



IIM Lucknow Casebook 2022

The Consulting & Strategy Club



Foreword



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The Consulting & Strategy Club, IIM Lucknow (Batch of '22 & '23)

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This casebook has been created by the 36th and 37th batch of the Consulting and Strategy Club of IIM Lucknow. This casebook aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the case interview process conducted by consulting companies and should be of help to anyone who is interested in consulting as a career.

The Consulting and Strategy Club of IIM Lucknow has been at the forefront in helping students of IIML prepare for their consulting interviews. In 2020, we became the first consulting club in India to launch a mobile application: **CSC Briefcase**. It covers what consulting is, brief about renowned consulting firms, process overview for a typical case interview, along with a whole lot of resources to practice such as frameworks, sample cases, mock case videos, industry insights, interview transcripts & even datasheet for guesstimates. It is one of a kind unique initiative undertaken by the Consulting and Strategy Club of IIM Lucknow. The app is available for download on Google Play Store. We also have an active **YouTube channel** where you can find videos on mock cases & guesstimates.

We would also like to thank everyone from the 35th and 37th PGP and PGP-ABM batches of IIM Lucknow who volunteered to document their case interview experiences and share it as part of this casebook. Lastly, a big thank you to our readers, without whose feedback and inspiration this document could not have been created.



The Consulting & Strategy Club
Indian Institute of Management Lucknow



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Consulting Overview

The Consulting & Strategy Club of IIM Lucknow is proud to present the IIM Lucknow Casebook for the year 2022. Through this casebook, we have made an attempt to bring to you a consolidated preparation guide which is an amalgamation of commonly asked case frameworks and recent case interview experiences – as communicated by candidates who sat through the placement process of consulting firms recruiting from IIM Lucknow.

Preparing for consulting interview can be daunting, especially if you are doing it for the very first time! Here is our take on what the process typically looks like and what you should anticipate. We hope this helps our readers make an informed choice of whether they want to make a career in consulting or not. If your answer is yes, then we hope the book helps you better prepare yourselves for the process.

Who should use this book?

- Students who wish to familiarize themselves with the typical interview process followed by major consulting firms across the globe
- Students across Indian B-schools and undergraduate colleges who are preparing for consulting roles on campus
- Students who want to practice cases closest to actual interview scenarios

Insight into the process

1. The Shortlist

The first step towards landing your dream job is preparing your CV, on the basis of which the interview shortlist is released by various firms. Making the perfect CV is a task in itself and should be taken very seriously. It is important to get your CV reviewed on five parameters – impact, language, structure, highlighting & formatting.

- **Impact:** Typically, you are encouraged to show the impact created by you in every possible point and also quantify the impact wherever possible.

- **Language:** Once your points are finalized, you should check if each point conveys your role/contribution in a crisp and clear manner to the evaluator. If you have worked in a very technical role, try to use less jargons and simplify the language for the person on the other side of the table.
- **Structure:** After freezing your CV points, it is important to order the boxes in your CV tactfully (The most generic boxes in a CV being – education, academic achievements, work experience, extra-curriculars and positions of responsibility).
- **Highlighting:** Highlighting key points is crucial to attract the evaluator's attention to the points that you want him/her to read first. This is especially significant since companies have to evaluate a large number of CVs before coming out with the shortlist.
- **Formatting:** Lastly, your CV must be well formatted. Presentation skills matter and any flaw here puts you in negative light.

Top consulting firms are known to shortlist candidates whose CVs show 3-4 'spikes'. Spikes can be any noteworthy achievements in the sphere of academics, extra-curriculars, work-experience or PORs that make your CV stand out from the rest. Try to keep this at the back of your mind while making your CV.

2. Buddy Process & Company Interactions/Dinner

Some companies have a month-long buddy process. One buddy is assigned to each shortlisted candidate. Buddies are typically your college alumni in the firm who have 0-3 years of experience in the firm. This process aims to serve the following purposes depending on the company:

- **Support & guidance for the final interview:** Buddies practice cases with you over the one month and provide feedback for the final interview. They also help you prepare for HR answers. Any queries about the process can be routed through them. Interactions with them are meant to be less formal than a professional setting.



- **Opportunity for candidate to evaluate the company:** Buddies are also your means of getting an insight into the company. There may be multiple interactions and workshops scheduled in this one-month period where company representatives and buddies will visit campus to take a pulse check on your prep. This is an ideal time to ask questions about firm culture, get to know the people and try to gauge if the firm is a good fit for you.
- **Pre-interview evaluation of candidates:** Some companies may have a pre-interview evaluation of candidates either through the cases done with buddies or through interactions during workshops and dinners. It is important to be proactive throughout the process and maintain visibility. However, your performance on the day of your final interviews is the most important criteria for your selection.

In most cases, the buddy process is what you make of it. Thus, you should try to maximize your gains out of this process.

3. Final Interviews

On the final day, you will have 2-3 case interviews back-to-back. While they maybe eliminative for some firms, others may hold the same number of interviews for all candidates before rolling out offers. Each interview typically lasts for 45 mins for final placements while the summers process usually has shorter interviews lasting for around 20 minutes. It comprises of a case and HR questions.

Case:

For this component of the interview, you are evaluated on your communication skills (clarity of thought, articulation & crisp communication), problem solving skills (scoping the problem, reaching the solution using a structured approach and asking the right questions) and numeric skills (comfort with numbers, business acumen, speed & accuracy). In addition to this, the interviewer may want to evaluate your presence & personality in general while you are interacting with a client.

HR:

It is extremely important to know your CV inside out. You can be asked anything related to your CV. In fact, there are times when you are asked cases based on themes/sectors in your CV. The questions that you must prepare for are – basic introduction, your reasons for wanting to join consulting and why you want to join the particular firm you are interviewing with. How the job fits into your short-term and long-term plans may also be important questions to reflect on. All in all, through this component of your interview, the interviewer tests how good a fit you are for the firm.

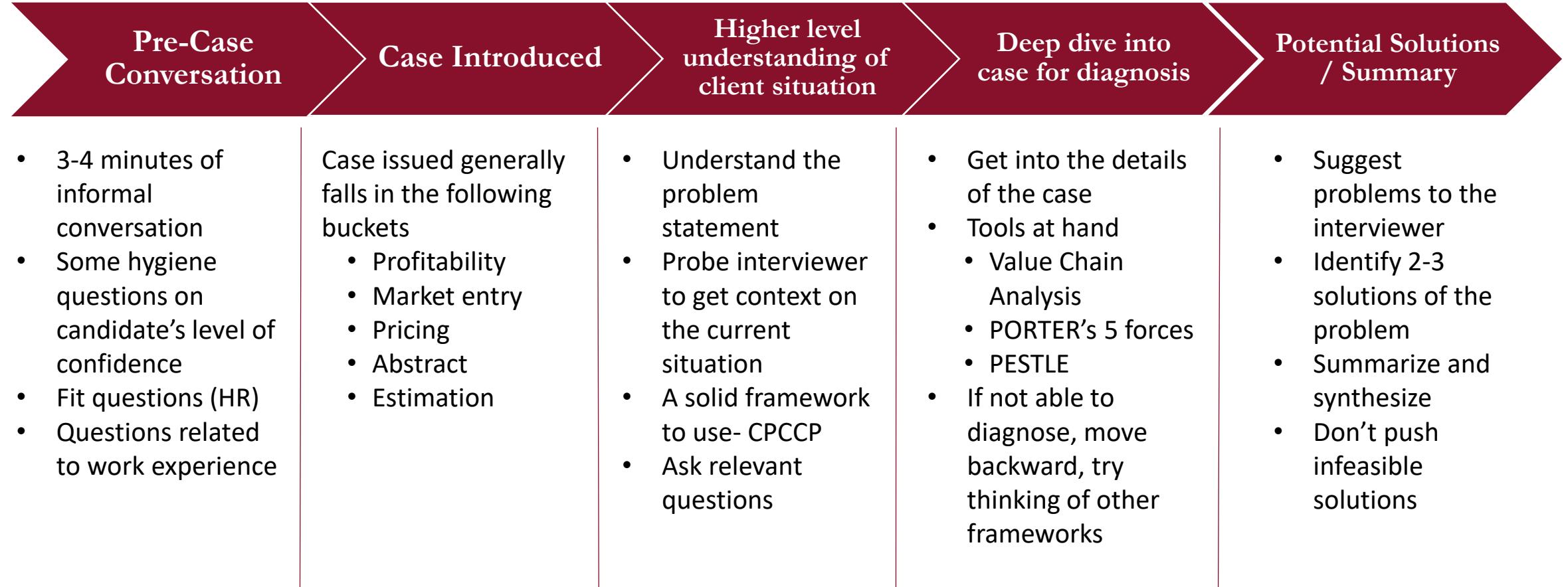
4. Virtual Interview Process

In the current COVID scenario, most firms have shifted their hiring processes online and are conducting interviews digitally. In light of this, it becomes all the more important to keep the interviewer engaged throughout the interview process and communicate the approach well. Unlike a physical interview, interviewers do not have access to the sheet of paper where the interviewee makes his/her case structures. As a result, the role of communication becomes all the more crucial.



Introduction to Case Interviews

Case Interview Helicopter View



“Personality”, “Fit”, “Work Experience” Related Questions

Personality

- Questions to gauge a higher-level understanding of candidate's skills-communication, knowledge and experience related
- Sample questions:
 - Tell me about yourself? – (Ice breaker. Your chance to take the interviewer to your strengths)
 - Things that you are passionate about? (Your ability to deep-dive into your interests)
 - Situational questions- Handling a crisis, negotiating with colleagues and others

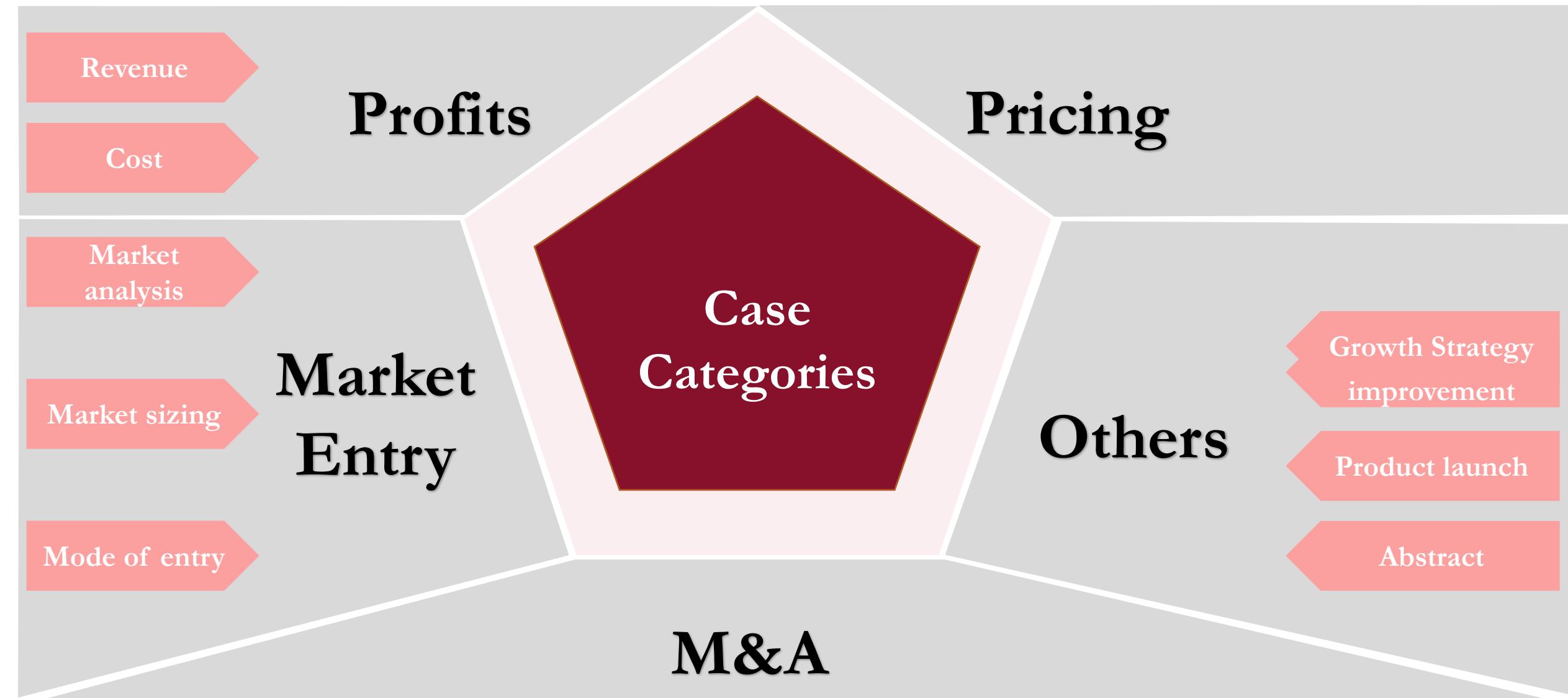
Fit for the firm

- Questions to assess if the candidate can fit in the culture of the firm. Since consulting firms put high emphasis on their culture, this area is a make or break
- Sample questions:
 - Why firm “X”? (To understand your knowledge about the firm's culture)
 - How do you solve a problem? (Assessing how you approach problems- 70% of early career)
 - What is your greatest achievement? (To assess how you measure impact)

Work experience

- Questions around candidate's work experience/internships- assessment of overlapping areas of work with the interviewing firm, responsibilities handled, and impact delivered
- Sample questions:
 - Things that you liked about your previous firms? (Identifies your optimism about workplace)
 - Most interesting project? (Knowing your expertise in the area of work)
 - Why did you leave your previous job? (Triggers that reduce your motivation about workplace)

Major Case Interview Categories



Solving a Case: Frameworks

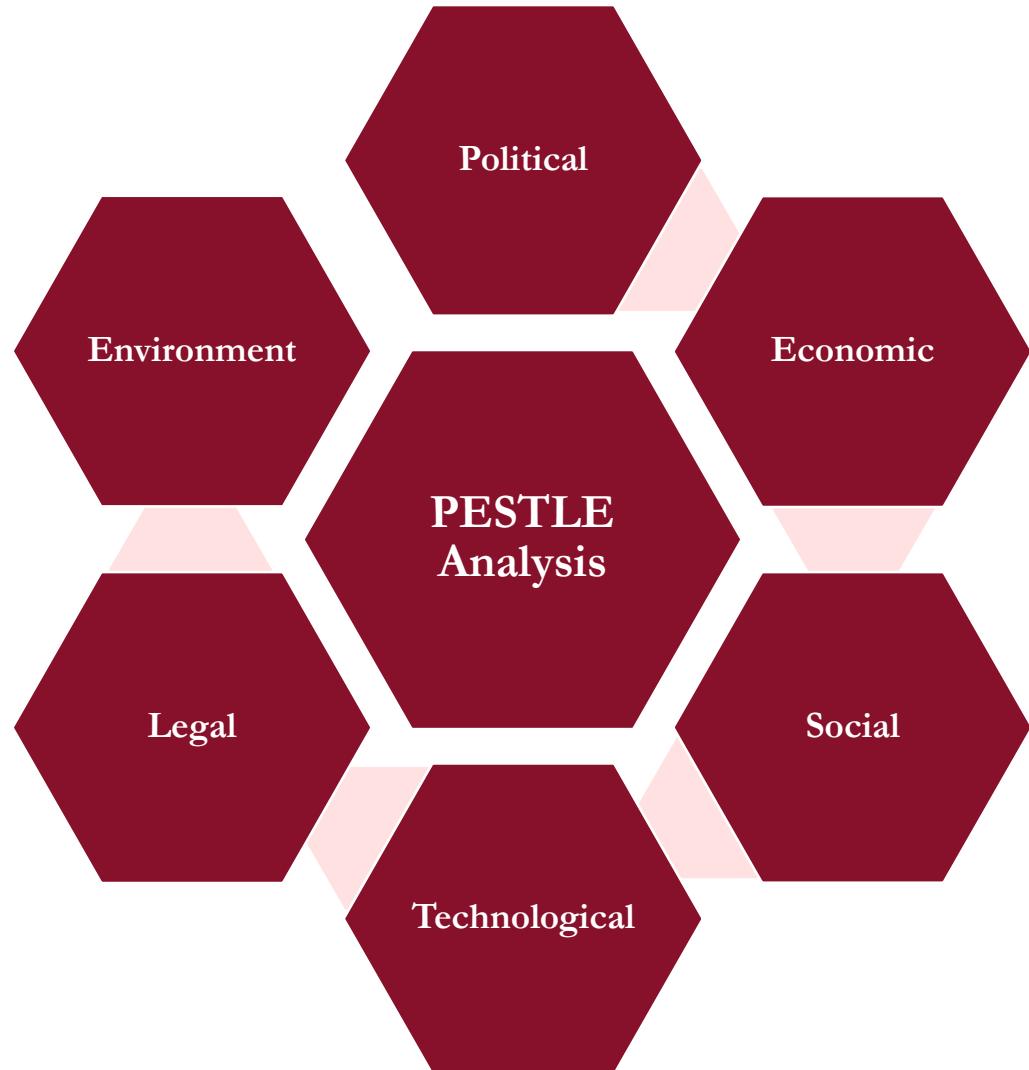
Irrespective of case type, the problem statement can generally be probed by deploying “CPCC”

Problem Formulation	Company	Product	Customer	Competition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMART objectives (constraints priorities) Scope of the problem Since when are you facing the problem? Magnitude of the problem Why certain decisions being taken now? (Market Entry Cases) Geography specific? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business lines & revenue segments Locations – Plant, Sales Business Model & Distribution model Scale of operation Type of player – Low cost or differentiated How old is the company? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SKUs – types, variants, sizes USP of the product Revenue share by product Is the problem specific to a product? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are the customers segmented Customer segments served? Different customer and consumer? Revenue contribution of channel partners Is the problem specific to a customer segment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who are the competitors and what are their market shares? Who are the indirect competitors? Fragmented vs concentrated industry Are competitors also facing the issue?

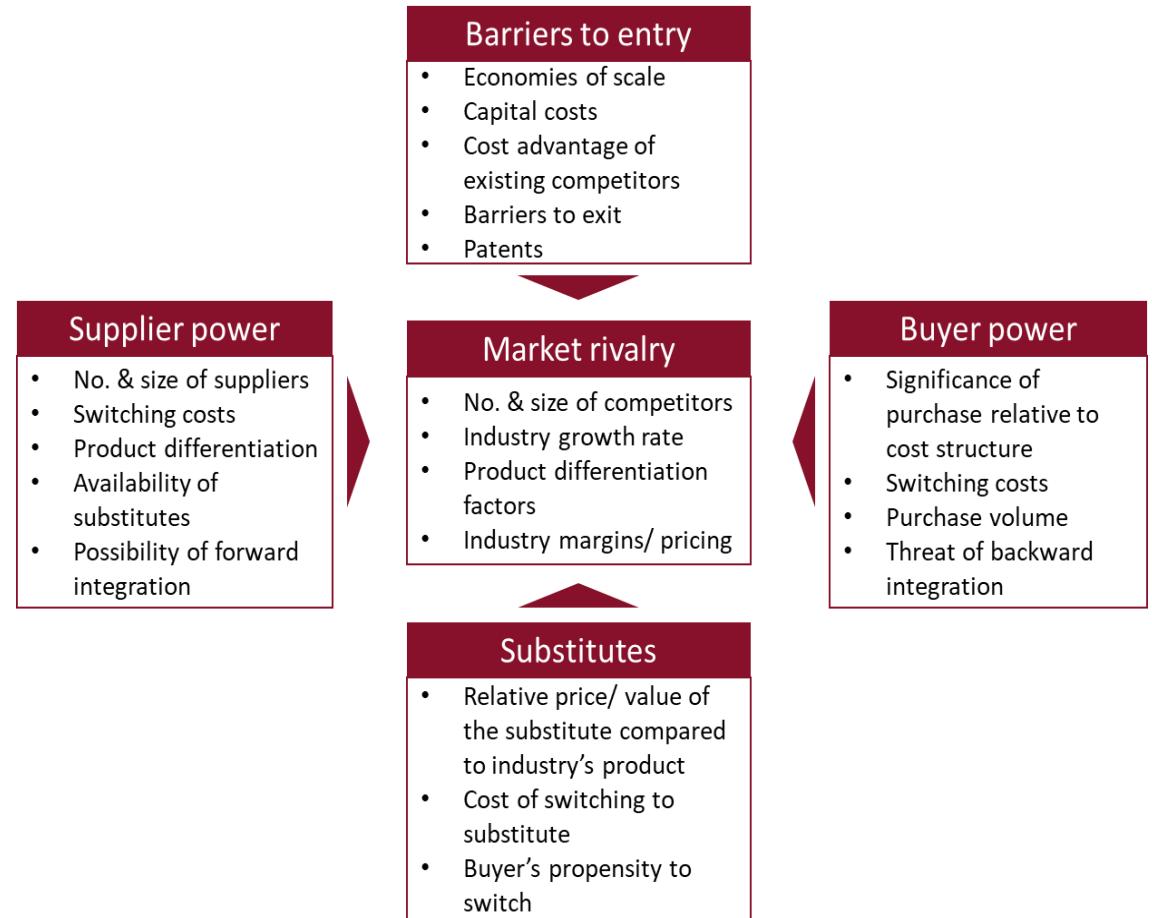
Points to remember	<p>Why clarifying questions are important?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better understanding about the client & industry Scoping and segmenting the problem Generating inferences from the information gathered. Accordingly, customize further questions and case solving structure 	<p>To-Dos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contextualise the questions as per the case (product, industry etc.) If you have any prior understanding, always state it and get it validated, rather than asking a question.
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Frameworks to conduct Industry Analysis

PESTLE- Macroeconomic analysis



Porter's 5 forces- Microeconomic analysis

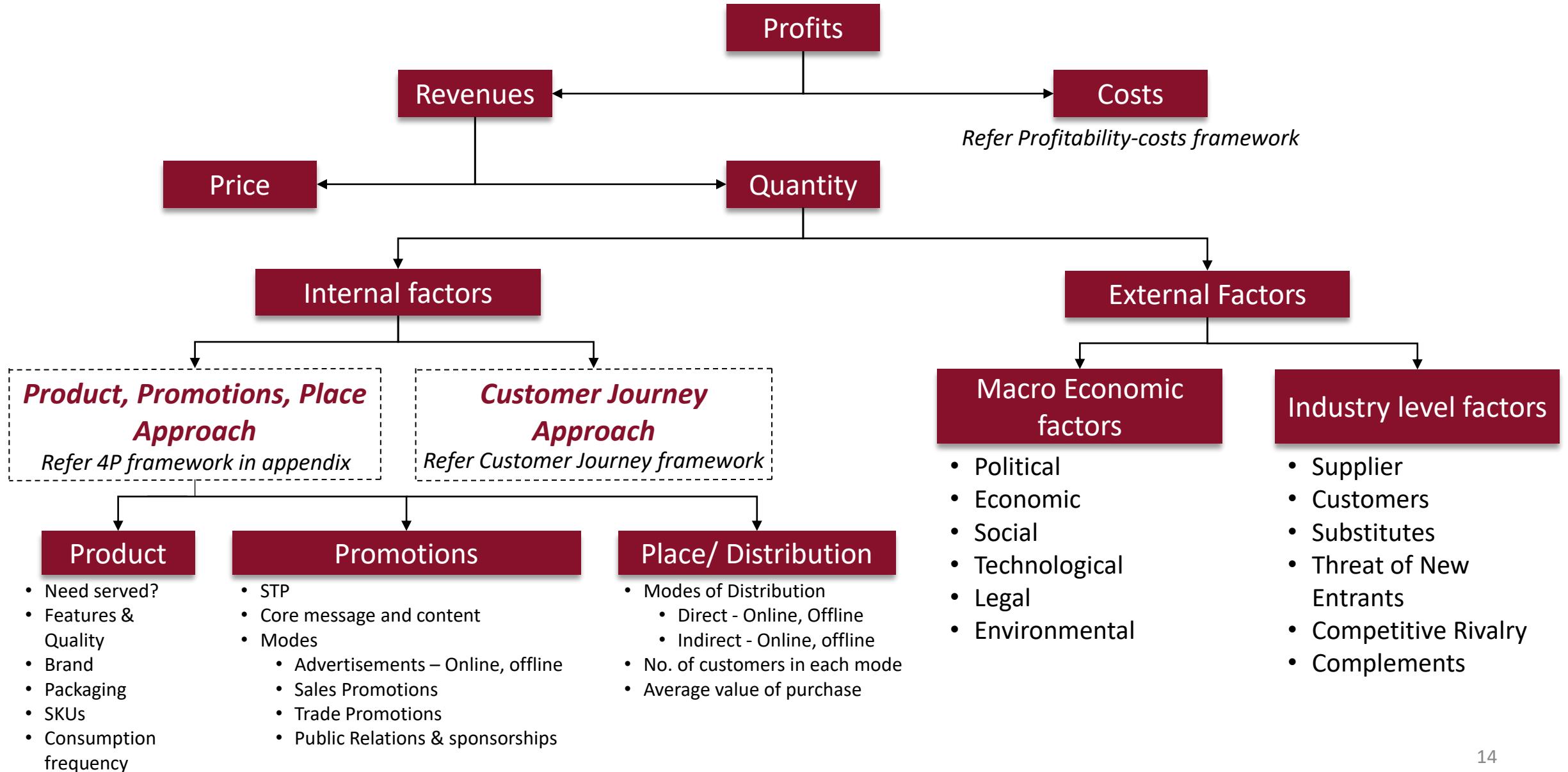


- Refer to the appendix for detailed PESTLE analysis

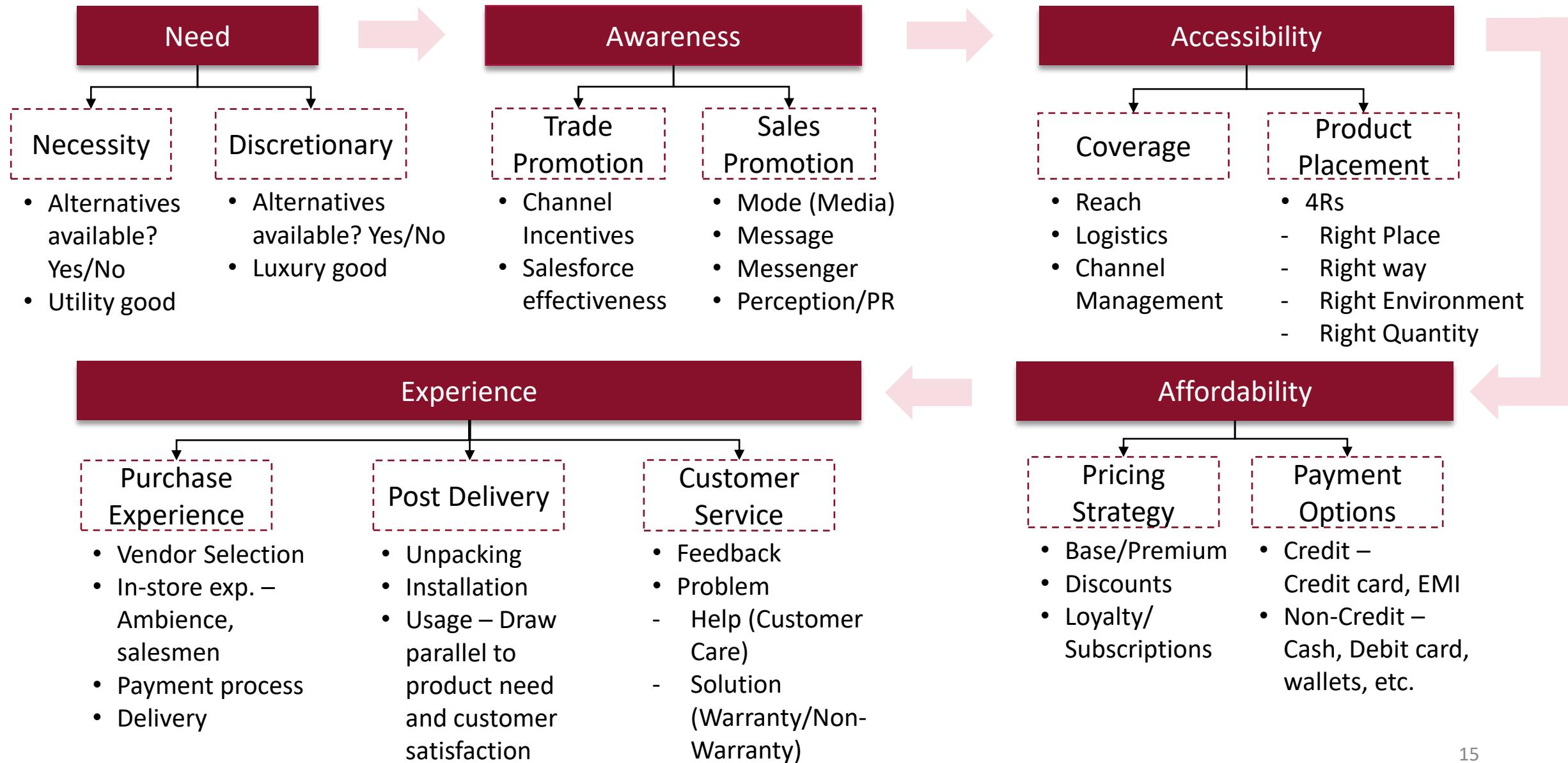
The 4P framework – generally applicable across all business cases

Product	Place	Promotion	Price
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the product's differentiating attributes? • Why does the consumer purchase the product? <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features • Quality • Packaging • Brand • Support services (installation, after sales support) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the product distributed to consumers? • What is the distribution supply chain? (distributor, wholesaler, retailer) – Commissions, product push, time to transport etc. • What new methods of distribution are available? • Product placement at retail outlet (Right place, right way, right environment, right quantity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What promotions are being used – advertisements, sales/trade, PR? (Mode, Message, Messenger) • Any negative PR recently • What is the most effective way of “getting word out”? • Evaluate each promotion mechanism by reach, frequency, impact • How it helps in creating brand loyalty, preferences <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales & Trade promotion • Advertising – ATL/ BTL/ TTL • Personal Selling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the product priced? • How are its competitors priced? • What pricing strategy? • How the customers pay (channels, payments modes)? • Discounts, loyalty schemes <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost based, value pricing, competitor based • Premium pricing • Skimming pricing • Penetration pricing

Profitability Framework- Revenues are declining



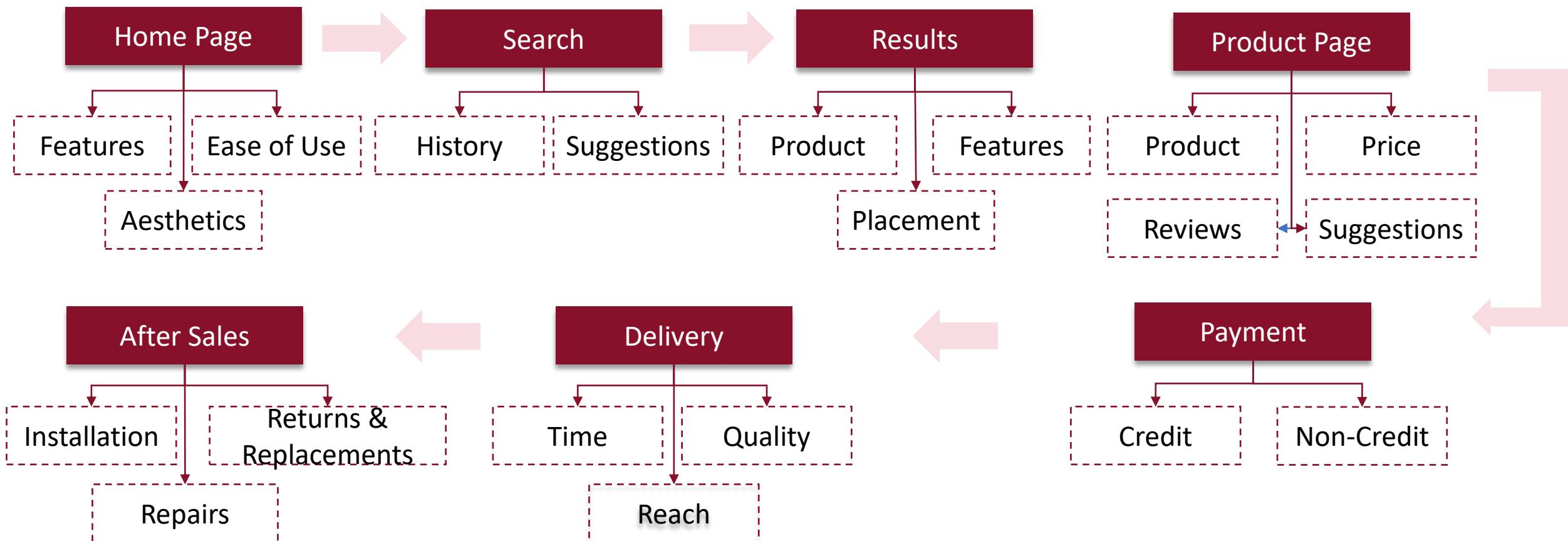
Profitability Framework- Customer Journey Approach



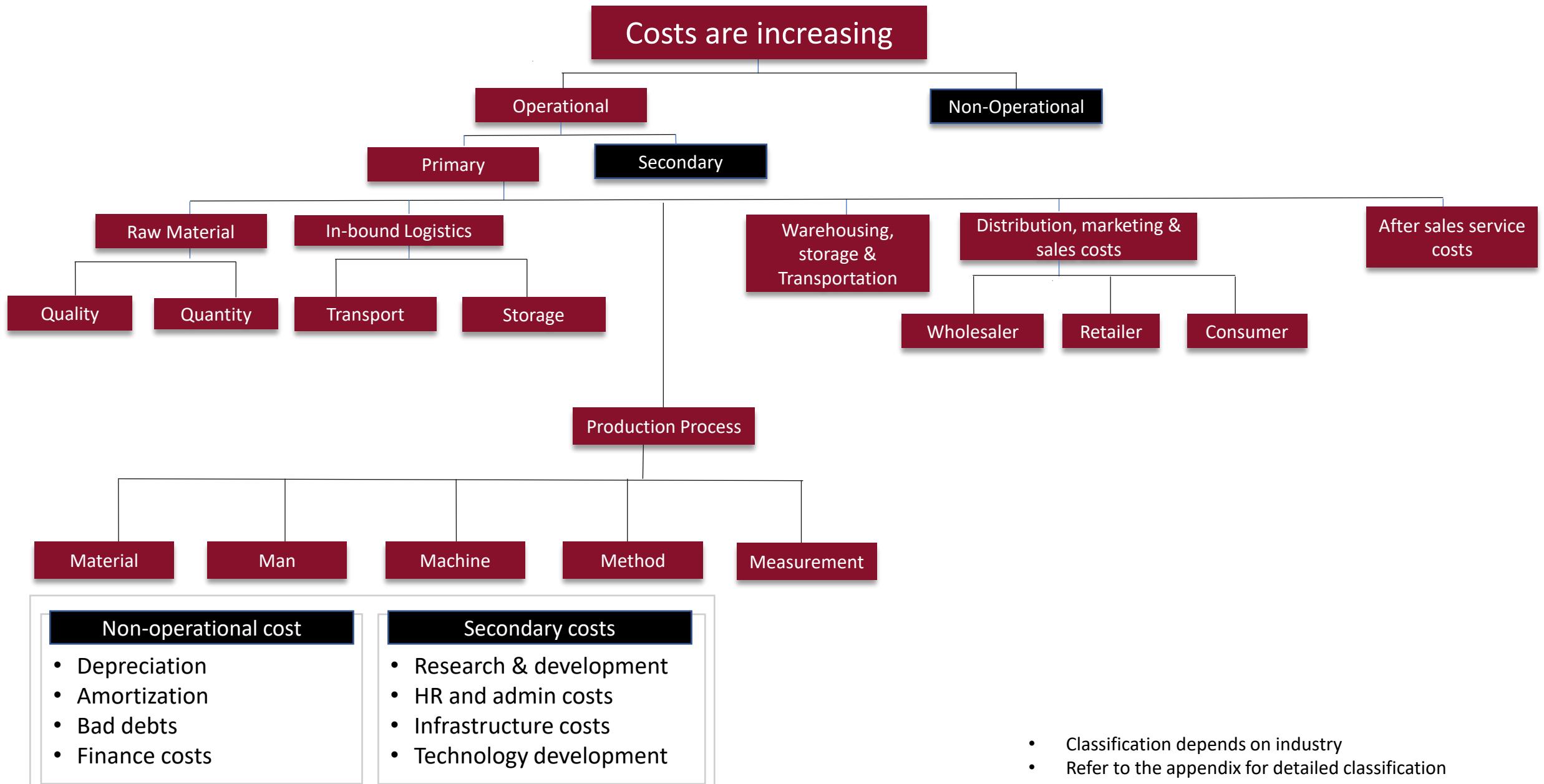
Customer Journey Approach in practice

It is not always necessary to follow the standard buckets while mapping the customer journey
 The candidate should step into the shoes of the customer and solve it through first principle

Example: Mapping the customer journey on an e-commerce platform



Profitability Framework- Costs are increasing*



Market Entry Framework (1/2)

Proposed framework for market entry:

- A. Understanding context - Qualifying questions
- B. Decision to enter –
 - Market attractiveness
 - 1. Quantitative Analysis
 - 1. Market Size & Growth
 - 2. Breakeven Analysis (NPV, IRR, Payback period)
 - 2. Qualitative Analysis
 - 1. Country (macro) & Industry analysis (micro)
 - Need-gap analysis & STP
- C. Mode of entry
- D. Operationalizing (optional)

A. Qualifying questions

Basic info:

- Company
- Products/
services

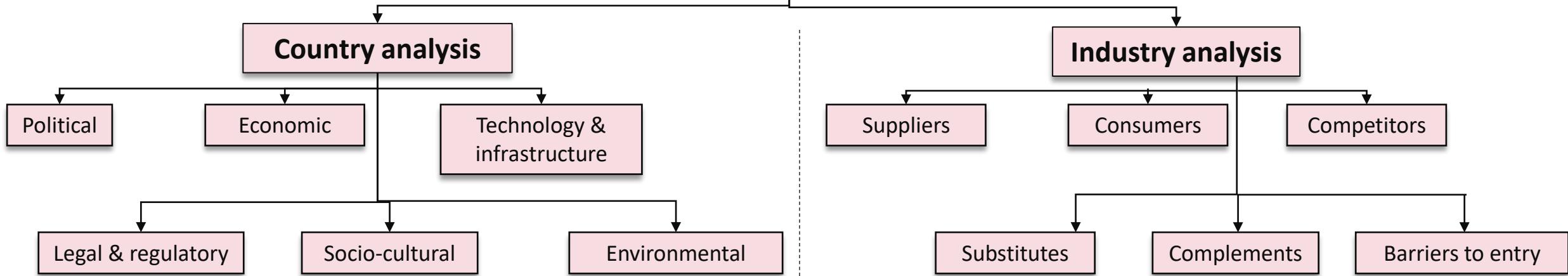
Motive

- Profit increase
 - Market share expansion
 - Diversification
 - Other reasons - welfare, charity, etc.
- Any reasons why the chosen country?
Why now?

