depth of pothole, can range from say alignment damage to accidents
- 4. Pollution: Pothole causes congestion due to which people must be on the roads longer. This causes Air Pollution from vehicle gas emissions. Land Pollution is also caused because in India people tend to throw things out of cars. (*The interviewer seemed to hit Aha moment when I said Pollution and he seemed satisfied post this*)
- 5. Wastage of precious non-renewable resources- Petrol/Diesel as the car now must run for longer
- I was asked to not estimate the costs (put numbers to it). Since the factors are a lot, I asked to prioritize
- I was asked which points according to me were most important. The key was to not give the right answer but provide a good logic for whatever you choose to pick
- I chose opportunity cost of time

**My estimation equation:**

- #cars passing the pothole X Average delay per car X Average salary per car (this was done for say a given day)
- **Interviewer:** How would you find the salary for people who are not working? Like Housewives  
**Answer:** I would put the value of the substitute for her. If she is not cooking or taking care of the baby then they would probably hire a cook or a nanny to do it so salaries of the cook or nanny would be my number. *[He seemed satisfied]*

**Guesstimate**

- Again, due to paucity of time we could not get into numbers but there was enough qualitative discussion around who the target groups would be, who are the people that would use this, is it just limited to rural houses or would people with electricity also use it
- Turns out, I did not quite understand the product even after scoping questions and so I was questioned on everything I said because I seemed to have been getting it wrong
- But I think the fact that I did not give up, and was able to align my thinking with the interviewer worked for me

**What went well**

- Confidence, not being nervous, talking to interviewer very candidly
- The feedback I received was that he would be comfortable putting me in front of clients because my answers were honest and genuine, and Dalberg appreciates that
- Don't try to glorify your PI answers, and if you don't know something then it's okay to show

- weakness (it's a sign of maturity)
- Do your cases well. Take the interviewers buy in, think of as many things as you can and then narrow it down. Structure every step
  - If you get stuck, don't lose your calm. Everybody gets stuck one place or another

### **What could have been done better**

Scoping of the second case. I am not from the industry and I don't know anything about Energy products. It's okay to take more time to scope if the case is not familiar to you to avoid controversies later.

### **5.2.6 Deloitte**

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Deloitte India
<b>Candidate name</b>	Achuth Arun Resmi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Kathir, Senior Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	M&A
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Two international banks are merging and would like to understand what the operational advantages of doing so would be
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Personal background, View on political landscape of hometown
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	

#### **Q: What is the geographic presence/location for Banks A and B?**

A: Bank A had significant presence in North America and Europe, with a relatively small presence in Asia. Bank B had significant presence in SE Asia and a small presence in Europe

#### **Q: What does relatively small mean?**

A: Sizes of both the banks in Asia were relatively the same

#### **Q: What are the primary customer segments for the bank?**

A: Both are universal banks. Bank A is an old player with large retail and commercial operations. Bank B is predominantly in retail banking

#### **Q: What engagement channels do the bank use for interacting with customers?**

A: Engagement Channels – Physical branches and online banking

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Since the focus was purely on the operational side, I decided to focus on a customer facing/non-customer facing split.
- Once the interviewer gave his approval, I went ahead and put down reasons

#### **Non-Customer Facing**

- **Significant overlap in Asia**
  - Can reduce headcount in a crowded market
  - Can use spare headcount to expand into second and third tier cities in Asia, which is the next biggest market
  - Merge physical branches and ATM network to reduce operational expenses
- **Access to talent pool at lower cost and offshoring opportunities**
  - Especially for Bank A
  - Increased buyer power due to large size of combined entity

**Customer Facing**

- **Greater geographical coverage and access to network**
  - a. ATM and physical branch network
  - b. Continuity of service
  - c. Interoperability of cards of both banks
- **A customer now has access to more opportunities for investment across geographies, especially SE Asia**
  - At this point, the interviewer said that we could wrap up and that was the end of the interview

**What went well**

- Drew out a tree structure on paper and was putting my points down as I spoke which helped me and the interviewer to keep track of what I said
- Ensured that I was MECE

**What could have been done better**

- Could have used a customer journey split – Customer Acquisition -> Customer Service -> Customer Retention

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Deloitte India
<b>Candidate name</b>	Achuth Arun Resmi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	45 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Antony Prashant, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Abstract
<b>Problem Statement</b>	How would you go about designing an analytics platform for an organization?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	CV review to understand projects on resume better, discussed example of a project the interviewer had done to better understand the work Deloitte does

**Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: What type of organization is it?**

A: Manufacturing Firm

**Q: Why do they need the platform?**

A: It is needed to setup a predictive maintenance system

**Q: What is the data source?**

A: Their entire operations are IoT enabled

**Q: Are there any constraints that should be kept in mind?**

A: No financial or timeline constraints

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- I focused purely on the setting up the platform since I was told that there was full organizational buy-in for the idea
  - a. **Data Source** - The plant is IoT enabled, so the primary source of data would be from the sensors at each step of manufacturing
  - b. **Data Quality** - Creating controls and benchmarks to clearly distinguish between quality data and garbage
  - c. **Data Storage** - All this data will need to be stored centrally, so that the firm can leverage this info in the future as well
    - i. Also, spoke about the concept of a data lake, where data from different sources would flow in and be stored in a central repository
  - d. **Data Integrity** - Once the data is stored centrally, we have to manage access control, metadata protection and so on, in order to ensure that the data that came in is preserved.
    - i. Also spoke about creating separate environments in the data lake for each project, so that changes in one project would not affect the rest
  - e. **Data Analytics** – Spoke about opensource versus proprietary technology and laid out the pros and cons of each option
  - f. **Insights** - Touched upon how floor managers and even senior leadership may not have the time nor the technical expertise to run the program and read the insights.
    - i. This necessitates the creation of a “click-and-use” UI to allow non-tech savvy users to access the platform
- I touched upon my work-ex here, where I'd done something very similar

### What went well

- The split was comprehensive and allowed me to touch upon all aspects.
- Previous exposure to something similar at work helped.

### What could have been done better

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Deloitte S&O
<b>Candidate name</b>	Anand Banerjee
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	20 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Deepali, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market Entry
<b>Problem Statement</b>	How could Swiggy launch a food delivery app/service for tier 4/5 towns in India?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	NA

### Scoping Questions Asked

Generic questions asked around objective identification and 5 C's.

### Structure/Analysis to solve the Case

- Used a 4 P's approach
  - a. **Product**- features to be incorporated e.g., a 'lite' version of the app to support low data

consumption, vernacular language version of the app etc.

- b. Place** - In terms of accepting sms orders and orders over the phone from a central Swiggy call center, ability to piggyback on the traditional method of ordering in tier 4/5 towns
- c. Pricing**- In terms of deep discounting to induce trial and attract customers to the platform, briefly mentioned cross-side platform effects
- d. Promotion**- schemes involving tie-ups with large local players, campaigns stressing how Swiggy can 'deliver any flavour to your doorstep with the press of a button' etc.
- I touched upon my work-ex here, where I'd done something very similar

#### What went well

- The MECE approach and innovative solutions

#### What could have been done better

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Deloitte S&O Middle East
<b>Candidate name</b>	Chaitanya Pawde
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	50 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Abstract
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Khemedis is Abu Dhabi based organization. Based on the data shared what would be the growth opportunities and relevant recommendations?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Prior experience in consulting, Why Deloitte, Why this team, Why Middle East

#### Scoping Questions Asked

- Deloitte S&O was recruiting for the Monitor team based out of Abu Dhabi, and hence the discussion was on a Monitor case aligned with the kind of work they do in Middle East.
- A self-explanatory case booklet was handed and there was no opportunity to ask clarifying questions
- The case summarized economic development in a fictitious country of Khemed through a wide range of data –
  - a. Share of different sectors in the economy
  - b. Expected growth rates of each sector
  - c. Current employment across sectors and expected employment trends
  - d. Share of Khemed's citizens and expats employed in each sector
  - e. Education levels across men, women and different age groups etc.
  - f. ~ 10 graphs and charts encompassing the above content and moderate amount of text explaining Khemed's historical economic development and challenges for the future
- **Quantitative questions:**
  - a. Currently, the number of Khemedis employed is XX. The current population of Khemed is AA, which will grow BB% per year for the next 5 years. Now if after 5 years, we want YY% of Khemedis to be employed, then how many new jobs will need to be created over 5 years?
  - b. Using the sectoral projected growth data for three sectors A, B and C, find out their contribution to the economy/ employment after 5 years?

- Quantitative questions:**

- Which sectors could have more potential for Khemedi employment after 5 years and why?
- What could be some development programs implemented by Govt. of Khemed to improve employment levels and what could be some of the challenges in implementing these?

[No calculators allowed and discussions on the case start sharp after 20 minutes]

### Structure/Analysis to solve the Case

#### **Quantitative**

- Calculate the population after 5 years, find out the exact number of Khemedis out of this population that should have jobs after 5 years using the YY% data,
- then find the delta between this number and the XX number, to find the number of new jobs to be created.

[Mentioned upfront that the numerical answers were not concrete and complete but had written down the approach for both the numericals, and my thoughts for the next 2 questions.]

### What went well

- Handling of the situation and presentation of answers.
- Despite the lack of calculations, the decision to pen down approach and ensure all 4 questions were tackled worked better.
- The interested was more in knowing my approach and thought process, rather than the exact answers to the numericals.
- The abilities to think on your feet, be practical and composed
- Be confident and receptive to feedback.
- Accept genuine errors if pointed out, and also take stands on some points if you strongly feel so.