Constraints

- Time period
- Investment

B. Entry decision - Market attractiveness[#]



[#]Quantitative – Market Size & Growth, Breakeven Analysis (NPV, IRR, Payback Period)

Market Entry Framework (2/2)

B. Entry decision - Need-gap analysis & STP

Identify segments on the basis of:

- Geography
- Demographic
- Behavioural
- Psychographics

Perform need-gap analysis

- Define product/ services
- Identify USP
- Target segments whose needs are met

For each target segment, identify

- Market Size (potential guesstimate)
- Growth
- Lifecycle

C. Framework for market entry mode

Rate comparatively for each factor on 3-level scale: **High, Mid and Low**

Factors for various options	Organic growth	M&A	JV	License/ Franchise
Costs				
Time to profitability				
Autonomy/ control				
Risks				

D. Operationalizing

Setup the business for the firm:

1. Establish value chain
 - Sourcing
 - Manufacturing
 - Logistics (Transportation & Storage)
 - Distribution
 - Marketing
 - Customer service
2. Product/ services related¹⁹: (4 P Approach)
 - Product/ Service
 - Pricing
 - Promotion plan
 - Place
3. Identifying Risks & Synergies

Market Sizing/ Guesstimates

A. What do interviewers look for in guesstimates?

1. Approach (Reduction factors, assumptions made) – Most important
2. Market/ consumer/ industry specific insights
3. Calculations – Speed, correctness
 - Perform approximate calculations to save time & reduce chances of error

C. Does the final answer matter?

- The final answer need not be accurate
- Try not to arrive at numbers with large deviations (10x, 100x) (validating final answer through any other ball-park estimation). In case of error, don't hesitate to go back to the approach & include any other factor or review the numbers taken

B. Types (Decide based on constraints/ limiting factor)

Demand Side:

- Example – Mobile phones sold, Ketchup consumed etc.
- **'Consumer Centric'** approach –
 - Imagine yourself as a consumer of the product and identify consumer insights
- Usual reduction factors –
 - Population (Or any other consumer)
 - Age, Gender, Income
 - Religion, Ethnicity
 - Urban/ Rural or location wise
 - Consumer usage related factors
 - Units per person
 - Substitutes & other options
 - Complements
 - Replacement Rate
 - Competition

Supply Side:

- Example – No. of flights landing in an airport
- Usual Reduction Factors –
 - Production capability
 - Infrastructure facility
 - Time, Resource, Capital
 - Units per facility
 - Competition
 - Substitutes & Complements

D. Process

Scoping & Clarification

Define the approach (reduction factors), draw issue tree & get buy-in from interviewer

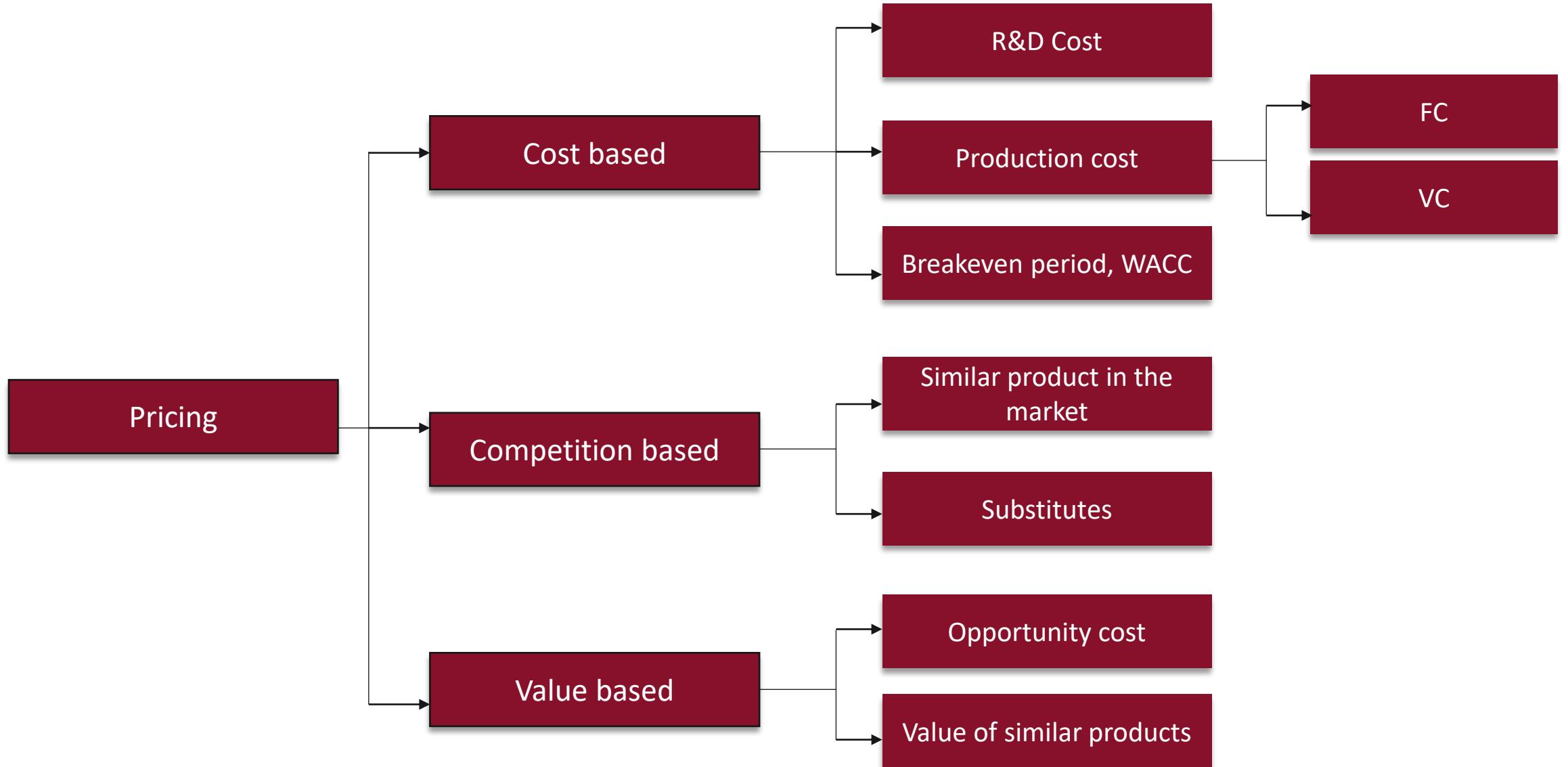
State all the numbers and back it up with any suitable rationale

Apply 80/ 20 Rule – Only proceed with major segments

Perform calculation & adjust minor segments ignored

Validate the answer through other approach/ benchmark (ball-park estimation works)

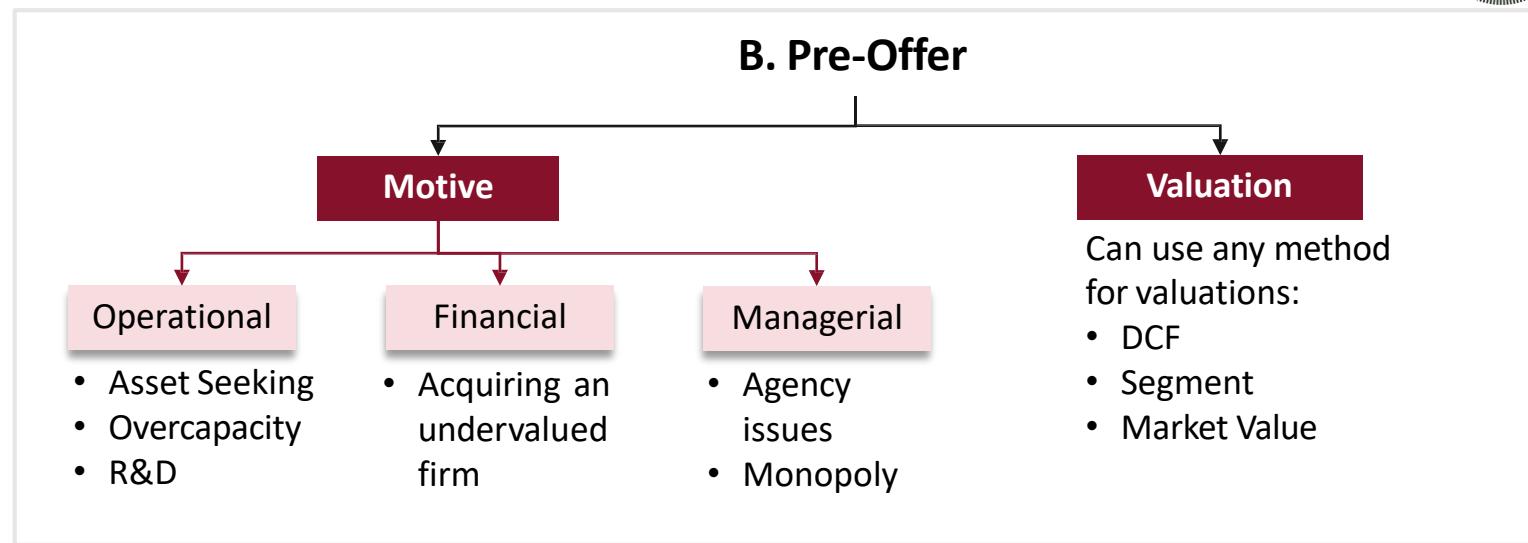
Pricing Framework



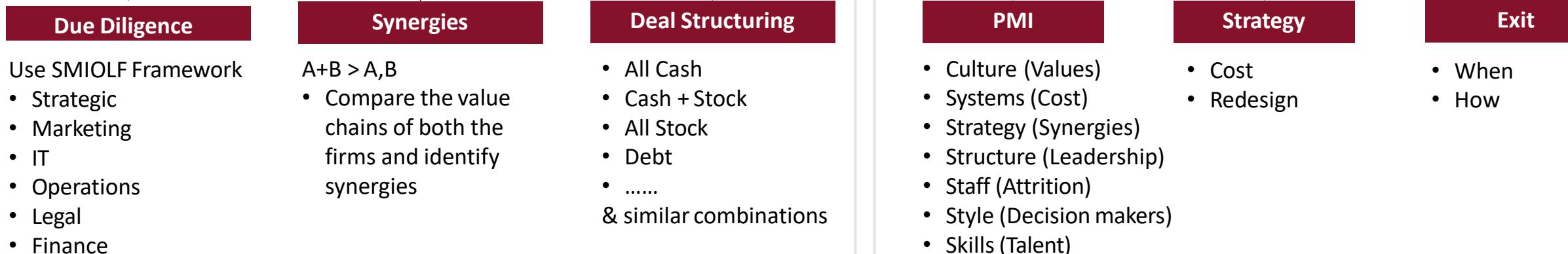
Mergers & Acquisitions, Due-Diligence

Proposed framework:

- A. Type of merger – Horizontal, vertical, conglomerate
- B. Pre-Offer
 - Motive for merger and valuations
- C. Offer
 - Due-Diligence
 - Synergies
 - Deal Structuring
- D. Post-Offer
 - PMI
 - Strategy & Exit



C. Offer



Due Diligence (Do DD of heads relevant to the case)

DD is an extensive process undertaken by an acquiring firm to assess target company's business, assets, capabilities, & financial performance.

Organization	Product	Customer	Competition	Operational	Marketing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure • Ownership • Divisions • Business Units • Strategy • Comp. advantage • VRIO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offerings • Variants • Stage in Lifecycle • Change in product mix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STP & Stickiness • Change in customer mix • Demographics-geographic, psychographic, behavioural 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market structure • Market share • Growth • Offerings • Valuation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value chain • Suppliers • Distributors • Innovation • R&D 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer mix • Channel mix • Communication • Brand Image
Financial	Management	IT	Legal	HR	Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit of FS • Earning Quality • CAGR of KPIs- Sales, profit • Cash flows • Working capital cycle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience & Qualification • Promoters stake • Strategy • Culture • Belief and Vision • Integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems • Processes • Integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patents • Licenses • Agreements • Regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies • Professional HR Team • Feedback mechanism • EE survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emission • Pollution • Reuse • Recycle • Refurbish

Synergies

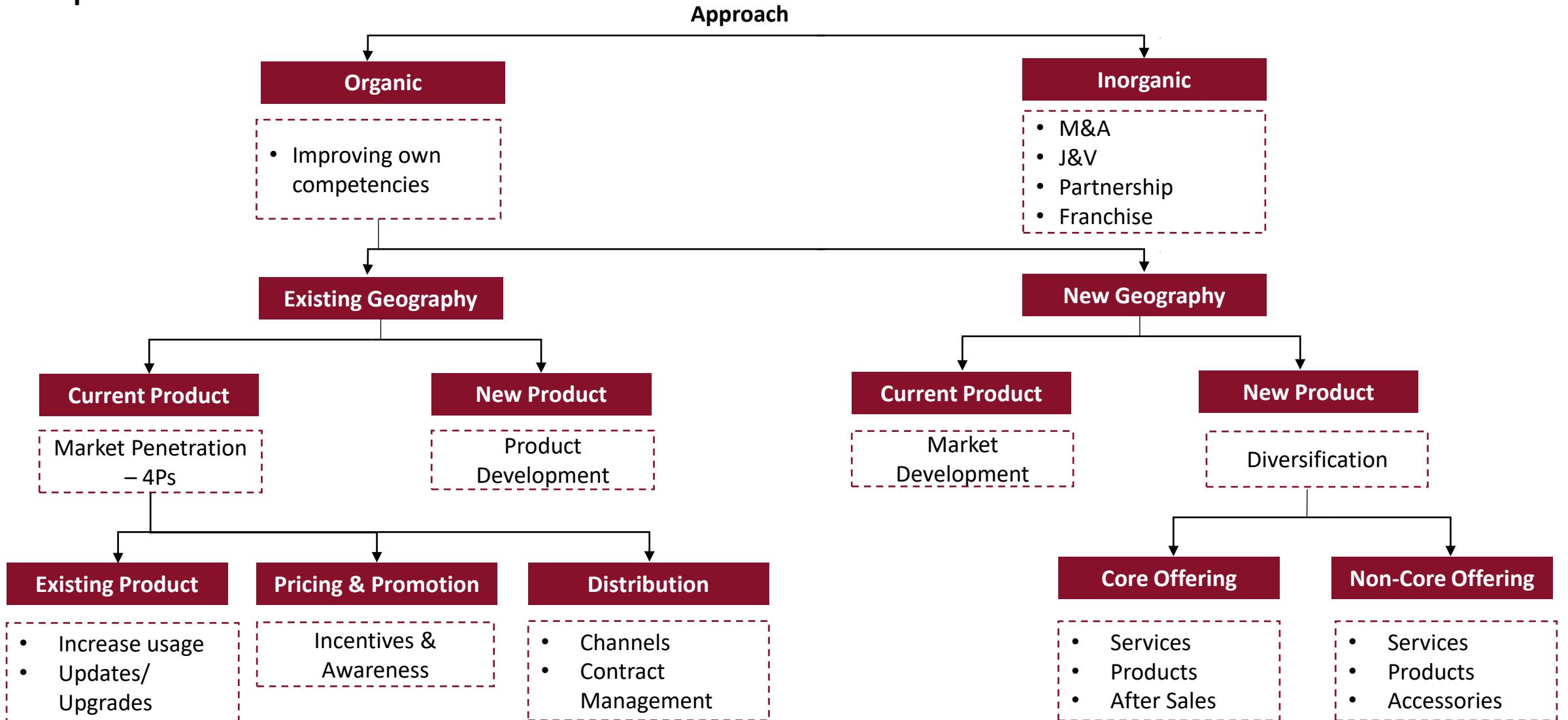
Synergy is an interaction or cooperation giving rise to a whole that is greater than the simple sum of its parts.

- It Identifies potential synergies across value chain:
R&D-> Suppliers-> Operations ->Product -> Distribution ->Marketing ->Customer
- Other areas of synergies- Finances, HR etc.

R&D/ Resource	Suppliers	Operations	Product	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing knowledge, tech, labs, machinery & scientists • Access to patents, licenses, spectrum, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dec. number • Retain quality • Bulk Orders- Dec. order & transport costs • Bargaining power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economies of scale/scope • Higher capacity utilization • Higher productivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider range • More variants • Better pricing- due to better quality & lower competition 	
Distribution	Marketing	Customer	Financial	HR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale/Scope • Salesforce rationalization • Incr. penetration- more channels • Bargaining power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale and reach • Customer data • Knowledge sharing • Co- Branding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better product • Same STP • Cross selling • Bundling • Upselling (Ability to sell more) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WACC decreases • Deprn. tax shield • Tax savings • Bankruptcy costs • Agency costs • Information asymmetry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productivity increase • More diversity • EEs with special competencies • Labour cost rationalization

Growth Strategy

Proposed framework:



Case Examples

Profitability- Interview Transcript

An Oral Hygiene Products Manufacturer facing declining profits in India

Case Transcript

Your client is an Oral Hygiene Products manufacturer. They have observed declining profits. Help find the solution to their problem.

I would like to begin by confirming the problem statement, and asking some clarifying questions from our client. As per my understanding our client manufactures oral hygiene products, and has faced declining profits. Is that correct? How long has the client been facing this problem?

That is correct. The client has been facing declining profits since the inception of the firm 2 years ago.

Thank you. What all products does the client manufacture? Also, where does the client operate?

The client manufactures two products toothbrush, and mouthwash. They are present only in the Indian market.

What are the competitors faced by the client, and where is the client situated in the competition?

Since they have established their operations recently, the client is still market follower, and is placed 4th in terms of national market share for oral hygiene products.

What is the sales split of the two products manufactured by the client? Further, have both of seen a decline in profits?

The client manufactures one standard type of Toothbrush (A) and Mouthwash (B) each, which contribute 75% and 25% of the total sales, respectively. Both are being hit in terms of profitability.

Does the client operate across the value chain or in a specific part? Also, will it be safe to assume that the end consumers of the client's products are majorly households?

Yes, the client operates across the entire value chain; and, could you elaborate which households?

Sure. Assuming the client is competing nationally, I believe the toothbrush sales should be majorly driven by middle-income households. Whereas, Mouthwash demand emanating largely from upper-middle to high-income households. Is this assumption fair?

Fair, you may proceed further.

Since there are two products with their respective sales contributions, I will begin with toothbrush since it has greater contribution, and then proceed to mouthwash

Sure, go ahead.

So, Profits can be broken down to revenues and costs. Since profits are declining, it could either be revenues declining, costs increasing or costs increasing greater than the revenues. Which option would you like me to proceed with?

Let's focus on the Revenues for Toothbrush.

Now Revenue issue can be a market share issue where your firm is facing declining revenues whereas the industry is performing well, or a market value issue, where the market itself is not performing to the par. Where do you think the issue is here?

I think it's a Market Share issue, the Toothbrush market has maintained its growth levels otherwise.

Thanks, now Revenues can further be broken down into Price, and Volumes. Has there been a decline in the volume of the product being manufactured or has there been some change in the prices?

The prices have remained constant focus on the volumes here.

Ok. So if there has been a fall in volumes, it could be because of supply side issues, where the demand exists but the client has not been able to meet it, or a demand side issue with the problem at the consumer's end. Could you help me understand, on which side the issue could be?

The client believes that there has been a fall in demand.

Alright then. This fall in demand can then further be attributed to internal factors innate to the client's product such as branding, product specifications, and after sales service or external factors that have emerged from outside the client's control, like substitutes, complements, with taste and preferences. Is there any segment you would like me to focus on specifically?

Begin with product specifications

The Product specifications can further be broken down into functional aspects (i.e. the bristles, grip, length of the toothbrush etc.) and experiential/symbolic factors like colours, packaging, unique features. Could there be a reason for us to believe that the client's product is different from the industry in the above factors?

Yes, it has been found that the bristles and the length the toothbrush has not been satisfactory. Can you highlight what issues could there be?

Sure, Indians are known to brush their teeth rigorously, and mostly in the morning for freshness. I believe there could be an issue with the quality of the bristles or the area of bristles that could either make the experience hurtful, or not allow adequate toothpaste to get a satisfactory brushing experience. For the length, due to the brushing pattern as stated above, rigorous strokes are made. If the length is longer than expected, it could either damage the gums, or not make the toothbrush flexible enough to provide the experience the customers are looking for.

Profitability- Interview Transcript

An Oral Hygiene Products Manufacturer facing declining profits in India

Case Transcript

These could certainly be plausible issues; but changing product specifications is a lengthy process, and requires research. What would you recommend the client?

Alright. The decline in revenues for toothbrush is largely coming from product where the client may have difficulties in finding immediate solutions. In that case I would recommend fringe benefits to customers in the short run to make the product more lucrative until specifications can be met with. These could be:-

1. Explore bundling of products to make the bundle attractive and drive sales in both products
2. Niche promotion that could address this myth, or make the brush look like a differentiated offering

The recommendations seem feasible. Now explore the mouthwash segment. Focus on external factors, and it is a market share issue.

Thank you. Since it is an external issue, it implies, the client's product is facing issue in the business environment. Would it be safe to assume that the issue with Mouthwash being faced, at the same time as Toothbrush too?

No, it is a more recent phenomenon.

Sure, since it is a customer driven (demand) issue, external factors could be Affordability, Availability, Accessibility, or Likeability. Is there any specific factor you would like me to consider first?

Explain what you mean by likeability?

Likeability are the factors that would affect the customer's propensity to buy the product provided it is available, affordable and accessible. These could emerge of substitutes, tastes and preferences, or complements.

Yes, it has been found that our mouthwash brand is endorsed by a famous Hollywood actor who is also endorsing a tobacco brand in a significant country, and has faced global criticism for it, which may have affected preferences here. This was a constructive interaction, thank you and all the best!

Profitability- Case Structure

An Oral Hygiene Products Manufacturer facing declining profits in India

Qualitative Information	Case Framework	Quantitative Data & Analysis
<p>Case background: Oral Hygiene Products manufacturer facing unsatisfactory revenues</p> <p>Case facts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Products – Toothbrush (A) (75%) and Mouthwash (B) (25%) • Customers – Middle Income Households for A and Middle to High for B • Placed 4th in the Market • Problem since inception, 2 years ago 	<pre> graph TD Profits[Profits] --> Revenue[Revenue] Profits --> Costs[Costs] Revenue --> Price[Price] Revenue --> Volumes[Volumes] Price --- Demand[Demand] Volumes --- Supply[Supply] Demand --- Internal[Internal] Demand --- External[External] Internal --- Promotion[Promotion] Internal --- Distribution[Distribution] Internal --- Product[Product] Product --- Functional[Functional] Product --- Experiential[Experiential] External --- Likeability[Likeability] Likeability --- Availability[Availability] Likeability --- Accessibility[Accessibility] Likeability --- Affordability[Affordability] Availability --- Substitutes[Substitutes] Accessibility --- Complements[Complements] Affordability --- Tastes[Tastes and Preferences] </pre> <p>The diagram illustrates the Case Framework. At the top right is a tree diagram for 'Profits' branching into 'Revenue' and 'Costs'. 'Revenue' further branches into 'Price' and 'Volumes'. Below this, 'Demand' is connected to both 'Price' and 'Volumes', which in turn connect to 'Supply'. The 'Demand' node also connects to two main categories: 'Internal' and 'External'. The 'Internal' category includes 'Promotion', 'Distribution', and 'Product'. The 'Product' node under 'Internal' connects to 'Functional' and 'Experiential'. The 'External' category includes 'Likeability', which then branches into 'Availability', 'Accessibility', and 'Affordability'. 'Availability' connects to 'Substitutes', 'Accessibility' connects to 'Complements', and 'Affordability' connects to 'Tastes and Preferences'.</p>	<p>None</p>

Problems and recommendations	Interviewee feedback
<p>Toothbrush – Product Specifications Issue in Bristles and Length. Niche promotions and bundled sales until product redesign</p> <p>Mouthwash – Taste and Preference Issue because of Brand Ambassador</p>	<p>The case assesses the ability to extend and structure a revenue side issue in the most extensive way. The key is to cover most filters first, and then explore the breadth before depth while searching for the issue. Structure is prioritized over recommendation</p>

Profitability- Interview Transcript

Our client is a biscuit retailer. Of late, they have experienced a decline in profit. Why is this happening?

Case Transcript

(After clarifying the problem statement) I would like to understand more about the retailer. Where is our client's business based out of? Where are the retail shops located? How long has the retailer been facing this issue?

Good. The retailer is based out of India. The shops are located in the residential areas of Lucknow. It's a well-known shop. The client has been facing this issue since last 3 months.

Alright. I would like to understand more about operating model of the client. Does our client manufacture the biscuits as well?

Interestingly, our client procures the biscuits from the manufacturer. He stores it in the warehouse and then sends it to the respective retailers.

Okay. Could you please elaborate a bit on the competition faced by the biscuit retailer? And are the competitors also facing this issue?

There are no major competitors in Lucknow. People heavily rely on our client's products. No, the competitors are not facing this issue.

Now, I would like to know more about the different types of biscuits being sold by the retailers? And does our client serve only households?

As of now, our client sells only one type of biscuits. It is being consumed by the middle class families.

(Asked for a few seconds to develop my structure) Based on our discussion, the client is facing issues in the profits. Profits can be declined because of two reasons: a) decline in revenues b) increase in costs. Do you want me to focus on any particular area?

Yes, I would like you to explore costs first.

For costs, I would like to see what are costs being incurred by the retailer at each point of the value chain of the retailer. As per my understanding, the client will first procure the biscuits from the retailer. For which, some inbound logistics will be required. After unloading, the biscuits will be stored at a warehouse. From there, they will be transferred to the retail shops. Is there anything I am missing out?

Great. I think you have covered all the points. You may start with your this structure.

Sure. I would like to start with the procurement of biscuits from the wholesaler. Has there been any change in the price charged by the wholesaler or any other terms and conditions?

We get our supplies from the same wholesaler for last 5-6 years. There has not been any major change in any of these. You may move ahead.

Sure. I would like to understand the modes of transportation used by the retailer to procure the biscuits from the retailer.

The retailers own a few trucks. There have been a few structural changes like increase in fuel costs but it has impacted the overall industry. Go ahead.

Now, next step is to unload the biscuit packets. There could be issues related to mishandling during the process.

No, I don't think there is any mishandling at this stage. What else?

Next, I would like to understand how the storage of the packets takes place?

Good. We own a warehouse nearby the city. We are using the same warehouse for last 8 year. What kind of problems can you think here?

There could two possible problems in storage. A) Human issues B) Non-human issues

Interesting, can you walk me through the possible issues under each head.

Sure. Under human issues, there could 3 possible problems:

- i) Mishandling which includes damage due to the labour
- ii) Stealing of the packets by the labour
- iii) Management of the inventory i.e., using LIFO for a perishable product may affect the old packets

Absolutely. Inventory management is one issue due to lack of training in new employees. Can you think of some non-human issues?

Under non human issues, there are two possible issues:

- i) Spoilage due to climatic conditions ii) Damage due to rodents

Yes, there has been a lot of damage due to this monsoon season. Great, can you recommend some possible steps to combat this issues observed?

Sure. In short term, we can: i) Employee training in inventory management ii) undertake regular pest controls to prevent the damage from rodents.

In long term: i) installation of CCTVs to keep a check on workers ii) renovate the warehouse to make it water proof.

Certainly. It was a great discussion. Do you have any questions for me?

Profitability- Case Structure

Our client is a biscuit retailer. Of late, they have experienced a decline in profit. Why is this happening?

Qualitative Information	Case Framework
<p><u>Case background:</u></p> <p>Biscuits retailer facing issues due to increasing costs</p> <p><u>Case facts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located in residential areas • One product and no competitor • Middle class families • Problem since last 3 months 	<pre> graph TD Profit[Profit] --> Revenue[Revenue] Profit --> Cost[Cost] Revenue --- Unloading[Unloading] Revenue --- Storage[Storage] Storage --- LoadOnShelf[Load on Shelf] Storage --- NonHumanIssues[Non Human issues] LoadOnShelf --- TransferShop[Transfer to shop] NonHumanIssues --- PurchaseCustomer[Purchase by customer] NonHumanIssues --- AfterSales[After sales service] Unloading --- HumanIssues[Human issues] HumanIssues --- Mishandling[Mishandling] HumanIssues --- Stealing[Stealing] HumanIssues --- InventoryManagement[Inventory Management] NonHumanIssues --- Spoilage[Spoilage] NonHumanIssues --- Damage[Damage] </pre> <p>The diagram illustrates the value chain and profit structure. At the top is 'Profit', which branches into 'Revenue' and 'Cost'. 'Revenue' leads to 'Unloading' and 'Storage'. 'Storage' leads to 'Load on Shelf', which then leads to 'Transfer to shop'. 'Transfer to shop' leads to 'Purchase by customer', which finally leads to 'After sales service'. From 'Storage', it also branches to 'Non Human issues', which further branches into 'Spoilage' and 'Damage'. From 'Unloading', it branches to 'Human issues', which further branches into 'Mishandling', 'Stealing', and 'Inventory Management'.</p>
<p>Problems and recommendations</p> <p>i) Human issues: Poor inventory management by personnel ii) Non-human issues: Spoilage due to the monsoon season Recommendation: i) Training in inventory management techniques ii) Make the warehouse water resistant.</p>	<p>Interviewee feedback</p> <p>The case revolves around the back-end work of the retailer. It is not always necessary for a retailer to face customer related issues. Therefore, it is a recommended step to clarify the operating model. Using the value chain can help in identifying the problems easily at each stage.</p>

Profitability- Interview Transcript

Client is an NBFC. Its sales have been declining for the last few months. Help identify the reason.

Case Transcript

Client is an NBFC. Its sales have been declining for the last few months. Help identify the reason

Okay. Since the problem only occurs with you, I am going to start from the broker. Are we offering the brokers competitive commissions ? Are our checks stricter?

Could I know more about the client? Where is it operating, for how long, how are sales defined, which customer profiles it serves and is the competition facing a similar issue?

Both our commission and checks are competitive.

The client has been operating in India since 2000. It's HQ is in Mumbai. As an NBFC, it offers loans which have seen a decline. My competition, which includes other private NBFCs and banks, are not facing the problem. We provide both retail and corporate loans, both of which are facing the decline.