### What could have been done better

- Could have read the case faster and better judged the amount of work needed.
- Taking some notes as I was reading - perhaps this took up some time
- Could have tried preparing the approach sheet first with pointers for all 4 questions and then attempted the calculations on a separate sheet

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Deloitte India
<b>Candidate name</b>	Sonakshi Gupta
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Deepti Sagar, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Business Strategy
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Tata Sky is your client and they're faced with a major challenge. In this age of convergence, they're facing a stiff competition from OTT platforms such as Netflix and Hotstar. Would you recommend they scrap their existing model and go back to the drawing board or would you recommend they continue with their existing business model?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Review of resume, Case comp specific question, situation specific

	question
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because it was a time-capped interview, solutions were discussed straightway</li> </ul>	
<b>Structure/Analysis to solve the Case</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suggested a stratified model - for rural and semi-urban regions in India, Tata Sky works well the way it is because viewership hasn't evolved to level wherein, they've increased consumption of on-demand content.</li> <li>While in Urban India, Tata Sky needs to stay relevant because people are transitioning to OTT platforms, especially the millennials.</li> <li>Tata Sky could launch a hybrid service such as Airtel's XStream Box which is an aggregator offering both satellite channels as well as on-demand content through Netflix and Hotstar.</li> </ul>	
<b>What went well</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The structured thinking and presentation my case in a logical sequence</li> </ul>	
<b>What could have been better</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We were informed that the first round would be guesstimates however it turned out to be case.</li> <li>Be prepared for all sorts of information asymmetries and curveballs.</li> </ul>	

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited
<b>Candidate name</b>	Vaibhav Goushal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	General Discussion
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Ashwin Ballal, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Abstract
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Should Vodafone Group and Aditya Birla Group infuse fresh funds in the combined entity, Vodafone-Idea Ltd. given the current state of affairs in the Indian telecommunication industry?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did not ask any specific scoping questions. The idea was to present reasonable arguments along with the answer to the question</li> </ul>	
<b>Structure/Analysis to solve the Case</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The combined entity, Vodafone Idea has over 330 million subscribers making it India's second largest mobile telecommunications network.</li> <li>The positive brand image of Vodafone in India combined with the expertise of the Kumar Mangalam Birla makes the entity a prime contender for investment</li> <li>Despite the recent spate of judgments, ill-timed policy changes, and tax disputes, the Indian telecommunication market remains attractive is poised to grow at a double digit CAGR.</li> <li>The oligopoly created in the sector is favourable for the three remaining private players, they will</li> </ul>	

- now be able to raise prices resulting in a positive change in ARPU and overall revenue growth.
- The government too has hinted at certain concessions to ensure the survival of the remaining three private telcos.
  - **The company a long runway for growth in the country, provided it is able to weather the current storm.**
  - **The company should look at raising capital to assuage its existing investors and to create a big enough war chest to tackle the looming AGR crisis.**

### What went well

- Presented tangible facts and make reasonable opinions about the side of the argument chosen
- Provided a small recommendation at the end of the argument
- Engaged the interviewer

### What could have been done better

- Could have expanded the scope of the discussion to include other points pertaining to national level strategic interest and overall economic growth impetus provided by the telecommunication industry

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited
<b>Candidate name</b>	Vaibhav Goushal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	General Discussion + Mini Case
<b>Duration</b>	40 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Ashwin Ballal and Deepthi Sagar, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Abstract
<b>Problem Statement</b>	How will you help the combined entity (Voda-Idea) to cut operating costs by at least 50% over the next two years?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Discussed CV to highlight role fitment

### Scoping Questions Asked

- Asked generic questions on operations and associated costs

### Structure/Analysis to solve the Case

- After discussion, narrowed down the focus areas to scaling down on customer service centers and human capital costs.
- Together with the interviewers, proposed a phase-wise plan to create ground-level synergies for Voda-Idea.
- Based on the limited financial and operating information provided by the interviewers, proposed a plan to cut costs by 55% over two years.

### What went well

- Able to narrow down the problem area fairly quickly.
- Simple and uncomplicated approach to ensure that I meet the time allocated by the interviewers

### What could have been done better

- Considering that the interview was for a team that focuses on Telecom and Technology, could have researched more on the norms and some basic operating models of telecom operators in India

### 5.2.7 Ernst & Young

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Ernst & Young
<b>Candidate name</b>	Chitwan
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	4
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	~30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	N/A
<b>Type of Case</b>	Profitability
<b>Problem Statement</b>	The company is a coaching establishment like TIMES, that is facing a decline in profitability. We want to figure out the reason.
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	N/A
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A</li> </ul>
<b>Structure/Analysis to solve the Case</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approached it from a TR-TC perspective and discussed cost side/revenue side.</li> <li>Deduced that the problem lay in reduction in volume as people had started shifting to online courses.</li> <li>Discussed the growth of online education and its cost advantages, convenience etc</li> </ul>
<b>What went well</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broke down the revenue side well</li> </ul>
<b>What could have been done better</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spent too much time discussing costs</li> </ul>

### 5.2.8 EY-Parthenon

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	EY-Parthenon
<b>Candidate name</b>	Himanshu Punjabi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	4
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case interview
<b>Duration</b>	45 mins
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Cameron, Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market Entry/Profitability
<b>Problem Statement</b>	A commercial laundry operator in Abu Dhabi is planning to enter Dubai. Should they enter the market?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	N/A
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	

**Q: What is the deciding factor for go-no go decision? Are we looking at profits, market share or something else?**

A: Decision should be made on profitability and breakeven period

**Q: What is the estimated fixed cost?**

A: US\$3m to US\$4m per year

**Q: What does the competition look like in the market?**

**Q: What is the expected revenue and variable costs per laundry load?**

**Q: Who are our customers?**

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- **Estimated Profits** - Since focus was on profitability, I calculated estimated profits based on [Market size\*market share\*(Revenue-VC) - Fixed cost]
- **Market sizing** – Used footfall in hotels as the starting point. Estimated the market size by (Number of hotels\*Average number of rooms in each hotel\*Average occupancy every year\*Number of clothes given for laundry everyday)
- **Estimated market share** - Estimate market share based on current competition and arrive at profitability and breakeven period.
- Covered other aspects of market entry such as regulations, risks etc. as covered in the consulting case book.

### **What went well**

- Probed into the possibility of attracting new entrants

### **What could have been done better**

- Identified the correlation between fixed costs and CAPEX
- Kept alert and correlate every piece of information with information that was shared previously

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	EY-Parthenon
<b>Candidate name</b>	Vedant Purohit
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	40 mins
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Camillo Schobesberger, Senior Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market Entry
<b>Problem Statement</b>	You are advising an industrial laundry company currently operating in Saudi if they should enter the Dubai market or not? What factors would you consider?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	<p><b>Q:</b> Why do you want to work at Parthenon?  <b>Q:</b> Are you sure you want to work abroad?  <b>Q:</b> What is your main motivation behind it?</p>

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: What does industrial laundry exactly mean?**

A: Mass laundry

**Q: What are the different segments we cater to?**

A: Hotels/Hostels/Hospitals/Corporates

**Q: What is the specific motive behind expansion?**

A: Profits/Revenues

**Q: What are the metrics they are looking at to decide success?**

A: Customer acquisition

**Q: How large is the market segment in Dubai?**

A: \$10 mn

**Q: Is there any competition or regulations?**

A: Mainly, 2 large competitors and 2 small ones

**Q: Is the market growing?**

A: The tourist market is growing

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Used the Market Entry Analysis, Profit-Loss analysis, Market Entry Strategies frameworks
- Focused on the 80-20 rule. Took the segment that is more profitable
- **Business Model:**
  - a. Collect clothes/bedsheets/curtains in a van,
  - b. Get to the station
  - c. Clean them
  - d. Distribute in the similar fashion
  - e. Turnaround time 2 days
- **Things to keep in mind:**
  - a. Customer segment in the industry (business travelers/tourists)
  - b. Maximum market share that can be captured
  - c. Maximum efficiency, any changes might be required in the technology, distribution bottleneck, competitor's advantage,
  - d. Quant heavy case, so quick thinking and neat writing

### **What went well**

- Kept my calm and asked questions I was not too sure about.
- Picked up the hints around customer segment and growth and that built confidence for both of us

### **What could have been done better**

- My start was rocky and did not get the hang around the problem

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	EY-Parthenon
<b>Candidate name</b>	Himanshu Punjabi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	4
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 mins
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Abhishek Agarwal, Director
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market Entry
<b>Problem Statement</b>	A European chemical manufacturer is looking to setup a manufacturing plant in SE Asia. What are the factors they should consider?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	N/A
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	

**Q: Why do we want to manufacture in SE Asia and not in Europe?**

**Q: Do we have expertise in manufacturing outside of Europe?**

**Q: Is there any history in setting up a greenfield plant outside Europe?**

*[Established that the Company only wanted to manufacture in SE Asia and that its target sales geography would continue to be its existing geographies]*

#### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Used Market entry framework
- Modified standard market entry structure to just focus on manufacturing in a new geography.
- Ended with the case with PESTEL framework.

#### **What went well**

- Got a sense of what the interviewer is interested in learning and answer accordingly

#### **What could have been done better**

- Could have done a better job in explaining the structure.
- Practice explaining a case structure without showing the paper to your case prep group to improve your ability to explain without having recourse to a visual aid.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	EY-Parthenon
<b>Candidate name</b>	Aksh Sheth
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	1
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case+PI
<b>Duration</b>	40
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Principal
<b>Type of Case</b>	Guesstimate
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Estimate the number of spark plug sold in Andhra Pradesh
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	<p>Q: Tell me about yourself          Q: What are your interest areas?          Q: Why don't you want to join a startup?          A: I told that I am interested in learning about business models of startups and problems solved by startups.</p>

#### **Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q:** What are the vehicle types I should include?

A: 2W, 4W (cars) and buses

**Q:** How many spark plugs are used in each vehicle type?

**Q:** Should I include both new and replacement demand?

A: We can discuss when we go into details

#### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- I asked him demand side or supply side and explained the approach for both the methods. From the demand side, I calculated the number of vehicles (2W, 4W, and bus) sold in Andhra Pradesh.
- However, I should have only included the replacement demand. The fact was that no OEMs were in

- Andhra Pradesh. So only replacement demand had to be included.
- Then I focused only on the replacement demand. The interviewer gave numbers of the installed base. I asked about the replacement cycle to which he mentioned that the spark plug needs to be replaced after every 1500 kms. I converted that to number of years. E.g., in case of 2 wheelers, 50kms per day \* 300 days = 1500 kms, so I assumed that spark plug needs to be replaced in a 2 wheeler every year.
  - Similarly, I estimated the replacement cycle for cars and buses. I calculated the replacement demand using installed base, replacement cycle and number of spark plugs in each vehicle type.

### **What went well**

- Show all your workings to the interviewer so he can correct you if required
- Take time to think as opposed to quickly answering without much thinking

### **What could have been done better**

- Stay calm
- Don't get nervous if you don't know about the industry or the product. Ask a meaningful question to the interviewer to understand the same

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	EY-Parthenon
<b>Candidate name</b>	Jagriti
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case+PI
<b>Duration</b>	50 min
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Shehbaz Ali, Director, Dubai Office
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market Sizing and Market Entry
<b>Problem Statement</b>	European manufacturer of office chairs specializes in niche technology (has its own IP) for "swivel chairs". Client wants to look at opportunities within the home market and identify growth opportunities abroad to pilot. Client wants to identify and establish a base in foreign markets, primarily in UAE. They are ranked #3 in Europe, want to become #1 How can they achieve this?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	<p><b>Q:</b> Introduce yourself?  <b>A:</b> Gave a prepared answer, focusing on parts that I thought were more relevant for this role and company.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Why consulting?  <b>A:</b> Spoke about how I have built a strong foundation in analytics with ~4 years of experience and now wanted to move to front end management/strategy consulting. Gave reference of my time at BCG and how working closely with consultants and realizing the impact my analytics solutions had on clients' businesses, I felt motivated to make this functional switch.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Why EY-Parthenon?  <b>A:</b> International/Global experience, more exposure, interesting projects, diverse teams, immense opportunities, and possibility of shaping your own career going forward.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Tell me about a time you faced conflict at work and took steps to resolve it?  <b>A:</b> Gave the example of an analytics project for a banking client at BCG.</p>

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q:** Should I focus only on UAE for the sake of this analysis?

**Q:** Should the market sizing be based on value or volume?

**Q:** Are we considering only swivel chairs?

**Q:** What is the client's current market share and expected market share to become #1?

**Q:** What are the product advantages/disadvantages?

**Q:** What are the core strengths of company?

**Q:** Who are the competitors?

**Q:** What is the expected customer response to the new technology and their ease of adoption?

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

**Frameworks used:** I listed down various ways in which we can size the market i.e. topdown or bottom-up, supply or demand side, etc. For market entry, I used Build, Borrow (JV), Buy (inorganic method i.e. M&A) framework

After discussing with the interviewer, I used the topdown approach starting with the total infrastructural area available in UAE (interviewer gave me the number), and dividing it into residential, commercial and retail. Then I divided commercial into industrial and non-industrial. Among nonindustrial, I took assumptions for available (open) floor space in offices. Finally, I divided into swivel and non-swivel chairs considering factors such as area required by a chair, life of a chair etc. to arrive at 2 figures – market size for swivel chairs for new market and for replacement market.

**Recommendations/ Synthesis:** I suggested to enter the market through partnering with other firms in middle east. Gave a list of pros and cons along with potential barriers to entry and how to tackle them.

### **What went well**

- I was confident throughout the interview (Specially in PI/Behavioral questions). I got stuck at few places during the case, but I didn't flutter and maintained my calm.
- Asked relevant questions to the interviewer and moved ahead. I also always shared my thoughts with the interviewer and asked him if my approach was correct. That saved us time as he would correct me beforehand if he thought I wasn't thinking in the right direction.

### **What could have been done better**

- At various times during the interview, the interviewer had to help me to arrive at the most logical and correct answer. I would have preferred if I thought about it myself proactively.
- I should have practiced more Market entry cases.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	EY-Parthenon
<b>Candidate name</b>	Jagriti
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case+PI
<b>Duration</b>	35-40 min
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Thomas Bradtke, Lead Partner, Riyadh Office
<b>Type of Case</b>	Growth Strategy
<b>Problem Statement</b>	How can Saudi improve international relations with other countries and build stronger ties and strategic partnerships? For simplicity sake, I was asked to take India as the other nation. Client was Govt of Saudi Arabia. (It was a real ongoing project with a 3 months' timeline that the partner himself was working on)
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	<p><b>Q:</b> Introduce yourself?</p> <p><b>A:</b> Gave a prepared answer, focusing on parts that I thought were more relevant for this role and company. Followed up by asking about the partner. (He was an exBCG partner and had joined Parthenon few years ago, so I tried to strike a conversation around that and asked for his reasons to make the shift etc.)</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Tell me 3 unique things about yourself that make you stand out?</p> <p><b>A:</b> I spoke about my work experience in analytics, my ability to work well in teams as well as work independently (quoting examples from past projects),</p>

	and my initiative-taking abilities (again substantiating with examples). (I further rambled on to tell more about myself but in hindsight, I don't think I should have done that)																										
<b><u>Scoping Questions Asked</u></b>																											
Not a lot of scoping questions since the case was very open-ended																											
<b><u>Structure/Analysis to solve the Case</u></b>																											
<p><b>Frameworks used:</b> Tried to incorporate the PESTEL framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommended dividing the project into 2 phases – evaluating historic ties and potential future opportunities separately.</li> <li>Listed a few points that can be looked at under each head (using PESTEL framework and other points such as trade relations, international projects together, common allies etc.).</li> <li>In the final “business plan”, I came up with a 5-step approach to completion of the project – Identifying opportunities/pain points, strategic planning, understanding tradeoffs, implementation/execution planning, and identifying bottlenecks.</li> </ul>																											
<b><u>What went well</u></b>																											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very important to ask relevant questions to the partner, for example, I asked about the industries and projects prevalent in MENA, what kind of assignments is he working on, what's in the pipeline, UAE trends and future landscape etc.?</li> <li>I also stayed calm and answered confidently</li> </ul>																											
<b><u>What could have been done better</u></b>																											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I could have been more concise in my answers (very important to give sharp and to-the-point answers to both behavioral and case questions).</li> </ul>																											
<table border="1"> <tr> <td><b>Company Interviewing for</b></td> <td>EY-Parthenon</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Candidate name</b></td> <td>Kriti Jain</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Number of Rounds</b></td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Round No</b></td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Type of Round</b></td> <td>Case+PI</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Duration</b></td> <td>50 min</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b></td> <td>Partner, Dubai</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Type of Case</b></td> <td>Growth strategy</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Problem Statement</b></td> <td>Government of Saudi wants to improve its ties with Government of India. You have to advise Saudi Government on engagement strategies and roadmap.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>PI/Introduction Questions</b></td> <td>Top three things on your resume that you think are the most significant.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Scoping Questions Asked</b></td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><b><u>Structure/Analysis to solve the Case</u></b></td></tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">I used three sets of relationships that would have to be evaluated – Saudi &amp; other nations, Saudi &amp; India, Other 2 nations who relations might influence Saudi-India collaboration (like something between Iraq-US influencing Saudi). Then, there could be direct engagement strategies – military, economic, sports, cultural, etc, or indirect engagement like through lobbying in international forums, UN, etc. We discussed examples of a lot of these points. Second part was a deeper discussion on how would you choose/prioritize from a list of these strategies. I used the effort vs impact chart to evaluate these. We also discussed what exact parameters would have to be used to measure effort and impact in this case.</td></tr> </table>		<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	EY-Parthenon	<b>Candidate name</b>	Kriti Jain	<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3	<b>Round No</b>	2	<b>Type of Round</b>	Case+PI	<b>Duration</b>	50 min	<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Partner, Dubai	<b>Type of Case</b>	Growth strategy	<b>Problem Statement</b>	Government of Saudi wants to improve its ties with Government of India. You have to advise Saudi Government on engagement strategies and roadmap.	<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Top three things on your resume that you think are the most significant.	<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	N/A	<b><u>Structure/Analysis to solve the Case</u></b>		I used three sets of relationships that would have to be evaluated – Saudi & other nations, Saudi & India, Other 2 nations who relations might influence Saudi-India collaboration (like something between Iraq-US influencing Saudi). Then, there could be direct engagement strategies – military, economic, sports, cultural, etc, or indirect engagement like through lobbying in international forums, UN, etc. We discussed examples of a lot of these points. Second part was a deeper discussion on how would you choose/prioritize from a list of these strategies. I used the effort vs impact chart to evaluate these. We also discussed what exact parameters would have to be used to measure effort and impact in this case.	
<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	EY-Parthenon																										
<b>Candidate name</b>	Kriti Jain																										
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<b><u>What went well</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having a structured approach is the only thing that can help in such cases, since there was not much info. There was no problem to be solved.</li> <li>Have clarity of any solutions that you propose, the interviewer could go down into depth on any point</li> </ul>
<b><u>What could have been done better</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try keep your answers in as much structure as possible.</li> </ul>

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	EY-Parthenon MENA
<b>Candidate name</b>	Aayush Rajesh Poddar
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Guesstimates + Case + PI
<b>Duration</b>	45 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Aman Bedi, Senior Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market entry case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Estimate the market size of waste management in India and strategize market entry for a client
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Questions related to family business
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asked questions related to the 3Cs and 1P to scope out the case.</li> </ul>	
<b>Structure/Analysis to solve the Case</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estimated the market size through a top-down approach and discussed the flow of my approach at each node.</li> <li>Discussed elimination of industrial waste and excretory waste in domestic waste during the market sizing. The interviewer was happy that I was considering all options and discussing assumptions before proceeding ahead.</li> <li>Leveraged the information from the scoping questions, industry and competitive advantage to ascertain the benefits and challenges of the entry into the market.</li> <li>Based on the scoping and analysis, recommended the interviewer that the client should not enter as the waste management market in India has a pretty high government risk</li> </ul>	
<b><u>What went well</u></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was a highly unconventional industry but I maintained my composure and stuck to my framework and scoping to provide the recommendations.</li> </ul>	
<b><u>What could have been done better</u></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I would urge everyone to always do a sense check of your guesstimate before providing a final number to the interviewer.</li> </ul>	

## 5.2.9 Kearney

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Kearney
<b>Candidate name</b>	Achuth Arun Resmi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case + PI
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Sunil Pasricha, Director (India)
<b>Type of Case</b>	Value Chain
<b>Problem Statement</b>	<p>A high-end cosmetics firm based out of Europe is deciding on moving its value chain to China.</p> <p>There is a clear business case for shifting to China and the client is clear on that front.</p> <p>However, being a high-end product, the client is worried about the negative impact on brand perception from moving to China.</p>
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Previous work experience related
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	

**Q: Do we have any constraints?**

A: None so.

**Q: Can we move a portion of the value chain to China?**

A: Yes, it is possible.

**Q: What are the major markets for us?**

A: Asia, Europe and North America.

**Q: Would establishing a supplier network be an issue?**

A: Not an issue. Enough suppliers can be found in China.

**Q: In what price range do we sell our products?**

A: Our prices range between \$100 to \$2000.

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Exhaustively listed factors that could affect brand perception like product quality
- Proceeded to factors affecting quality at each stage of the value chain due to a move to China.
- The interviewer chose to focus on potential solutions to one of the factors- that high-end customers would be very wary of skin care product quality as they are directly applied to the skin.
- Provided the following recommendations:
  - a. **Move non-direct application products to China**  
This could be done by analysing a matrix, with price on x-axis and method of application (spraying, ointment, lotion etc.) on the y-axis
  - b. **Moving only packaging to China** – To reduce concerns about the quality of the product and to capitalize on shorter shipping routes to target markets, moving packaging to China while keeping manufacturing of the products in Europe would be an alternative.
- **Final solution**
  - a. The interviewer agreed that 15% of product costs were packaging and moving to China would reduce this to 5%.
  - b. Further proceeded to recommend undertaking a cost-benefit analysis to see if making products in Europe and shipping to China would be better or shipping packaging to Europe.