Okay. So, then there is a problem with the final conversion of customers. And since the brokers are neutral, are we taking a lot of time to get back?

How do we provide loans to our customers?

That's correct. Our competitors have upped their process of verification, that has significantly reduced their get-back time and covert the customers. That's good, we can end the case here.

We provide loans directly and through DSEs which are like brokers for banks.

Thank you.

Has there been a decline in the DSE channel?

Yes. Significantly.

Has there been a fall in the applications? Could you tell me how this channel works?

The number of applications has been the same and yes, the product is still competitive. The DSE channel works like this – customer goes to broker – broker shows them all the options, including ours – broker sends back applications – we review the applications – get back to broker – broker conveys to customer – deal is signed

Profitability- Case Structure

Client is an NBFC. Its sales have been declining for the last few months. Help identify the reason

Qualitative Information	Case Framework						
<u>Case background:</u>							
NBFC facing declining revenues in DSE (independent) channel	Customer approaches DSE	Broker presents loan options	Broker sends back forms to NBFC	Loans reviewed	NBFC gets back	Client accepts	Deal signed
<u>Case facts:</u>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem specific to client • Here, sales mean loan sales • Loans provided by client are competitive 	<pre> graph LR A[Customer approaches DSE] --> B[Broker presents loan options] B --> C[Broker sends back forms to NBFC] C --> D[Loans reviewed] D --> E[NBFC gets back] E --> F[Bank takes longer time to review offers and give clearance] F --> G[Client accepts] G --> H[Deal signed] </pre>						
Problems and recommendations	Interviewee feedback						
Clients' loan application verification process time is significantly slower than the competition and is having trouble converting customers.	It is always good to ask for value chains of a business you have less knowledge about. The case did not follow any conventional structure, hence it is extremely important to solve cases using first principles.						

Profitability- Interview Transcript

Our client is an automotive manufacturer and has been facing a decline in profits. Help us find out why.

Case Transcript

Since when have the profits been declining and by how much?

The client has been facing this issue since the past 1 year and the quantum of fall has been 10%

I would like to understand the company's business model and how long it has been in business for?

The company is 50-60 years old. It typically procures parts, assembles it and sells the final product in markets across India

Where are the company's manufacturing plants located? And where does it procure parts from?

It has 5 manufacturing plants. One each in Pune, Kolkata and Lucknow and two in Chennai. Distribution happens from all across India while procurement sites are aggregated closer to Chennai

Does the company have its own stores or does it distribute through third parties? What is the share of online and offline distribution?

We distribute through our own stores as well as through third party distributors. The share of offline sales is around 95% and rest is taken up by online sales.

What is the type of automobiles that you manufacture? And what is the share of revenues you get from each of these product segments?

The client manufactures commercial vehicles, passenger vehicles and is also in the business of spare parts. The revenue mix is around 50%, 50% and 5% respectively

And what is the kind of clientele we are targeting with the products?

With the passenger vehicles, the client is targeting the middle income group and the typical clientele for commercial vehicles is trucking aggregators and other businesses

Alright, in terms of competition, who are your major competitors in the market and where are you placed among them? Have they been facing a similar issues?

We are among the top 3 players in the market and you can assume all three of us have equal market share. I am not aware if our competitors are facing similar issues or not.

I'd now like to delve into the case and identify reasons for decline in profitability. So since you said your profitability has been declining, it could either be a function of decline in revenues or increase in costs.

There has been an increase in costs

Okay, I would like to break down the costs into Primary and Secondary costs. Primary costs will include costs related to R&D, procurement of raw materials, in-bound logistics, warehousing of raw materials, processing, warehousing of finished goods, outbound logistics, marketing etc.

That sounds exhaustive. I would like you to begin with procurement, our R&D costs haven't had an impact on profitability.

Okay, I would like to know if there has been any major change in the location of the manufacturing plants / suppliers you're procuring from / product mix / target customers in the recent past that could have led to a change in procurement costs for the firm?

Yes, we have recently changed our suppliers owing to a change in procurement policy which aims to localize procurement closer to Chennai plants.

Okay, so one of the reasons for lower profitability be the additional transportation costs you are bearing to transport the parts from Chennai plants to other manufacturing facilities located pan-India?

Yes, that is correct. But at the same time we are lowering raw material procurement costs for Chennai plants. The transportation cost as a proportion of total costs has gone up from 5% to 8% while the raw material cost has gone down from 15% by 17%

Okay, that means that the change in raw material cost has been ~1.73% of total costs and so the net increase in costs has been $3\% - 1.73\% = 1.27\%$. So this is one of the reasons for a spike in costs and decline in profitability.

Right, now I would like you to tell me how the findings so far can impact warehousing costs.

Warehousing costs could be further divided into human and non-human costs. Human costs include any changes in number of employees, skill level of employees, wages of employees in the warehouse. Non-human costs will include costs associated with inefficiencies in inventory management (inventory carrying cost) or related to general maintenance/security of warehouse

There has been no change in human costs. However, the inventory carrying cost has been impacted. Could you suggest why?

Is it because the number of days taken for the inventory to reach your Lucknow, Pune and Kolkata plants has increased, thereby increasing the number of days that the inventory is in transit?

That is right. Now, we have also been facing a lot of complaints post-purchase of vehicles. How could this be having a cost implication?

Okay, so complaints could be of two types, one, that requires only servicing and doesn't require additional spare parts, the other can be where spare parts are required. The implications of these can again be two fold - one, increase in manpower costs for handling these complaints and second, cost of storing/transporting spare parts on demand (Depending on how your model works)

Yes, so there has been an increase in the costs related to transporting the spare parts to these service centres since earlier the anticipated demand for spare parts was lesser than what it has been over the past year. The new supplier seems to be providing more defective parts. Could you summarize the case for me?

Sure. We were trying to ascertain why an automotive company is facing declining profits and we found out that one, there has been a change in procurement policy of parts which is leading to an increase in inbound logistics costs, second is the increase in inventory carrying costs because inventory in transit is taking longer now and lastly, servicing costs have gone up due to the new supplier supplying more defective parts.

Profitability- Case Structure

Our client is an automotive manufacturer and has been facing a decline in profits. Help us find out why.

Qualitative Information	Case Framework	Quantitative Analysis
<p>Case background: Automotive manufacturer is facing an increase in costs primarily due to a change in procurement policy of the company</p> <p>Case facts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 manufacturing plants located in Lucknow, Kolkata, Pune and 2 in Chennai • Makes Commercial vehicles, passenger vehicles and in the business of spare parts as well 	<p>Problem area</p> <pre> graph TD Profit[Profit] --> Revenue[Revenue] Profit --> Cost[Cost] Revenue --- ValueChain[Value Chain] Cost --- ValueChain subgraph ValueChain [Value Chain] direction LR PS[Procurement from suppliers] --- IL[Inbound Logistics] IL --- IW[Inventory warehousing] IW --- HC[Human Costs] IW --- NH[Non Human Costs] NH --- ME[Maintenance & Equipment] NH --- T[Theft] NH --- IM[Inventory Management] IM --- ICC[Inventory carrying cost] HC --- C[Change in Supplier] HC --- ID[Increase in Distance] HC --- MT[Mode of Transportation] HC --- ST[Servicing] HC --- SP[Spare Parts] HC --- TC[Transfer to shop] HC --- SC[Service Centre] end </pre>	<p>Raw material costs (previous) = 15% of costs Decrease in raw material procurement costs = 17% Thus, change in raw material costs = 1.73%</p> <p>Transportation costs (previous) = 8% Transportation costs (new) = 5% Thus, change in transportation costs = 3%</p> <p>Net increase in costs = 3% = 1.73% = 1.27%</p>
<p>Problems and recommendations</p> <p>Change in Procurement Policy has resulted in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Net increase in inbound logistic costs 2) Inventory carrying costs has increased 3) Servicing costs increase due to more defective parts 	<p>Interviewee feedback</p> <p>The case requires you to link one problem to another and arrive at multiple cost implications of a change in procurement policy of the organization. Being exhaustive in asking preliminary questions and laying down the entire value chain helps the interviewer to lead you in the right direction, otherwise the case can get extremely messy and lengthy</p>	

Cost Optimization Problem- Interview Transcript

Our client is a major IT company. They want to optimise their costs. Help them

Case Transcript

(After clarifying the problem statement) Firstly, I would like to understand what the client means exactly by optimizing their costs.

The client here wants to cut costs wherever possible by 10%

Okay, does the client have a timeline within which they want to achieve this?

2 years.

So, I would like to better understand this IT company in terms of their scale and services

The IT company is based out of 15 cities in India. They provide maintenance support for software as well as are into product development. You can think of them like any big IT firm you are aware of.

Then I am looking at a firm like a Wipro, Cognizant, TCS etc. Is it a correct assumption that most of their clients would be based in the US and Indian operations would be their offshore business?

Yes, that's a correct assumption. 90% of their clients are US based.

Moving to the IT competitive landscape, as per my understanding there are numerous firms in the industry and all of them offer pretty much standardised services.

Fair enough. Our client is one of the biggest players, however, the management feels that cost optimization will help them grow at a faster rate.

Sure, I would like to now move into breaking down the costs so as to exactly pinpoint areas wherein we can cut costs. For this I would be splitting the costs into operational and non-operational costs. Since, I understand that the major cost driver in the IT industry is the employee costs (part of operational costs) I would like to start there.

That's a good observation. You may proceed.

I would like to express employee costs as the number of employees multiplied by the cost incurred per employee.

But, how would you proceed from there?

As I understand cost per person could be calculated easily when we look at teams. I would further express the cost per person as the product of the number of teams, average cost per team and number of persons per team.

Good.

First, taking the number of teams, as I understand this would be determined by the number of projects? Or am I misinterpreting the structure of the organization?

The number of teams is not the same as the number of projects, as there are certain large projects with sub teams and smaller projects with just a few members. Why do you need this information?

Well, I would look at the following factors here. Firstly, introduce adaptive staffing as per the SDLC requirements on projects. As per my experience, when projects near 'go live' periods they require more manpower, however, during more relaxed phases this man power may be billing hours to the client without putting in enough work as they have more idle time. So, possibly we could look at an adaptive staffing system which would ensure that there are firstly minimum number of people on the bench at a time, optimum number of people per project and lastly we could look into the performance evaluation system. Strict monitoring and improving accountability in terms of hours billed to client and actual work done through a tracking system can be introduced. Lastly, if I were to try to reduce the number of hours billed per team, I would also look at upgrading from legacy systems using outdated software to more recent software systems.

Ok.

In terms of the average cost per team, I would look into the team compositions in terms of work done at each hierarchical level. Increasing the number of junior employees while reducing the number of senior employees, will help optimize costs especially, if the technical skills required are similar across lower and middle level employees.

Any other factor that you would look into while tweaking team composition?

I would look into the number of onshore and offshore employees. Onshore employees will tend to be more expensive to maintain for the company as compared to offshore employees. Hence, firing one onshore employee will be almost equivalent to let's say firing 10 offshore employees. However, I am unsure of how the labour laws work for onshore employees. Within India also, I could look at hiring as well as relocating more employees to Tier 2 cities where the cost of living is less. This would not only help in decreasing salaries for employees possessing the same competency and skill set but also decrease my other operating expenses.

Fair point. What else?

I would next like to move into the number of people at a time per team. As the IT sector sees large attrition rates, training costs will increase if the client's attrition rates are higher than that of competitors. Hence, if possible having lock-in periods in line with project completion timelines will help. Secondly, especially in areas such as testing, increasing automation testing and decreasing manual testing will help improve time, quality and costs for project delivery.

Do you think you are missing out on any important factor?

I would look into the pay structure of the employees to optimize fixed & variable components of the salaries.

I think we have covered sufficient ground in terms of employee costs. Can you briefly list a few other areas where costs can be significantly reduced?

Sure. Firstly, I would look into the sales team, in terms of efficiency, number of clients converted (retention of old clients and generation of new business) and look at any reductions there. Next the infrastructure costs in terms of rent paid, options of co-working spaces, work from home etc.

We have run out of time. Thank you.

Cost Optimization Problem- Case Structure

Our client is a major IT company. They want to optimise their costs. Help them

Qualitative Information	Case Framework
<p>Case background:</p> <p>Major IT company looking to reduce costs by 10% in the next 2 years.</p> <p>Case facts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works on a typical offshoring model like a TCS • Optimising of costs directly linked to future growth • Operates out of 15 cities in India • 90% of clients are based in the US 	<pre> graph TD Costs[Costs] --> Operational[Operational] Costs --> NonOperational[Non-Operational] Operational --> Infrastructural[Infrastructural Costs] Operational --> Sales[Sales & Marketing Costs] Operational --> Employee[Employee Costs] Operational --> Finance[Finance Costs] NonOperational --> BadDebts[Bad Debts] NonOperational --> Depreciation[Depreciation/Amortization] Employee --> Employees[Number of employees] Employee --> CostPerEmployee[Cost incurred per employee] Employees --> Teams[Number of teams] Employees --> AvgCost[Average cost per team] Employees --> EmpPerTeam[Number of employees per team] Teams --> Staffing[Change in staffing system] Teams --> Bench[Change in employees on bench] Teams --> Billing[Change in time billing system] AvgCost --> CompositionSkill[Change in team composition (skill)] AvgCost --> CompositionLocation[Change in team composition (location)] EmpPerTeam --> LockIn[Introduction of lock-in periods] EmpPerTeam --> Automation[Introduction of more automated methods] </pre>
Problems and recommendations	Interviewee feedback
<p>The major cost driver in the IT Industry is employee costs. Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Increase automation, upgrade software systems 2) SDLC adaptive staffing, decrease attrition through lock in periods 3) Increase team efficiency, employee efficiency - review of appraisal system & pay structure, tracking systems for monitoring client billed hours 	<p>Cost Optimization problems can be easily solved if there is a prior understanding of the major cost driver of that particular industry, in the case of IT, it would be the employee costs. It is advised to clarify with the interviewer beforehand, if the emphasis should be on the major cost driver. Secondary cost drivers can then be touched upon at a later stage. Competitive benchmarking can also help</p>

Market Entry- Interview Transcript

A global investment bank wants to enter India. Help it out.

Case Transcript

I am the MD of a global investment bank. My bank wants to enter India. Help me out

I will need to understand more about the investment bank. Can you tell me which country it is headquartered in, what geographies does it cover and why does it want to enter the Indian market?

Good question. I am a US based top 20 investment bank. I am strongly present in US and European markets and have small presence in Asian markets. US and European markets are slowing down while Indian markets are picking up so we want to expand our business in India.

That's interesting. Can you help me in understanding your revenue sources, their break-up and your customers.

Definitely. We have four major products- ECM, DCM, M&A and FX markets. We also do private IB advisory. Our major revenue drivers are M&A, DCM and FX. Our customers range from fortune 1000 companies to mid size multi-million dollar firms. We also cater to high net worth individuals. Further, though there is competition, we expect to gain a good market share.

I understand. Looking at the situation, I will base my decision on the following factors:

- i) Macroeconomic outlook for India: India is in a strong growth phase. Over the next 10-20 years, the same is expected as well.
- ii) Banking regulations and environment: Banking regulations are reasonably liberal and the fintech innovations have made the financial sector more efficient.
- iii) Further, number of HNIs, fortune 1000 firms, multimillion firms are also increasing significantly.

To conclude, the market appears welcoming.

Yes, the overall market is great. What other things should I look at?

Based on our discussion, we understand that Indian market is attractive. Now I will like to focus on IB business. We need to identify what market shares will we be able to capture across our product mix. Will the growth in each of these businesses be sustainable? Given that there are potential clients- Firms etc. present, what are the resources available to

capture them. What will be my break-even period, expected revenues, costs, ROE etc.? Above analysis will help me quantify the investment decision.

Interesting. Anything else that you will like to look at.

Two more things:

- i) Overlap between our current operations: Will a entry into India be able to leverage our existing operations? Do we already have an existing office that can cater to the Indian demand?
- ii) Mode of entry: Since we are a US bank and may lack local market understanding, we can either partner with a another player through merger/acquisition. Or we can also enter directly, given we have a background with the market/government and our prior experience of entering other geographies.

Great. Can you help me in estimating my expected revenues in the first year of operations

Definitely. Your total revenues for the first year of operations will be:

Revenue earned per deal* Number of deals.

Given that there are multiple products, we have to calculate the above based on each product.

We can calculate the number of deals per product based on- Total number of deals in that country* Expected market share. To identify revenue earned per deal, we can identify deal size and multiply it with the margin per deal.

You are right, Let me give you some information. I want to do business in M&A, DCM and ECM. I expect to do 3 M&A deals, 4 DCM deals and 10 ECM deals in the first year. Expected deal size for M&A is \$5 bn., DCM is \$2 bn. And for ECM is \$1 bn. Our margins on each are 5%, 3% and 2%.

Sure. Given this information We can simply calculate the revenue as:

Margin*deal-size*Number of deals per product.

Makes sense. Thanks for having this discussion. You have any questions for me?

Market Entry- Case Structure

A global investment bank wants to enter India. Help it out.

Qualitative Information	Case Framework	Quantitative Data & Analysis																
<p>Case background: US based top 20 global investment bank wants to enter Indian due to slowdown of US/European markets</p> <p>Case facts: Four products: DCM, ECM, FX, M&A Key customers: Fortune 1000 firms, other multimillion \$ firms and HNIs</p>	<p>IB entering India</p> <pre> graph TD A[IB entering India] --> B[Indian market conditions] B --> C[Macroeconomic factors] B --> D[IB industry factors] C -.-> E[10 year growth rate] C -.-> F[Average margins and deal sizes] D -.-> G[Number of metros] D -.-> H[Banking regulations] D -.-> I[Number of HNIs/ multi-MN \$ firms] D -.-> J[IB growth rate in India v/s other markets] E -.-> K[Expected share and projections] E -.-> L[Revenue and cost projections] E -.-> M[Revenue break-up by each product] E -.-> N[ROE and break even analysis] E -.-> O[Synergy with bank's current market portfolio] E -.-> P[Risk ratios- Vary, Car, Capital ratios] F -.-> K F -.-> L G -.-> M H -.-> N I -.-> O J -.-> P K -.-> Q[On-shore/Off-shore operations] L -.-> Q M -.-> Q N -.-> R[Niche player acquisition/ Partnership with local bank] O -.-> R P -.-> R Q -.-> S[Direct entry] R -.-> T[JV/ Acquisition] </pre>	<p>Expected 1 year revenue: Number of deals by product: M&A:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Product</th><th>DCM</th><th>M&A</th><th>ECM</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No. of deals</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr> <td>Average size (\$bn)</td><td>2</td><td>5</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Margin</td><td>3%</td><td>5%</td><td>2%</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Revenues=</p> $4*2*0.03 + 3*5*0.05 + 10*1*0.02 \text{ bn. \$}$ $= \$ 1.19 \text{ bn}$	Product	DCM	M&A	ECM	No. of deals	4	3	10	Average size (\$bn)	2	5	1	Margin	3%	5%	2%
Product	DCM	M&A	ECM															
No. of deals	4	3	10															
Average size (\$bn)	2	5	1															
Margin	3%	5%	2%															
Problems and recommendations	Interviewee feedback																	
<p>Since we discussed the factors that will drive entry into the market, we can say that the decision will be contingent on the result of the proposed analysis in the case.</p> <p>Recommendation: Conduct the mentioned analysis quickly to converge to a decision</p>	<p>Though the case statement may appear complicated and might give the impression that a knowledge of Investment banking industry is required, the fundamental mechanics of the case is very simple. Probing the interviewer with right set of questions and ability to handle difficult jargons can be very useful.</p>																	

Market Entry- Interview Transcript

Ratan Tata returned from Germany where he observed 3rd party authorized car service. He wants to see if he can start the same in India. Help him.

Case Transcript

Could you please explain what 3rd party authorized car service means?

Sure. A 3rd party authorized car service is an independent car service provider. It provides all services provided by car OEMs (Other Equipment Manufacturers) to their customers, providing a suitable alternative to car owners.

Does this mean this provider offers car services for different brands and is adequately adept at dealing with issues belonging to different cars such as hatchbacks, sedans, SUVs or vans?

Yes. The provider can service any car brand or type as it has professionals and experts that have worked in service department of various car brands. Additionally the provider has contacts with various suppliers for repair parts and refurbishments.

Great. Thanks for the information. Now I would like to understand the objective of Ratan Tata for setting up such a similar car service in India?

Ratan Tata is primarily looking for profitability and revenues through this venture.

Are there any constraints that I should have in mind while analysing the problem? Any profitability targets, time period or investment constraints?

No. There are no constraints as such. The venture is funded well, although we would like to see profitability as soon as possible.

Sure. Now I would like to explain you my approach. I would like to break the analysis as follows: Market attractiveness ☐ Need-gap analysis & STP ☐ Mode of entry ☐ Operationalizing the firm.

Interesting. How will you evaluate the market attractiveness in India?

To analyze the market attractiveness, we must break down the analysis into macro factors affecting the country & then the micro factors that affect the industry. The idea is to look for factors that enhance and/ or limit our entry into the car service market.

I think the macro factors are taken care of as TATA group is well established in India. You may begin with micro analysis.

Sure. I would like to first understand the current car service market in India through the following aspects: Customer demands + Supplier availability + Competitors + Substitutes + Complements + any other Barriers to Entry. Could you tell me a little bit about the consumer demands?

So currently the car customer are served equally by organized segment (serviced by brand OEMs) and unorganized segment (roadside car fixers).

Could you please explain the difference in the two segments? What are the benefits of each? If my understanding is correct, then, organized sector would be primarily driven by customers who have car insurance and want authentic repair/ service. While the unorganized sector is usually for cheap, time-saving service.

That's correct. Although you should also know unorganized players provide very poor service leaving customers frustrated with multiple service for same problem.

Sure. This means customers ideally would like to have the following in their car service: insurance that covers their service, authentic service, cost-effective and time-saving.

Yes. That's correct. Let's look at the supplier aspect.

Sure. In my opinion, firstly we will need repair parts suppliers from various car brands OEMs. Do the OEMs that manufacture the car also manufacture the repair parts?

Yes that's correct. However, we do not have a lot of control over them. Car brand OEMs drive a major part of their revenue through services and would see our operation as threat to their operations.

I see. That means the car brand OEMs cannot be relied on as suppliers for parts. Correct?

No. The car brand OEMs can supply to us. But they will charge higher price.

There are two aspects. Either the customer will come to us through insurance or through their own pockets. The insurance won't support us because we will be charging higher service cost. Similarly, the customers won't spend higher because they have cheaper and authentic option available through car brand OEMs service centres. Either way, we will not be cost-effective.

That's right. We will provide more expensive service.

What about other 3rd party suppliers that we can source parts from? Additionally, can we manufacture the parts ourselves?

We do have 3rd party suppliers but their quality is not reliable. Producing in-house is not an option.

Okay. Since producing in-house is not an option, it appears our only source of repair parts are 3rd party suppliers. Since their quality is not so good, are their prices lower than car brand OEMs?

Yes their prices are lower.

So, since we can't compete with the organized retail segment on price, we can perhaps compete with the unorganized sector through 3rd party supplies. Could you tell me the quality differentiation between the repair parts from these 3rd party suppliers and from unorganized players? Also what is the price difference?

The quality is the same actually. Prices however will be expensive at our end.

Oh. Then we will not be beneficial to our consumers again as our prices will be higher and quality wouldn't have any difference.

So what do you think?

Since we can neither compete with organized segment nor with unorganized segment because of suitable supplier that can provide better quality at lower cost, we shouldn't enter this market.

Market Entry- Case Structure

Ratan Tata returned from Germany where he observed 3rd party authorized car service. He wants to see if he can start the same in India. Help him.

Qualitative Information	Case Framework	Quantitative Data & Analysis
<p>Case background : Ratan Tata wants to start 3rd party authorized car service in India</p> <p>Case facts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd party authorized car service is an independent car service provider • Provides all services offered by car brand OEMs service centre • Service has professionals from various car brands to deal with all car problems 	<pre> graph LR A[Market attractiveness] --> B[Need-gap analysis & STP] B --> C[Mode of entry] C --> D[Operationalizing the firm] A --> E[Macro analysis] A --> F[Micro analysis] E --> G[Customer demands] E --> H[Supplier availability] F --> G F --> H G --> I[Insurance] G --> J[Authentic] G --> K[Cost-effective] G --> L[Time-saving] H --> M[Car brand OEMs] M --- N["Competes with the car brands OEMs directly Seen as threat to car brands OEMs business Expensive for insurance companies and consumers"] H --> O[3rd party suppliers] O --- P["Offers low quality car part repairs Similar quality to roadside car fixers but more expensive than them"] </pre>	<p>50-50% market split between organized and unorganized car segments in India.</p>
<p>Problems and recommendations</p> <p>Broke down the micro analysis into suitable components. Deeply studied customer demands and then delved deeper into supplier availability. Identified that lack of suitable supplier is not conducive to market entry as customer demands won't be met</p>	<p>Interviewee feedback</p> <p>The interviewee/ candidate carefully analyses the market entry operations into several segments and then further breaks down the problem for micro analysis. Based on the analysis, the interviewee identifies the crucial reason why the market entry won't be sustainable and hence recommends against it.</p>	

Market Entry- Interview Transcript

Client is a Football club owner. Its planning to enter China. Help identify whether it should enter or not.

Case Transcript

Client is a Football club owner. Its planning to enter China. Help identify whether it should enter or not.

Could I know more about the client? Where is it based out of, which other geographies does the club has its presence in and why does it want to enter China?

The client is based out of USA. It has previously participated in the European Premier League and Singapore Premier League. It wants to enter China because it thinks the market in China is lucrative and untapped. It wants to gain broadcasting rights, look for new players and earn through ticket and merchandise sales.

What are the timelines and are there any financial constraints?

The Chinese premier league is scheduled within the next 6 months and our client wants to participate in it. There are no major financial constraints.

I would first like to analyze the country level macro factors, then the sports industry particularly Football in China, then estimate the market size and if everything is suitable, I would further delve into the team specific dynamics, potential risks and mode of entry.

Sounds good. Go ahead.

So first I would like to analyze whether China, being a closed economy, is open to foreign clubs entering their country. Also, the FDI options along with legal requirements need to be considered. Next, the overall GDP of China and growth in the sports industry would be important. Also, how US players are treated in China, the perception of US clubs in China and the performance of Chinese players needs to be considered. Suitable technology and infrastructure for broadcasting, compatibility with US standards are a few other factors.

China has recently allowed entry of foreign clubs and the sports industry in booming in China. Also no major difference in perception of players exist in China and the technology is compatible to US standards. However, the club is owned by the same client which has a legal case pending in China.

This is a potential risk. Is the client willing to take such a risk?

As of now, consider the client is willing to proceed. Let's move ahead.

Next, I would like to look at the football industry, starting with the competitors both direct and indirect. Direct would include International and Domestic teams along with their USPs. Indirect would include local clubs. Next, we need to analyze the availability of Chinese football players and club's own players. Also, the possibility of other sports such as Table Tennis substituting interest in football should be considered. Football stadiums and merchandise suppliers are important complements along with the people's interest in football as compared to other sports.

The client's players are used to playing on synthetic grounds. However, in China grass grounds exist.

This might affect the performance of US players in China and raise safety concerns as well. However, this can be overcome by practice as we still have 6 months before Chinese Premier League

Good. Now estimate the market size.

The market size can be estimated as the total number of football viewers in China. Do we have any data on the percentage viewership?

It is estimated that a total 35% viewership exists out of potential 1.5 cr people.

As such the total market size comes to be approximately 50 lacs. What is the clients international benchmark in terms of market size?

The client has entered where the market size is greater than 40 lacs.

So, it is feasible to enter. Next, we can consider the team dynamics such as number of Chinese and US players in a team, coaches and practice sessions in Chinese grounds.

That is sufficient. We can end here. Thanks

Market Entry- Interview Transcript

Client is a Football club owner. Its planning to enter China. Help identify whether it should enter or not.

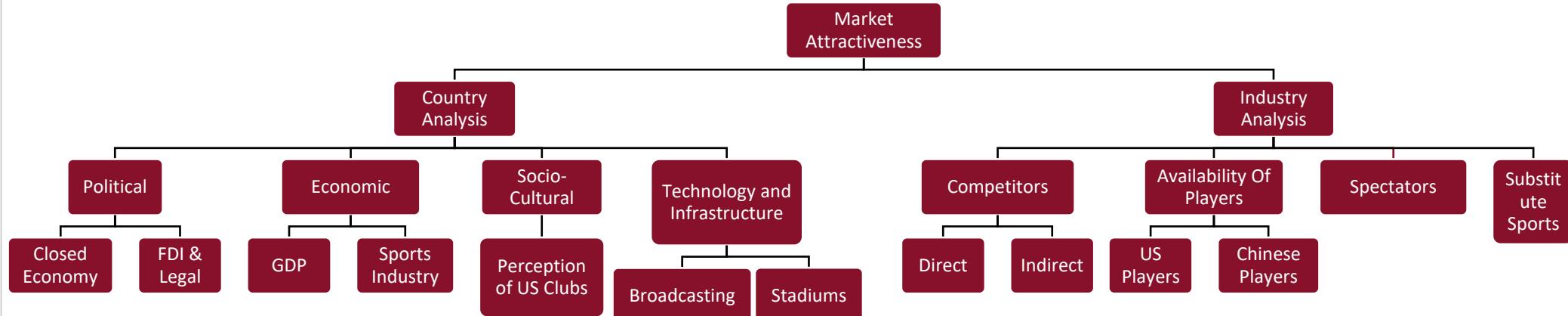
Case Framework

Case background:

US based football club
wants to enter China

Case facts:

- Prominent club of US
- Wants to look for new players apart from earning revenues
- Major competitors are 3 International teams and 5 domestic teams.



Problems and recommendations

Problems: a) The club is owned by the same client who has a legal case pending in China. b) The client's players are used to playing on synthetic grounds. However, in China grass grounds exist.

Recommendation: Since a lot of factors are to be analyzed in Market Entry case, always list the various factors and ask then the interviewer which area to focus .

Interviewee feedback

The case looked different but followed any conventional market entry case framework. Hence, it is extremely important to stick to basics and seek help from the interviewer wherever required.

Pricing- Interview Transcript

A pharmaceutical company has recently developed an Anti tobacco pill. Assess whether you should launch the product or not.

Case Transcript

(Clarified the problem statement) I would like to understand more about the company first. Where is it based and what type of pharmaceutical company is it?

The company is a leading Generic Drug manufacturer operating pan-India. It has been in operations since 15 years and caters to a wide variety of diseases.

What is the current business model of the company? Is it similar to a usual pharma company's value chain – where the manufacturer sells its products through sales representatives

Yes. The company operates as a typical pharma company

Could you please elaborate a bit on the competition in the pharma industry and specifically in the anti tobacco pill

There are 2-3 major competitors in the industry. 60% of the market is organized. For the Anti tobacco pill, there is no direct competition since it is the first of its kind pill

Since it's first of its kind, do we also have patents for the same?

Yes, it is a patented pill

I would also like to understand the product better. Is it a OTC or prescription drug? How should it be consumed? What is the suggested consumption pattern?

It is a prescription drug that is to be taken once a day for 4 months. It needs to be simply taken with water. Our research shows that the success rate is 50%

Lastly, I would like to clarify the objective of launch. Is the firm looking for capturing market size or profit maximization? What is the time frame?

The firm is interested in maximizing market size and profits, both in a span of 2 years

I would like to breakdown the problem into assessment of Market size & opportunity, Macro Analysis, Micro/Industry Analysis, Launch strategy

Interesting. Let's explore the Market Size & Opportunity

Sure. I would start by breaking down market size into Price and Quantity. Do we have any data on either.

No. We don't have any data. But I would like to understand that how can I price my product.

We can price the products in three ways – Value based, Cost based and based on any substitutes

Great. Can you walk me through each of these

Sure. Starting with the cost based, I we would first understand the variable costs and fixed costs. In variable costs, I'll look at costs across the value chain – raw materials, manufacturing, sales and distribution. The long term costs such as R&D for the product will be spread over multiple years and would have to be factored in. Based on the above analysis, we can get per unit cost. After getting a per unit cost, we would decide on a margin to price the product.

Good. What about the substitute based pricing?

Although there are no direct competitors, there might be some de-addiction courses that help in stopping tobacco. We can evaluate the time frame for such courses and fees for the same before pricing our product

Alright. We feel that exploring value based pricing might be better. Can you walk me through that

Under this method, I would like to understand the benefits and the costs. Starting from the basic, a person would first save the price of the tobacco packet that they consume. Second, they would benefit from the positive effect on health - they would have lower chances of life threatening diseases such as lung cancer, heart attacks. Also, there would be a lower number of general physician visits because improved immunity. Lastly, they would also save on the price of the mouth fresheners that they buy

Interesting. How can we work out the numbers here?

So starting with the cost of tobacco, on an average my friends consume 2 tobacco units a day which roughly costs Rs. 10 each. Thus, over an year, they consume tobacco worth $2 \times 30 \times 10 \times 12$ i.e. Rs. 7200. With each tobacco packet, they need 1 mouth freshener of Re 1. Thus cost of mouth freshener for an year would be $2 \times 30 \times 1 \times 12$ i.e. Rs. 720. Total comes out to be around Rs. 8000 a year. We should also include long-term cost savings.

Go ahead

Smokers have a higher chance of chronic diseases. For such a disease, they might incur expenses nearing 3 lakh. Considering that the probability of contracting such disease is 10%, we need to factor 30,000 into the calculation. So the total cost per year would be Rs. 38,000. We would have to divide by the total amount into the Total number of pills. Total number of pills are $1 \times 30 \times 4$ i.e. 120. Thus, the total amount per pill would be around Rs. 300.

Doesn't this number seem significantly high?

Yes, this is high since this is the maximum that the consumer would be willing to pay considering he takes into account in all the above factors. Since the customers do not think of long term effects at once, they might not be willing to pay this. In case we just want to include the short term savings, we would divide 8000 by 120 i.e. Rs. 66. We can use these figures in addition to figures from the other two methods to price our product

Pricing- Case Structure

A pharmaceutical company has recently developed an Anti tobacco pill. Assess whether you should launch the product or not.