**What went well**

- Able to hold a conversation with the interviewer and not lose his attention
- The matrix of price x applicability helped gain the interviewer's attention

**What could have been done better**

- Could have started with the value chain, which would have led me to the packaging versus manufacturing analysis earlier in the interview.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Kearney
<b>Candidate name</b>	Sapna Purswani
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case + PI
<b>Duration</b>	40 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Susheel Sethumadhavan, Principal
<b>Type of Case</b>	Value Chain
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Design a supply chain for a last mile logistics company
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	<p><b>Q:</b> Have you been offered shortlists from other firms? Why do you want to work at Kearney?</p> <p><b>A:</b> I gave him an honest answer around what my interests are and how they are aligned with the job profile at Kearney. I had personalized and tied into my experiences and profile.</p>

**Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: What are the strategic network design decisions to be answered?**

**A:** Design only the distribution network for the logistics company and ignore other decisions.

**Q: Is the client looking to decide the number/size of plants, geographical location, warehouse/inventory stocking points keeping constraints in mind?**

**Q: What kind of products does the client deal with?**

**Q: Asked other usual questions related to:**

- Consumer
- Company
- Product
- Market
- Business model

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Did not use a specific framework, instead used applications of designing distribution network concepts.
  - Number of warehouses and factors that the decision depends on number of facilities/warehouses to be built keeping in mind:
    - a. Customer expectations (responsiveness)
    - b. Cost of building facilities
    - c. Inventory storage and type of products (slow moving/fast moving vs cold/normal storage) stored and shipped by the company.
  - Highlighted that the number of warehouses and location (i.e. whether a hub and spoke model or Point to Point model is to be implemented) depends on the:
    - a. Transportation costs
    - b. Required response time
    - c. Inventory costs
    - d. Facility costs.
  - Spoke about the importance of aggregation and how it is dependent on:
    - a. Type of product (fast/slow moving)
    - b. value of product (high/low value) in detail
- [Drew a 4\*4 matrix]

**What went well**

- Interviewer was quite impressed and asked if I had any questions for him.

**What could have been done better**

- N/A

**Company Interviewing for**

Kearney

**Candidate name**

Sapna Purswani

**Number of Rounds**

3

**Round No**

1

**Type of Round**

Case + PI

**Duration**

25 minutes

**Interviewer Name/Designation**

Krishna Bhagavatula, Manager

**Type of Case**

Value Chain

**Problem Statement**

Suggest ways to improve the OTIF (On time in full metric) of a glove manufacturing unit.

**PI/Introduction Questions**

Introduce yourself, Why consulting? Why Kearney?

**Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: Is any specific segment of consumers or any specific geography being affected?**

**Q: How do competitors fare on the OTIF metric?**

**Q: What is the business model? Which part of the value chain do they operate in?**

**Q: Are there any recent trends/changes in industry?**

**Q: How is our product different from other gloves in the market?**

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

*[The OTIF metric was picked up from a previous work experience that was being discussed with the interviewer]*

- Used value chain analysis, dividing my analysis into parts:

- a. **Time delivery metric**

- i. Investigated the performance of on time delivery metric and then moved on to in-full metric.
- ii. Was asked to state various reasons that could affect each metric.
- iii. Was asked to focus on the delivery time metric.

- b. **Reason for late delivery**

- i. Identified that the key source of late delivery is unavailability of small and medium gloves.
- ii. This was due to unequal demand for large, medium, and small gloves but similar production schedules for all types of gloves.

- c. **Levers to change production schedule**

- i. Enquired whether the molds/fixtures on the assembly line are detachable which in turn affects the feasibility to change production schedule.

- **Recommendation:**

- a. Use time series forecasting to predict demand (taking trend seasonality and noise into consideration).

- b. Schedule production as per the predicted demand.

<b><u>What went well</u></b>
• N/A
<b><u>What could have been done better</u></b>
• N/A

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Kearney
<b>Candidate name</b>	Kartik Gupta
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case + PI
<b>Duration</b>	40 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Susheel Sethumadhavan, Director
<b>Type of Case</b>	Value Chain
<b>Problem Statement</b>	The client is a media company who wants to buy media rights from content creators and broadcast to customers of their channels. Identify analytical ways to come up with the strategies of selection of content from creators.
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Resume related questions, Why consulting? Why Kearney?
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	

- N/A

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Started with a complete value chain - journey of activities that the broadcasting company would have to consider, from customer preference analysis to payment to the content providers.
- At each step of the value chain, I identified:
  - a. What data would be required
  - b. How to collect the data
  - c. What statistical technique to apply
- Leveraged BADM, SDEC concepts to come up with these algorithms with some basic hyper-parameters.
  - a. Clustering
  - b. Segmentation
  - c. Euclidean distance matching
- Gave some analysis of the cost-benefit analysis by creating a 2X2 for maximizing viewership of their channel
- Came up with a way to optimize the price paid to content providers.

### **What went well**

- The structured process, and especially the creation of the value chain helped me in formulate my analysis

*[Kearney being an analytical bent consulting firm, statistics and data science concepts helped in swaying the needle in my favor]*

### **What could have been done better**

- N/A

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Kearney
<b>Candidate name</b>	Kartik Gupta
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case + PI
<b>Duration</b>	25 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Manish Bindal, Senior Engagement Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	Value Chain
<b>Problem Statement</b>	The client is a manufacturer of a product that has a special holiday packaging and is sold at airport shops. Thus, once the holiday season is over, the packed product is redundant and would have to be returned to the manufacturer. Our aim is to identify analytical ways to optimize the number of products to be manufactured, and minimize both, lost revenue and salvage of excess production.
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Previous work experience, Why consulting?
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	
• N/A	

#### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

[Visualized my thought process in tables and diagrams to help me explain my solution to the interviewer better]

- Identified various ways to estimate the demand of such products using data and analytics and focused on the algorithms that can be used.
- Brought up the concept of Type 1 and Type 2 errors trade off to come up with an optimal service level, depending on cost of lost revenue, and cost of salvage.

#### **What went well**

- The interviewer was impressed by the use of OPMG and SMMD concepts

*[Operations and related concepts, with good understanding of data is highly recommended, especially for Kearney]*

*[Having a high CGPA also helps sway the conversation in a positive direction]*

#### **What could have been done better**

- Could have been more structured in scoping and problem solving

## 5.2.10 McKinsey & Company

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Kushal Dalal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1

<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Renny Thomas, Senior Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Digital Transformation case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Evaluate the level of investment to digitize the operations of a private bank
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Hobbies and interests, reasons behind joining consulting
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	

**Q: Can you please provide more context on the bank?**

A: It is a premier private bank. Should it invest a small amount and be a follower in the digital space or invest a large sum and hope to disrupt?

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Started with thinking what happens if the bank does not invest in technology and digital initiatives? Identified two aspects:
  - What happens to our current business** - Will the bank be able to at least retain its current business and portfolio of customers without a digital transition?
  - New business opportunities** - How will not investing or leading the digital game affect the bank's potential to get new business?
- Answering these two questions required an assessment of the expected changes in banking industry due to technology.
- Evaluated the possible changes in business lines such as loan disbursement (especially housing loans) due to digital initiatives.
- I drew out the loan disbursement value chain as follows:  
Identification of loan customer -> Evaluation of credit rating -> Documentation and processing (includes loan product itself) -> Principal transfer -> Interest collection
- Evaluated the value chain with respect to changes in the digital space and linked it to points a and b mentioned in the beginning.
  - Not having digital or substantial internet presence will limit bank's reach since it will never be able to seamlessly reach smaller rural areas. Hence new business potential will be limited.
  - Not having consumer level data will limit bank's ability to implement innovative credit rating schemes and it would instead rely on traditional mechanisms, which might prove ineffective.
  - Lack of data will also limit ability of bank to craft innovative products better suited to the financial requirements of a consumer instead of vanilla interest rate loans.
- Concluded that not stepping up its digital game is something that the bank can ill-afford since it will hamper its current and new portfolio of customers.**
- Discussed that the bank should conduct an NPV analysis to understand how much money it should invest in digital reinforcements.

**What went well**

- Strong communication.
- Being mentally present during the case and having a conversation with the interviewer
- Asking real life questions that are related to the case

**What could have been done better**

- Case solving structure

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Kushal Dalal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case

<b>Duration</b>	35 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Shirish Sankhe, Senior Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Cost evaluation case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Evaluate the additional costs to be paid by the Cab association for an autonomous cab
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Reasons behind joining Consulting and McKinsey
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The interviewer asked me to imagine the cab association to be situated out of United States,</li> <li>They want to evaluate how much extra should they pay for an autonomous cab compared to the standard vehicle.</li> </ul>

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Compared the differential profits of the two vehicles by considering all the revenues, costs and normalize it over the different life of the two vehicle types.
- Some of the differential cost heads I considered were:
  - Driver costs
  - Fuel costs
  - Maintenance costs
  - Parking costs
  - Regulatory/ Insurance costs
- Took into consideration that there will be different revenues generated because of the higher operational hours of autonomous vehicles.
- Post the cost and revenue calculations, concluded that an autonomous vehicle yields incremental profits of \$10,000 every year, but with a lifespan of 3 years compared to 6 years for an ordinary vehicle.
- Estimated that if the costs of an ordinary vehicle are \$100,000, accounting for the difference in life, you would pay \$80,000 for an autonomous vehicle  $[(100,000/2) + (10,000*3)]$

**What went well**

- Understanding the interviewer went well for me.
- Adopted a bottom-up approach which the interviewer was more comfortable with
- Ability to adapt to the situation

**What could have been done better**

- Quantitative portion of the case could have been much better.
- Practicing more quantitative cases (basic MADM and profit/loss accounting) would have helped

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Sanjay Nair
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	1
<b>Round No</b>	1 (Two mini rounds)
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Guesstimate + Two Cases
<b>Duration</b>	45 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Saurav Mishra, Suparna Biaswas and Jaidit Brar, Partners
<b>Type of Case</b>	Salesforce Effectiveness, Market Entry
<b>Problem Statement</b>	<p><b>Guesstimate –</b> Estimate the number of foreign tourists in India.</p> <p><b>Case 1 –</b> A large IT conglomerate is facing attrition among its entry</p>

	level employees (hired from engineering colleges). Employees were leaving and joining a rival firm situated right across the road.
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	<b>Case 2 –</b> Analyze any two industries where new firms had to attack long entrenched incumbents.
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	Basic introduction, examples of leading teams and facing/overcoming challenges, biggest accomplishment

- NA

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Guesstimate**

#### **Guesstimate:**

- Identified peak seasons for travel and distinguishing travellers as Asian and non-Asian
- Assigned flight utilizations and frequencies based on international airports and seasons
- I reached a number of 10 million (very close to the actual number of 15 million)

*[Throughout the process, kept asking the interviewer for his inputs and asked whether he wanted me to narrow down further or not]*

#### **Case 1:**

- Drawing on the Salesforce Efficiency framework, I drew three buckets:
  - a. Ability,
  - b. Opportunity, and
  - c. Motivation
- Listed down a multitude of factors under each like:
  - a. Salary
  - b. Skill-Mismatch
  - c. Flexible Job Hours
  - d. Promotion Blockages
  - e. Incentive Structure
- The interviewer stopped me in between and asked me to choose any two reasons that might be most likely, to which I replied - Salary structure and Skill Mismatch

#### **Case 2:**

- Drew out a modified framework using the Ansoff matrix that could be applied to any industry
- Used examples of:
  - a. OnePlus disrupting a market where Apple had been market leaders by creating a new segment and niche for itself
  - b. Indigo disrupting the aviation industry
  - c. Drew a parallel with RyanAir and Southwest

### **What went well**

- Communication- thinking out loud and brainstorming with the interviewer helped build my confidence as well
- My Guesstimate number was extremely accurate
- Used customized frameworks as opposed to sticking to bookish ones.
- Listening carefully and pick up on the cues that the interviewer provides.
- Take your Time - able to stay calm and think my thoughts through instead of blurting out random ideas and concepts.

### **What could have been done better**

- Structure and approach in a guesstimate are much more important than the final number
- Minimize the number of overall assumptions

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Purvi Saraf
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	45 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Peeyush Dalmia, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Performance improvement case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	How will you increase the sales of a credit card company?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	N/A

#### Scoping Questions Asked

- The client had stalls in malls to offer credit card propositions to the public, through which they were currently selling 5 to 6 cards/mall
- Aim to increase this number to 9 to 10.

#### **Q: What is the time required to increase the sales?**

A: 12 months

#### **Q: What does the client do?**

A: Like Amex, the company performed sales, underwriting and similar operations.

#### **Q: What are the sales locations?**

A: 1 stall/mall, 3-4 people manning the stall depending on the situation.

#### **Q: What is the sales lifecycle?**

A: Salesman approaches customers > If customer says yes > Fill out the form > Documentation from home > Back Office performed underwriting operations > sent card to customer

- Increasing the sales to be approached as a case of increasing the sales for a large mall with an affluent customer base.

#### Structure/Analysis to solve the Case

- To solve the case, I used the Salesforce efficiency framework and broke down the case into 3 focus areas
  - a. **Number:** Agreed that it can be increased.
  - b. **Skill:** Concentrating on training and development for our employees on aspects like manning the stall, actual sales pitch, and ways to reduce attrition of customers post the pitch.
  - c. **Motivation:** Since the compensation of the employees is majorly fixed (70%), increasing the variable component could help. Along with that, recognition of employees also needs to be considered as well.
- On being pushed me to come up with more solutions, proposed the following -
  - a. **Location:** Rationalization of location of stall in the mall, and consider opportunities for having a stall outside the mall,
  - b. **Leveraging the People, Product, Tech (Process) framework:** Work on each of these levers, and suggested to have a Digital kiosk instead of salesman
- The interviewer explained that he had seen these solutions before, so I proposed few out-of-the-box solutions as well –
  - a. Outsourcing the job

- |  |
|--|
| b. Providing digital solutions                     |
| c. Deciding which malls to pick across geographies |

### What went well

- Staying calm when the interviewer is pressurizing you worked well.
- For the younger candidates, they are evaluating our maturity during the conversation, so it is very important to work on soft skills.

### What could have been done better

- N/A

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Anirudh Rajagopalan
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	40 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Sudipto Paul
<b>Type of Case</b>	People, Process and Technology
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Previous work experience related questions
<b>Problem Statement</b>	<p>Client is Mukesh Ambani.        He wants to revamp how retail is done in the country by changing the way Kirana stores do business.        His objective is twofold:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that the stock cycle of Kirana stores changes from the current 2-week model which is followed by current big FMCG brands to a daily stock cycle.</li> <li>2. Provide a solution on how to go about doing this and to ensure that this does not balloon costs.</li> </ol>

### Scoping Questions Asked

- Basic initial scoping as it was critical to understand the current model.
- Discussed on how the current HUL's and P&G's of the world do their distribution and the margins involved in each leg of the chain.

### Structure/Analysis to solve the case

- Given that the storage of products at HUL warehouses was a big blocker to having a daily stock cycle, identified how many warehouses would Reliance have to build and their rough size.
- Number was arrived by guesstimating:
  - a. Truck's radius of coverage in a day
  - b. Area that one warehouse can cover and subsequently how much warehouses will be required
- To arrive at the size, guesstimated the average daily sales and extrapolated that with a 10-day storage to cover for variability
- Recover some costs by reducing holding costs for Kirana stores and increasing commissions.

- Discussed on how this model can help other businesses like JIO or pivot to other businesses like own FMCG products.

### **What went well**

- Right attitude is very important.
- Given the case was not a standard one, it was important to not show nervousness and keep a healthy discussion going.
- Involving interviewer in the conversation and the case solving.
- Moving the case forward and not really getting stuck on any single point
- Asking a good question at the end is important as that leaves a final impression in the mind of the partner

### **What could have been done better**

- Could have given a creative solution in the end
- Formed a mental picture of my approach.

<b>Candidate name</b>	Garima Gupta
<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI
<b>Duration</b>	1 hour
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Suvrojoy Sengupta, Partner in Energy practice
<b>Problem Statement</b>	People, Process and Technology
<b>Type of Case</b>	How will an oil company like Reliance strategize for the mobility future?
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	The introductions were minimum as we had met each other at McKinsey lunch and had interacted about EV vehicles for quite some time. The round started with a case on adoption of EV vehicles.

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

- NA

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the case**

- Started with understanding the products and their end customers.
- We jointly narrowed it down to consumption of crude oil in automotive sector and spoke about the government push for EV which will lead to demand decline.
- Further tried to understand in which segment will EV see a demand rise by analyzing:
  - Why will customers switch from petrol or diesel to EV vehicles.
  - Cost of ownership calculations including upfront cost, maintenance costs and petrol usage costs for 10 years.
  - Cost of ownership for EV vehicles.
- The breakeven took a few years for personal vehicles. But repeating the same calculations for a vehicle used by Ola shifted the breakeven to 1 year.
- Commercial vehicles would see a quick bump in EV adoption once infrastructure is in place.

**What went well**

- Used the right terminologies like cost of ownership and breaking it down to its components
- Despite knowing that it can boil down to a case on EV, I didn't jump the gun and started at looking at all product and customer segments for Reliance before narrowing down to transportation industry

**What could have been done better**

- The calculations could have been faster and better - estimation of maintenance cost for a car and its mileage were also slightly off

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Abhinav Arora
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	25 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Kushe Bahl, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Salesforce Effectiveness
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Improve the productivity of the salesforce a company by 30-40% using digital and analytics (DnA)
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Introduce yourselves, biggest achievement in professional life, explain one project

**Scoping Questions Asked**

Was asked to make assumptions I am comfortable with. The interviewer was more interested in the approach and hence kept the scoping short

**Q: What kind of industry are we looking at?**

A: Assume any industry.

*[I assumed banking industry given my background in the same. Chose credit cards and hence also decided on the customers and checked with the interviewer]*

**Q: How do we define productivity?**

A: He gave a formula on the spot.

**Q: Any timeframe to achieve the results?**

A: Let us take 2 years.

**Q: Any financial constraints or implementation constraints?**

A: No.

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

To solve the case, I broke it down into three areas:

- Salesperson persona:** Listed down general demographics that helped later with the recommendation
- Identify current pain points:** Identified issues across three main buckets: Ability, Opportunities, and Rewards/Motivation (from MGTO course and sales-force framework)

- DnA recommendation on each pain point:**

Then based on the issues we identified, then came up with the recommendations.

### What went well

- Conversed throughout the interview and made it a discussion which made it easier to get help at multiple points.
- In open ended cases, it is recommended to make it a conversation, else you can deviate from the actual case very easily.
- Previous practice

*[For McKinsey, practice cases around your previous experience. High probability of getting a case on that]*

### What could have been done better

- Could have come up with some more recommendations instead of giving one for each kind of issue identified

### Company Interviewing for

McKinsey & Company

### Candidate name

Abhinav Arora

### Number of Rounds

3

### Round No

2

### Type of Round

Case

### Duration

10 minutes

### Interviewer Name/Designation

Somnath Chatterjee, Partner

### Type of Case

VC Round

### Problem Statement

Suppose you wanted to start your own analytics service company like Mu Sigma. How would you go about it?

### Scoping Questions Asked

- Minimal scoping as I was from Mu Sigma
- Asked for financial constraints, Location, client's location that we are targeting, objectives etc.

### Structure/Analysis to solve the case

To solve the case, I followed basic three steps:

**Fundamental attractiveness → Ability to win → Risk**

- Fundamental attractiveness:** Looked at Porters and PESTLE analysis. Made it quick by leveraging my past experience in the industry. Highlighted key gaps in the industry as of now that could be exploited
- Ability to Win:** Looked at profit potential. Took an example of one project and came up with profitability. Also, looked at competitive advantage that we can build. Here used the gaps identified from the step 1
- Risks:** We could not get into the risks. The case ended before that.

### What went well

- Leveraged past experience to come up with the points and quickly closed the buckets.
- Drawing from experience gave the chance to exhibit knowledge and appear confident.

<b><u>What could have been done better</u></b>

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Abhilaksh Sharma
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Renny Thomas, Senior Partner
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	NA
<b>Type of Case</b>	Supply Chain
<b>Problem Statement</b>	How to bridge the supply/demand mismatch when it comes to Power demand in India?

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

- NA

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the case**

- Split power distribution bottlenecks into **operational** and **financial ones**

#### **Operational:**

- Looked at the infrastructure quality and the quality of maintenance programs
- Drew out a consumer power distribution grid to see the distribution process and which factors could be the culprit.

#### **Financial:**

- Looked at revenues and costs involved in power distribution
- Worked with the hypothesis that revenues are difficult to collect from a fair number of their customers.
- Interviewer asked me to think about industrial power as well
- Discussed how factories which have their own power sources do not feed power back into the grid
- Given the right pricing mechanism they could probably be incentivized to do so

### **What went well**

- Quick to recognize where the interviewer wanted me to go with each piece of input
- Previous knowledge and work experience

### **What could have been better**

- Take enough time to really think through next steps.
- Well versed with the Power industry, over and above the part of it that I was acquainted with

<b>Candidate name</b>	Abhilaksh Sharma
<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Shirish Sankhe, Senior Partner
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Proudest academic achievement, previous work experience, proudest achievement at work, biggest challenge
<b>Type of Case</b>	Profitability
<b>Problem Statement</b>	A cement manufacturer has seen a stagnation in revenues recently and is wondering how to get at least a 15% increase in sales.