Qualitative Information	Case Framework	Quantitative Data & Analysis
<p>Case background: Pharmaceutical company which has recently developed an anti-tobacco pill.</p> <p>Case facts: Generic drug manufacturer based in India First of its kind pill – prescription drug with 50% success rate Gain maximum market share and profit in 2 years</p>	<pre> graph TD A[Price of anti-tobacco pill] --> B[Cost Based] A --> C[Substitute Based] A --> D[Value Based] D --> E[Cost of tobacco] D --> F[Cost of mouth freshener] D --> G[Cost of treatment of chronic disease] </pre>	<p>Cost savings on tobacco per year = (# of tobacco packets per day x days x price of tobacco packet) = $2 \times 30 \times 12 \times 10 = 7200$</p> <p>Cost of additional mouth freshener per year = $2 \times 30 \times 12 \times 1 = 720$</p> <p>Cost of treatment in case of chronic disease = 3 lakh Chances of contracting = 10% Expected Cost = 30,000</p> <p>Total number of pills to be taken = $1 \times 30 \times 4 = 120$</p> <p>Price per pill (based on long-term consideration)= $38000/120 \sim \text{Rs. } 300$</p> <p>Price per pill (based on short term consideration)= $8000/120 \sim \text{Rs. } 66$</p>

Problems and recommendations	Interviewee feedback
<p>Identified the pricing approaches through cost based, substitute based and value based methods. In value based methods, derived prices by specifically looking at long term and short term considerations of customers</p>	<p>Although this appears to be a market entry and launch strategy case at start, the interviewer is primarily looking to grill on pricing and wanted to drive to value based approach specifically.</p>

GTM Strategy- Interview Transcript

Client is an Alcohol manufacturer. It has recently developed a readymade cocktail line. Help them take the product to the market.

Case Transcript

Client is an Alcohol manufacturer. It has recently developed a readymade cocktail line. Help them take the product to market.

Could I know more about the client? Where is it operating, for how long, what products is it known for, competition that the client is facing?

The client has been operating in India for 25 years. It is known to operate in the whiskey and rum market under popular brands. The cocktail is a new and only product in the market. It is ready to launch.

What are the objectives and constraints of the client?

The client wants to maximize revenues as soon as possible. There are no major constraints.

As a part of the analysis let us understand the product. Could you describe the composition, taste (flavours), USP, SKUs and packaging?

The product is a pre-mix cocktail which comes in a 250ml bottle in four flavours, mojito, screw driver, LIIT and Bloody Mary. It has preservatives, hence doesn't taste as fresh as actual cocktails. However, our product can be stored for 3 months. The alcohol content is the same as a strong beer, comes in a same looking glass bottle. The bottle is transparent to show the colour of the cocktail with a white label.

So, our product is trying to be a substitute to both fresh cocktails and a strong beer. So we should identify potential customers on the basis of this. Fresh cocktails are mostly consumed in high end restaurants by women of the upper middle class. Similarly, strong beer is consumed mostly by pub going youth. Hence, we can target these customer profiles and place our product in pubs, restaurants and direct retailers.

Sounds fair. Can you help us determine a price basis this?

Sure. There are three methods of Pricing – competitor based, cost based and value based method. Since there are no competitors and the product is unique, we shall be using the value based method. We are indirectly competing with the strong beer and readymade cocktails, hence we have a range. A strong beer comes at around Rs. 70, since our product tastes better at the same content and we have a brand name, our cocktail should be priced above this. The product is closer to a fresh cocktail (avg. price of Rs. 330) but lacks the freshness because of preservative which also give it a longer life. Hence the product should be priced at around Rs.220.

Alright, what next.

I would like to discuss available distribution channels and the promotional strategy.

The client has an existing network of distributors, i.e. restaurants, super markets and clubs. Give me some brief campaign ideas and we'll close the case.

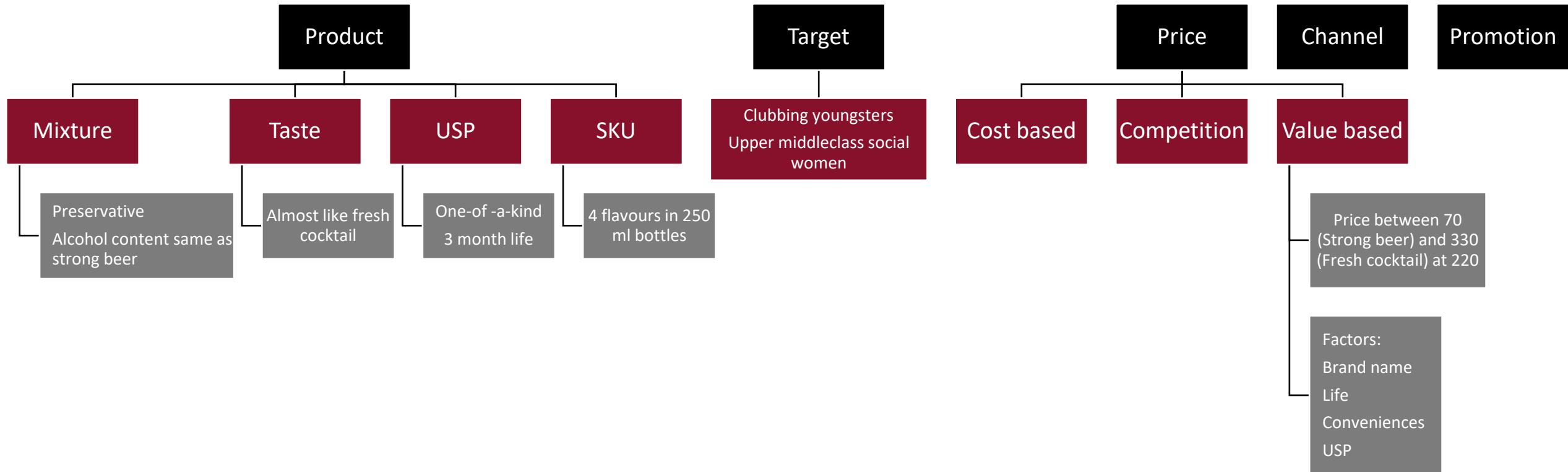
Sure, we'll target the clubs and supermarkets first, as there our products will not be cannibalizing the sales of fresh cocktails like in the restaurants. We can host parties, offer free samples, drive social media campaigns with youtubers etc.

These ideas sound good. We can end here. Thanks

GTM Strategy- Case Structure

Client is an Alcohol manufacturer. It has recently developed a readymade cocktail line. Help him take the product to market.

Case Framework



Qualitative information

Client has been operating for 25 years with two strong brand names. It faces indirect competition from the beer and fresh cocktails. It is a unique product

Interviewee feedback

To come up with the strategy it is important to know about the product, competition and target. Based on this you come to the price, channel and promotion strategies. The target can be determined in more detail by doing market sizing.

Growth Strategy- Interview Transcript

Client is a media service provider- Netflix . Help him increase its market share in India

Case Transcript

Client is a media service provider- Netflix . Help him increase its market share in India

Could I know more about the client? Is it the Netflix we know? What are the timelines and constraints of the client? What is its current share?

Yes, it is the Netflix we know. The client wants to increase its market share by 20 % in one year. They are no major constraints. There are two other major competitors, and the current share of Netflix can be taken to be around 25 percent.

As per my knowledge Netflix entered India two years ago and caters mainly to college students and young professionals. Its differentiating factor is its in-house produced local content and is positioned as a Premium offering. Is this a current assumption? Also can you let me know about the current subscription plans?

Yes, it is true. Currently the company has three subscription plans, single screen for Rs 500, two screen for Rs 650 and four screen for Rs 800.

So, I would like to break the problem in two parts. First I would like to analyze the new offerings possible in terms of products, promotions, price and channels. Then I would like to analyze which offering would be suitable for which geography.

Sounds good. Go ahead.

So, in terms of products, Netflix should focus on in-house production and diversify into regional languages and create content for kids also. This would help attract a new customer segment. It can also include cooking and dance sessions. Netflix could license TV series and movies which are all time classics. It could also purchase rights to broadcast any sport such as football and develop a niche in it. Since the overall internet speed is low in India, Netflix can upgrade to a low speed platform something like 'Netflix lite' so that streaming can be done without buffering. In terms of promotion Netflix could offer loyalty programs, tie up with schools, offices, airlines, hotels, etc. and follow a referral strategy. They can also offer a first episode free of various TV series so that people have an option to try and then subscribe.

Okay. What about pricing and channels?

As far as pricing is concerned, Netflix can come up with customized bucket options where price sensitive customers can subscribe to a few TV series and movies. Also, it can offer a limited subscription model in terms of languages or content. In terms of channel, Netflix can launch an application for android and IOS. It can also come up with something similar to a Firestick which can be plugged into any TV or a device similar to Kindle designed for Netflix.

What can be the possible drawbacks of customised bucket options?

Since, generally people watch one or two TV series at a time, it is possible that majority of the subscribers shift to the customized bucket option.

Fair point. Do you think a Netflix only device can compete with the already existing tablets and mobiles?

Depends on how it is positioned and priced. It can be a major attraction for those who prefer to binge watch content on the platform. Some videos can be pre-fed and users can have an option to download videos later and watch them later as per their convenience.

Good suggestion. Go on.

Next I will look at geographies and product combinations. Since the majority of its current subscribers are from Metro and Tier I cities, Netflix needs to follow a penetrative strategy in these areas. Here tie ups, loyalty programs and sports content might help. However as Netflix expands to Tier II and III cities, it needs to focus on Netflix lite and regional app based content.

These ideas sound good. We can end here. Thanks

Growth Strategy- Case Structure

Client is a media service provider- Netflix . Help them increase their market share in India

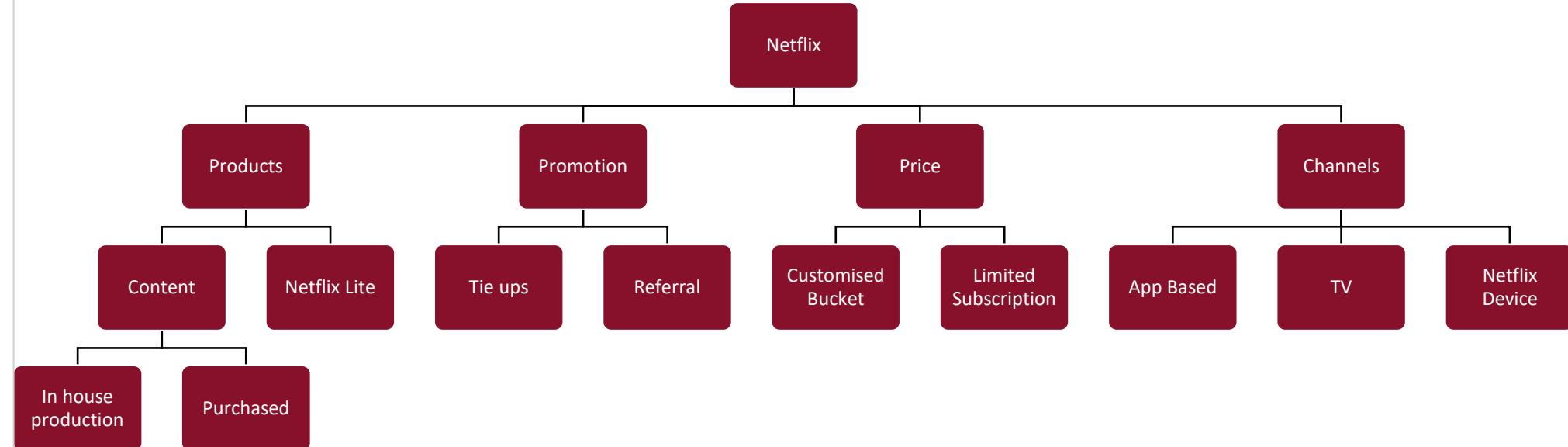
Case Framework

Case background:

Netflix wants to increase market share in India

Case facts:

- Launched two years ago in India
- Struggling to gain market share
- Faces direct competition from Hotstar and Amazon Prime.



Problems and recommendations

Identified the various new offerings in terms of products, promotions, price and channels to attract new customers and increase retention in existing ones. Subsequently analyzed which offering would be suitable for different geographies.

Interviewee feedback

This case can also be structured with the Ansoff Matrix in the following way:

- 1) How to acquire new customers
- 2) How to increase retention in existing customer segments
- 3) How to enter new geographies and develop new technology.

Growth Strategy- Interview Transcript

Client is a Cement Manufacturer. Devise a growth strategy to increase both revenue growth as well as margins.

Case Transcript

The client is a promotor driven cement manufacturer operating in India since last 3-4 decades. The industry is growing at 14% p.a. while the client's revenues are growing at only 12% p.a. In addition, the margins are also 2 %age points less than the industry average. You are required to devise a growth strategy to increase both revenue growth as well as margins.

Let me just reiterate the problem statement. The client is growing less than the industry which means it is losing market share every year. In addition, the profitability of the client is also 2 % points less than the industry average. This means we have to focus on both revenues as well as costs.

Yes, you are right.

Before diving into the problem, I would like to understand more about the company, its products, customers, competitors and a bit about the industry.

This is all the information that you have. I am not sharing any other information

Okay! Let me have a minute to structure my thoughts and then we can start diving deep into the problem.

Sure

Profit is essentially a function of Revenues and Costs. In this case, we need to focus on both revenues and profits. Which one should I focus on first?

It is totally up to you. I am interested in knowing your approach to the problem

Sure. Let me start with revenues first and then, if time permits, I will move on to costs. Revenues are essentially average price into number of units sold. I am assuming we have only 1 size of SKU. Let us focus on quantity sold first. In quantity, I want to look at majorly 3 things i.e. Product, Distribution & Communication/ marketing strategy

Sure

Within product, I want to look at the Design, quality and customer experience aspects. In design, I don't have much clue about the industry but as far as I know, there are broadly 2 types of cement: Grey & White. Maybe we can enter the other category or alter our portfolio mix to include more proportion of the higher margin product. Another aspect of the design can be granularity of the product. If more granular cement is desired by the customer or not. If yes, we should make necessary changes. Looking at the quality, I think some of the measures of measuring quality of cement is quickness to dry and strength. If we are not placed at par with the competitor here, I would like to make necessary changes in the product to make our product better than the competition. Under customer experience, I believe that masons are our customers. So, maybe we can speak to them and do some research and come up with a product which offers better experience. Should I move to distribution now?

Totally up to you. If you feel you have covered everything, we can move on to the next point

I think I broadly had only this in mind as of now. Let me switch to distribution. Under distribution there are mainly 2 aspects we can look at, our existing distribution and whether we can increase distribution or not, this can be either in the same geography or a new geography.

Increased reach is a good point. How do you plan to look at the existing distribution?

I would like to look at the trade promotion schemes here. What is the margin we are paying vis-à-vis competition? What margin structure are we following? Can we improve the same to provide more incentives to distributors?

And this is an industry where purchases are influenced by influencers. We can tie up with the contractors so that they can recommend our products over the others. In addition, we can also go for institutional sales by directly tying up builders and firms like L&T, DLF, etc.

Okay. Let's move on to the next.

Sure. Under communication, there are three things that we need to focus on, Mode, Message and Messenger. By mode I mean the channels we are using for communication. Message refers to what are we conveying, and messenger stands for whom are we conveying the message through. I would like to explore options like celebrity endorsements, endorsements through architects or bigger builders, etc.

Makes sense, we can end the case here. Thank you!

Growth Strategy- Case Structure

Client is a Cement Manufacturer. Devise a growth strategy to increase both revenue growth as well as margins.

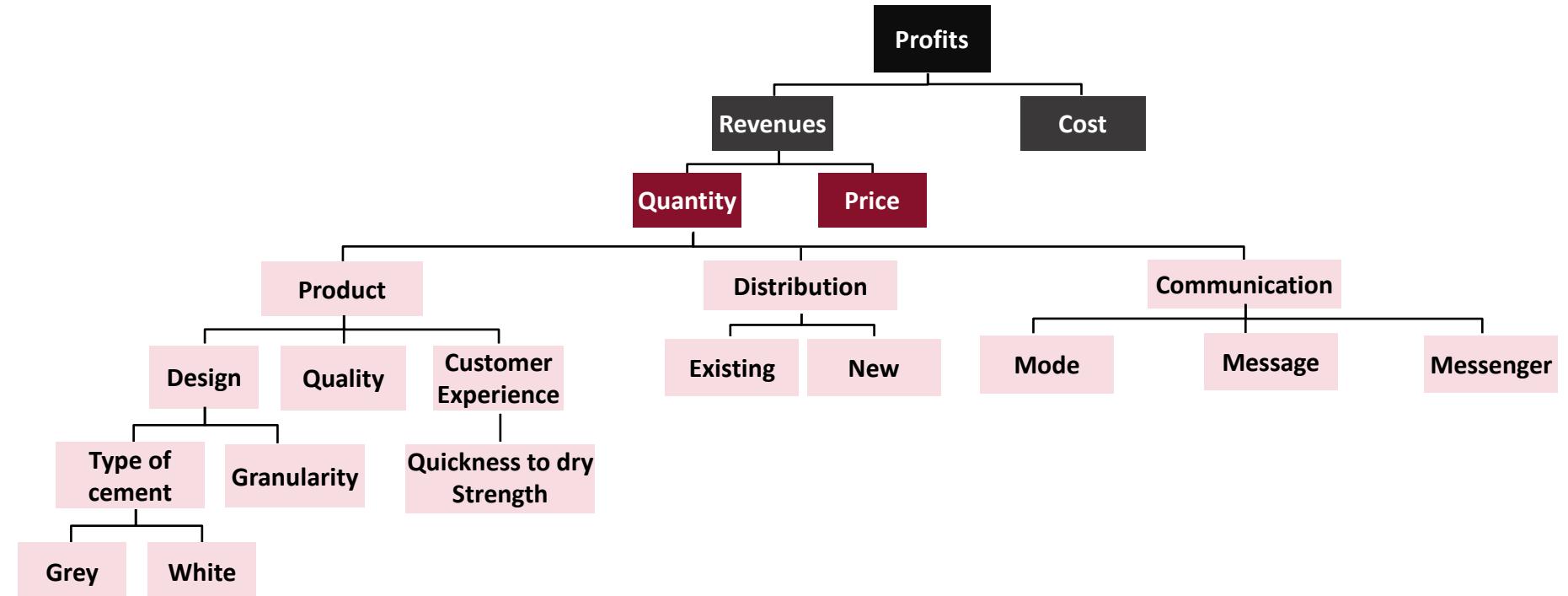
Case Framework

Case background :

Company wants to increase revenue share and margins

Case facts:

- Operating in India for 3-4 years
- Industry revenue growth at 14% v/s client's 12%
- Margins 2% points lesser than industry



Problems and recommendations

Identified the objective and structured the problem. Divided revenues into its components. The quantity sold was further broken down into product, distribution and communication related aspects. Each of these heads was further broken down into subheads.

Interviewee feedback

This case can also be structured with the Ansoff Matrix in the following way:

- 1) How to increase sales and margins in existing customer segments
- 2) How to enter new geographies

Since the question was about margins, should have moved faster to analyze ways to reduce costs

M&A- Interview Transcript

A traditional pharma company wants to acquire a biologicals startup. How should it go about it?

Case Transcript

Our client is OldPharma, a major pharmaceutical company with revenues \$10bn. Its corporate HQ and primary R&D centres are in Germany with regional sales offices worldwide. It has had a successful history developing and selling small molecule drugs (which is the major variety of drugs today).

It wants to enter a new rapidly growing segment of drugs called “biologicals”, that can treat conditions not treatable with traditional drugs. Since competitors are way ahead of OldPharma, it wants to jumpstart its biologicals program by acquiring Biofuture, a leading biologicals startup based in San Francisco area. Biofuture was founded 12 years ago by prominent scientists and employs over 200 people. It is publicly traded and is valued at \$1bn.

What factors should the team consider whether the team should acquire BioFuture?

1. Value of Biofuture's current pipeline - # drugs in development, likelihood of success, revenues and profits
2. Future drug pipeline – R&D capabilities (scientific talent, IP – patents)
3. Marketing/sales capability – Relationships with physicians KOLs
4. Acquisition price
5. Existing partnerships with pharma companies
6. OldPharma's capability gaps in biologicals, R&D, sales and marketing
7. Other potential targets

What issues should the team consider while evaluating the existing drug pipeline?

1. Market size, share, Costs – manufacturing and selling
2. Perception in the medical community
3. Likelihood of clinical trials, winning regulatory approval, side effects and legal exposure
4. Emergence of substitutes – Time to market, Loss of exclusivity time
5. Strength of patents – How likely is it a competitor can copy BioFuture's drug?

BioFuture's existing pipeline is very limited. OldPharma is interested in its potential to become a biological research engine. What risks exist for integrating R&D functions?

1. Scientists do not have overlapping disease interests
2. Integration into process driven OldPharma culture may hinder the entrepreneurial culture that is key to its success
3. Language barriers hinder communication and sharing of information
4. Key scientific talent may leave Biofuture after acquisition

Post acquisition, OldPharma believes it is necessary to consolidate all biologicals R&D into one centre either Germany or San Francisco. It currently does not have any biologicals R&D practice in Germany.

Germany – Overall better integration of OldPharma and Biofuture

1. Better coordination with non-biologicals R&D
2. Better coordination with other business units like sales/marketing
3. Easier transfer of scientists in biologicals and traditional R&D

San Francisco –

1. Less likely to see flight of talent – Relocating to Germany could be tough
2. Easier to retain entrepreneurial spirit at Biofuture at SFO
3. No need to rebuild manufacturing plants, research facilities etc.

A week into the engagement, the VP of business development meets you in the cafeteria. He asks your team's perspective on the acquisition and next steps you are planning to take. How would you respond?

(Summarize the case)

Due Diligence- Interview Transcript

Your client is a PE Firm. It wants to take up a stake in a chain of restaurants. Diagnose and recommend whether it should go ahead with the acquisition

Case Transcript

(After clarifying the problem statement) I want to understand the client's business. What is the average portfolio, the expected growth rate and exit time?

The company has a mixed portfolio of different sized investments and is looking for a 30% growth rate on this investment. It wants to make a quick exit in about 4-5 years.

Alright. I would like to know why the firm is considering a chain of restaurants for investment?

Interestingly, our client does not have any investments in the hospitality sector and this investment may help us complement a future investment.

Okay. So, can I know some details about the restaurants? Exactly how many restaurants are being run as of now and where?

There are 6 restaurants in different metropolitan and Tier-1 cities as of now.

Okay. I would like to know more about the cuisine served by the restaurants and their experience.

The restaurants provides quick service and authentic Spanish and Italian cuisine. They've been in the market for the last 5 years adding one new city each year.

Thanks. Now, I will move on to the supply and demand aspect. Is there a significant demand for these cuisines in the cities this restaurant chain is operating?

Yes, there is significant demand from consumers towards cuisines they haven't tried before.

Alright, now I'd like to know the number of competitors serving a similar cuisine in the locations served by the restaurant chain. I'd also like to know their market share.

Yes, there are 4-5 competitors serving authentic cuisines in these cities with equal market share.

Is there a significant difference in pricing of these restaurants?

The competitors also serve in the same price segment. Going ahead, I would like to know how would you value the investment?

Sure. I can value the company by analysing the current performance of the restaurant chain and what is the future growth expected. I can find the NPV of the profits by guesstimating the revenue and cost figures. Further I can try to come up with an annual growth rate and compare it to our expected growth rate to check feasibility.

That sounds reasonable. Lets focus on revenue as of now. How will you compute the revenue from the demand side? You can focus on the restaurant present in Delhi.

Okay, from the demand side, revenues will depend on the accessibility to restaurant, affordability of food and experience. In terms of the accessibility, the focus is chains currently present in Metros and Tier 1 cities. Hence, our consumer base would primarily be middle class and above segments.

For affordability, there would be different dishes available according to customer budget; the consumers who could afford it would depend on the price available.

Assuming average price per dish at INR 150, estimated demand/month is the price per meal*potential market*frequency of visits. The potential market would be ~20% of the population of Delhi (20 Mn) i.e., the high income & middle income in service sector. In order to estimate the frequency of visits I could split the customers into three groups; 1) 10 visits/ month, 2) 5 visits/ month, 3) 1 visit/ month

Okay, can you evaluate the risks associated with the investment?

The biggest risk comes from food delivery services such as Zomato, Swiggy etc. Since this gives the customers the easy of ordering food from anywhere at a discounted price . Therefore, it could result in less demand for quick service food and reduced margins.

Additionally, there is traveling expense associated with going out to eat. So, customers would be less willing to travel to one of these restaurants frequently unless located nearby.

An added risk for quick service restaurant is the changing perception of consumers towards healthy food. Consumers are moving away from processed food to healthier options like salads.

Great. Can you tell me what due diligence should be done?

For due diligence, we'll discuss the various levers involved in the restaurant functions or operations. **Financial:** Which stores are the most and the least profitable? Is each store maintaining its gross profits, or are increasing revenues and profits the result of reducing prices or adding stores that are unprofitable or only marginally profitable?

Operational: Revenues at restaurants are closely tied to location; determine risk if location changes.

Legal: Such as a landlord unwilling to extend the lease on a highly profitable store

HR: Is the current management operating the stores at sustainable personnel levels? Has there been a recent change in salaries or benefits of employees or any change has been promised?

Strategy: How would the deal fit in with the client's overall growth strategy? Are there any past or future investments from which synergies can be leveraged?

Yes, well done. How would you finally come to the investment decision? Also, conclude the case

The one last thing that is left is comparing the estimated growth rate of the NPV with our estimated growth rate. The former would basically be our estimates of the restaurant's organic growth and how much we can add to it through inorganic growth. If the sum of these two is not less than 30%, and the NPV of the recurring profits seem adequate, the PE firm should go ahead with the purchase.

Due Diligence- Case Structure

Your client is a PE Firm. It wants to take up a stake in a chain of restaurants. Diagnose and recommend whether it should go ahead with the acquisition

Qualitative Information	Case Framework	Quantitative Data & Analysis
<p><u>Case background:</u> The client specifically looking to invest in a restaurant chain</p> <p><u>Case facts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment fund – 30% growth rate in 4-5 years Explore viability by estimating revenues (demand side, supply side) Identify risks associated with the investment Explore potential due diligence steps 	<pre> graph TD Revenue[Revenue] --> SupplySide[Supply Side] Revenue --> DemandSide[Demand Side] SupplySide --> NoOfCities[No. of cities] SupplySide --> GrowthRate[Growth rate] SupplySide --> RestaurantCity[Restaurant/city] DemandSide --> PricePerMeal[Price per meal] DemandSide --> PotentialMarket[Potential Market] DemandSide --> VisitFrequency[Visit frequency] </pre>	<p>Population of Delhi = 20 MN Target customer segment (20-50 years) = 50% Middle and higher income segment = 60% Population employed in service sector = 70% Potential market = $50\% * 60\% * 70\% = 21\% (\sim 20\%)$ of population Visit frequency = $20\% * 10 + 40\% * 5 + 40\% * 1 = 4.4$ visits/month Total market potential = $250 * 4.4 * (20\% * 20 \text{ MN}) = 2,640 \text{ MN/month} = \text{INR } 2.6 \text{ bn/month}$ Italian/Spanish cuisine = 2-3% of market potential = INR 66 MN/month</p>
Problems and recommendations	Interviewee feedback	
<p>Identified the valuation of the company using Supply and Demand approaches. Identify indirect competition while exploring risks associated with the investment by specifically looking at long term and short term consumer behaviour. Always remember the original motive of the client (in this case, 30% growth rate) while identifying risks, synergies and different levers for Due diligence.</p>	<p>The case had a wide number of things that could be analysed; key was in understanding the interviewer's questions one at a time and focusing on the available information for that question.</p>	54

Business Abstract- Interview Transcript

Our client is a low cost airline carrier. It has been facing an increase in turn around time at the Mumbai airport. Find out why

Case Transcript

(After clarifying the problem statement) I would like to understand the magnitude of the problem better. Since when has the TAT increased and by how much?

The client has been facing this issue since the past 3 months. TAT has increased from 30 to 45 mins

What exactly do you mean by turnaround time?

It is the time that a plan takes after landing to the next take off.

How many flights does the airline operate at the Mumbai airport? And since when have you been present at the Mumbai airport?

The client operates 10 airplanes and has been present at the airport for the past 10 years

And do you operate domestic or international flights or both?

Only domestic flights

Is this problem being faced only at the Mumbai airport or other airports as well? And by our airlines only or by other airlines operating at the Mumbai airport as well?

Only Mumbai airport. Only our airline as far as I am aware.

Alright. I would like to take a few minutes to lay down the entire journey of a plane from the time it lands at the airport till the time it takes off again and then try to ascertain where the problem lies

Sure

Please let me know if my understanding is correct. The plane first lands on the runway, goes on to its parking spot. After this the passengers deplane and the ground staff helps in offloading the luggage. The maintenance staff possibly cleans the plane. The plane is fuelled. Once the plane is ready for the next flight, passengers on-board, luggage is on-loaded again, there is also some time for crew change. After this the plane goes to the runway from where it finally takes off. Am I missing anything?

I think this is an exhaustive process. We'll figure out if anything is missing as we go deeper into the case. You can start exploring all buckets post landing.

Okay, after the plane lands it reaches its parking spot. Has there been any change in this because of which the time taken to reach the parking spot from the runway and subsequently the time taken to go to the runway from the parking spot has increased?

Yes. The parking spot has changed, but it is now closer to the runway and the boarding gates. Because of this actually we are saving 5 mins of our time in total

Okay, is it then fair to assume that then whatever is causing this increase in TAT is because of a delay of 20 mins and I need to ascertain what it could be?

Correct.

Okay, once the aircraft reaches the parking spot, the passengers deplane. Has there been any change in the seating capacity of the plane because of which deplaning is now taking time? Or has the airline rolled out some schemes for the aged or disabled because of which deplaning is taking time?

No, we have not changed the plane capacity since the past 10 years. There has been no increase in the time taken to deplane as such.

Alright, so as the passengers deboard, the ground staff is also engaged in offloading the baggage. There could have been a possible increase in this due to increase in freight/baggage allowance or delays by the staff due to lack of training or experience

There is no increase in off-loading time. The ground staff and maintenance staff has remained more or less the same. Any hire/fire doesn't impact TAT significantly

Sure, in that case I'm assuming there hasn't been any change in the cleaning time before the aircraft is ready for the next set of passengers to board?

Yes, you may proceed further.

Now before the plane finally takes off there are three more things that are to be done. One is fuelling and second is crew change and then finally getting the passengers for the next flight on board. Has there been any increase in the time taken to fuel the aircraft?

Yes. What could be the possible reasons for this?

Well, there could be either an increase in tank capacity or the speed of fuelling could have reduced.

The tank capacity has remained the same and the speed of fuelling is also the same. Could you think of something that also links to the previous finding of yours?

Previously we had discovered that the parking spot had changed. So the possible effect it could have on the duration is that it could be taking the oil tanker longer to reach the plane in its new parking spot because of which the time was increasing.

Correct. Now if you could do some quick math for me, if the speed of the tanker is 3 km/hr and the distance of the plane from the tanker is around 1 km then what is the delay time?

If the tanker is covering 3 km in 1 hr, it'll cover 1 km in 1/3rd of an hour which is 20 mins. Since we had figured out earlier that the time saving due to the changed parking spot is 5 mins, the overall increase in the TAT is 20-5=15 mins.

That is right. Thank you, we can end the case here.

Business Abstract- Case Structure

Our client is a low cost airline carrier. It has been facing an increase in turn around time at the Mumbai airport. Find out why

Qualitative Information	Case Framework	Quantitative Analysis
<p>Case background: Low cost airline carrier facing high turn around time at the Mumbai airport</p> <p>Case facts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Been facing increased TAT since the past 6 months • Increase of 15 mins in TAT • Ideal TAT should be around 30 mins, thus its total turn around time at the moment is 45 mins 	<p>Problem area</p> <pre> graph TD TAT[TAT] --> Landing[Landing] TAT --> Deplaning[Deplaning] TAT --> Baggage[Baggage offloading] TAT --> Cleaning[Cleaning] TAT --> Fuelling[Fuelling] TAT --> StaffChange[Staff Change] TAT --> Onboarding[Onboarding /Onloading] TAT --> Takeoff[Take-off] Cleaning --> ChangeInTankSize[Change in tank size] Cleaning --> DecreaseInSpeed[Decrease in speed] Baggage --> IncreaseInFreight[Increase in freight/bags] Baggage --> IncreaseInTime[Increase in time due to human delays caused by ground staff] Fuelling --> IncreaseInDistance[Increase in distance of tanker from plane] Fuelling --> ChangeInParking[Change in airline's parking spot] </pre> <p>Increase in seating capacity Increase in older /disabled passengers</p>	<p>Decrease in TAT because of reduction in distance from boarding gates = 5 mins</p> <p>Increase in distance of fuel tank from plane's parking spot = 1 km</p> <p>Speed of fuel tank = 3 km/hr</p> <p>Therefore, increase in fuelling time $= 1\text{hr}/3 = \frac{1}{3} * 60 \text{ mins} = 20 \text{ mins}$</p>

Problems and recommendations	Interviewee feedback
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Inform the fuelling department in advance to cut down on the time taken for the tanker to reach the parking spot 2) In the longer term - try to quantify the losses vs savings of retaining the new parking spot 	<p>The value chain approach seems to be the most exhaustive in this case. Also try to understand if the problem of change in parking spot is temporary or for a longer duration and why it was changed in the first place - after that give suitable recommendations</p>

Abstract Case- Interview Transcript

Our client is the Ministry of Shipping. They have less than 1% market share in the global ship repairs industry. Help them identify the reasons why for such a low share and suggestions to increase the same.

Case Transcript

I'd like to understand the client and the concerned industry better. Can you describe where do they operate out of, what all do they do under the purview of ship repair, and what competition is the client facing?

The client has been operating out of a dry dock in Gujarat. It provides ship repair services on dock, which broadly encompasses wear and tear maintenance (major operations) and basic breakage (minor operations). They serve ships travelling through South East Asian routes, so they usually compete mainly with ship repair service providers in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

Do we have any data on what are the crucial service factors in this industry? How are we doing on these parameters relative to competitors?

Yes, the time it takes to repair the ship is the most important criteria. Currently, the client takes 4-5 more days than competitors for providing comparable services. Distance from the port and price of services are secondary factors which may become relevant. One of the other important factors client is not doing well on is port space utilisation.

Okay. Let's try to see which parts of the ship repair process create this time lag, given these may provide insights as to how market share can be increased. As per my understanding, the process should entail ship's docking on the port, paperwork (given international borders), the process of carrying out the repairs once the ship is docked and ship's exit from the port. Is there anything I'm missing in this process?

This sounds fine. You may go deeper into the process and try to understand where our problem originates.

Sure. When the ship enters the port, docking needs to be time efficient. Once the ship has entered, is the time taken to obtain necessary approvals/paperwork at par with competitors? How is this process different from theirs? What about the immigration process for people onboard the ship? Does dry docking increase the time taken to provide these services? Finally, the method of doing ship repair- is that labour intensive or tech intensive?

That's a good list of factors. Documents for immigration arrive much slower than they do in other nations. Apart from this, the client uses labor intensive processes, but this is true for competitors' processes too. Our processes just take longer.