**Scoping Questions Asked**

- NA

**Structure/Analysis to solve the case**

- Used an approach heavy on
  - a. Segmenting revenues and costs across different outlets
  - b. Types of items and customers (over time and geographies)
- Realized factory operates at full capacity for all months of the year other than the monsoon
- Structured the problem by breaking it down into:
  - a. Production
  - b. Product
  - c. Distribution
  - d. Marketing
- The company could simply produce more cement in the monsoon months and sell it for the rest of the year (because demand can't be an issue if the factory is operating at full capacity)
- Asked to identify how much the company could grow the revenue by if we operated at full capacity
- Analyzed and provided the correct answer

**What went well**

- PI round
- The case was simple and seemed like a hygiene check

**What could have been done better**

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Abhilaksh Sharma
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case and Guesstimate
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Aditya Sharma, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	People, Process and Technology
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Case - Find ways to increase non-cash transactions in India.

<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	<b>Guesstimate</b> - Identify the number of credit card users in India. Co-curricular activities related questions
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NA</li> </ul>	
<b>Structure/Analysis to solve the case</b>	
<p>[Was initially given a case on how I would increase India's gold medal tally. However, since I had solved this case earlier, I politely asked for a new one]</p>	
<b>Case</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Started exploring factors that would affect adoption of non-cash means of payment.</li> <li>• Was asked to dispense with the structure and give creative solutions.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of ATMs in India by disincentivizing usage with cess.</li> <li>• Increasing internet penetration and subsidizing non-cash transactions.</li> </ul>	
<b>Guesstimate</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gave several approaches we could use:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Demographic segmentation</li> <li>b. Counting bank branches</li> <li>c. Average number of credit card users per branch</li> <li>d. Number of club/lounge visits (which are tied to credit cards)</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Opted for the demographic approach, and discussed a wide variety of factors that could be looked at to break this down             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Age</li> <li>b. Gender</li> <li>c. Location</li> <li>d. Rural/urban split</li> <li>e. Incomes</li> <li>f. Shopping frequency</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	
<b>What went well</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displayed of integrity when I asked for a different case.</li> <li>• Establishing rapport with the interviewer by frankly discussing personal experiences</li> </ul>	
<b>What could have been done better</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should have been much more structured and thorough for the guesstimate.</li> <li>• Certain this was due to a math error made in R2 - work on your math!</li> <li>• Prep for PST</li> </ul>	

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Radhika Agarwal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	30-35 minutes
<b>Interviewer</b>	Renny Thomas, Senior Partner

<b>Name/Designation</b>	
<b>Type of Case</b>	Digital transformation case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Strategize digital transformation of a bank and evaluate its impact
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Profile walkthrough, Reasons behind joining consulting

**Scoping Questions Asked**

- The interviewer set the case background as a meeting with the Head of an Indian bank, who wanted to understand how he can transform his bank and what impact would it have.
- Asked a few scoping questions to understand the following aspects:
  - Details regarding the bank and the business
  - Current level of technological advancement in the bank

**Q: In what ways does the client wants to transform the bank?**

A: The interviewer responded that the client wanted to leverage automation to enable changes in traditional banking, i.e. mobile banking, net banking, and internal changes.

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Split the impact of changes into two areas:
  - Client facing
  - Internal automation (internal processes)
- Discussed how each would affect cost and revenue (no numbers were used). For example, internal automation will have a larger impact on cost.
- Discussed that the costs will increase in the short run due to the technological investment and training but will:
  - Reduce headcount cost
  - Reduce dependency on headcount
  - Improve accuracy in the long run.
- Discussed the impact on employees and change management
- Discussed how each change would impact different stakeholders and relevant key changes

**What went well**

- Splitting the changes into external and internal impact as it was easy to identify and isolate the stakeholders and their reactions to the change.
- Prior experience in internal automation

**What could have been done better**

- Could have asked some more pointed questions regarding what exactly the client wanted to focus on

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Radhika Agarwal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Guesstimate Case
<b>Duration</b>	40 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Indraneel Banerjee, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Guesstimate
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Evaluate if the Airport Operator should charge entry fee for all cars
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Profile walkthrough

**Scoping Questions Asked**

- Most people in India do not use the parking service in an airport
- Would it be viable for the operator to charge an entry fee for all cars, regardless of whether they park inside the airport?
- Evaluate if the guesstimate was substantial enough to bring up this as a suggestion to the client

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Estimated the number of people coming in or out of the airport every day by estimating:
  - a. Runway usage
  - b. Time spent per flight on the runway
  - c. Number of seats in every flight
  - d. Flight occupancy levels.
- Estimated the number of cars by assuming that on average, people travel in groups of x.
- Estimated the entry fee per car
- Discussed how much people would be willing to pay without ruining their customer experience
- Used basic pricing structure questions to come to the final revenue per day from this fee.
- Discussed how we should define “substantial” revenue for a business.

**What went well**

- Being relaxed
- Comfortable with numbers
- Quick calculations helped to look at 2-3 scenarios that helped understand the impact of the changes in assumptions on revenue.

**What could have been done better**

- Stating rationale behind numbers and assumptions

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Avish Rana
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case Interview (Video Conferencing)
<b>Duration</b>	35 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Suparna Biswas, Partner
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	N/A
<b>Type of Case</b>	Growth Strategy
<b>Problem Statement</b>	A client of ours is a financial services firm and they have a competitor who is growing faster than them. How will you help them get more growth?

**Scoping Questions Asked**

**Q: Could you please provide additional information on the company?**

A: Client was a retail brokerage firm and made money by charging a brokerage amount on transactions

**Structure/Analysis to solve the case**

- Break down revenue into its components:
  - a. No. of users x transactions
  - b. user x revenue/taxation
- Asked more specific questions about which were the problematic numbers
- Turned out to be taxation/user was higher for the competitor
- Explored possible causes for this and any difference in the type of users which led to the information that the new competitor was an online only platform whereas our client had a lot of offline transactions happening.
- Competitor could have a lower taxation/user count because their users required more handholding
- Client could have a lower taxation/user count because the transactions that could be executed were limited by the bandwidth of the relationship manager who was executing the transactions

### **What went well**

- Was able to find the right direction after some nudging

### **What could have been done better**

- Should not have jumped to conclusions quickly
- Should have scoped the case better.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Avish Rana
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	45 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Jaidit Brar, Senior Partner
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Introduction, co-curricular activities, case competitions, previous work experience
<b>Type of Case</b>	Value Chain
<b>Problem Statement</b>	A lead-acid battery manufacturer wants to improve the experience of users when they discover that their car's battery has discharged, which often involved them having to push the car around. Find a store that can replace the battery and search for warranty information.

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

- NA

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the case**

- Sketching out a user's journey on paper and highlighted the various points at which they encountered a problem.
- Individually looked at each problem and started suggesting solutions
- Suggested a predictive 'smart battery' that would automatically alert the manufacturer and the user that the battery was getting discharged and then inform a nearby dealer/store to come and replace the battery.
- The manufacturer could eventually even convert this into a subscription service.
- GPS devices are available that can easily pass the information to their servers while the manufacturer could come up with technology that allows them to evaluate the health of a battery and that information would just have to be passed on to the company's servers in order to be

shown to a user on their app.

### **What went well**

- Able to go in the right direction towards the end of the interview, after some nudging

### **What could have been done better**

- Talked about my past projects and case competitions in a lot of detail

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Ayushi Gupta
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	35 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Aditya Sharma, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Growth Strategy
<b>Problem Statement</b>	How would I double the tourism revenue in India
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Background, previous working experience, describe a situation where I had to take a leadership position

### **Scoping Questions Asked**

- Was asked to give a qualitative analysis and not use any numbers

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the case**

- Formal definition to tourism in India
- List all the forms of tourism possible in India per India's geography
- Listed down all possible tourism ideas starting from J&K in the north to the coastal areas in the south
- Due to structuring the problem from north to south, I was able to cover things like medical tourism, wildlife tourism, food tourism, etc.

### **What went well**

- Found something common (Harry Potter) in the beginning which made the entire interview more informal
- Even though the case was very informal, I was able to give it structure.

### **What could have been done better**

- Could have asked a couple of more clarifying questions.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Ayushi Gupta

<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	25 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Renny Thomas, Senior Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	General Discussion
<b>Problem Statement</b>	What in my opinion was the future of healthcare in India
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Previous work experience, liked the most about ISB and what was my favorite subject and why

**Scoping Questions Asked**

- I was told to avoid any clarifying questions about numbers

**Structure/Analysis to solve the case**

- Brief introduction about the current norms in the Indian healthcare domain.
- Listed down all the stakeholders in the system.
- Discussed each stakeholder in detail comparing to the developed countries and listing down what would change
- Once we came to the topic of AI and wearables, he got very interested.

*[After this the interview did not involve me at all. He told me about his recent trip to China and how he saw the use of AI to detect everything from security concerns to facial expressions. He gave me his thoughts on the future of AI in the healthcare market]*

**What went well**

- Confident in my communication.
- Substantiated all claims with examples.
- Previous experience with Pharma and Healthcare led to detailed answers to a question that was very vague.

**What could have been done better**

- More structure to the case question

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Kamalika Sengupta
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	35 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Shirish Sankhe, Senior Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Performance improvement case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Identify the reasons behind the dropping profits for a cement manufacturing firm
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Profile walkthrough, Experience at ISB, Individual strengths and weaknesses, Reasons behind joining Consulting

**Scoping Questions Asked**

- N/A

### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

To solve the case, I narrowed it down to a cost problem and split it up by the company's value chain. The types of problem I identified have been reasoned out below:

#### **Production problem:**

- A critical issue for the company arose from the peak demand encountered by it in a few months, which it was unable to meet.
- Found out that the firm's capacity was under-utilized during the other non-peak months and suggested that there be production in advance (during the non-peak months) for the peak months.
- This solved nearly 60% of the problem.

#### **Transportation problem:**

- The company was facing transportation issues as well, for which I suggested to rent warehouses and pre-fill them for peak demand times.

*[I had also identified the packaging problem contributing to the drop in profits, however, we did not have time to address it]*

### **What went well**

- Calm throughout the interview
- Was able to solve majority of the problem on my own

### **What could have been done better**

- Better preparation for the PI questions

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Neelambra Lahori
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	15 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Suyog Kotecha, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	M&A case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Evaluate if a steel manufacturer should acquire a smaller steel manufacturer
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	N/A
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The interviewer mentioned that the smaller steel manufacturer has gone bust owing to a financial fraud, and our client is a steel manufacturing giant that needs to evaluate this acquisition opportunity.</li> <li>• To further understand the case, I enquired about the following aspects -           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What is the current capacity of all players in industry?</li> <li>b. Do the prices have an upward or downward pressure (whether more influenced by demand-side or the supply-side)?</li> <li>c. Is the acquisition target operationally sound?</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. What could be the expected and closing bid?</li> <li>e. Who are the likely competitors to up-bid?</li> </ul> |
|--|

### Structure/Analysis to solve the Case

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First focused on the most critical thing - do we need to acquire for our own benefit, or do we need to acquire to keep competition at bay?</li> <li>• Evaluated the acquisition proposal against the following aspects –           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Compared capacities of the two manufacturers,</li> <li>b. Likely action by the players (use operationally or shelf the capacity)</li> <li>c. Impact on market prices.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|--|

### What went well

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul> |
|---|

### What could have been done better

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul> |
|---|

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Sumanjima Das
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	30-35 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Suyog Kotecha, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Value Chain
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Your client is a premium fabric manufacturing company. The operations head wants to make a business case to the CEO on how tech enablement can improve operations. Help him/her.
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Previous work experience, most challenging projects

### Scoping Questions Asked

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asked clarifying questions about:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Company</li> <li>b. Products</li> <li>c. Operations</li> <li>d. Customers</li> <li>e. Suppliers</li> <li>f. Competition</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|---|

### Structure/Analysis to solve the Case

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drew the value chain for the company based on the information</li> <li>• Based on the value chain, I divided the operations into 4 buckets –           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Storage,</li> <li>b. Transportation,</li> <li>c. Inventory, and</li> <li>d. Information</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|--|

- For each bucket, wrote down the operational KPI that a kind of technology can improve and the financial impact it would have
- Explained how the technologies that would improve these KPIs.