Okay. Addressing the paperwork issue first, I'd like to understand how this documentation is dealt with at our end and at the government's end. I'm assuming this process is carried out through online means for reasons of viability. Is that correct?

This could be because of multiple reasons- because of our labour based processes lacking efficiency, or because of them having efficiency but lack of enough quality leading to lower repeat business over the years.

Yes, that's correct.

Okay. Then the problem could be due to the systems at either end or the red-tapism originating inside the system on account of bureaucracy. Now, addressing the second part, there could be multiple reasons- labour based processes lacking efficiency, or because of them having efficiency but lack of enough quality leading to lower repeat business over the years.

You're right about quality of workers causing inefficiency. Most of the workers employed in these ports are unskilled or not specifically trained for the job. Can you suggest some measures that will help address these issues?

Sure. There are two sets of issues we need to address. To address the inefficiency in the current business, we can try moving to using skilled workers. We can employ people with similar experience, who are technical specialists in the field. In terms of long run efforts, the Government should aim to simplify the procedural clearances in case of ship repair customers. They could go for an improved IT and clearance system to facilitate faster relay of clearances as well. Finally, the Government should aim to increase port utilisation by increasing the range of its services, quantum of its services or using it for domestic ship related services

These ideas sound good. We can end here. Thanks

Abstract Case- Case Structure

Our client is the Ministry of Shipping. They have less than 1% market share in the global ship repairs industry. Help them identify the reasons why for such a low share and suggestions to increase the same.

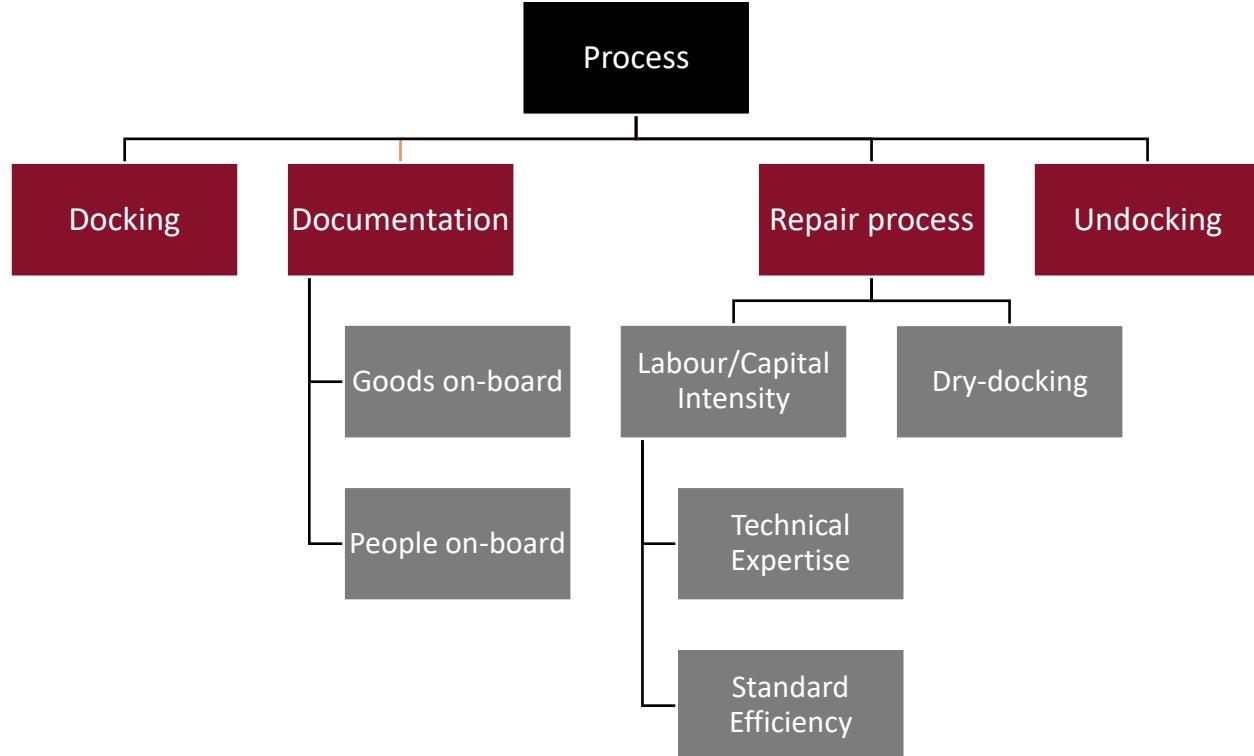
Case Framework

Case background:

Low market share in the global ship repairs industry

Case facts:

- Current market share – 1%
- Slower ship repair process than competitors (by 4-5 days)
- Prioritisation criteria for service takers is time taken for ship repair



Qualitative information

Client is the Ministry of Shipping. You have been appointed to increase the client's market share in the global ship repairs industry. Time to repair the ship is the most important criteria, client takes 4-5 more days than competitors for providing comparable services.

Problems and recommendations

Process approach followed, with key recommendations for these steps:

- Paperwork for goods and people on board > Improved clearance system
- Repair process > recruitment of specialised labour

Additionally, to address Port Utilisation, they should consider up-selling additional services or rent the space out to private service providers as well

Abstract Case- Interview Transcript

Our client is the State Government of Maharashtra. They want to improve the traffic conditions in the state. Help them

Case Transcript

(After clarifying the problem statement) I would like to understand how the client defines traffic conditions. Also, is the client targeting any particular cities/towns in the state?

Traffic conditions is defined as the number of vehicles per unit time, a measure of road congestion as well as their implications. The client wants to decrease this by 15% from the current levels in each of three metro cities and five Tier 2 cities that the government is focussing on.

I would next like to understand the current road conditions in the metro cities and Tier 2 cities.

Metro cities are connected with National highways, State Highways, Existing 2,4, 6 and 8 lane roads. All these are 90% concretised with seasonal pothole issues requiring maintenance. Tier 2 cities are connected again with national, state highways and the internal 2, 4 lane roads are 60% concretised.

So, as I understand, the stakeholders in both the Tier 2 and metro cities would be the same but the issues to be addressed may differ slightly. Hence, I would like to break the issues down depending on the stakeholder to be liaised with.

Yes, this approach should be fine.

I have 2 more questions before I step into solving the case. Firstly, what is the timeline that our client is looking at to achieve these targets. Secondly, I am assuming that there are no budgetary constraints

Yes, that's a correct assumption. Regarding the timeline, the government has a tight 2 year target to achieve the reduction in congestion

Thank you for the clarification. I will now like to list down the 4 major stakeholders that I can identify namely- The citizens , the municipal corporations, the traffic police and lastly the construction lobbies. Would you want me to look into any particular stakeholder first?

Fair enough. You can explore each of these one by one.

Sure. Starting with the citizens of each of the cities, I would like to divide the issues possibly contributing to congestion on the basis of transportation type i.e. public and private modes

Ok. Identify the issues and the possible solutions also.

Alright. In the private modes of transportation, I would look at two wheelers and four wheelers separately. As I understand, two wheelers would be more predominant in Tier 2 cities. From my observations, illegal two wheeler registrations, unlicensed drivers and environmentally non-compliant vehicles are some of the issues. Four wheeler congestion would be more a problem in metros, possible issues arising out of peak office hours, increasing disposable income & hence an increase in car ownership while possibly the capacity of city roads have not increased proportionately.

What about the recent decrease in the sales of private automobiles?

Well, that would still increase the traffic congestion due to private taxis such as Olas & Ubers. I believe there should be laws around the number of vehicles per cab operator allowed to operate on non-share basis per locality per city at a time.

Fair enough. You may continue

Some solutions would be- tighten the regulations to procure a license, increase the PUC check points with frequent checks by the traffic police and set up a checks system for the sale of non compliant second hand vehicles which are environmentally non compliant. To decrease four wheeler congestion, offices in a pin code could if possible stagger their discharge times, incentivise workers to car-pool, borrow the odd-even policy implemented in NCR , have more restrictions regarding roads and timings after which heavy vehicles such as trucks, lorries can enter. Also, streamline traffic, by creating one ways during peak hours on 2 lane & 4 lane roads, such as those implemented in certain parts of Mumbai

I think we can move onto the other stakeholders you mentioned.

Sure. Moving on to the police, I would like to break this down into centralised systems and decentralised systems. Within centralised systems I would look into infrastructural and environmental factors. Infrastructural issues could be lack of proper sign boards, CCTV cameras, improper functioning and inadequate signals, improper lighting etc. In the environmental factors, I would look into the AQI monitors, noise pollution control systems etc. Decentralised systems would include the traffic police functioning at every signal/intersection. Are they equipped with speed sensors, quick response systems to decongest roads due to accidents, stalled vehicles, processions etc to prevent bottlenecks.

That sounds exhaustive. I would like you to now move onto how the conditions of the roads and the seasonal factors mentioned will be dealt with.

I will look into these under the Construction Lobbies stakeholder bucket in my structure. As construction of roads is mainly given on contractual basis to construction companies, I would look at increasing the concretised roads for the Tier 2 cities as there are currently just 40% of concretised roads. In the metro cities ensuring that construction companies finish existing projects on time as per deadlines as also providing suitable diversions due to the construction work so as to not create further congestion. Undertaking construction of more expressways and broadening of existing lanes would also fall here.

Ok. But, what are the duties of the Municipal Corporations then?

Agreed. The last stakeholders, the Municipal Corporations would have the responsibilities of identifying these new infrastructure projects, executing them and most importantly addressing seasonal issues such as potholes before the monsoons arrive. To increase accountability by the municipal corporations to the people, we could look at a partnership with the local communities to identify locality wise road issues causing congestion. Also, have a citizen portal where with the help of Google Maps.

Sure, I hope your suggestions help improve the traffic conditions of our client. We can end the case here.

Abstract Case- Case Structure

Our client is the State Government of Maharashtra. They want to improve the traffic conditions in the state. Help them

Qualitative Information	Case Framework
<p><u>Case background:</u></p> <p>The State Government of Maharashtra is looking to decrease the traffic congestion by 15% in 3 metro cities and 5 Tier 2 cities.</p> <p><u>Case facts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congestion is the number of vehicles per unit time on the road Metro cities have 90% concretised roads while Tier 2 cities have only 60% concretised roads Seasonal issues such as potholes causing congestion in metros 	<p style="text-align: center;">Stakeholders</p> <pre> graph TD Stakeholders[Stakeholders] --- Citizens[Citizens] Stakeholders --- Police[Police] Stakeholders --- ConstructionLobbies[Construction Lobbies] Stakeholders --- MunicipalCorporations[Municipal Corporations] Citizens --- PublicModes[Public modes of transport] Citizens --- PrivateModes[Private modes of transport] Police --- CentralisedSystems[Centralised systems] Police --- DecentralisedSystems[Decentralised systems] ConstructionLobbies --- ExistingProjects[Existing projects] ConstructionLobbies --- NewProjects[New projects] MunicipalCorporations --- Tier2cities[Tier 2 cities] MunicipalCorporations --- Metrocities[Metro cities] PublicModes --- TwoWHEELERS[Two wheelers] PublicModes --- FourWHEELERS[Four wheelers] TwoWHEELERS --- CabsTaxis[Cabs, taxis] TwoWHEELERS --- PrivatelyOwnedCars[Privately owned cars] CentralisedSystems --- InfrastructuralCosts[Infrastructural Costs] CentralisedSystems --- EnvironmentalCosts[Environmental Costs] DecentralisedSystems --- Tier2cities DecentralisedSystems --- Metrocities </pre>

Problems and recommendations	Interviewee feedback
<p>Stakeholder approach, with following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Citizens : Carpooling, limited taxis per city, stricter licence checks 2) Police force: Provision of quick response systems 3) Municipal Corporations: Existing projects speed-up, citizen inclusion 4) Construction Lobbies: Concretisation in Tier 2 cities 	<p>The case requires the interviewee to come up with the maximum number of problems and their respective solutions. Idea generating cases require depth as well as breadth. In very open ended abstract cases wherein there is a requirement of a long term plan, the stakeholder approach helps being exhaustive and looking at the case from multiple points of view.</p>

Abstract Case- Interview Transcript

A Hollywood film producer has called in a consultant to develop a successful film. Help it out.

Case Transcript

A Hollywood film producer has called in a consultant to develop a successful film. Help it out.

I would like to know more about the producer. Can you tell me how old they are and where they're based out of?

It is an old production house with 90% success rate, based out of Los Angeles.

Can you define the parameters of success for me?

Two objectives:

- a) Break even in 3 years.
- b) Receive critical appreciation

Does the producer have a theme in mind? Also, is there a Director and have other cast and crew members already been signed?

The theme revolves around a teenager who committed suicide. They don't have a director in mind yet, and the cast & crew will be selected by the director, although we may choose to give opinions.

To start off our analysis, I would like to begin by discussing how to achieve critical appreciation, first. We can divide this timeline into three major phases- Pre-production, production and post-production.

First, in the pre-production phase, we need to develop a good story and script around our theme. Hire a director who has made such successful films before and allow him to choose the cast and crew best suited for the film.

Secondly, in the production phase, we need to look at developing a convincing set by hiring a good art director. The cinematography and screenplay will also be a key aspect into developing a good film. This will be taken care of by the direction team, cameramen and the actors. We shall also need good soundtracks, both background and main, for which we shall need good music directors, lyricists, singers. Finally, a good editor, who shall finalize the film.

Alright, what next.

Lastly, I want to look at the post production phase. This shall serve two purposes. First, to promote the movie to the audiences, and in a way to gather some funds to reach our break even objective. We can look at endorsements, promotions in target audience areas like malls, universities etc., and a good trailer and music launch to generate interest for the film.

Okay, this seems good. Let's quickly look at the factors you want to consider for the break even part.

Sure. Considering that critically acclaimed films may not be box office successes, I would want to divide my approach into 3 buckets. 1) Maximize revenue from sales, 2) Other avenues of portraying idea, 3) Ancillary sources

1) We should look at maximizing distribution to theatres, pay-per-view services, online mediums and through CDs and DVDs. 2) We should aim for film festivals worldwide and look at options to convert our story into a play or even a novel. 3) Finally, we can use ancillary sources like merchandise and goodie sales. Also, we can organise suicide awareness camps, as it connects to our theme directly.

These ideas sound good. We can end here. Thanks

Abstract Case- Case Structure

A Hollywood film producer has called in a consultant to develop a successful film. Help it out.

Qualitative Information	Case Framework
<p>Case background: Production company with 90% success rate. Based out of LA.</p> <p>Commercial Objective: Break even in 3 years.</p> <p>Non-commercial Objective: Critical appreciation.</p> <p>Case facts: Story line: Teenager commits suicide. Appointment of cast and crew to be done by director on recommendation of production house (if any).</p>	<pre> graph TD A[Qualitative Information] --> B[Case Framework] B --> C[Successful Film] B --> D[Breaking Even] C --> E[Critical Appreciation] C --> F[Breaking Even] E --> G[Pre-Production] E --> H[Production] E --> I[Post-Production] F --> J[Film Distribution] F --> K[Other Avenues] F --> L[Ancillary] G --> M[Story & Script] G --> N[Director & Writer] G --> O[Cast (Lead and Support)] G --> P[Crew] H --> Q[Set/Live Location] H --> R[Cinematography & Sound] H --> S[Performance] H --> T[Editing] I --> U[Distribution] I --> V[Brand Endorsement] I --> W[Trailer/Music Launch] I --> X[Promotions] J --> Y[Theatres] J --> Z[Pay-per-view] J --> AA[CDs/DVDs] J --> BB[Online streaming] K --> CC[Film Festivals] K --> DD[Live Plays/Shows] K --> EE[Novel] L --> FF[Merchandise] L --> GG[Suicide Awareness] </pre> <p>The diagram illustrates the Case Framework. It starts with 'Successful Film' at the top, which branches into 'Critical Appreciation' and 'Breaking Even'. 'Critical Appreciation' further divides into Pre-Production, Production, and Post-Production. 'Breaking Even' divides into Film Distribution, Other Avenues, and Ancillary. Each category is supported by specific factors listed in dashed boxes.</p>
Problems and recommendations	Interviewee feedback
<p>We need to target the different areas as mentioned in order to maximize our objectives. Since we have a 3 year break even period and a critically acclaimed film might not be a box office success, we should look at converting the film into a novel or a play as well.</p>	<p>It is important to concentrate on both aspects of the case. In the short time we have, one generally tends to forget one of the two aspects. Listing down factors is a key for abstract cases. For break even analysis, the candidate can choose to do a quick guesstimate of the number of viewers and of revenues & costs.</p>



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How to make best use of Interview Experiences?

- o The interview experiences are categorized as per different companies. This will give readers a chance to understand and differentiate the type of cases asked by each company, the depth into which they want you to go and what domain to companies tend to focus on.
- o There are instances when the same problem statement was given to multiple candidates and thus different approaches to the same case have been written down. This will enable students to get diverse perspectives on the approaching the case.
- o The case experiences have been provided in a format that is closest to the actual conversation that went down on the day of interviews and hence students can go over the case transcripts to set their expectations of the case interviews right so that there are no last-minute surprises.
- o This book can also be used to create a bank of HR related questions that can be asked. Since the background of each candidate has been provided alongside the HR questions asked, you can find candidates with similar profiles as yours.
- o Names of candidates and their profiles have been provided so that readers, if need be, can reach out to the relevant person to be able understand the case better or for any other assistance that they may require with respect to placement preparation.

Note: All mentions of 'C' refer to Candidate while 'I' refers to Interviewer in this book.

Case Interview Experiences (Summers 2021)



Akanksha Goyal

Undergraduate College	Jaypee Institute of Information Technology, Noida
Field of Graduation	B.Tech. (CSE)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Wipro Technologies (22 Months)

HR & Conversation Questions

1. Tell me about yourself
2. Why Accenture?
3. Why Consulting?
4. Tell me about yourself including your family
5. What motivates you in life?
6. If given a choice, which domain you would be interested in working in Accenture and why?
7. What kind of project you worked in during your job?
8. What tools/technologies did you use during your job?
9. What are your two major learnings from your previous work experience?

Case Interview 1

Guesstimate the total number of dinner sets in Lucknow

C: Sure. Started by stating population and segmenting them.

I: Do not worry about the numbers. Just go with the approach quickly.

C: Here are we talking about the dinner sets in shops or in homes.

I: Take your assumptions.

C: Ok. Ignoring the dinner sets in shops. I will divide the population in Lucknow in lower income, middle income, and high-income family groups with a family size of approximately four.

I: Ok.

C: Additionally, assuming lower income group to have almost nil percentage, I will assign percentages of middle and high-income group families in Lucknow.

I: Correct.

C: Now considering that a middle-income family have approximately 1 dinner set at home and high-income family to have approximately 2 sets, I will find out the number of dinner sets in Lucknow homes.

I: The approach is good. You correctly segmented them. Just a little thing, try not to ignore the lower income segment. Consider them even if they are in small percentage.

C: Noted.

I: You may ask any questions if you have.

C: Asked questions related to her experience.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? The interviewer was looking more for an approach towards the problem rather than the correct numbers and this went well for me.

What could you have done better? NA

Questions asked to the Interviewer Asked about her experience at Accenture. The kind of roles offered and difference between CN and IMU roles.

Tips for Future Candidates

Be confident. Prepare well and take your time to answer questions. Do not answer in a hurry.

Chahat Nanda

Undergraduate College	Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	B. Com. (Hons.)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Deloitte India (23 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Introduce yourself.

How has your day been so far?

Why consulting?

Explain the business impact of the project you have done as a part of Deloitte.

Case Interview 1

How can we increase the profits for Zomato (Indian multinational restaurant aggregator and food delivery company)?

I: How can we increase the profits for Zomato?

C: (Asked a few preliminary questions for better clarity) What is the target that we are trying

to achieve and what is the timeline that we have in mind?

I: We want to increase the profits by 10% in the next 2-3 years.

C: As per my understanding, in order to increase profits, we would either have to increase our revenues or decrease our costs or adopt measures that are a combination of these two. Is there any particular aspect that I should focus on?

I: Let us focus on increasing revenues for now.

C: The multiple revenue streams for Zomato which we can consider are - restaurant fees paid by restaurants which have tied up with Zomato, advertisements and promotions, delivery fees and revenue through Zomato gold.

I: Fair enough, how would you go about increasing revenues.

C: We can look at all these revenue sources sequentially and adopt measures under each one.

1. There exist a few restaurants which have not tied up with Zomato yet, so it is possible to offer them incentives/roll out schemes to increase the number of restaurants listed on our platform. 2. We can increase the number of advertisements displayed on the app. We can also conduct some interactive and participative events online which shall increase our reach and attract new customers. 3. Zomato gold/pro is one of the major sources of revenue. However, a large chunk of customers has not subscribed to it and share it with existing subscribers because of the price. We can reduce the subscription fees and introduce subscription plans for a shorter duration instead of one year to work around this issue. This shall lead to increase in the gold subscriptions.

I: I really liked your structuring. Can you also suggest some new avenues which Zomato can tap into increase revenues?

C: Zomato can also start taking bulk orders, not immediate delivery but for a later pre-scheduled delivery. This option can be used by people who are planning to have any gatherings in future with the convenience of doorstep delivery. Also, Zomato can tie up with home-operated bakeries/tiffin services/ food outlets to increase its offerings.

I: Fair enough. Thank you for your time. It was great interacting with you.

What worked well for you?	Having a proper structure while answering helped me cover all aspects and I tried to keep the conversation going.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case/HR Interview 2

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.

Tell me about your family.

How are you liking Lucknow?

Tell me something about Amritsar.

You have already worked in consulting, so what brings you back?

Interview Experience	
What worked well for you?	Answer confidently and keep the conversation flowing.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 3

Assume that I am the MD of the bank for which you worked in your last organization. The targeted post-merger synergies were not achieved. Kindly prepare a two-minute pitch to explain what could have possibly gone wrong and how can we improve.

I: You can take 5 mins to prepare a 2-minute pitch and can also use internet if you need.

C: (Did not explore internet and tried to structure my thoughts in my mind. Took 2 minutes to structure and start with the approach).

I: Please begin.

C: The merger of two public sector banks has been successful to some extent. However, in order for it to be called a completely successful merger we shall have to focus on the deviations from targeted synergies and take relevant remedial actions. The different categories of synergies which we wanted to achieve include Technological, Cost, Human, Operational. It is possible that we have not been able to achieve these synergies for the

following reasons: 1. Technological systems have not yet been fully merged and as a consequence customer data has not completely migrated from one system to another. 2. The cost synergies were not achieved because of duplication of processes. It might take time to completely shift to the processes of one of these banks. 3. Human synergies might not have been achieved because of the cultural shift that people are facing because the banks have been operating in different geographic areas. 4. The operational synergies might not have been achieved because the application portfolio demands some refinement as currently there are multiple applications offering the same products. Hence, there is a need to rationalize them. We can correct all these hurdles and accordingly target achieving the relevant synergy goals that we had set initially. We can target migrating the system in completion at the earliest and we can conduct bonding activities between the employees so that the work environment lightens up. We can also rationalize the application base.

I: That would be great. Thank you for your time.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Listing down the categories of different synergies well in beginning showed that my approach was comprehensive. Starting 5 mins earlier than the time given to think helped me avoid the awkward silence.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Accenture has the project spotlight wherein they invest in startups, what is the basis and the rationale behind deciding which startups to invest in?

Tips for Future Candidates

Be structured with your approach and keep it as comprehensive as possible.

Keep the conversation going. Don't be silent for too long.

Treat the interview like a conversation as the interviewer wants to know you better.

N U Nikhileesh

Undergraduate College	SSN College of Engineering
Field of Graduation	Engineering
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	L&T Construction (26 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.

Walk me through your achievements.

Case Interview 1

Client is a local clothing retailer with a well-established regional brand. Got multiple retail shops across India. In the advent of COVID they want to make a move into the online platform. Suggest ways to make the transition effectively.

I: Tell me about yourself.

C: Gave my introduction and mentioned about my past work experiences.

I: Alright, let us do a case. Client is a local clothing retailer with a well-established regional brand. Got multiple retail shops across India. In the advent of COVID they want to make a move into the online platform. Suggest ways to make the transition effectively.

C: I would like to ask a few clarifying questions.

I: Sure.

C: What are the regions the client operates in?

I: We have our presence pan India.

C: Do we have any monetary constraints and what is the timeline we are looking at?

I: No budget constraints and we are looking at 6 months' timeframe.

C: Has there been constant growth in revenue or was it saturated?

I: There has been decent growth until COVID hit. Now you can proceed to provide the suggestions.

C: There are two major options available. First one is the existing online channels. We can leverage existing online platforms like Myntra, Amazon, Flipkart etc. to market and sell the products. The second option is to establish a separate website and market accordingly to lure new customers and continue ties with loyal customers. The first option is more preferred as it requires lesser time to adapt and has the potential to capitalize on the massive traffic in these existing platforms. We can offer discounts to mark the entry into the online mode and can establish more hybrid models down the line.

I: Okay, sounds good. Let's do a quick guestimate: Size of airport terminal building in a Tier 1 city like Patna.

C: I used Supply side approach to calculate potential traffic and converted it into space required in peak hours, considered 60 % area for footfall and remainder for other areas.

I: Great, lets discuss another case. Client is a FMCG good manufacturer. Has had a lot of product returns lately. What are the probable reasons?

C: Can I ask a few clarifying questions?

I: Sure.

C: What are the different types of products?

I: We have dairy products like paneer, curd, milk etc. You can make your assumptions and go ahead with the suggestions directly.

C: Firstly, since our client deals with dairy products, they will have relatively less shelf life (max of 1 week). So, the following reasons could be attributed to the return:

1. Delay in delivery – constraint in logistics
2. Not storing them in the right temperature, while transporting
3. Low customer demand, retention of product with retailer
4. Inadequate testing - Lack of R&D

I: Okay, thank you.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Using first principles, interviewer did not expect a mechanical approach by using frameworks.

	Being conversational while solving the case.
What could you have done better?	I could have been more MECE in the guesstimate.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

I was given a case based on my work experience. Digitization in the construction industry, how would you implement Industry 4.0?

CV preparation helped me ace this interview. The in-depth knowledge of the construction sector came into use.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? The case was based on my work experience and my in-depth knowledge about the sector helped me in solving the same.

What could you have done better? I could have structured my answers in a much better way.

Questions asked to the Interviewer Asked about the role expectations.

Case Interview 3

Client is an apparel manufacturer (clothing only) and wants to double their revenues in a

span of 4 years – how should they go about it?

I: Let's do a case. Client is an apparel manufacturer (clothing only) and wants to double their revenues in the span of 4 years – how should they go about it?

C: I would like to ask a few clarifying questions.

I: Sure, please go ahead.

C: What is their current mode of operation and where are the current operations based out of?

I: Operations are currently based out of India. They are a subcontractor in the value chain and have cotton-based apparels such as tops/ t-shirts, undergarments etc. They have 10 factories in Coimbatore, Andhra and Punjab and supply to H&M, Gucci, M&S (biggest client), VS and other local brands. They cater to both Indian and global market.

C: Do they have both online and offline presence?

I: The client does not have any online operations. Offline channels are well established through contracts.

C: Are there any budget or time constraints?

I: No constraints. Their current revenue is Rs. 2 Bn.

C: Okay, thanks for the information. Please allow me some time to frame my recommendations.

I: Sure.

C: We can explore 4 different options:

- Expand our product line and introduce curtains, bedsheets, mats
- Start own brand and market as high-quality, low-cost product (wholesale margin reduced) and sell online (Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra)
- Increase reach through online and offline channels and advertisement to reach out to more people
- Increase capacity of manufacturing plants. It currently operates at 60%, possibility of increasing it

I: Okay, we can close the case, thank you.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? First principles and a holistic approach.

What could you have done better? Could have clarified a few more assumptions.

Questions asked to the Interviewer Level of exposure in the role.

Tips for Future Candidates

Be clear in your communication.

Try to be MECE in your approach.

Try using first principles.

Omkar Sampat Kadam

Undergraduate College	Veermata Jijabai Technological Institute
Field of Graduation	B.Tech. (Information Technology)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Infosys Limited (35 Months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Questions regarding Infosys.

Case Interview 1

TATA wants to enter the OTT Space. Devise a strategy.

I: Introduced himself & asked me to talk about myself.

C: * answered * (Every company asks this so best to prepare beforehand).

I: What kind of work did you do at Infosys?

C: Mentioned about the European client I worked for, building AWS-based analytics engine, and leading a team within just 2 years.

I: Favorite subject in Term-1.

C: Marketing Management-I.

I: Asked a case on pricing a new OTT platform by TATA.

C: Asked scoping questions to narrow down the scope of the problem & gave broad level buckets (content, analytics, marketing, technology, legal, etc.), asked if the focus should be on anything specific.

I: Asked to pursue subscription-based pricing & further distribution of cost objects for OTT.

C: Gave approximate numbers (not to the extent of a guesstimate though).

I: Asked if any questions for him.

C: Asked a couple of questions & bid goodbye.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Structured approach towards the case worked well I suppose. I went ahead with broad buckets first and then confirmed with the interviewer if I need to go deeper into each one of the buckets. That showed I knew what I was doing & provided the interviewer to guide me towards the end goal as well.

What could you have done better? Practiced more pricing questions to give a more comprehensive approach and ask more relevant questions.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Case Interview 2

To buy Flipkart, what price would I pay?

I: Mentioned about getting feedback from the team. Asked about the reason behind dip in 12th grade performance.

C: Explained clearly since the question was anticipated.

I: Asked about work experience in Norway and what was difference there as compared to here.

C: Explained in terms of work culture, ethics, etc. without showing either of them in a negative light.

I: Jumped to straight into a case - If you were to buy Flipkart, what price would I pay?

C: Asked questions about who I am in this case, what is my background, objective, etc. Divided the cost factors that will be dead weight for me & further cost benefit analysis involving perceived value too.

I: Asked about Capability Network and my understanding.

C: Explained about the same.

I: Asked if I had any questions.

C: Asked about some of the recent projects he had been working on & in what direction does Accenture see the technology spectrum growing.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Since fair amount of positive feedback was given from the first interviewer to the second one, this was more of a confirmation interview. I was able to give the what's and whys of the factors to be considered for the case and that was enough.

What could you have done better? NA

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Clarity of thought seemed to be more important than reaching the answer. Confidence through the process should do the trick.

Prachi Lohia

Undergraduate College	St. Xavier's College, Kolkata
Field of Graduation	Economics Honors
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

Being a fresher, why are you choosing consulting as your starting career?

What are the things that you will improve in these months before joining the firm?

Question regarding academic project.

Case Interview 1

A VC wants to invest x amount in Byjus, after how many years will it get back the investment.

I: Which sector/industry you are comfortable with?

C: Education sector (as I have done my project related to that).

I: I am a VC and want to invest x amount in Byjus, after how many years will I get back my investment?

I: Use your phone to get as much information as possible and tell me exact number of years after 2 minutes and also the parameters that you considered.

C: Searched about the valuation of Byjus, expected growth potential, inflation rate, future projects.

C: Communicated the parameters I looked upon with reasoning and said that it will take approximately 5 years to get back investment.

I: Profitability of the company is also very important and should have also been incorporated in decision making.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Keeping my calm.

What could you have done better? Including profitability in my analysis.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Preeti Gautam

Undergraduate College	ISM Dhanbad
Field of Graduation	Engineering
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Schlumberger (33 Months), Oyster Learning Pvt Ltd (8 Months), SBI (27 Months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

After all your experiences, was coming going for an MBA a conscious/planned decision or a chance one?

Why consulting?

Why Accenture?

Do you have any questions for me?

Case Interview 1

The client is contract apparel manufacturer with 10 factories, with nearly \$1 Bn sales. The client wants to double the sales in next 4 years. How to go about it?

C: Where is the client based out of and what is the extent of the business (domestically or globally)?

I: One of Southeast Asia's biggest firms, and supplies all over the world to brands like M&S, Gap, etc.

C: Where does the client supply location wise and where are the competitors located, if any?

I: Client supplies globally. The competition is located in other countries like China, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka etc.

C: The client can grow sales through two approaches, either through extending the production and promotion of current line of apparels. Other would be to extend the line to other clothes which cost less (requiring less variation in style and type) such as coveralls, uniforms, etc. which are required for operations all over the world.

I: What else?

C: The client can also target more brands, new developing markets where there is a rising branded clothing consumption.

The interviewer tried probing for more solutions. I tried thinking of other measures (cannot recollect all), but eventually, told him that I cannot think of more solutions at the time.

(I had forgotten to mention inorganic growth options like M&A, JV, etc.).

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? NA

What could you have done better?	I could have prepared a few more growth strategy cases as I later realized I missed out upon a few options which I could have suggested (Joint Ventures, Acquisitions and Takeovers).
Questions asked to the Interviewer	How is the project assignment decided for interns as well as for new employees?

Case Interview 2

This was not a case interview round. The questions were based on HR and my previous work experiences.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Thorough preparation of my resume.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Riya Chaudhary

Undergraduate College	IIT Jodhpur
Field of Graduation	Engineering
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Envestnet Yodlee (23 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself and your family.

Tell me about your work experience.

Case Interview 1

What factors will you consider while planning the yearly budget preparation for buying rice for home?

I: What factors will you consider while buying rice?

C: My budget, seasonality, last year price trends, prices of alternative brands, storage period.

I: How will you apply data analytics to decide buying strategy?

C: So, we have the factors/variables involved in the problem. We need to find which variables will give the most information. For example, if we have graphs describing past year trends and comparison with other brands, we can come up with the most efficient solution.

I: Okay, what next?

C: Then we make the purchase as allowed by our budget. Since rice has a long storage life, we can buy in large amounts for around up to 6 months.

I: So how will you summarize the case?

C: First comes the data collection phase where we decide the factors involved, which in our case are the budget, last year trends, competitor pricing, etc. Then comes the data analysis phase where we look at the available data and use it to make decisions. Then we do the purchasing and post that comes the post-purchasing process which involves documenting this year's numbers and comparing with previous years investments.

I: That's correct, thanks.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I was able to relate my work experience with the interview questions.
What could you have done better?	I could have structured my answers better.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	What kind of work can interns expect in Accenture?

Case Interview 2

There is a premium beauty services/salon company based in Dubai. They are looking for expanding. Discuss how they should proceed.

C: (Scoping questions) How old is the company and what kind of services do they offer? Do they sell their own line of products as well?

I: It is a well-established company almost 25 years old. Yes, they have their own line of products as well. They have all basic beauty parlor services.

C: What locations do they serve currently? And how is the market? Are there any competitors?

I: Currently they serve Dubai and Tier 1 Indian cities. There are some popular competitors like Lakme, etc.