### What went well

- Comfortable in the case and could structure it quite well because of the familiar background.

### What could have been done better

- Identified financial KPI to make the case stronger.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Avish Rana
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	45 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Raghavan Janardhanan, Partner
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Generic PI/CV and background related questions
<b>Type of Case</b>	General Discussion/ Case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	How would you automate a process?

### Scoping Questions Asked

#### **Q: Do you have any particular process in mind?**

A: No specific process, use a process that you have automated in the past

### Structure/Analysis to solve the case

- Discussed prioritization, looking at tasks that would lead to the most cost savings, least scope for manual corrections, etc.
- Was asked to automate the reimbursement process at a company for its employees.
- Listed out the process on paper and then talked about metrics for prioritization (such as volume of taxations, cost of each taxation)

### What went well

- Prior experience with product management
- Interviewer liked my problem-solving approach

### What could have been done better

- Should have started writing on paper earlier and show more energy in the interview.
- Higher energy

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
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<b>Candidate name</b>	Gurveen Kaur Ghai
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case
<b>Duration</b>	45-50 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Raghavan Janardhanan, Partner
<b>Type of Case</b>	Abstract case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Identify 10 different ways to automate a client's order to cash cycle
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Profile walkthrough, questions related to work-experience

**Scoping Questions Asked**

- Clarifies certain aspects like constraints, timelines, and the type of client.

**Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- Estimated current time and resources spent at each stage moved on to the technological and financial feasibility of implementing the changes.
- Answered questions on the importance of a certain idea and reasons behind the client not implementing it yet.
- Provided further substantiating the ideas and clarifying certain unclear aspects.

*[Post this, he asked me a non-evaluative question on what start-up idea I had, if any. I responded with a Waste management idea integrating aspects of technology]*

**What went well**

- I believe knowing my resume and the projects I had worked on thoroughly was very helpful to walk him through and come up with ideas.
- I was able to add some structure and logical flow to a very open-ended and unconventional case.
- It helps to be aware about the latest developments in industries and technology as it brings diverse ideas and insights.
- I think staying conversational, reading your interviewers mind and drawing a parallel between his experience and the given case and answering accordingly can give you brownie points too.

**What could have been done better**

- I could have utilized the paper better and been neater with my listing down the process and recommendations. Typically, we know how we divide the page for structured cases.
- A couple of ideas I had presented seemed forced because initially, I thought I should come up with all 10 ideas in one go. Instead, it is okay to come with 5-6 good ideas on which you can have an in-depth discussion.

## 5.2.11 PricewaterhouseCoopers DIAC

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	PwC DIAC
<b>Candidate name</b>	Surabhi Joshi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No.</b>	Quick summary of all rounds
<b>Type of Round</b>	Guesstimate + Puzzles + Case Interview
<b>Duration</b>	Rounds ranged from 30-40 mins
<b>Interviewer Information</b>	Manager (R1) Sanjeev Shukla - MD & Operations Head (R2)
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Basic questions about past work experience

**Brief Summary of the Interview**

- **Round 1** (15 mins)
  - a. Started with a **Guesstimate**: Calculate the net costs of painting all the pillars in Delhi metro line
  - b. Since it was net costs, I accounted for the revenue generated from printed advertisements on pillars
  - c. This was followed by some basic math calculations, mainly to check the problem-solving speed
  - d. Some basic puzzles were also asked
  
- **Round 2** (25 - 30 mins)
  - a. Given a situation about an Airline operator and was asked to calculate the break-even point for them
  - b. **This was all done verbally and was asked to refrain from using paper to solve it**
  - c. Was further asked to tweak the case and find break-even point for multiple scenarios

*[This was a timed round and the buzzer was set for 25 minutes]*

**What went well**

- Had practiced a lot of guesstimates before.

**What could have been done better**

- Wasn't used to solving cases verbally, so it took some time

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	PwC DIAC
<b>Candidate name</b>	Nirmit Gandhi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No.</b>	Quick summary of all rounds
<b>Type of Round</b>	Resume review + Case + Linear Programming
<b>Duration</b>	Rounds ranged from 30-40 mins
<b>Interviewer Information</b>	Manager
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Basic questions about previous work experience

**Brief Summary of the Interview**

- **Round 1** (15 mins)
  - a. Resume review followed by a simple case
  - b. Asked to build a simple model based on a problem statement.
  
- **Round 2** (10 mins)
  - a. **Guesstimate**: How much paint is required to paint all the pillars of the Mumbai Metro
  
- **Round 3** (15 mins)
  - a. A discussion on position and salary followed by signing FIF

**What went well**

- Did the case and guesstimate well
- Talked about my background and interests
- Asked the interviewers about the type of projects they were working on

**What could have been done better**

- Had not reviewed DMOP so making the model took a little bit longer than was necessary.
- Practice Guesstimates and Puzzles if time allows

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	PwC DIAC
<b>Candidate name</b>	Jasmeet Singh
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No.</b>	Quick summary of all rounds
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI Question + Case
<b>Duration</b>	40 mins
<b>Interviewer Information</b>	NA
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Basic Introduction Questions

### **Brief Summary of the Interview**

- **PI Questions**

**Question:** The interviewer asked me to perform a stand-up comedy for 2 minutes as I am a stand-up comedian and have put that in the resume.

- **Case**

**Type of Case:** Operations

**Problem statement:** How to reduce time of Toll gate in between Hyderabad airport to ISB from 15 seconds to 8 seconds

**Scoping questions asked:** The initial questions revolved around whether this average time is during peak or non-peak hours. Once I get the clarity, I divided the problem into peak and non-peak hours. I also asked about the number of toll gates and number of people involved. Also, whether the process is manual or automated

**Frameworks used:** No direct framework

**Structure/ analysis to solve case:** I made the case quite structured. Once I have identified that the problem was in peak hours that too on one side of the road, I moved forward with whether the process is manual or automated. As the process was manual, it added to the issue. She asked me for couple of recommendations.

- 1) Automating the system
- 2) Operations concept of rather than having different queues- there should be 1 queue which divulge into many diff toll gates.
- 3) Fast tags implementation
- 4) Using non-peak side toll gates for the other side when required (allocation of toll gates).

### **What went well**

- I did well on structure, presence of mind and confidence.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Strategy& (Healthcare Focused Consulting in Conjunction with DIAC)
<b>Candidate name</b>	Urvashi Tripathi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No.</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case Interview
<b>Duration</b>	50 mins
<b>Interviewer Information</b>	Tamanna Tripathi, Manager
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Basic questions about ISB and work

### Brief Summary of the Interview

- **PI**

I was asked about my journey at ISB and what I did differently here. I spoke about my focus on case studies and the ELP to better my knowledge of the final consumer, something I had no experience in, earlier. My interest in healthcare and work in the previous organization were also discussed. The mode was conversational and relaxed and went on for about 20 mins.

- **Case**

**Type of Case:** Market Entry

**Problem statement:** Our client is a diagnostics firm that is looking to enter the Indian market. Help me understand if this is a good decision, if so, what is the market size and which mode of entry would you use.

**Scoping questions asked:** Defined the market and check for opportunities of growth in the market, current structure, current players in the market, the firm's financials, purpose to enter the market, the consumer's outlook towards diagnostics i.e. insurance policies in place, inherent biases about quality, value on convenience, the urban vs. the rural market and the pricing model they had in mind.

- **Frameworks used:** 3CP for scoping, Market entry framework: strategic vs. economic intentions, industry attractiveness, value chain management, market sizing, *Build:Borrow:Buy*

### What went well

During the PI, I was thorough with my resume and hence, tackled each question with ease and confidence.

- I was able to build a rapport with my interviewer. The nature of the interview became conversational, and the interviewer tried to diffuse the pressure when the case happened
- Knowledge about the industry, especially in a role such as this one which is tagged to an industry, always helps. The interviewer becomes comfortable when you speak in her language.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Strategy& (Healthcare Focused Consulting in Conjugation with DIAC)
<b>Candidate name</b>	Urvashi Tripathi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No.</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Case Interview
<b>Duration</b>	40 mins
<b>Interviewer Information</b>	Senior Manager
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Basic questions about profile, projects, and work

### Brief Summary of the Interview

#### **Round 2**

- **PI**

Run me through your profile. More detailed questions on past projects and impact created. I was asked about tough situations at work, handling clients that are overseas.

- **Case**

**Type of Case:** Profitability and Pricing

**Problem statement**

A bullet train is to be launched from Bombay to Ahmedabad. Details such as average speed, number of

carriages, differentiation of carriages, stops in the journey, fixed cost investment etc. were given out

- **Question 1:** Price tickets for premium and economy customers
- **Question 2:** Years to achieve breakeven given costs; Tangible value in executing this project
- **Question 3:** Additional sources to generate revenue

**Scoping questions asked:** Number heavy case with most details provided

**Frameworks used:** Profitability

**Structure to solve case:** The case was number heavy even though it was simplistic in approach.

- The interviewer tried to induce stress through numbers and any assumptions I made for simplicity were shot down
- Once I arrived at an answer, the interviewer wanted to further up the pressure so asked me about 15 mental math questions right after the case.

#### What went well

- PI was structured and well thought out.

#### What could have been done better

- The math made me flustered despite it being a simplistic case.

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Strategy& (Healthcare Focused Consulting in Conjugation with DIAC)
<b>Candidate name</b>	Urvashi Tripathi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No.</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI
<b>Duration</b>	25 mins
<b>Interviewer Information</b>	Partner
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Basic fitment questions

#### Brief Summary of the Interview

This was a round to judge company fit primarily.

- I was asked about US laws I would like to change
- There was discussion on my undergrad, my previous workplace, and the career trajectory of my choice.