C: Okay. So, do we have any constraints with respect to geography, labor or budget?

I: No constraints.

C: And how much time do we have to plan the expansion?

I: Around 2-3 years.

C: Okay, so we have the following options - Since we have sufficient time, we can look for geographical expansion and expand to Tier-2 Indian cities as well. Also, we can look for expanding to other south Asian countries. Another option can be to launch economy range of products and also sell them on e-commerce platform for worldwide sales.

I: That'll be fine, thanks.

Interview Experience	
What worked well for you?	Structured approach.
What could you have done better?	I could have explored and evaluated more options.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	How has your experience been at Accenture?

Rohith Prasath

Undergraduate College	NIT Trichy
Field of Graduation	B.Tech. (Production Engineering)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Deloitte USI (34 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Why Accenture? and why not Deloitte?

What industry do you want to work in?

Why MBA?

Why consulting?

Give me an example of a situation where you led your team to success.

Tell me about your job responsibilities and projects.

What did you like in Deloitte? and how will you implement the same at Accenture?

Tell me about the current e-commerce trends in India and how they will change by 2024?

Case Interview 1

Your client is a musical equipment manufacturing company that is undergoing a loss for the past 2 years. Provide them a solution.

C: Reiterated the problem statement and confirmed the objective; also asked for any other objective.

I: Let's focus on the profit for now.

C: Asked him about the company, competitors and products sold.

I: Keyboards are the main products. They generate 80% revenue from them. Profits have been declining since 2019. A few competitors faced this same issue, but the others did not. Our client is the biggest player in the Indian market.

C: Profits depends on revenues and cost. Is it a cost side problem or revenue problem?

I: Let's look at revenues first.

C: Revenues depends on price sold and quantity sold. Was there any change in any of these two factors?

I: Yes, the price remained the same while number of equipment sold increased. Can you tell me the reason for this?

C: Was it sudden increase or gradual increase?

I: Sudden increase.

C: There are two possibilities that I can think of 1) Covid lockdowns made a lot of people free

to pursue their interest and kill boredom 2) Schools making music as a compulsory subject.

I: It's the first option that you mentioned. People have been buying more equipment than usual during COVID. Good job figuring it out. Now tell me what does this mean for our client?

C: If quantity sold had increased and we continue to face losses then we must be facing a bigger issue on the cost side. Let me analyze the cost side of the problem.

I: Sure.

C: Was there any increase in R&D costs, salaries, or training costs?

I: Yes, there was a slight increase here but not too significant. Let's move further.

C: What about the raw materials required? Was there any change in them?

I: Tell me what the raw materials are first.

C: The materials I can think of are plastics, wood and electronic chips.

I: You are right. These are our main raw materials and yes there was a significant increase in the cost of electronic chips. Tell me why?

C: Increase in electronic chips could be due to more demand or increase in transportation costs or increase in storage costs or reduction in supply.

I: The demand has indeed increased, and production has decreased. Do you know why? It's related to real life scenario.

C: Elaborated on covid and how it has increased the demand for electronic gadgets. Also highlighted how covid has affected supply chains due to shut down of multiple countries.

I: You are right but I want a specific answer for electronic chips.

C: Is it about the Taiwan China issue?

I: Bang on! That's what I wanted to hear. (Explained in detail about the issue and how it caused the shortage) Now tell me what should my client do?

C: 1) Can go for new suppliers who produce for our competitors (Short term solution).

2) Can try to setup a new plant separately in India with the help of the old supplier (long term solution).

I: That's exactly what our client had in mind. They are using our competitor's supplier for the short term and that is the reason for increase in the R&D and training costs. Can you figure out why that is?

C: They might be using a different technology for producing our chips and might require training to handle them.

I: Correct! Now tell me about your long-term solution. Will your old supplier really want to come to India to setup a new plant?

C: If he can get a good ROI then he will surely consider. Since we are the biggest player in the market, he will surely get a good deal of money from this.

I: That's it. Good job figuring out the details correctly.

What worked well for you?	I built a good rapport with my interviewer in the first 3 minutes which made the interaction very friendly and the mood very light.
What could you have done better?	I missed revising the trends in my project industry which was ultimately asked in the interview.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Asked about Accenture's probable ventures in the gaming industry.

Tips for Future Candidates

Take the buddy interactions seriously. They have a big impact on the outcome.

Have a good understanding of the company and its work.

Be thorough with your previous work experience industry or project, if any, as a major part of the interviews revolved around it.

Be prepared with future trends in your work-ex industry, general technology and digital.



ALVAREZ & MARSAL

Abhishek Srinivas

Undergraduate College	College of Engineering Pune
Field of Graduation	B. Tech.
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	GEP Worldwide (33 Months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Introduction and quick review of CV.

Why MBA after almost 3 years of procurement consulting experience at GEP?

Why shift to consulting after engineering?

Questions about my work-experience (projects, clients, domains)?

Case Interview 1

Estimate the number of 2-Wheeler Electric Vehicles for last-mile delivery of e-commerce packages in a township near Mumbai.

I: Estimate the number of electric bikes required for last-mile e-commerce delivery for a township.

C: Could you please tell me a bit more about the township and the demographics?

I: You can assume a township close to Mumbai: Approximately 1000 acres with around 1 million population who belong to the middle-income group.

C: Understood. In this case, I would first like to estimate the demand for online orders and the delivery schedule (no. of last-mile deliveries per day).

I: Sure, that sounds fair. Please go ahead.

C: (Calculated the number of orders using the demand-side approach) As the population falls in the middle-income group, we can assume that they order online regularly. 1 M population -> 250 K households -> 3 orders/ month -> 750 orders per month -> Lead time per order (~3 days) -> Calculate number of deliveries per month. Could we proceed with the approach?

I: Okay, go ahead.

C: Now, I would like to calculate the electric bike requirement based on the number of deliveries per day. Considering an electric bike can deliver up to 30 packages per day in a closed township, we estimate the requirement for the electric two-wheelers.

I: Sure, this approach works, but do you think you could have used the e-commerce penetration rate to estimate the demand?

C: Yes, we could explore alternate approaches to arrive at a more accurate figure. Would you like me to look into it?

I: No, that's alright. I think we can end it here.

(This was a small guesstimate and was largely conversational as an extension of the earlier HR discussion.)

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I was able to relate my work experience with the interview questions.
What could you have done better?	I should have clarified the supporting data a bit more and use the information to estimate the no. of deliveries.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Questions on "Digital Transformation" and how A&M is implementing it for its clients in India.

Tips for Future Candidates

Focus on solving cases and guesstimates that are more quantitative. Practice PE investment cases (e.g., Your client is a PE that is looking to invest in a firm in the Housing Finance domain. Should the client go for 40% stake in the firm?)

S Shashank Iyer

Undergraduate College	Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra
Field of Graduation	B.Tech. (Biotechnology)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	EXL - Analytics Consulting (24 Months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

Asked to walk through all the projects in work experience. Some cross questions on the same lines.

Case Interview 1

Your client is a big hospital looking to improve operations. Come up with main 3 points of what problems would consider improving on by applying analytics-based methods.

Started with interviewer telling me about him and his work area in A&M.

I: Tell me about yourself?

C: Presented the prepared answer but modulated it more towards work experience and internships done in same area as the interviewer (Pharma).

I: Walk me through your CV and major projects done?

C: Started from work experience and explained all projects with an addition of projects done in internships at the end.

I: Your client is a big hospital looking to improve its operations. Come up with main 3 problems you would consider improving on by applying analytics-based methods.

C: Took a min to note down certain points. Followed the problems a normal person would face in the hospital after entering and effectively communicated my thinking for the problem with the interviewer. Addressed problems relating to scheduling for a patient in attending a doctor consultation or lab, self-registration after entering hospital and report collection etc. and applied analytics-based solutions for the same.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Explaining the whole solution and the thinking behind it so that the interviewer is involved full time.
What could you have done better?	Keeping some answers in CV discussion brief and crisp.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

You are conducting a cricket tournament in IIM Lucknow. How many cricket balls would be used in it if you want to order all at once?

I: Tell me about your projects in dashboarding?

C: Walked him through all the projects done in that domain with all the technologies used. Some cross questioning on hygiene check of dashboards and things to consider while developing them.

I: As you mentioned you have a liking for sports, let's do a guesstimate. You are conducting a cricket tournament in IIM Lucknow. How many cricket balls would be used in it if you want to order all at once?

C: Asked preliminary questions about the tournament pattern and number of teams involved. Calculated the number of matches that would be played and then the number of balls that would be required. Added a buffer stock at the end as a random percentage but gave reasoning on the basis of loss and wear & tear of the balls.

Case Interview 3

The Interview was basically a last round just to know me more and about my background. Asked questions on why I chose biotechnology and now an MBA and how I see the biotech space growing in near future with some new findings in that area. Some questions were about my work experience and internships and also about the life at IIM Lucknow so far.

Tips for Future Candidates

Practice Cases regularly in your case groups.

Arthur D Little

Latika Pavaskar

Undergraduate College	R.A. Podar College of Commerce and Economics
Field of Graduation	B. Com.
Professional Qualifications	CA
Work Experience	MBS (20 months); KPMG (11 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.

Discussion on Bharatnatyam.

Case Interview 1

Have you ever visited rural parts of Maharashtra? (My family owns a mango farm). We had a discussion on how mangoes are cultivated after which I was given the case statement. You have been approached by Maharashtra Government to help bring reforms in mango farming on 3 aspects: Finance, growth in agricultural produce and increasing people connect.

Type of mangoes: Alphonso (different mangoes have a different cultivation process).

Location: Ratnagiri.

Need to bring reform: Government wants to increase export of mangoes.

Weather conditions: as seen in rural Maharashtra. Sometimes unforeseen rains spoil the produce.

I took some time to structure my thoughts and then started with the growth in agricultural produce. I divided it in 2 buckets: (a) steps that can be taken by farmers and (b) steps that can be taken by government.

A. Farmers: Divided it by months as follows:

July: January (Manure, Water: rains, rainwater harvesting, ground water, Organic Farming, Insecticide);

January: March (Pre-Harvesting: water, covering the ground with leaves to ensure that fruits hanging near the ground don't get spoilt because of excess heat);

April: June (Harvesting (right time to harvest), Theft, Inventory).

B. Government: Financial incentive and support, purchase of excess produce, cutting out the middlemen.

The interviewer cut me off. He asked me if I am passionate about farming. Recommendation from interviewer: I missed to ask the needs of the farmers: main stakeholders to get affected by the reforms.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? My knowledge about mango farming.

What could you have done better? I missed on asking the needs of the farmers who are the main stakeholders to get affected by the reforms.

Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA	What could you have done better?	At the end of the interview, he told me how I could have talked more on the marketing front which was a part of my services bucket. However, the conversation drifted from the case, and I wasn't able to bring up that point.
Case Interview 2		Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA
Which industries have you worked in before?			Interview 3: HR & Conversation Questions
Picked hotel industry. Case: A hotel chain (say ITC) wants to grow its business. Assume covid cases are reducing and the government is allowing international travel.			Tell me about yourself.
Number of hotels: around 30.			Follow up questions on my introduction.
Market share: 10%			Industries I have worked on.
Operations: PAN India.			If an FMCG company wants to launch a product, what steps should it follow: Told me to use the 4 P approach.
Services offered: as seen in any luxury hotel.			Case Interview 4
Buckets: Covid safety precautions and services offered: current and additional.			Estimate the market size of high-speed internet line for home connections in 2030.
Covid safety precautions: stated all the government and WHO regulated precautions.			About the new internet line: 1 GBPS, fixed line, cost: Rs.300: 400
Service Offerings: took an example of Goa: I gave examples basis my own past hotel experiences on what I liked and what I disliked.			About the existing internet line: 100-200 MBPS, optic fiber, cost: Rs. 2,500: 3,000
The discussion drifted to Goa. We discussed about places to visit etc.			Will require a completely new infrastructure.
Interview Experience			Target consumers: home connections (OTT users)
What worked well for you?	Providing solutions basis past experience.		

He asked me not to start with the population of India (was looking for a non-conventional approach) and he did not want numbers, rather just the approach.

I started with income group and number of OTT users. Made some rough calculations.

Follow up question: In which city between Mumbai and Jaipur would it make more sense to launch the service and why?

Answer: As the population density and the target audience of the high-income group is higher in Mumbai, it would be idea to launch the service in Mumbai.

Tips for Future Candidates

Be confident.

Siddhant Gulechha

Undergraduate College	IIT Gandhinagar
Field of Graduation	B.Tech. (Civil)
Professional Qualifications	None
Work Experience	ZS Associates (24 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

What did you do at ZS? Few follow up questions.

In the past few interviews, you have had, what was one thing you lacked?

Walk me through your CV.

What did you learn at ZS?

How would you apply your learnings gained from ZS in a retail bank?

Questions on internship.

Case Interview 1

Your client is a scientist who has created a teleporter. Now, she wants to monetize her

invention. Tell her 5 things to consider doing the same.

(It was more of an idea generation case and was completely led by the interviewee).

C: Asked a few scoping questions and then proceeded to tell the points I'd consider

1. Safety precautions (Invention would be dangerous in the wrong hands)
2. Target Group: Government/Military, not open to all due to high risk
3. Pricing strategy
4. GTM strategy
5. Patent

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Interviewer liked the range of ideas provided.
What could you have done better?	Could have explored the GTM strategy a bit more.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2 (Interviewer: Barnik – Managing Director)

Your client owns a pathology lab in southern region of the country. He wants to increase his business by 4-5x times. What would you do?

It was more of an idea generation case and was completely led by the interviewee

C: Covered the following things post scoping questions

1. Digital transformation

2. Promotions
3. Anshoff matrix
4. Backward/Forward integration
5. M&A

Tips for Future Candidates

All the best. You have got this. Let your intention be known and still be humble.

Siddharth Mehrotra

Undergraduate College	Delhi Technological University
Field of Graduation	B. Tech.
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	PwC (22 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Questions on CV and work experience.

Tell me about yourself.

What kind of work you did?

Case Interview 1

Guesstimate on Number of electric vehicle sales in India in 2030.

I: Let's do a guesstimate. We are concerned with passenger vehicles. We want to know what the expected number of EV sales in India by will be 2030.

C: Asked for growth trend or any data available.

I: Currently 2.7 Mn annual passenger vehicles are sold. Out of this about 15k are EV. We are expecting 10% growth in annual passenger vehicle sales in next 5 years and 8% growth in further next 5 years.

C: Considered this data to prepare an approach. Segmented number of vehicles based on below and above Rs.10 lac. Further divided into less and more premium, considered EVs in premium segment and then used the growth % here.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? NA

What could you have done better? I could have asked more clarifying questions.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Case Interview 2

Skoda wants to enter Indian Market with EV. How would you proceed?

C: Asked initial scoping questions. Where are their current operations based and why India?

I: They have EVs in Europe, USA and see India as a lucrative market.

C: Is there any particular model or particular segment/ price range at which they are aiming?

I: Not decided yet.

C: How does the current scenario look like in India?

I: Many manufacturers like Tata, Honda, Hyundai, etc. have already started making hybrid vehicles and EVs.

C: Do they plan to import vehicles or manufacture in India?

I: Manufacture in India.

C: Prepared a framework with 3 main buckets: overall industry, competition, and company (like further analysis of what the company does well, bad, etc.). Industry bucket further had market and overall analysis, competitors had tech comparison, advantages to competitors and enablers to EV provided by each company. Last bucket was not asked much.

I: We can close the case, thank you.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Using a structured approach
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 3

Case 1: Russian truck company wants to enter Indian market through inorganic route (acquire, invest). Advise them.

C: I would like to get some more information about our client. Where do they currently operate from and why India?

I: They are currently present in Russia, China, USA. Seeing India as a growing market, they wish to assemble and sell in India.

C: Prepared a similar framework as above.

I: Let's move to the second case.

Case 2: Family had a sponge iron plant. Father ran the business, and it was now being passed to son. Son has come after earning MBA degree and wants to decide whether to stay or leave the business. Client is one of the big players in the market. They are located in the Eastern part of India.

C: The Sponge iron industry is scattered. Since, I was not familiar with the industry, hence asked more questions to understand what process was followed at the plant: input, process, output. I then developed an approach based on industry level framework. I provided an overall framework with various buckets that would be relevant like demand, supply, legalities, market growth, etc.

I: What other issues can there be in the industry?

C: I touched upon substitutes, price, future usage, etc.

I: Okay, thank you.

AUCTUS ADVISORS

Sanyam Gupta

Undergraduate College	Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	B.A. (Hons.) Economics
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	PwC (27 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Introduce yourself.

Walk me through your work experience.

Couple of questions related to GST policy as they were relevant to work experience.

Case Interview 1

Your client is a large retailer based in a Tier 1 city that sells multiple fashion related accessories. They want to sell a new brand of premium perfumes but are unsure of the demand of these products. Help them forecast the right amount of inventory they should buy?

C: Could you please help me understand the retailer a bit better, when we are talking about a multiple brand retailer, can I think of something like a Shopper's Stop based in Delhi?

I: Yes, Shopper's Stop would be very similar to what the client does. However, our client only has one store in a premium mall in Delhi.

C: Thank you, understanding the perfume the client wants to sell, is it a known premium brand or a completely new one? Also, what is the price range of the perfume, and does it make products for a single gender?

I: It is a famous existing brand, and the perfumes range from INR 15000. They make perfumes exclusively for women.

C: So, can I assume that the consumer of these perfumes will be high income females above a certain age.

I: Yes, that would be right.

C: So, demand of the perfume would be a function of number of people visiting the shop on average, number of them making high value purchases, popularity of the brand, advertisement push and external economic factors. Do we have any numbers on any of these metrics?

I: Our team has already done the data crunching and have suggested 3 alternatives along with the requisite probabilities of the stock getting sold off. 20000 units: 100% sales, 30000 units: 80% sales, 40000 units: 65% sales. The store will have to dispose of any units not sold and bear the loss of their cost.

The rest of the case was calculating the cost and benefits of each decision alternative and calculating the expected profit to give the right answer.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Being well versed with the decision tree mechanism of solving problems.
What could you have done better?	I could have drilled down to the main factors affecting demand more quickly.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Do decision tree analysis thoroughly.

Varun Gupta

Undergraduate College	NIT Bhopal
Field of Graduation	B.Tech. (Electrical)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	ZS Associates (22 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.

Why consulting?

What kind of projects did you work on while at ZS?

Case Interview 1

A film producer decides to release a movie through reviews from a pre-release that had a limited audience. The pre-release costs Rs. 1 crore. A hit movie would earn Rs. 200 Cr and a flop movie would earn Rs. 50 Cr. There's a 50-50 chance that the audience gives a thumbs up or thumbs down to a movie. If the audience gives a thumbs up, there's 80% probability that the movie would be a hit and 20% that the movie would be a flop and 40% & 60% respectively if the audience gives a thumbs down. It costed Rs. 10 Cr to produce the movie. Suggest the most profitable option to the producer.

There was limited cross questioning as the information was very extensive and I clearly stated all my assumptions while discussing the case.

I solved the case through the decision tree method where I created several branches considering all the situations. Further, I calculated success probability and total earnings for each option to suggest the most profitable way.

What worked well for you? Having a clear mindset and logically choosing the next step. Communication is also very important in order to engage the interviewer.

What could you have done better? I missed creating one branch in the decision tree. When I was asked to recheck the scenarios, I found it and that helped me get back on track with the case.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Case Interview 2

The client wants to invest in a business that installs telecom towers. How can they decide if they should invest or not?

I solved this case using a mix of market entry and growth strategy frameworks and highlighted the metrics I would recommend the client to look at to come to their final decision.

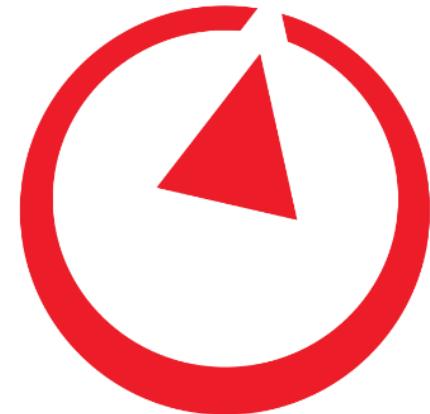
Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Being confident and communicating properly.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 3

Analyze if you should invest in Paytm's IPO?

Puzzle- You have two eggs, and when one is thrown, it'll get broken only if dropped from above a certain floor level. What is the max floor number from which the egg can be thrown such that it doesn't break?



BAIN & COMPANY

Anamika Gupta

Undergraduate College	Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies
Field of Graduation	B.M.S
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	VMock: Business Analyst (24 months) and EY: Analyst (9 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.

Case Interview 1

Your client is one of the Top 3 IT services company. It is not growing. Find why?

C: I would like to know more about the client. What kind of services is the client providing? Is it operating on a global level? How long has it been established for? Is the company not growing in existing business or new business?

I: The client is well established. It has valuation of \$5 Bn. It operates in all the major countries. The client has two major business segments: IT Hardware and App Development. The company is not earning enough revenue in new customer segment.

C: Can I know the revenue breakup from the two segments and are we facing growth decline in any segment?

I: You can assume a 30:70 breakup in IT hardware and app development. We are facing decline in app development segment.

C: Thanks for the information. On what parameter are we comparing the growth of app development segment?

I: The net new revenue acquired this year by competitor is 10%. However, the net new revenue acquired by us is 5%.

C: Thanks, I have fairly understood the business model of the client. Please allow me some time to jot down my thoughts.

In an IT company, the major touch points for providing App development service would be:

1. Company Infrastructure
2. Customer Acquisition
3. Customer Retention
4. Service Delivery
5. Client Success

As you have told me that we are not able to generate net new revenue as per market standards. Shall I go forward with customer acquisition department or focus on any other department as well?

I: Let's go forward with customer acquisition.

C: Okay, customer acquisition could be impacted due to sales team or product.

I: Let's focus on sales team.

C: The sales can reduce due to a decline in willingness, ability of the sales team or the number of people in sales team.

I: Let's go forward with willingness first.

C: The willingness could be monetary or non-monetary. Monetary including salary, commission, or any other monetary benefit and non-monetary such as promotion, appreciation, and other perks.

I: Let's focus on the monetary aspect. There is a base salary and flat 3% commission for closing a deal.

C: That's an interesting pay structure of commission. I would further like to bifurcate the new customers acquired into customers approached → customers Converted.

I: There are two parameters basis which we measure the sales team performance.

Win Rate = No. of clients converted/ No. of clients approached

Close Rate: Value they convert / Value they target (Bid for)

There is no issue in Win Rate.

C: Is it fair to infer that the number of clients approached is as per market standards, but they are not targeting the big-ticket client?

I: Yes, this is the issue they are not targeting the big-ticket clients. What could be the reason behind the same?

C: As the commission rate is flat 3%, there might not be any additional incentive to reach out to the big-ticket clients.

I: Yes, that's right. What would you recommend?

C:

Short Term:

- Introduce variable commission for clients, basis value contributed.
- Set Value wise targets instead of number of clients acquired.
- Update the database to include leads of big-ticket clients.

Long Term:

- Training the employees to better persuade clients for better conversion rate.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? NA

What could you have done better? NA

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Be confident and don't forget to smile. The interviewer is there to have a conversation and help you wherever you are stuck. Don't take too much pressure. Try to build a connection with the interview early on.

Anantharaman P S

Undergraduate College	Vivekananda College, Chennai
Field of Graduation	Commerce
Professional Qualifications	CFA Level 1
Work Experience	EY (36 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Why consulting?

Take me through some of the projects you've worked on in EY

Case Interview 1

Your client is a major player in the IT Sector and work largely in the space of offering tailor made products such as enterprise applications, general software tools, payroll systems, etc. Their profitability has declined sharply, and they want you to diagnose the problem and suggest possible solutions.

The interviewer explicitly mentioned that they wanted the case to be more conversational and steered away from an approach largely dependent on frameworks.

I was asked questions about the industry, value chain and what the major cost drivers are.

Started the analysis with some clarifying questions around the company, the competitive landscape, and the customer base. At this stage I was asked about revenue streams and the interviewer assisted in identifying all the relevant ones. After analyzing those revenues were largely consistent, proceeded to focus on costs. Broke it down further to personnel, infrastructure and facility related costs.

Drilled down individually to each of these costs. Interviewer expected detailed responses on what each of the costs entail. The problem area was around personnel costs and over reliance on onshore employees for development. IT companies largely tend to outsource recurring software services. Interviewer closed the case here.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Prior experience in a similar project, awareness about the value chain and some of the best practices in the industry. Was able to leverage this and go beyond to provide some good insights.

What could you have done better? Displayed some nervousness initially, was able to recover post the clarifying questions and case prompt.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Do not rely on bookish approaches when trying to solve a case. More often than not, you will be interviewed by senior partners, and they will try to catch you off guard and will expect depth from all your answers. Try to understand the value chains and cost drivers of some major sectors, it will come in handy.

Bhavyaa Kukreti

Undergraduate College	Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	Bachelor of Management Studies
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	CBRE (16 months) and Everest Group (17 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Give me a brief introduction about yourself

Case Interview 1 (Deepak Jain – Partner)

Your client is a maker of nets and ropes that are used across the fishing, agriculture, and construction industries. They have been facing stagnant growth for the past few and we need to help them devise a strategy to achieve full potential. Let us focus on the fishing segment for this case.

C: (Re-iterated the problem statement). What is the current level of growth, and do we have a target in mind?

I: Current growth is in the range of 3-4% but their target is to grow at a rate of 15%.

C: Could you tell me a little more about the firm? Where is it currently based out of and is

fishing net sales the only source of revenue?

I: The firm is based out of India and operates in the Indian market only. Yes, net sales are the only revenue source.

C: Understood. What about the product? How many variants do we sell, and do we have a USP?

I: We have multiple ranges and SKUs and are priced at a premium.

C: Could you tell me a little more about the Indian fishing net industry? How many players operate in the segment and what is our market share?

I: There are two sets of players: organized and unorganized. We are a market leader and hold 70% of the share.

C: Okay. In terms of the entire value chain of activities, I understand that we manufacture the nets, but are we also involved in distribution and sales? Who are our end customers?

I: We sell the nets through our network of distributors and dealers to small and large-scale fishermen.

C: I think I have gotten a fair understanding of the market. In order to push revenue, we can either increase our price or increase the sales volume or a mix of both. However, given we are already priced at a premium in a price conscious country like India, we might risk losing market share if we go ahead with that. I'll focus on avenues through which we can increase the sales volume.

I: Yes, that sounds like a good approach.

C: In order to push sales, we can look at a combination of two factors: our product and the

market we operate in. Do you want me to focus on any particular combination?

I: Let's look at exploring new markets first.

C: Sure. We can explore new markets within the fishing industry such as inland fishing and shrimp farming in India. Further, we can enter new markets of neighboring coastal countries such as Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Philippines, etc. through exports or country set-ups. We can increase volume using our existing product range or come up with newer variants that have higher ductile strength, longevity, longer usability life or are made of cheaper material. On the contrary, given the rising concerns around sea pollution and damage to sea animals caused by discarded fishing nets we can come up with nets made of biodegradable or natural material.

I: Those are interesting suggestions. If we were to foray into exports, which country would you pick?

C: I would pick a South Asian neighboring country such as Sri Lanka which has a flourishing fishing industry with dynamics similar to that of India.

I: Why not the U.S.?

C: Multiple reasons such as: high export costs, no competitive advantage and high risk. Additionally, the U.S. fishing industry is organized and at an advanced stage wherein they use automated shipping vessels and higher quality nets.

I: Makes sense. How would you estimate the market size of nets in Sri Lanka? Just give me a broad approach.

C: I would start with the overall population of the country and then identify what percentage of the population resides in the coastal areas (I would use the country map and dimensions

to come up with a rough estimate). Further, I would divide the working population into primary, secondary, and tertiary sector to then find the share of people employed in fishing. I would then group them to identify the number of boats in play and estimate the use life of the nets to calculate annual demand.

I: That sounds like a fair approach. What about India? How would you push sales using the existing product and market?

C: I would look at lowering the price to push volumes or discriminatory pricing for the unorganized market; further I would strengthen my sales channels by tying up with fishing associations and unions.

I: Do you think the 15% target is achievable if we continue to operate domestically?

C: I think it is an ambitious target to have. Given the fishing industry is also growing at a slow pace and no boom is expected, there are limited avenues through which we can push sales. However, we can look at the other industries: construction and agriculture as these seem more promising with the high investments in infrastructure and introduction of new farm laws. Further, we can explore new industries where nets and ropes could be used such as sports: cricket nets, football nets etc.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I ensured the interview was very conversational and constantly took the interviewers buy in. I had a constant smile throughout even when he cross questioned me.
What could you have done better?	I could have spent more time understanding the value chain and operating model as in the end the interviewer told me that

	the client only manufactured the material for fishing nets and not the finished product.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	<p>I saw your profile and was fascinated by the personal brand that you have built for yourself. How do you split your time across building the Bain brand as a partner versus building a brand for yourself?</p> <p>Given this is a real-life case you worked on, what were the suggestions provided by you and were you able to reach the targeted growth rate?</p>

Tips for Future Candidates

Try to keep the interview as conversational as possible and try to use information given at the start of the case throughout the solving process. Also, feel free to give insights basis industry knowledge that you may have.

Go through past case interview experiences in the CSC Casebook, as similar cases tend to be repeated.

Bhavya Bhatia

Undergraduate College	Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies (SSCBS)
Field of Graduation	BBA (Financial Investment Analysis)
Professional Qualifications	CFA Level 1
Work Experience	Deloitte India: Consulting (20 months), Bain Capability Network (3 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Hi Bhavya, how has your day been so far?

Tell me about yourself.

How was your experience at Bain earlier this year?

How do you like to spend your weekends prior to IIML?

What projects did you work on during your time at Deloitte?

Case Interview 1

An IT company is seeing decline in profits. Diagnose the issue & provide recommendations.

I: Hi Bhavya, how are you doing today?

C: I'm well, been a hectic day but really excited to be here and have this opportunity!

I: (Interviewer realized I was a bit anxious and stressed, so had a candid conversation about Bain, her work there and general stuff about IIML for 5-7 minutes).

Okay Bhavya, let's get started with a case. Our client is one of the top 3 IT service providers, you can imagine it to be a Wipro/Infosys. It has 5 verticals: CPR, Manufacturing, Tech, Media and Financial Services. Of these, CPR, Manufacturing and Financial Services have a sales Department. The work of the IT company involves building applications, infra maintenance or building of servers, app maintenance, data work (e.g., Cloud) and IT consulting work. Now the focus here has to be on IT Consulting. For procuring these projects, the company has salespeople. They have targets they have to meet based on which their salary is dependent. Now, it has been observed that our sales have decreased while the salesforce commissions based on the targets have remained the same. It has also been observed that the average time period per project has decreased. Can you help us diagnose this?

C: Sure! Firstly, could I know since when this decline has been there and whether it has been there across the verticals?

I: It's a secular decline, taking place for the last 1 year.

C: Alright, secondly, I'd like to understand the salespersons' salary structure a little better. I'd imagine there would be a fixed and variable component, and the variable component is based on them meeting the sales targets?

I: Yes, and let's assume the variable component makes up most of the salary.

C: Great, could you explain how the commission structure is designed?

I: The structure is designed as No. Of projects * Conversion Factor.

C: Oh okay, what exactly is the conversion factor?

I: Good question. The conversion factor is defined two ways: 1) Number of projects won/Number of projects bid or 2) value of projects won/value of projects bid.

C: Oh, so if I get this correctly, there's one based on no. of projects while the other is based on the sales value of projects?

I: Yes, that is correct.

C: Oh alright, I'd want to dig deeper into this a little bit before I proceed. Have both metrics seen a decline?

I: No, so while number of projects won is at par, the value won has declined.

C: Understood. So here I'd want to explore potentially something we're doing wrong because of which the value we're winning is low.

I: Go ahead.

C: So, I believe there could be a couple of things. Either there's some problem with the projects itself, with the way they're being pitched by salespeople, or the competition is offering something better.

I: Hmm, well the pitch is fine. But the competition is largely providing longer term projects while we aren't.

C: Understood, so in that case, that seems to be the issue. We aren't able to pitch longer term projects which might have higher dollar value. Now, I'd want to understand differences between the competition and us in terms of securing these longer-term projects. Can I assume similar types of projects and similar salespersons?

I: Yes.

C: Okay, in that case, if the salespersons are similar and so are the projects, there might be an issue in pushing the projects from our salespersons. Is the conversion factor we talked about linked to Number of Projects or Value of Projects?

I: Yes, the conversion factor is largely linked to number of projects.

C: Understood. In that case, it's apparent that pushing longer term projects isn't incentivized adequately, is that fair?

I: Yes. However, there are other factors at play too, since till last year the value of projects was at par.

C: Understood. Are there other attributes of longer-term projects that differentiate themselves from the short-term projects? Potentially in terms of nature of projects, time to convert for salespersons or effort involved even in shorter time periods?

I: Yes, the second is the case. It takes more time on average to close the project which is causing the issue. Do you have any recommendations for this issue?

C: Yes, for our current sales, 1) We could incentivize longer term projects better through value-based approach 2) We could train the salesforce to pitch the projects in a shorter time period and close it earlier 3) We could increase the quality/composition of Salesforce that could be more equipped to deal longer term projects. Alternatively, we could think of identifying new areas of sales that could compensate for lost sales through longer term projects, potentially specializing in short term projects and increasing volume there.

I: Great, thanks Bhavya. How do you think it went?

C: Umm, I think I diagnosed the problem, but it took a lot of time to reach there. Could've been more efficient.

I: Yep, I felt it was alright as well, you could've been more efficient. But thanks for your time, and best of luck!

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? The interviewer gave almost 1.5 pages worth of information to start off with. I focused on understanding every bit and staying on top of the flow of her data and what points were ambiguous. I then proceeded to ask about them so that clarity is maintained, and she appreciated that. Apart from that, while I did blabber a bit, it was conversational, and she was constantly involved so I wasn't working in a silo.

What could you have done better? I was quite nervous and tired for this round. For a large part, I was working through the case mechanically. What would have helped is picking on the long-term projects cue earlier itself and probing about it, to save time.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Case Interview 2

Havells Chief Logistics Head is thinking of employing Bain. What ideas can we propose? (I had worked in the Transportation & Logistics space during Deloitte Consulting, so case made potentially keeping that in mind)

I: Hi Bhavya, how are you today?

C: I'm good! Just happy to be here and have this opportunity.

I: So, you've had a tough day huh? Well, this is how Day Zero is for most folks. But trust me, consulting or not, this doesn't matter in the long run.

C: Yes, thank you.

(Interviewer proceeded to tell me about himself and experience at Bain. He asked me questions including why don't you tell me about yourself, what was your work like at Deloitte, how do you spend your weekends, post that to ease me into the case)

I: So, you know how these interviews go, I am obligated to give you a case while I'd like to keep chatting. Let me give you something maybe slightly related to what you've worked on. Your client is head of logistics of Havells. This is our 1st meeting with him, and we're supposed to have a conversation to pitch ideas.

C: Great, just so I understand this correctly, we have to pitch some ideas to Havells' Logistics head regarding potential improvements in their department for reducing logistics costs?

I: Yes.

C: I'd like to understand Havells a bit better before I proceed. Is it the electrical goods company? What sort of products does it have and what is its value chain like?

I: So yes, Havells has multiple factories and produces wires, switches, etc. They manage their own logistics.

C: Okay, and just to be sure about this, they procure raw material, there's inbound logistics, they manufacture the goods, there's out outbound logistics, they store goods at their own warehouses and sell it to distributors?

I: Yes. You can ignore inbound logistics, however. Just focus on factories to distributors.

C: Great, also are there any specific objectives Havells has, going into this meeting?

I: Yeah, so you can assume they want to improve cost of logistics as a % of revenue. So even a 5% improvement for 10K crore company is high.

C: Great. I'll just take a moment to gather my thoughts.

I: Sure.

C: So, the structure I'd like to proceed with involves assessing Transportation & Warehousing. I can potentially proceed with transportation here.

I: Go ahead

C: Under transportation, aspects I'd want to look at include 1) The Modal Mix 2) The Route design 3) Effectiveness of covering routes.

I: What do you mean by Modal Mix? Havells just uses Road.

C: Oh okay, I could have looked into any scope for efficiency from transports mix that could reduce costs. Is there a constraint only on using roads on?

I: Yes, go ahead with route design?

C: Sure. So, there we could explore the potential routes decided at a network level between plants to minimize time and cost. The permutations could be explored that work best for Havells.

I: How can a consulting firm here provide value? Havells must know its routes well already.

C: I understand, but 1) Consulting firms typically have access to huge amounts of data and analytics tools that are unique solutions for such kinds of problems. We could leverage them to optimize route design for them. 2) Business owners/heads have their own biases while approaching such issues, an objective route mapping could help check for any bottlenecks.

I: Okay, go ahead?

C: Under route effectiveness, I'd want to look at if there's any internal or external factors that inhibit truck owners from covering these routes adequately. In internal issues, aspects such as truck capacity/truck effectiveness in carrying goods, driver issues can be explored. In external issues, aspects such as stoppages, bribery etc. could be explored.

I: Okay, but why does this even matter?

C: Improving effectiveness in routes would mean lesser time taken on these routes.

I: And how does that help? They pay fixed amount per ton to drivers.

C: Well time saved would mean more tons delivered in the total time present. Then the incremental revenues in the time saved would be the benefit to Havells.

I: Hmm, let's move forward.

C: Right, I'll move to warehousing now. Herein, I believe again either optimization at the network level can be done or within warehouses can be done.

I: What sort of optimization at network level are you talking about? And how would we do it?

C: This would involve the ideal placement of warehouses on the routes to minimize time and costs, as discussed earlier for route design using data and analytics. Herein the aspects to optimize would include 1) Number of warehouses 2) Location of warehouses.

I: Hmm. Can you provide aspects within warehouse improvements?

C: Sure, this would include aspects such as improving turnaround time of trucks at warehouses and improving logistics operations within the warehouse.

I: Examples of within warehouse improvements?

C: Few that come to mind include improving inventory management, assembly and roll out of goods in shortest time. Labor and Role of automation here could be explored for improvements in time.

I: Hmm. Alright, we can stop here. How do you think it went?

C: I think it was alright, I tried to cover the board but there could've been improvements.

I: Right, I think you largely covered everything. Just could've taken more pauses and been more concise. But that's fine. Alright, best of luck and take care Bhavya!

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I tried to be MECE wherever possible. The problem statement was very vague, so keeping it relevant and keeping a structure was imperative.
What could you have done better?	The interviewer seemed really disappointed with my solutions throughout. It was quite demotivating. But prior to the case and

	post the case he was extremely jovial, which gave me the sense he was just stress testing me. It's important to keep going and not let these aspects affect you.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA
Tips for Future Candidates	
<p>Probing questions is imperative, even if you don't have too much time. Ask them and be succinct with them.</p> <p>Take pauses to structure. Don't rush through the interview.</p> <p>Know your HR aspects inside out, including your spikes and your weaknesses.</p> <p>If you get numbers, be careful and lay out the approach for your answer before moving ahead.</p> <p>Don't stress out because of signals/responses from the interviewer. They're usually intentional to test you. Follow your process of solving cases as you've practiced.</p>	

Mayank Jain

Undergraduate College	St. Xavier's College, Calcutta
Field of Graduation	B.Com. (Hons.) Marketing
Professional Qualifications	Actuarial Sciences (3 Levels)
Work Experience	PwC India (33 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Being from St. Xavier's and Calcutta, why didn't you pursue CA?

Tell me something about yourself apart from what's there on your resume.

Case Interview 1

You are meeting the head of the logistics department of a company. They are involved in both B2B and B2C sides of the business. Talk about what would be the agenda of the meet and the proposition you would take to transform their logistics business.

C: Asked me a couple of HR questions including why not CA.

I: Answered and realized he was a CA. He started laughing based on my answer.

C: (Clarified the problem statement and the objective). Followed the CPCC approach.

I: (Stopping in between) Do not follow the conventional case solving models and logically explain the thought process and rationale.

C: What's the name of company, chief products/ services, their operating cities? Can I also know the current system of logistics: Internal/External vendors, technology being used for inventory/supply chain/vendor management?

I: The company name is Havells India selling all the current products you're aware of. They have engagement with multiple outside vendors for delivery. The storage & warehousing is internal, and SAP is the ERP system currently being used by them for all internal purposes.

C: Okay. I have all the information I need. Can I take a minute to analyses the way to go?

I: Sure, take a couple of minutes.

C: The typical supply chain process comprises of the following 4 stages: Inbound logistics, storage & warehousing, operations, and finally outbound logistics. If this seems fair, I'd like to explore each stage and discuss the integral parts and deliberate upon the changes/improvements in each stage.

I: Fair enough. Go ahead but be very brief as we don't have a lot of time. Only focus on the key element in each stage.

C: Sure. Under Inbound logistics, the key component is the number of vendors. My suggestion here is to have limited but integral vendors with the aim of solidifying long term relationships with the same. This will give them confidence and give us higher bargaining power to cut costs via economies of scale.

I: Fair.

C: Under storage & warehousing, and operations, I suggest having an end-to-end application linked to our ERP system for end-to-end internal tracking of orders, dispatches and an overall pulse over inventory. If time permits, I would like to also talk about the current inventory system we follow.

I: No, let's ignore that for now.

C: Under outbound logistics, again the number of vendors is important. Also, I'd also like to look at the reverse logistics aspect since electronic goods tend to have a high return percentage, hence would also explore this angle.

I: (Starts laughing and asks me to hold on). At this point, it seems you're babbling on and on. Take a minute and tell me what the three most important aspects in this entire process are.

C: (After a minute) The three most important part of this process would be the technology, employees and the current system of processes and operations.

I: Fair enough. Okay Mayank, we will stop here for now.

C: Do you have any feedback for me?

I: I think you have a lot of ideas and despite the lack of industry knowledge, you were able to come up with good ideas. The three important aspects were correct, but you missed out on cost. In logistics, cost would be extremely crucial. For future cases, try to be a little more structured. That's it.

C: Thank you, sir. Will keep that in mind.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I did not panic despite the industry being completely new, followed logic along with the CPCC framework.
What could you have done better?	A little more structure would have been appreciated.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Asked for feedback.

Tips for Future Candidates

Just be logical and approach things from first principal if nothing else works. Be confident and composed even if you are rattled during the case.

Yash Rathi

Undergraduate College	Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce
Field of Graduation	Bachelor of Management Studies (Finance)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

NA

Case Interview 1

We are a steel pipe manufacturer, and we are working on a cost transformation program and wish to reduce our cost by Rs. 150 Crores.

C: What is the time horizon within which we would like to reduce the cost?

I: 12 months.

C: What is the product that we manufacture and whom do we cater to?

I: Large steel pipe and we cater to B2B and large customers.

C: Do we deal in separate product SKUs?

I: We have different diameters and variants depending on the process. But let us have one SKU for now.

C: What would be the location?

I: Hanjar port. We can import raw material from China and export it to the neighboring countries.

C: Given we are looking at reducing costs, what would our total current cost be?

I: Rs.6000 Cr. What are the various costs that I incur?

C: Raw Material (RM), production, distribution, marketing, and support. And considering the Heavy Goods Industry, most of the cost should come from Raw Material Purchase and Inbound Logistics.

I: Yes, RM is my major cost, and it accounts for 60% of the overall cost.

C: How much of that is Steel Pipes?

I: Steel which we bend and make the rolls for our pipe is 95% of our raw material.

C: Great, we can look at cost for Raw material in terms of the price/tonne*quantity.

I: How would you look at the price?

Opened the Cost Structure and then proceeded with procurement as per discussion

C: I will start looking at the procurement process currently and try to find potential optimization methods.

I: We procure for the entire year in one shipment currently.

C: Do we have possibility to alter this, as we might be saving on inventory costs.

I: Inventory is not a problem. But we can break the total order in multiple orders. Efficiency and utilization are an issue. But if we have the liberty to order as many times as possible as possible, we like, what should be the number according to you. Like, 1,2,3,4 or maybe even more?

C: I would go with 2 as we can assess efficiency from the first order and order according and saving on transportation.

I: Great. Should I order 80% in the first or 20% in the first?

C: Should be 80% as would have safety margins and reduce stock out costs as it might disrupt the entire process.

I: Sure. Doing this we can reduce the steel cost by 2%. Can you come up the number?

C: Sure. 60% of 6000 would be the cost of raw material, which is 3600 and since we use 95% of RM for steel, the number comes to around 3420. 2% of which is around Rs. 68 Cr.

I: Great, are we able to reach the goal through this?

C: No, we are only able to reach less than 50% of the goal. Should I scope further for other means of optimization.

I: No, let's wrap up the case, thanks for your analysis.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Keeping a good structuring but exploring the case as it proceeded. Making use of all the hints from the Interviewer.

What could you have done better? Could have kept the solution a little brief.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Keep it conversational and don't ignore the hints given by the interviewer.

Go through all the previous year transcripts to get a good sense of the case types.



Antriksh Mathur

Undergraduate College	IIT Delhi
Field of Graduation	B. Tech.
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Axis Bank (24 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.

Case Interview 1

Your client is Facebook. They have recently started WhatsApp Pay and want to become the top 2 payment gateways in India. Please help them.

I: Tell me about yourself.

C: Told already prepared answer.

I: Great! Let's solve a case. Your client is Facebook. They have recently started WhatsApp Pay and want to become the top 2 payment gateways in India. Please help them.

C: Asked about the company, product, competitors, clarification on "Top 2" and any time/financial constraints.

I: Explained about the product. Competitors are GPay and PhonePe with a total market share of 70% followed by Paytm at 10%. The expectation is to gain at least 40% market share in next 3 years and there are no financial constraints.

C: Broke down the problem into payments by individuals and businesses. Was told to concentrate on Individuals. Further divided into P2P and P2B transactions. First discussed about P2B transactions and including features that are present in competitors but absent in WhatsApp Pay and then some new features that are not even present in competitors.

I: Great suggestions. You might have seen that a payment is successful only when the sender and the receiver both have set up their WhatsApp Pay accounts. How can we increase the customer base?

C: Suggested in-app advertisements (limited), cashback/discounts on payments via WhatsApp Pay as well as partnerships with online marketplaces to offer discounts. Also, set up a strong referral program to incentivize existing customers to pitch the product on Facebook's behalf.

I: Thanks. We can close the case here.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? NA

What could you have done better? NA

Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA
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Case Interview 2

I: General introduction and exchanged pleasantries. Let's solve a case. Shared his screen containing some numbers related to performance of a telecom company like different revenue streams (Fixed line, mobility, enterprise), revenue growth, revenue share, EBITDA %, market growth rate, etc. Identify the financial health of the company and suggest recommendations if something is wrong.

C: Found annual EBITDA % and revenue. Asked about many other factors and found out that the company has taken on a lot of debt and the interest expense is higher than revenue.

I: Good. How will you improve the financial health of the company?

C: Asked some questions related to the industry and the company and then suggested some recommendations for each revenue line.

I: Great. We can close the case.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	NA
What could you have done better?	NA

Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA
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Case Interview 3

I: General pleasantries. Let's solve a case. Your client is an industrial automation giant. They manufacture train wagons, digital hoardings and streetlights. They are looking to design a software offering for the future, something that would be relevant for the era of self-driven vehicles.

C: Asked questions related to exact specifications of software offering and general CPCC.

I: So, the software offering that the company is looking to design is a controlling equipment. The company has a presence all over the world. Looking at the products what do you think could be the customers?

C: Could be governments and city authorities.

I: Right. You can disregard any competition for now.

C: Software offering for streetlights and traffic lights could make use of image processing. Streetlights that would switch off if no movement is detected for a long time. For traffic lights, the timer can be made dynamic depending on the traffic at each side of the light. For digital hoardings, depending on available information, they can be customized to show targeted advertisements to the passing vehicles. Also, these hoardings can be integrated into screens in the self-driving vehicle. The company can also look to design automated vehicle carriers that would be able to transport multiple cars from one location to another.

I: Great ideas. We can end the case here. Do you have any questions?

C: Is this a case that you have worked on before?

I: Yes. We got this case some time ago. We thought to design an application like Uber but the difference being that you would input your starting and end location and automatically different vehicles would be assigned to take you from X location to Y. So, cars trains, buses, etc all would have information about your location, etc. and all vehicles being interconnected would automatically create the route for you and book the vehicles for the journey. Thanks, Antriksh, it was great interacting with you. A couple of your ideas were something that even we had not thought of. Good going.

Tips for Future Candidates

Interactions with seniors, Team Disha Sessions, HR answers

Casebooks (IIML, IIMA, IIMC, Case Interviews Cracked, etc.), Buddy Cases & Seniors Case Slots

Use case slots with seniors to develop first principle thinking. It is very important to analyze the solved cases and think through whether your structure is able to handle all sorts of problems that that company might be facing. Try to do cases covering multiple industries as well.

Archit Kapoor

Undergraduate College	Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	B. Com. (Hons.)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

Why BCG?

Case Interview 1

Guesstimate: Number of Ola and Uber cabs in Delhi.

I: Guesstimate the number of Ola and Uber cabs in Delhi.

C: Asked a few clarifying questions and started with the guesstimate.

Took a demand side approach:

Started with the population of Delhi and segmented it based on:

1. Income level
2. Age
3. Regular Vs irregular users

After calculating the daily demand for cabs, tried to estimate the number of passengers one cab can cater to in a single day.

For calculating this, I segmented the work hours into peak and non-peak hours and computed the average number of passengers in one cab by taking relevant assumptions.

Total number of cabs = Daily Demand for cabs in terms of passengers/ Number of passengers catered by own cab.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Communicating the overall approach in the beginning of interview helped in keeping the interview conversational and clarifying the interviewer when taking critical assumptions helped in solving the case with decent structure.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

Your client is a cement manufacturer, and they are targeting 10% growth but currently they are facing declining profits. Identify the problems and recommend some changes.

C: Repeated the case and started with basic CPCC.

Where is the client located? What kind of growth are they targeting (Revenue/Profit)?

How many products do they have and what is their revenue share?

I: Client operates in India and is targeting revenue growth. They have 2 products and decline is across both.

C: Do you want me to identify why profits are declining first or suggest how to grow revenue?

I: Let's start with growth.

C: Made the Ansoff Matrix and recommended some ideas across all the segments:

1. Exclusive contracts with suppliers, discounts for customers, targeting B2B segment
2. New variety of cements- fast drying, cement cubes

Diversification- Entering logistics industry since the client already has a strong distribution network.

I: Let's see why profits are declining now.

C: Started with basic framework and identified that costs were increasing.

I: Identify all the areas where costs could go up and what could be the causes.

C: Laid down the value chain and under each head mentioned the problems that client could be facing.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Being exhaustive in my ideas.
What could you have done better?	NA

better?

Questions asked to the Interviewer

NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Do not take guesstimates lightly. There is a high probability of being asked guesstimates on Day Z.

Arihant Jain

Undergraduate College

Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University

Field of Graduation

B. Com. (Hons.)

Professional Qualifications

NA

Work Experience

ZS Associates (24 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Are you in Lucknow right now? Tell me more about Manipur (I was in Manipur on the interview day).

Tell me about yourself.

How was your experience working at ZS Associates?

Case Interview 1

Our client is a big FMCG player. Their salesforce productivity has been stagnant. The client has come to us to understand if this is good or bad?

I: Lets quickly start with the case (the partner had joined the call 15 mins late due to some technical glitch on his end: key is to keep calm and not think about anything else).

Our client is a big FMCG player. Their sales force productivity has been stagnant. The client has come to us to understand if this is good or bad?

C: (Repeated the question to make sure I understood it correctly) Before I dive into the case, can you help me understand a few things about the client?

I: Ask what you need but let's get quickly into the case, rest can be answered during the case solving.

C: Can you please help me understand what the client means when it says salesforce productivity. Is it Sales/Number of people in sales force?

I: You can take it to be Sales/ Cost of the sales force.

C: Okay. Since when has the productivity been stagnant? Also, have competitors also seen this?

I: Since last year. We don't know about competitors.

C: Can you tell me a little more about the company? How old are we? How do we sell our products and to whom?

I: We are a very old company; the largest player in the market. We sell our products directly to retailers in the market who sell them to end consumers.

C: What is the work of the people we employ in the salesforce? Visit stores or calls or...?

I: The work of the sales force is to visit stores and get orders from the retailers. I think you have got all the right questions. Let's get into the case now.

C: Sure. Just give me a minute to structure my thoughts and then we can dive to find if it's good or bad for the company.

I: Sure, take your time.

C: I would like to look at two things here: total sales and cost of sales force. Do we have something specific in mind to start with or can we go one by one through both?

I: In the interest of time let us look at the cost of sales force only. We can assume that the total sales and number of retailers have increased over the years.

C: Sure. Since the total sales have increased and productivity has remained stagnant, the cost of the sales force must also have increased. We can look at the number of people in our sales force and how much we pay each employee.

I: Correct. Let's assume that the number of people has remained the same.

C: Okay. So, are we spending more per employee now?

I: Yes exactly.

C: I would break down how much we spend on a person into Salary, Extras, Commissions & Training Cost.

I: That is fine. Tell me if the increase is a good or bad thing?

C: With time the cost we must spend on employees might have increased. What we can do is increase our sales.

I: Why do you think our costs increased per employee?

C: Promotion of existing employees, people becoming expert in understanding the compensation scheme and earning more, training cost increases, market correction (Based on competitors & inflation rate).

I: What can you compare the increase to in order to check if the increase is justified?
C: Competitor compensation, Inflation Rate, Wage rate in the country, Index representing amount required to lead a life with good standard of living.

I: Okay, sounds good. We can end this case now.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I was able to understand the problem and focus on that from the very start. The partner looked very happy when I asked the meaning of sales force productivity and then started the structure from it.
What could you have done better?	More factors could have been told when the partner asked what you can compare the increase to in order to check if the increase is justified. Felt like he was looking for some more factors there.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	No time left to ask questions.

Case Interview 2

Your client is a glass bottle manufacturer in Germany. They manufacture bottles for juices & alcohol. The market is growing at a rapid pace and the client wants to expand its capacity. Three options are available setup plant in Germany, import goods from India, or import goods from China. What should the client do?

C: (Repeated the question to make sure I understood it correctly) Before I dive into the case, can you help me understand a few things about the client?

I: Let's take them up during the case. First start with things you will look at to come to the decision.

C: We can do a qualitative and quantitative analysis to decide which option is better in the long run. Do you want me to proceed with this approach?

I: Go ahead.

C: For the qualitative side of things, I will look at two things: Micro Factors & Macro Factors involved. Under micro factors I will look Cost (Both initial one time & landed cost per unit including transport & duties), Quality of bottle, Turnaround time, and Freedom (risk & independence). Under macro factors I will look at Legal aspect & country relations. Does this look comprehensive, or should I add more factors?

I: Looks good. What is the most important factor while deciding?

C: Cost would be important.

I: Yes, for initial investment government is giving us some subsidy to set up so we will add a cost of USD 0.5 per bottle for those manufactured in Germany; others don't have any initial cost. Let's look at the cost per unit in detail.

C: Sure, apart from the initial investment the per unit cost will have components of raw material, labor, transport, taxes & duties, utilities/overheads.

I: Can you tell me which country will have an advantage in each of the factors you just mentioned above?

C: Sure, material will be available in cheap in China & India; cheaper labor will be available in India; transportation cost of goods from China and India to Germany will be high while if manufactured in Germany the transport cost will be low.

I: Right, say if the cost of making a bottle in Germany in USD 2.5, landed cost of bottle from India is also USD 2.5 & landed cost of bottle from China is USD 2.2. For China & India, the order will have to be placed at least 4 weeks in advance. What should the client do?

C: Does the Germany cost include USD 0.5 we decided to include earlier?

I: No, including that per bottle cost will be USD 3 in Germany.

C: The difference is not much and is of fixed cost which will not be relevant in long term, and we are also getting support from government. If we go ahead with our own plant we will have lower risk, better quality & better turnaround time. The client should go ahead with setting up the factory in Germany.

I: Right, but the CEO went ahead and partnered with India. Can you tell me a few reasons why he would have done that?

C: Sure, can I have a minute to jot down the points?

I: Yes, take your time.

C: Few reasons might be:

- a) Market expansion to India in long run
- b) Technology learning to reduce bottle cost (India can supply at USD 2.5 despite high transport cost)
- c) Earlier relation with the company
- d) Government support from India

I: Yes, market expansion is what the CEO was thinking about. Let's end the case here, all the best!

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	The partner looked happy when I classified the quantitative analysis into macro and micro and then bucketed further so I believe that my structure came out well.
What could you have done better?	When the partner asked which country will have advantage in each of the factors of production, I should have brought some insights rather than just plain facts.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Solve cases with as many seniors as possible, each person & case teaches you a different thing.

Make sure to go through the interview experience of candidates who have interviewed in your target company.

Listen to the interviewer carefully as the interviewer tends to drop a lot of hints during the case.

Be patient and calm before and in between the interviews.

Debjit Dutta

Undergraduate College	IIT Kharagpur
Field of Graduation	B. Tech. (Mining)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Axis Bank (24 months) and Karza Technologies (11 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

What kind of products did you build and work on?

Case Interview 1

Consider any app that you use frequently, what, according to you, are some of the major pain-points and what would you have done differently?

I: Based on your experience as a Product Manager, I want you to consider any app that you use frequently. What, according to you, are some of the major pain-points and what would you have done differently?

C: Okay, let's take LinkedIn as the app for our discussion.

(I touched upon the basic and advanced features that have been introduced to the LinkedIn app, comparison with respect to its previous versions and after its acquisition by Microsoft. I outlined the metrics that I as a Product Manager would want to keep a track of, while

parallelly going through the user's perspective and how the features suffice their requirements. The focus was towards achieving a balance between improving user experience, creating user delight as well as maintaining the user engagement metrics on the platform. This was a 5-minute conversation that stemmed out from my previous experience as a Product Manager).

I: Since you have worked and built fintech products, lets discuss about an initiative that I am working on, I am currently working on building a digital bank from the ground up in India.

C: Sure.

(This was not a case discussion and the conversation revolved around the different aspects of the bank and how a digital setup would look like. The partner mentioned the different initiatives he had planned for setting up the bank).

I: Thank you, it was a good discussion.

C: Thank you.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Being thorough with my resume and previous experiences to be able to draw from them and drive the conversation, definitely helped in the interview.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	I asked a few follow up questions pertaining to his initiatives for the bank.

Case Interview 2

Your client is a refrigerator manufacturer, who is recently facing a decline in their profits

C: I would like to understand more about the client. (I asked the initial clarifying questions including base of operations, manufacturing facilities, value chain, product mix, market position, current industry scenario etc.)

C: Please allow me a couple of minutes to structure my thoughts.

I: Sure.

C: The decline in profits can be an outcome of either an increase in costs or a decline in revenues or both, should I start from any of these parts?

I: There is neither a decline in revenues nor an increase in costs.

C: Okay, understood. Please allow me a minute to gather my thoughts.

C: I would want to understand the profit margins across the types of refrigerators we have and the market demand for the same. Also, how do they compare with the industry's trend?

I: We have higher margins on double-door refrigerators, but they currently constitute 20% of our portfolio. For our competitors, about 40% of their sales come from double-door refrigerators.

C: We can try to optimize our product portfolio so as to maximize our profit margins.

I: Thank you, you have solved the case.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? I was able to put in place a proper structure.

What could you have done better? NA

Questions asked to the Interviewer If this was a real case or not. It was one of the cases he had recently worked upon.

Deeksha Pant

Undergraduate College	Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	B. Com. (Hons.)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	American Express (35 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Questions on my background, work-ex and some discussion about the payments industry.

Introduce yourself.

Case Interview 1

If you were to launch a post payment product for the low-income households, how would you go about it? Which product, what features, market penetration etc.

The partner wanted me to solve the case as I would on a consulting project and also asked me to use my existing knowledge of the payments industry. So, I stuck to minimal questions and explained my approach every step of the way and took his confirmation from time to time.

C: Who wants to launch this product? Could you provide me some background information on the issuer?

I: A well-known bank in the low- middle income group, has 20+ fragmented competitors, looking to disrupt the mass affluent segment.

C: I want to divide my analysis into 3 segments:

- a) Type of product and features
- b) Marketing and Communication
- c) Onboarding of customers

Choice of products could be debit card, credit card, co-branded card, a virtual card, replenishable cards.

(I explained what each type of product is and what they are suitable for. In the end the choice comes down to either a physical credit card or a virtual credit card for maximum benefits on every rupee spent.

I made a matrix of the pros and cons considering the following metrics: Cost and Time to launch, Convenience to consumer, Consumer preference (specific to target segment), Revenue generation and concluded on the physical credit card option.)

C: Should I move on to the kind of features we should go for?

I: Leave that. Tell me what according to you are the main barriers to growth in the credit card space?

C: I divided the barriers to growth into 2 parts- merchant resistance and consumer preference.

- a) Consumers: Lack of trust in credit cards due to high interest rate on late payments, not as convenient as cash or UPI payments.
- b) Merchants: Interchange fees, payment regulations

I: Then how would you market such a product?

C: I followed the basic principles of mode, medium, message and customized it as per the target segment.

I: Do you know of any existing unique products for this specific target segment?

C: I spoke about Simpl (a platform for credit-based payments for online retailers) and we had a brief discussion on it.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I was confident and was engaging the interviewer while solving the case and even during the initial 5 minutes of conversation.
What could you have done better?	I could have mentioned relevant information from my work-ex and from existing companies in the payments ecosystem after the case was done. However, that came up later in conversation.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	This was an actual case that the partner had solved, so I asked him what the outcome was and if the product succeeded in the market.

Case Interview 2

A group of people want to start an online fitness app. They want your help with 3 things:

- a) Steps to analyze the target group and demand
- b) What data do you need for this?
- c) Sources for this data

C: Target market based on the below:

- a) Age
- b) Occupation
- c) Location
- d) Income levels

Narrowed down on 18–40-year age segment in tier 1 and 2 cities focusing on: students, working professionals, sports enthusiasts.

I also did a quick guesstimate of the market size on the basis of the above.

Sources of data:

- a) Google location services for current place of residence and frequently visited locations.
- b) Cred or similar payments apps for information on spending.
- c) Zomato/ Swiggy to check food preferences for product tie-ups.
- d) Social media presence and internet usage from telecommunication companies.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	The initial conversation helped break the ice and I felt very comfortable with the interviewer. I gauged early on that he did
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	not want a structured solution to the case but wanted me to brainstorm and come up with unique ideas.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the interviewer	NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Look confident even if you may not be feeling confident. Make use of the first 2-3 minutes to engage the interviewer with your work ex or CV related information or even small talk about the weather, it builds a good rapport with the interviewer and might sway him/her your way even if the case solving doesn't go as well as planned.

Drishti Sharma

Undergraduate College	Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	Bachelor of Management Studies
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

Case Interview 1

Our client is a home appliance manufacturer. For their refrigerator vertical they want to improve their profit margin which is currently around 13-15% (this is lower than their competitors).

C: Confirmed the problem statement, applied the CPCC framework.

I: Client has been established in India for a very long time. The client operates throughout the value chain. There are 3 major market players which retain roughly 70-80% of the

market share, our client is one of them. Refrigerators can be classified into 3 broad categories:

(a) Single Door (b) Double Door (c) Premium. The client also manufactures spare parts for refrigerators. Growth has not been a problem for the client.

C: To improve revenue, I laid down 3 options that the company can explore: (1) Number of Retailers we are dealing with (2) Average Quantity we are selling per retailer (3) Price.

I: The client is doing well in all these 3 dimensions. What else can we do to improve the margin?

C: We can analyze the cost side and identify areas where we can reduce costs to improve the overall margin.

I: Costs cannot be reduced further, anything else you can think of?

C: We can look at the other revenue streams such as spare parts and installation services.

I: Let's focus on refrigerators.

C: Confirmed if I can explore the competitive landscape and further questioned the difference between the client and competitor's product offerings and price.

I: Go ahead.

C: Asked the profit margin per category for our client and the competitors.

I: The client was earning a profit margin of 10%, 14% and 19% respectively for single door, double door and premium respectively. Competitors were earning 10%, 15% and 20% for these categories.

C: Asked if there was a difference in the sales mix? If the competitor was selling more of one category than our client?

I: Yes, the competitor is selling more Premium refrigerators which is driving up their overall margin.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I was smiling throughout the interview even when I faced some bottlenecks. The partner was very jovial, and I tried to match his spirit throughout the interview. At the end, he said "keep smiling it takes you a long way, trust me."
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

The client is a global tools manufacturer and has two product lines- hand tools (hammers, pliers etc.) and power tools (drill machines etc.) with limited differentiation. They launched their hand tools business in India 3 years back with 100+ dealers across the country but have only been able to achieve 1.5% market share even after conducting numerous marketing initiatives. The global management has asked them to get into the top 3 in 18 months or exit the market. How should the client proceed?

C: Reiterated the problem statement and the given information. I'd like to understand more about the competitive landscape. How many players operate in the market and their respective market shares?

I: The top 3 players in the branded tools market hold 60% of the market. Player 1 :35%, Player 2: 15% and Player 3: 10%.

C: Does the client have any budgetary constraints for this expansion in India?

I: No, the client doesn't have any budgetary constraints.

C: The client can grow in India through Organic or Inorganic routes. Under organic routes as you mentioned earlier the client has tested a lot of marketing initiatives and has struck enough deals with retailers across the country. Therefore, we can explore pricing. We can dilute our profit margin and decrease the price of the product, but it might lead to a price war.

I: The company wants to maintain its current pricing strategy.

C: Then we should consider inorganic options which include JVs and M&As. Since we plan on staying here long term, I don't see JV as viable. So, I think we should look at M&A.

I: Great. Whom would you merge with or acquire and why?

C: Since our aim is top 3. I would look at the firms on rank 2 and 3.

I: Why not rank 1?

C: With 35% market share, they seem to be way ahead of the other competition and striking a deal with them might be difficult as compared to the rank 2 or 3 players who'd be more interested in associating with a global giant.

I: After we merge, would you want to launch a separate brand for the recently acquired company or sell it under the client's name?

C: We can enjoy the brand recognition the company we acquired possesses and further improve our market share. Associating the client's name with an Indian Manufacturer will further improve the client's sale as well. Therefore, I recommend co-branding/ joint branding.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	NA
What could you have done better?	I finished the case quite fast, which should not be done. I should have taken my time and should have exhausted all the options completely.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Confidence is key.

Kamal Sharma

Undergraduate College	NIT Jaipur
Field of Graduation	B.Tech. (Mechanical)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Deloitte USI (34 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.

What motivates you in life?

Describe one of the best projects you have done in Deloitte USI.

Case Interview 1

Your client is an IT Service Company. You have been hired to analyze their cost structure and recommend solutions to reduce costs.

C: I reiterated the problem statement to ensure I was not missing any information. I also asked a few clarifying questions to gain a better understanding of the problem at hand. When you mention IT service companies, can I assume it to be like TCS, Wipro, Infosys?

I: Yes, you can assume it to be like TCS.

C: Just to know a bit more about the client, can you help with the following details - locations, client bases, age of the company, size of the company in terms of the workforce?

I: The company is based in India and has offices in Bangalore, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Gurgaon. It started its operations in the mid-90s and has approximately 5000 employees. Most of its clients are based out of the US, majorly Fortune 500.

C: Sounds good! To get a better understanding of the offering, is it safe to assume that it offers customized solutions to every client?

I: Yes, the requirement would vary based on its scale and specific need.

C: Thank you, I have sufficient information. In order to analyze the cost structure of the firm, can I take 20 seconds to structure my thoughts?

I: Sure, take your time.

C: Cost can be broadly categorized into HR, infrastructure, and miscellaneous costs. HR cost would include employees' salary, employee mix, benefits, and perks such as traveling, stay, F&B and insurance. Infrastructure cost would consist of computer servers, maintenance, software license, rent, utility, hardware such as laptops/desktops and technological accessories. The miscellaneous cost would include stationaries, security, salaries to maintenance staff, taxes, S&M. Would you like me to focus on any of these specifically, or should I explore each one by one?

I: Let's focus on HR cost, which accounts for more than 80% of the cost.

C: Employees' salary: fixed + variable component, and employee mix includes team

composition: Onshore & Offshore, and team utilization. (Elaborated each element in detail as was asked by the interviewer).

I: Good, now I would like you to think of a few major cost components associated with support departments?

C: Could you please help to understand what does support department do?

I: They provide support to the core teams involved directly with the clients' deliverables. Such as delivering laptop services, IT security team, so on and so forth.

C: Majorly, the cost would comprise of salary: perks and benefits, employee mix, and the number of employees supported per support staff. (Elaborated each component).

I: Correct, I think you have covered all. We are running out of time, so we can stop here.

Tips for Future Candidates

Don't try to fit in frameworks in every case; focus on solving problems of different industries

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I was confident throughout the interview. I ensured that the case discussion was conversational and substantiated answers with industry examples.
What could you have done better?	Scoping of the problem and initial questions could have been reduced, which could have helped me to save time.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Parkhi Mohan

Undergraduate College	IIIT Sri City
Field of Graduation	B. Tech. (Computer Science)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Deloitte India (12 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.