### 5.2.12 ZS Associates

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	ZS Associates
<b>Candidate name</b>	Sayantan Nandi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	45 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Not available, Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market entry case

<b>Problem Statement</b>	Provide insights about a small pharma company entering a certain drug market
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	NA
<b>Scoping Questions Asked</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NA</li> </ul>	
<b>Structure/Analysis to solve the Case</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussed the various insights I gathered from the data tables and charts presented in the case presentation, along with the headline for each slide.</li> </ul>	
<b>What went well</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I believe my previous consulting experience along with proficiency in the GMAT IR section came in handy.</li> </ul>	
<b>What could have been done better</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I felt I was well-prepared for the interview but I would recommend everyone to go through a lot of Pharmaceutical industry cases as that is what ZS' focus is.</li> </ul>	

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	ZS Associates
<b>Candidate name</b>	Sayantan Nandi
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case + PI
<b>Duration</b>	45 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Not available, Vice President and Senior Manager
<b>Type of Case</b>	Market expansion case
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Provide recommendations to a multiplex company aiming to expand its market
<b>PI/Introduction Questions</b>	Work experience related questions
<b><u>Scoping Questions Asked</u></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NA</li> </ul>	

#### **Structure/Analysis to solve the Case**

- I was provided data about the industry, company and the customer behavior, and given an hour to prepare. Hence, to keep my recommendations structured in the limited time, I concentrated on making the slides focused on market expansion strategy and the challenges the company may face.
- Additionally, I was given hypothetical scenarios to come up with additional recommendations and gauge my immediate thought process and problem-solving skills.

#### **What went well**

- Case preparation helped me immensely in focusing on the right pieces of data and providing clear-cut recommendations.

#### **What could have been better**

- I would recommend everyone to do as many cases as you can, especially related to market entry or market expansion.

## 5.3 Personal Interviews

### 5.3.1 Kearney

<b>Candidate name</b>	Achuth Arun Resmi
<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Kearney
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI
<b>Duration</b>	15 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Bharat Thota, Vice President (Chicago office)

#### PI/Introduction Questions

- First 10 minutes were focused on my past work experience, post which the interviewer was open to fielding any questions I had.
- Having done my research, I mentioned how ATK had added 200 partners in the last decade and had doubled revenues as part of the Vision 2020 program under John Aurik.
- I then asked him if the new leadership under Alex Liu planned to maintain this level of growth and their plans for the firm beyond 2020.
- The interviewer then spent 15 minutes walking me through the structure of the firm and what were the changes that were being planned.

#### What went well

- Able hold a good conversation with the interviewer and he was also eager to walk me through the changes at the firm, which helped the round overall

#### What could have been done better

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Kearney
<b>Candidate name</b>	Shubham Bansal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	4
<b>Round No</b>	1
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI
<b>Duration</b>	40 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Susheel Sethumadhavan, Director (Dubai)

#### PI/Introduction Questions

**Q: What would your back-up option be if consulting does not work out for you?**

**A:** Since I was well versed with the functioning of the industry, I explained why I would have chosen e-commerce.

**Q: Can you draw Amazon's value chain?**

**A:** I drew and explained every aspect of Amazon's working from product management to operations to logistics to inventory management

#### What went well

- Good presence of mind
- Establishment of a good initial rapport with the interviewer helped in engaging him throughout the interview
- A good performance in the first round

### What could have been done better

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Kearney
<b>Candidate name</b>	Sapna Purswani
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI
<b>Duration</b>	25 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Bharath Thota, Vice President

### PI/Introduction Questions

#### **Q: Please introduce yourself.**

**A:** I started by talking about my under graduation and then spoke about my work experience in detail. I highlighted one project and two key achievements for each organization I have worked with.  
*[He was interested in the projects and asked questions intermittently]*

#### **Q: Please elaborate one key project of your career.**

**A:** I chose to describe a project I implemented for a US based insurance client. I had extensively used data analytics in the project and explained my approach and tools used in detail.

### What went well

- Being thoroughly prepared with each project mentioned in your resume helped
- Able to establish a rapport with the interviewer early on in our chat
- Preparing a few pointed and insightful questions to ask the interviewer
- Take time to structure before speaking

### What could have been done better

- N/A

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Kearney
<b>Candidate name</b>	Shubham Bansal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	4
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Bharath Thota, Vice President (Analytics)

### PI/Introduction Questions

#### **Q: Tell me more about the machine learning algorithms you have worked on.**

**A:** The questions mostly revolved around the use of analytics in my previous work experience (EXL

Analytics) and I answered them based on the projects worked on.

**Q: Describe one project that you think was the most impactful one.**

A: I preferred to pen down my thoughts and explained everything from scratch in a concise manner. We also talked about the team structure and how I managed the project.

**Q: Do you view yourself as a data scientist, consultant or business analyst?**

A: I told him that I viewed myself as a business analyst currently who has extensive knowledge of what a data scientist does.

However, I would like to view myself as a consultant who uses analytics as a tool in the future.

**What went well**

- Important to answer questions that aim to judge this tactfully.
- Being thorough with my pre-ISB work experience and the projects, including the numbers, helped

*[Kearney looks for consultants who believe analytics is an essential tool in solving business problems]*

**What could have been done better**

- The project chosen to describe was very technical and was neither a consulting project nor an analytics project
- Could have chosen a project that would have been easier to explain

**Company Interviewing for**

Kearney

**Candidate name**

Priyamvada Biyani

**Number of Rounds**

5

**Round No**

1

**Type of Round**

PI

**Duration**

20 minutes

**Interviewer Name/Designation**

Sushil Sethumadhavan, Partner

**PI/Introduction Questions**

**Q: Why do you want to work in consulting? Why do you want to work at Kearney?**

*[After answering these, we spoke about our interests and how work culture at A.T. Kearney aligns with my love for travel]*

**Q: Could you draw out the value chain of the pharmaceutical industry and the major stakeholders?**

*[We spoke about my previous work experience and was asked this question as I was working in the pharmaceutical consulting space]*

**What went well**

- The interview progressed as a conversation with the interviewer making me feel comfortable through the round.

**What could have been done better**

- I could have been less nervous initially

**Company Interviewing for**

A.T. Kearney

<b>Candidate name</b>	Shubham Bansal
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	4
<b>Round No</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI
<b>Duration</b>	45 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Arpita Ghoshal, Manager, Analytics

**PI/Introduction Questions**

Basic PI and previous work experience questions were asked.

**Q: How did you handle banking regulations around credit disbursal?**

A: I explained how we did it at my previous firm and described a new analytical technique that helped us do it.

**What went well**

- I leveraged the fact that my pre-ISB work experience aligned with her work
- Established a rapport with the interviewer to drive the interview smoothly.

**What could have been done better**

- N/A

### 5.3.2 McKinsey & Company

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Viraj Gandotra
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI + Discussion
<b>Duration</b>	25 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Noshir Kaka, Senior Partner

**PI/Introduction Questions**

- This was primarily a PI based interview. I was asked to introduce myself and then talk some more about a few specific projects
- I worked on at JSW. We deep dived properly on one of my projects and had a 5 to 10-minute-long conversation on it
- Since I had worked with the MD of a major Indian cement company prior to joining ISB, the interviewer asked me specific questions related to the use of technology and analytics in the cement industry
- Firstly, I was asked how I could use digital enablement and analytics to accelerate cement sales. I gave ideas around:
  - a. Using data analytics for dealer selection
  - b. Enabling the sales force with CRM tools
  - c. Use of apps for sales and promotion related activities and finally
  - d. Integrating sales related platforms and apps with the internal ERP systems in the company.
- I was asked how I would use technology to understand the market potential better. Then I gave some recommendations which included:
  - a. Storing and distributing CMA's (cement manufacturer's association) data in real time and in a better way,
  - b. Using certain proxies for estimating the cement potential in the market, like tracking construction sites using GPS,
  - c. Monitoring warehouses and inventory churn of wholesalers
  - d. Monitoring the movement of cement via transporters.

- Spent the last 5 minutes of the interview telling him about why I took certain decisions (about simple things like a change in school, choice of college, workplace, etc.) and what motivates me in life

### What went well

- Being calm and confident
- Recognizing when a mini-case problem was thrown at me in the form of a normal PI question

### What could have been better

- NA

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	McKinsey & Company
<b>Candidate name</b>	Abhinav Arora
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	3
<b>Round No</b>	3
<b>Type of Round</b>	Case
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	NA, Senior Expert
<b>Type of Case</b>	Guesstimate and PE
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Estimate toll collected outside the Delhi airport

### Scoping Questions Asked

#### **Guesstimate**

- The client is not getting enough revenues from the parking available at the airport and is exploring to increase revenues
- Estimate the revenues that could be collected if a toll is setup outside the Delhi Airport.
- Every car that is entering the airport has to pay the toll.

#### **PE**

- You are meeting a client to discuss this potential opportunity in publishing industry
- What will be the five questions that you ask a client and why?

### Structure/Analysis to solve the case

#### **Guesstimate**

- Revenues = Toll charged per car \* number of cars entering the airport in a day
- To calculate price, I asked for the average number of hours a car is parked in the parking lot and price per hour.
- From this I got the maximum that we can charge and recommended price just below this price
- For number cars, I calculated:
  - Number flights departing
  - Passengers in each flight
  - % coming via cars
  - Number people in one car.

#### **PE Case**

- Divided the problem of PE in five buckets and framed a question for each bucket
- Topics covered included:
  - market and its growth
  - Suppliers
  - Competition

- |  |
|--|
| <p>d. External factors such as regulations, technology impact, etc.<br/> e. Objectives of the PE firm.</p> |
|--|

### 5.3.3 Shell Strategy Consultancy Insights

<b>Company Interviewing for</b>	Shell Strategy Consultancy Insights
<b>Candidate name</b>	Chaitanya Pawde
<b>Number of Rounds</b>	2
<b>Round No</b>	2
<b>Type of Round</b>	PI
<b>Duration</b>	40 minutes
<b>Interviewer Name/Designation</b>	Yasmine, Manager and Preyoshi, Consulting Lead

#### **PI/ Introduction Questions Asked**

*[The interview was primarily a stress test, with questioning circling around my past experiences with working in teams, mixed with situational problems]*

**Q: Can you tell us about a time you turned around a project in a very short span of time?**

**Q: Provide a situation in which you convinced skeptical clients by leveraging data**

**Q: Illustrate instances when you received tough feedback and how you acted upon it**

**Q: Provide examples wherein you handled a conflict in the team**

**Q: Provide examples where you were effectively able to manage a conflict with a client**

#### **What went well**

- Handled the interview in a calm manner and did not get flustered by their abrupt behavior
- Was assertive while answering and candidly accepted the mistakes I had made in the situations I had been provided with

#### **What could have been done better**

- Could have prepared crisp responses to such questions beforehand since I was allowed only 2 to 3 mins to describe each situation

**All the best!**