Case Interview 1

Shown a screenshare containing information pertaining to three product lines of a telecom company: their current market share, projected market in different segments, growth rate, EBITDA and market share ranking. I was asked about the current state of the company, and future action plans.

I: Hi Parkhi, how are you? Introduced himself and told me about his practice areas.

C: Briefly introduced myself.

I: I'll be sharing my screen and showing you some information regarding a telecom company. They have three product lines, with details mentioned in the sheet. I need your help in determining the current state of this company, and any future action plans.

C: The whole interview was very conversational, with the interviewer giving cues based on the different heads mentioned on his screen: revenue and COGS were calculated to find the current state of the company for each product line. Based on the individual analysis of each product line, the fate of the company was decided.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?

I remained calm despite not knowing much about the domain and kept taking cues from the interviewer. Keeping it conversational, and asking clarifying questions helped me sail through.

What could you have done better?

I should have practiced such financial cases during my preparation.

Questions asked to the Interviewer

NA

Case Interview 2

Your client is a public sector bank who is facing a high ATM fee payout. They require your help.

I: Hi Parkhi, how are you doing? Introduced himself and told me about his practice areas.

C: Briefly introduced myself.

I: Smiled and mentioned we'll directly be jumping into the case. Asked if I was ready, then gave the problem statement: Your client is a public sector bank who is facing a high ATM fee payout, they require your help.

C: Re-iterated to confirm the problem statement. Mentioned that I'd be needing the interviewer's input to fully understand the issue. Asked doubts regarding fee payout.

I: Explained that when customers of other banks withdraw money from our bank's ATM we receive pay in fee. Similarly, the vice versa situation results in a payout fee.

C: Scoped further with CPCC to understand the quantum of the payout fee and since when we had been facing this issue.

I: We have been facing this issue for the last 2-3 years, and the quantum of loss has been Rs. 200 Crores.

C: Asked where all our ATMs are located, who our customers are and whether our competitors are also facing a similar issue.

I: Mentioned that we operate pan India with 30 licenses, don't have a segmentation difference in our consumer base and with respect to competition it's a zero-sum game: so, if we have a high payout fee, another competitor is benefitting with a high pay in fee.

C: Having gathered the necessary information I asked for some time to structure the factors and broke them down into the number of customers, transactions per customer, frequency of transactions and ATMs present per customer.

I: Sure, let's start with the customers. What all could be the issues they are facing?

C: Further broke the factors down into geographic locations of the ATMS: availability and time to reach, wait time, safety, ATM operational hours, convenience and ease of use experience.

I: Explained that there is no issue with safety, then asked to explore the other factors. He mentioned that our bank currently has 10,000 ATMs and asked if they are enough?

C: Mentioned that the 10,000 ATMs number stand alone is not enough to come to a satisfactory conclusion. Asked about our market share, and benchmark against competitors.

I: Good. Assume there are 3 lakh ATMs in India, and our bank holds a 5% consumer base, being the 3rd largest bank in India. The largest bank holds 12% consumer base with 25,000 ATMs and 2nd largest bank holds 8% consumer base with 8,000 ATMs.

C: Comparing with the top 1st and 2nd largest banks, the number of ATMs our bank has is at the benchmark level, however; considering there are 3 lakh ATMs in India: we should ideally operate around 15,000 ATMs in India to cater to the 5% consumer base and try to increase this number to receive a higher pay in fee.

I: Yes, you are correct. We need to operationalize more ATMs across India to cater to our own customers and increase our pay-in fee. This is one issue we are facing. What could the other issues be?

C: Traced the customer journey to confirm there were no issues in the need to withdraw cash, and no affordability concerns. ATM accessibility was an already discussed issue. Hence, we then moved to availability and customer experience. Discussed factors like operational hours, availability of cash, queue time, ATM machine working condition.

I: Asked to expand on cash availability and machine working condition.

C: Asked how frequently the cash was re-filled, especially in areas where consumer density was high, and if the frequency of refill and volume of cash filled was sufficient.

I: Mentioned that this was the second issue we were facing, as our re-fill rate was not up to the mark. Then he asked me to scope further to figure out the last issue.

C: Focused on the ATM machine's working conditions: hardware and software related issues.

Broke hardware issue down to: machine not working, card reader broken, cash dispenser not rendering cash, and software issues into server side: client-side issues, internet issues, fund unavailability, language/software issues.

Keep your interview as conversational as possible; ask wherever any process is unclear and keep calm. Also, believe in yourself, and try to smile.

I: Yes, you are going in the right direction. Why could the machine not be working?

C: Listed factors like functional issues with a new machine just installed, old machines that were broken, damaged machines due to improper usage, spoilage due to water/weather/external factors, lack of electricity to run the machine, etc.

I: Yes, the third issue we are facing is that our ATMs located in rural areas don't have adequate power supply hence many of our ATMs are non-operational. Thank you, Parkhi, for your time, it was a pleasure interacting with you. All the best!

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I remained calm even when I did not know much about the domain and kept taking cues from the interviewer.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Priyanshi Jindal

Undergraduate College	Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	B.Com. (Hons.)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

Introduce yourself (Spoke about my extra-curricular activities; was also asked about my academic achievements).

Case Interview 1

Our client is a manufacturer of glass bottles in Germany. These bottles are used to keep juice. The client has seen a sudden rise in the demand for these bottles. The client has 3 options-

1. Expand capacity by setting up another manufacturing plant in Germany

2. Source these bottles from Indian manufacturers

3. Source these bottles from Vietnamese manufacturers

C: Repeated the problem statement just to ensure that I've understood it correctly, and then asked a few clarifying questions.

C: Are there any constraints in terms of budget or time?

I: The client wants the capital efficient option as soon as possible.

C: Can you tell me more about these bottles? Are all of these of a similar size?

I: Yes, there's only one kind of bottle.

C: Great! I would like to take 30 seconds to structure my thoughts.

I: Sure, go ahead.

C: We should evaluate all the 3 options one by one and see which one seems to be the best one. For setting up our own unit, we can see the budget and time considerations. For India and Vietnam, we can compare both by firstly evaluating the macro-economic environment, then by evaluating the industry in both countries, and then we can do a cost-benefit analysis.

I: I don't want you to give me a framework, rather just focus on a few factors that you'd like to evaluate. Like you mentioned, budget can be one factor, what else can be there?

C: Sure, I'll just take 30 seconds to list the factors that can be there.

I: Yes, you can even take 2-3 mins if you want to.

C: (Tried taking no longer than 30 seconds because I felt the interviewer might lose interest in the case.) So, we can have a few factors like:

1. Time- setting up our own unit will take more time

- 2. Budget- own unit will require huge capital investment
- 3. Rules and Regulations
- 4. Taxes and tariffs
- 5. Supply chain efficiency- We can consider the Economic Order quantity, Re-order Level, Danger level, lead time in this. Since getting the bottles from Vietnam or India might require us to evaluate all these things thoroughly, otherwise we might not have the bottles when needed.
- 6. Social Factors- whether the people are comfortable buying bottles which are manufactured in some other country
- 7. Quality of bottles
- 8. Environmental concerns if we set up our own unit

I: That was quite comprehensive. Now suppose we have decided to go ahead with India even though the bottles over there are 5% more expensive than Vietnam. Why do you think we might have taken this decision?

C: That might have been because of the few possible reasons listed earlier. Started listing down the pointers discussed earlier by saying they might be better in India's case.

I: Yes, but I want you to think more.

C: Asked for 30 seconds. I was not able to think of anything apart from foreign exchange rate fluctuation, but thought it is already covered in the 5% more expensive part. Since nothing else came to my mind, I started thinking out loud and mentioned Forex rate.

I: That was what I was looking for. Thank you, Priyanshi, it was nice meeting you.

C: Thank you!

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I kept calm and did not hurry after getting the problem statement. I tried keeping the interviewer engaged throughout.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Tips for Future Candidates

1. Make sure you do not panic in the interview.
2. I always believe quality of cases is more important than the quantity of cases. Ensure you do practice some good cases with the seniors.
3. Do abstract cases for sure. Actual interviews rarely have cases where a set framework can be applied.
4. Don't be disheartened if you are not able to clear a company's interview. Just be calm and things would work out very well.

Raevant Kaul

Undergraduate College	IIT Kharagpur
Field of Graduation	B.Tech. (Civil Engineering)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Ola (13 months) and Gain Credit (22 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

How has your IIM Lucknow experience been so far?

Tell me something about yourself.

Why did you join IIM Lucknow?

Case Interview 1

Your client is a bank based out of India and wants to explore "Buy now Pay later" model (e.g., EMI). Explore this opportunity for the bank.

I: Your client is a bank based out of India and wants to get into "Buy now Pay later" model. Explore this opportunity for the bank.

C: Asked more about the problem statement, objective and about the bank.

I: The client is a large private sector bank. The objective is to explore this opportunity in the e-commerce space as the industry has grown at a fast pace, especially due to Covid-19. All the banks and fintech companies are competitors and the end user would be a normal e-commerce customer. The products of the bank are like a large commercial bank.

C: Are there any constraints in terms of time frame or money?

I: Must be done in timeframe like 6 months.

C: We can start evaluating the decision by exploring the market attractiveness of the buy now pay later industry.

I: (Interrupts) No that is fine. The bank has done that already and wants to enter this market. Let's look at the ways to enter this market.

C: To enter the market we can investigate the following options:

1. Acquire a Fintech company already in this space
2. JV with Fintech companies
3. Direct Tie-up with E-commerce websites

Mentioned ways to evaluate each of these options and gave suggestions.

I: Okay, this is fine. Let's say that the bank decides to go with the 3rd option of "Tie-up with E-commerce websites". How will you assess the customer coming on the E-commerce website in terms of credit risk?

C: Mentioned credit risk modelling and the machine learning models being used by some banks and FinTech's. Discussed about the various metrics that can be used to evaluate customer's credit risk e.g., buying behavior on the e-commerce platform, payment methods used, frequency of buying/cancellations, credit history, credit score etc.

I: That will be it. Thank you!

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	The case was related to my work experience domain, so I was able to bring in some decent points, especially towards the end. Also, checking the approach and thought process with the interviewer from time to time helped.
What could you have done better?	I could have taken more time to think through the structure before discussing with the interviewer.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

A global tools manufacturing company wants to become one of the top 3 players in India in the next 18 months. What will be your strategy for the same?

I: (Gave all the case information in one go in the initial 2 minutes)

A global tools manufacturing company wants to become one of the top 3 players in the next 12 months. What will be your growth strategy for the same?

Currently the company has 1.5% market share, whereas the top 3 players have 60% market share in total (35%, 15% and 10% market share). The company has a national presence with

100 + dealers/hardware stores. The company has been in the country for more than 5 years. There are no constraints in terms of budget.

C: Mentioned the various growth levels a company generally has on the organic and inorganic front. Since such a steep growth was required in a shorter period, it suggested that using inorganic growth levers seemed appropriate here.

I: How can the company grow inorganically?

C: Briefly discussed about M&A, JV, partnership.

I: What factors would you consider while deciding which company to acquire?

C: Mentioned the various pre-merger and post-merger factors that should be considered. There was a discussion around which of the top 3 companies should be acquired basis the above factors and synergies. There was also a discussion around how the client should rebrand itself after acquiring one of the top players.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Taking cues from the interviewer and trying to keep it conversational.
What could you have done better?	Should have kept some questions prepared to ask at the end in the interview.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Keep some good questions ready to ask the interviewer. Try to build a conversation with the partner and keep cool.

Rajshree Chandel

Undergraduate College	Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	Mathematics
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

Introduce yourself.

General conversation on my undergrad subject.

Case Interview 1

A family has lost a member to Covid-19. They are suing the hospital where the patient was admitted on the grounds of malpractice. Two questions:

- (i) From the point of view of the hospital management, how much should they pay as lawsuit amount in this case?
- (ii) (Would it be better for the hospital to improve their processes instead of risking being sued repeatedly? Give me a cost-benefit analysis.

C: (Repeated case statement & clarified basic case facts like type of hospital, type of patient etc.)

I: Consider it a premium private hospital situated in Delhi. Patient was a 50-year-old male who was the head of the family.

C: I wanted to understand what all we are covering in lawsuit amount while doing a cost benefit analysis. Should I account for costs like lawyer fees, logistical costs, settlement amount, loss of brand value etc.?

I: Good points but consider that the lawyer fee and logistical costs are negligible, assume we have an efficient judicial system, so we are expecting a quick settlement. Moreover, brand value is something we are not currently concerned with since covid is a national emergency and there is plenty of demand. This may be a somewhat morbid scenario, but I only want you to look at what would be fair compensation for the life loss, i.e., the settlement amount.

C: (Asked for some time to think)

Although a person's life would be invaluable, I can think of two ways of assigning a cost to life. First is the direct monetary cost of life (in terms of the person's income and assets that will now be lost for the family), and second is the value of the time the deceased individual would have spent with the family. May I proceed with this approach?

I: Sure, go ahead.

C: So, the direct monetary value lost is relatively easy to measure. We can calculate it as:
(Average Annual Income) x (No. of working years left)

Within this we can also account for annual income growth rate, and any other investments / indirect income sources that may now cease to exist.

I: Makes sense. Consider that the retirement age is 62 years, and the net income is 1.5 Lakh per month.

C: Okay, that gives me the remaining 12 years of earning lost. *<Performed the calculation>*
 $1.5 \text{ L} \times 12 \text{ months} \times 12 \text{ years} \approx \text{Rs. 2.2 Cr}$ of direct monetary impact on the family.
(Realized I did not account for medical expenses) Should I also account for the hospital fee and medical expenses that went into the treatment of the individual?

I: No, that will have a negligible impact. Can you tell me how you will value the time that the family has lost with their loved one?

C: (Asked for some time to delve further)

Objectively, I can break down the time spent into smaller activities and value their replacement costs. For example, I can break down the daily activities that the person used to do like household chores, driving around the family, taking family members for outings, buying things for the family, contributing to the children's education and so on. These respective activities will have to be replaced by alternatives (like house help for chores, tutors for education, drivers for driving etc.) or will have to be borne by another family member. It would be simple to calculate these replacement costs. May I proceed with this approach to value the time lost with the family member?

I: Fair enough, I like the thought process. Assume that you know each of these replacement costs, how will you arrive at the final figure?

C: Considering that the person would have lived to the full life expectancy age if the mishap had not happened, I could break down the cost as follows:
(Years left to live) x (Number of family members) x (Annual replacement cost per member)
While determining the replacement costs, we can also account for the ages/stage of life of

the family members, i.e., if the father has died while his children are very young, replacement costs will be relatively higher. Should I delve into the calculations?

I: Sure, consider 3 other family members and annual replacement cost of 5 Lakhs per member.

C: (Performed calculation)

Year left to live = 70: 50 = 20 years (life expectancy in India = 70 years)

Value of time lost = (20 years) x (3 family members) x (5 lakhs p.a. replacement cost)
= 3 Crores

So, we arrive at the total settlement amount = direct monetary loss of family + replacement costs

$$\begin{aligned} &= 2.2 \text{ Cr} + 3 \text{ Cr} \\ &= 5.2 \text{ Cr} \end{aligned}$$

I: Fair enough. Now quickly tell me if it would be better for the hospital to improve their processes instead of risking being sued again.

C: I think we can answer that by comparing the cost of process improvement to the annual cost of lawsuits.

I: How would you do that?

C: For the cost analysis, I would break down the net annual cost for lawsuits such as:

(Annual Volume of Lawsuits) x (Settlement Cost per lawsuit)

Further, I will break down the Annual Volume of Lawsuits as:

(Average number of Covid Patients admitted per day) x (365 days)) x (% of patient deaths) x
(% of patient families filing a lawsuit).

I: Alright, consider that we admit 100 Covid patients on the daily, out of which patient deaths are 1%. Out of these deaths, 10% of the families file a lawsuit against us for malpractice.

C: (performed the calculation: $100 \times 365 \times 0.01 \times 0.1$)

As per this data, we will have nearly 37 lawsuits to deal with every year. Moreover, settlement amount for each lawsuit can be benchmarked to around 5.2 crores, as calculated. Therefore:

Annual Cost for Lawsuits = $37 \times 5.2 \approx 190$ Crores

So, if the process improvement costs are less than 190 Crores, we should go with that. Otherwise, it is cheaper to pay for lawsuits.

I: Good case. Let's close it here.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Formula based approach. I kept it conversational, took sufficient breaks and asked for help wherever I got stuck.
What could you have done better?	Could have come up with better ideas to abstract the value of time. Could have picked up on hints faster.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Asked about the origin of the case, whether he had worked on it and what solutions he proposed.

Tips for Future Candidates

Apart from the general case solving, make sure you come across as an amiable person.

Sarthak Mahapatro

Undergraduate College	IIT Kanpur
Field of Graduation	B.Tech. (Mechanical Engineering)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	ISRO (35 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.

Explain your work at ISRO.

Why did you leave ISRO?

Why MBA? What are you focusing on? Are you part of any CCA?

Case Interview 1

Your client is a TIC: Testing, Inspection and Certification Company. They are looking to incorporate IoT to improve their offering. Provide suggestions for the same.

I: Do you know what is IoT?

C: Yes, it is basically a set of hardware/devices connected to each other via the Internet and are in communication.

I: Yes. So, your client is a TIC: Testing, Inspection and Certification Company. They are looking to incorporate IoT to improve their offering. Provide suggestions for the same.

C: So, we need to provide suggestions for how a TIC company can make use of IoT technology to further improve their service. Before I start, I would like to understand a few things. What are the major customers for our company and what are the types of certifications that they provide?

I: There are 2 major types of services they provide, (1) Railway Tracks, (2) Shop Floor Machines.

C: Great. May I first focus on the Railway track inspection service and then come to the Shop Floor Machines?

I: Yes, you can do that.

C: Are there any Budget and timeline constraints?

I: No budget constraints, timeline: as soon as possible.

(30 seconds to think)

C: There are 2 ways in which we can upgrade our Railway track inspection service -

- a) Improve our existing service by using IoT to increase the efficiency of testing and inspection, reducing the lead time for the whole certification process. This would help us differentiate our offering from others

- b) Secondly, we can expand our offering from 1 time certification service to a continuous health monitoring service. Here, we can use sensors connected by IoT to regularly monitor the health of the tracks and provide pre-emptive warnings.

I: Okay, that sounds good. But how will you explain it to the higher management? What are the factors you consider while presenting them the solution?

C: Please give me some time to collect my thoughts.

(Took ~60 seconds to come up with the analysis)

C: I would present the following analysis,

- a) Amount of initial investment required.
- b) Amount of increase in variable costs.
- c) Expected increase of revenue due to improving existing service.
- d) Expected revenue from continuous health monitoring service.
- e) Break-even n ROI analysis.
- f) Long-term implications, expected life for technology etc.

I: Fair analysis. Thank you!

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Good formal conversation and I was able to structure the abstract case. The idea of continuous health monitoring service was pretty like the actual case.
What could you have done	NA

better?	
Questions asked to the Interviewer	<p>How is the TIC industry in India?</p> <p>Could TIC and the continuous health monitoring technology be useful in Amusement Parks as well?</p>

Sakshi Bhalla

Undergraduate College	Government Law College, Mumbai
Field of Graduation	Law (Dispute Resolution)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Advocate: Bombay High Court (46 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Introduce yourself.

Explain what brings you to a B-School after having practiced law?

Case Interview 1

Imagine you're advising the Prime Minister of India on improving the legal system in India. Suggest the changes you'd recommend and why.

C: Since I'm recommending the Prime Minister of the country, is it fair to assume that there are no money constraints?

I: Yes.

C: Is there a specific timeline I'm looking at for the recommendations to be implemented: short term or long term?

I: None.

(After jotting down my thoughts using the What/Who/When/Where/How approach)

Changes in terms of:

A. Policy (The 'What'):

(a) Simplifying Laws; and (b) Simplifying Processes (For example: reducing the no. of appeals).

B. Judges (The 'Who'):

(I) The number of judges: filling up vacant posts and having a mechanism in place to fill up vacant posts knowing well the retirement age of judges; and (II) the quality of judges: (a) selection: making it a prerequisite to have at least 2 years of trial court experience and (b) training: placing incoming judges in division benches with senior judges, external training, monthly briefing, yearly training etc.

C. Timelines (The 'When'):

(a) Judges: incentivize judges, especially at grassroots levels, to reduce the duration of the cases; (b) Advocates / Parties: Making adjournment an exception, not a norm by requiring a written application for adjournment along with a fine. Not allowing more than a certain no. of judgments in a matter.

(Here I broke down the timelines to internal processes and external reasons)

D. Infrastructure (The 'Where'):

(a) increasing the number of courts/tribunals; and (b) improving the quality of existing courts/tribunals, specifically at the grassroots level.

E. Implementation (The 'How'):

A lot of changes which appear to be good are brought on paper, but not implemented properly. That is half the reason why our legal system is slow. To ensure changes are implemented effectively, have each subordinate court/tribunal answerable to the higher authority.

For example, the District Court's work could be overseen by a committee comprising of judges of the High Court.

I: That was comprehensive. Thank you, that will be it.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	My knowledge of the subject and an easy framework.
What could you have done better?	Made my framework more MECE at the 2nd/3rd level.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

Your client is a cement company, it is trying to grow its presence in India. Advise your client on how to proceed.

C: I'd like to know a little more about the company. Where are we based out of and where do we operate?

A: Based out of Bangalore, operate in South India.

C: Next, I'd like to know what kind of cement/grade of cement does our company produce and how do we price it via-a-vis others?

I: Cement is broadly of 2 two types: grey and white. The grey being cheaper and more commonly used, the white being the more expensive one. We produce more of grey and price it 5 rupees lower than our competitors.

C: I'd like to know about how strong our presence is in terms of market share.

I: We are one of the dominant players in South India and our presence in North India is limited. Our competitors have a strong presence in North India.

C: Is there any way we can categorize our customers: in terms of rural / urban?

I: Primarily rural customers.

It took 30 seconds to jot down my thoughts.

No. of places we sell at * no. of customers * no. of products * no. of stores we sell at * price of the product.

In terms of places that we sell at, my recommendation would be to stick to South India and penetrate deeper. To this end we could (a) identify small towns and villages which would be

requiring urbanization, shifting from Kaccha houses to Pakka houses, and make our presence there at district levels (b) identify towns which are likely to undergo construction of buildings and apartments.

In terms of no. of customers, we could have 3 categories (a) Builders, (b) Government, and (c) retail customers. Try entering tie-ups with the big builders of the southern region, for future construction. With respect to the government, try entering in tie ups with them for social causes such as building schools, rebuilding cities after natural calamities, the constitution of houses for the poor etc. In terms of Products, since our main segment is grey, focus on that but ensure white is available specially in urban areas.

In terms of no. of stores, increase the number of outlets our product is available at. Since our major customer segment is rural, every district / big village should have our product available in South India. By taking the product closer to our customer, we can ensure that a pull effect is created for our product.

In terms of Price of Product, since cement is a commodity and our prices are lower than those of our competitors, we can increase our price marginally without it affecting the demand.

These are the things I'd recommend to my client.

I: That was comprehensive. Thank you, that will be it.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? The fact that I didn't stop once I started talking. Also, the idea of a tie-up with the Government was appreciated.

What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	About the Partner's work with BCG over the course of the years.
Tips for Future Candidates	
Prepare your introduction well, first impressions last.	



EVERSANA™

Vrund Atulkumar Joshi

Undergraduate College	Shri M.P. Shah Government Medical College, Jamnagar
Field of Graduation	Medicine
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Apollo Hospitals (24 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Why MBA after MBBS?

Which subject do you find most difficult here? (Plus, some follow-up questions)

Which is your favorite subject? (Plus, some follow-up questions)

What is the difference between marketing at hospital chain like Apollo and a healthcare diagnostic startup? (I had experience across both)

What area did you focus on the most while you were working with HealthRozz?

Case Interview 1

There is a German pharma company that manufactures anti-cancer drugs and wants to enter India. Find out the market size for the company.

I: Hi Vrund! How are you feeling?

C: Pretty good. A bit nervous, but I guess that's inevitable.

I: Please feel comfortable. Let me start with a very obvious question. Why are you here after doing MBBS?

C: Gave the answer I prepared.

I: Fair enough. So, tell me, which subject do you find the most difficult here?

C: Economics.

I: Why do you find it difficult? Is it the subject or the prof? or both? Is it Macro or Micro that you studied?

C: Gave answers accordingly.

I: And your favorite subject?

C: Marketing

I: That's very obvious.

I: So, let's start with a guesstimate. There is a pharma company based in Germany. And they develop anti-cancer drugs and wants to enter into Indian market. Can you help me find the revenue for the company?

C: Asked some clarifying questions. I started stating assumptions about the number of cancer patients in India based on my knowledge and then confirmed it with interviewer.

I: Yes, Go ahead.

C: Can I remove people who do not believe in modern medicine?

I: Yes, you should. You can also remove people who would stop taking meds for monetary or any other issues.

C: Sure. I did some number crunching and confirmed it at every stage to finally arrive at a number which he seemed pretty satisfied with.

I: Are you comfortable with data analysis tools like Excel?

C: Yes, pretty comfortable.

I: Alright, thank you and have a nice day.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Industry knowledge and taking up the hints from interviewer.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

What do you know about Eversana?

What makes Eversana different from other consulting firms?

What are the other challenges in front of the world after COVID?

Are you a number guy or a word guy?

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Keeping it very conversational.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

KEARNEY

Harsh Agarwal

Undergraduate College	Hindu College, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	B.Sc. (Statistics Hons.)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

Asked about learnings from High School and Undergraduate College. How is it different from B-school?

Why consulting and specifically why Kearney?

Asked about my learnings from Term I of B-school and if the rigorous schedule actually helps?

Why did you not join Hong Kong University even after getting 50% scholarship?

What is one thing that excites you most about Consulting?

Walk me through your CV.

Asked some questions from Internship and Scholarships.

Case Interview 1

Your client is a Spice Manufacturer and Seller. They have been facing stagnant revenues from past 3 years and looking to expand their business. Help them out through all possible ways.

I: Your client is a Spice Manufacturer and Seller. They have been facing stagnant revenues from past 3 years and looking to expand their business. Help them out through all possible ways.

C: (Asked some clarifying questions to know about the problem and understand the objective of the company) To understand the client in a better way, could you tell me where is the client located and since how many years they have been in business?

I: The client is located in the northern part of India; they have been in business for past 15 years.

C: Have they experienced any decline in price of their products?

I: No, they have not seen a decrease in price, it's just they are having constant sales from past 3 years.

C: What is their product line, different modes of distribution? Who are their customers?

I: They sell home-made variety of spices. They manufacture spices and sell it directly to retail outlets, outlets in Mall (like Big Bazaar, Spencer's). Can you think of any other channel?

C: Do they have some online presence? Do they export spices to other countries?

I: No, they are not currently online. They are well established in Northern India.

C: Do we have some information about the other players in the market? What market share do we hold?

I: There are 3-4 big players in the market, we have a market share of almost 8%.

C: Can we say that we are focused on increasing the current market share through increasing our existing revenue or exploring other options?

I: Yes, you can say that.

C: What is the average price of our products? Is it competitive with the other players?

I: It is very similar to other players, and we cannot look for ways to decrease the prices as that option has already been explored.

C: Now that I have got fair bit of idea about the client, I would like to look for ways to increase their revenues. I would majorly focus on exploring the current market of the company as well as if can taper into new markets as well.

I: Sounds like a good approach, lets proceed.

C: There could be two ways to increase our market share in the existing.

Firstly, through exploring more distribution channels and bringing more retail stores on board to strengthen our presence.

Secondly, we can introduce some other SKUs of current product line or launch some new spices/ flavors from other parts of country to the market.

I: Sounds good. Can you also explore some other ways to increase sales?

C: Definitely. As I mentioned we can also explore to look for ways to taper into newer markets outside north India. Also, we can directly launch some new products into new markets but that can be a risky option as we would be more confident about our old products which has previously worked in Northern market.

I: Okay. Can you tell me what other channels we can explore for increasing our market share?

C: We can collaborate with restaurants, other product manufacturers where spices are required in bulk quantity. We can also get listed on online platforms to increase our visibility. For newer products we can look to launch a different segment which focuses on bringing spices from different regions of the country like Northeastern Dalle spice and other popular flavors.

I: I think you have covered all the aspects where we can look at it. Can you quickly summarize the case for me?

C: Sure. (Summarized- covered both sides of market)

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Most of the interview was clarifying and understanding the problem statement. I think it gave me a good start as it helped me in knowing about the business in a better way. Even though some structures are used in solving the case but tweaking it a little bit and presenting it in your own way plays an important role.

What could you have done better? I could have suggested some different ideas to solve the problem while summarizing.

Questions asked to the Interviewer Asked questions about industries and cases he has worked on till now.

Case Interview 2

Your client is into Construction business. They have currently experienced increase in their expenses, help them figure out where is the issue and give recommendations.

I: Your client is into Construction business. They have currently experienced increase in their expenses, help them figure out where is the issue and give recommendations.

C: (Asked some clarifying questions to know about the problem and understand the objective of the company) What all construction businesses is the client involved in like constructing buildings, roads etc. and since when they have been in business?

I: The client is majorly involved in constructing buildings.

C: Who are the competitors and where do we stand in the industry? Have they also been experiencing the same problem?

I: There are 3 other big players in the industry, and we have 10% share in the industry. They are not experiencing any increase in their costs.

C: I would like to understand more about the client's business, how do they sell flats which they build?
Do they sell it directly to people or they have some contracts with other parties?

I: They majorly work on contractual basis and other third parties sell it finally to people. What are you looking to figure out with this information?

C: I am trying to figure out which could be the major cost driver for the client. Keeping in mind this is a company specific problem I think the major costs would be labor cost and commissions for getting the contracts.

I: Yes, labor costs could be looked at further. What do you think could be the problem with the client?

C: There could be three components to it. First it could be that our labors are demanding more wages now but generally wages are set on industry standards. Second could be that more we are hiring more labors for our work. Third could be that the training costs which is incurred in training new labors is higher for our company.

I: Okay. We are hiring more but our revenues are also increasing in proportion, but our training costs are higher and that's where the problem is. What do you think can be done?

C: We can look to create efficient batches for training so that whenever training of labor takes place, it is for a larger set of people. If we are spending more on training it's clear that we are not hiring experienced and trained labor, do we have some information on why are we not doing that?

I: That's a good observation. We have tried hiring experienced civil engineers, but we are not able to match their pay-scale, or they are choosing other career fields. That is why we are hiring inexperienced labor or engineers and training them for the work.

I: Keeping time constraints in mind, you can suggest some recommendations on how to solve the issue at hand.

C: We can look at collaborating with some colleges for regular hiring from them. We can look to outsource training facilities for our labor. We can also look for launching some courses in colleges to incentivize them to join the company by highlighting the perks as well.

I: Okay. Don't you think we can also look to open up a college specifically for Civil Engineers so that we can have trained quality engineers in our company?

C: Certainly, we can also explore that situation. Although I just thought that the amount required to set up a college will be comparatively higher than other options.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Although the case was unconventional and on the side of idea generating type but clarifying the questions and going according to the responses given by the interviewer worked well for me.
What could you have done better?	I think while giving recommendations I could have thought of all possible unconventional ways to solve the issue.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	What are the initial steps involved in solving a real-life case and what tools do we generally use at Kearney?

Jayati Maheshwari

Undergraduate College	SGTB Khalsa College, University of Delhi
Field of Graduation	B.A. (Business Economics Hons.)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

Introduce yourself.

Run me through your CV.

I was enquired about the P&G Emerging leaders Program, and asked if I have an offer from P&G. I was then asked which firm I will choose.

Case Interview 1

P&G's leading detergent's market share is falling. They need your help.

C: Reiterated the problem statement to understand if I am being asked to identify the problem or come up with ideas to solve it. (Although identifying the genesis of the problem is of utmost importance to solve it, knowing the interviewer's expectations is very important as final interviews were scheduled for only 12-15 minutes.)

I: Figure out the problem.

C: Sure. I would want to start with some preliminary questions to scope out the problem. For how long the problem has existed and what is the quantum of decline.

I: We have been facing this issue since the past 1 year and have witnessed a 25% decline.

C: Are we talking about covid or pre-covid times?

I: Covid times.

C: Is the decline concentrated to a particular geography or any particular product or the entire detergent line.

I: No, evenly spread across.

C: Enquired about the competitive landscape, more details about the detergent (premium category or regular), and our consumers.

I: Detergent market in India is highly competitive, with premium brand from P&G and HUL regular brand from Ghadi and Nirma and competition from local brands as well. We deal in premium category.

C: Understood. Thank you, Sir! May I take a moment to structure my thoughts?

I: Sure.

C: So, I would like to view the problem from 2 sides, demand and supply. For demand side, I will analyze the journey of a typical detergent consumer, and for supply side, I would analyze the value chain.

I: Fair approach. Go ahead.

C: For demand side, I will step into the shoes of a consumer and map his/her entire journey. Starting with if the consumer needs our product in the same quantity as he/she used to in pre covid times. During covid washing load was substantially lesser. Following this, is the consumer even aware of all our offerings, for which I would want to analyze the marketing budget and efficiency by analyzing outreach and different mediums used.

Post which, I will analyze if the consumer has accessibility for the product. Here I would analyze both online and offline channels. For offline channels, I would also analyze factors such as product placement, ease of product identification, retailer's push and commissions etc.

I: Right, go on!

C: After this, I would analyze if the consumer had the purchasing power to buy the product, as covid caused a substantial decline in discretionary disposable income.

Then I would analyze the experience of a consumer using the detergent. Here, I would also see if P&G or the competitors have made any significant change to the product and packaging.

C: You seem to be well-versed with the sector. Just list down the supply side factors quickly.

I: For supply side, I would analyze the value chain, starting from raw material procurement (which could be a major issue due to covid), payment terms with suppliers, inbound logistics (since crossing borders across states was an issue), production related issues especially related to labor and covid norms as stipulated by the government.

C: These are enough. I think we should close the case here. Thank you.

I: Thank you Sir!

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?

The interview was very conversational. When the interviewer realized I am curious to know more about the FMCG industry, he kept on giving me real life insights. I used those insights to solve the case.

What could you have done better?

I could have spent lesser time on scoping questions and used that time to solve the case.

Questions asked to the Interviewer

NA

Case Interview 2

Second round was a conversational round where no case was taken up.

Questions asked were:

- Tell me about yourself
- Why Kearney
- Give me 2 reasons why you wouldn't want to venture into consultancy. How will you overcome these?
- You come from a joint family. Do you think you will be able to cope with the life of a consultant?

Walk me through your CV. The interviewer seemed really interested to know about my profile, which is why I gave him a detailed explanation of my PORs and internships. To add credibility, I dropped a few real-life instances and insights which I discovered during my internships.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I was well versed with my CV and HR questions, which is why I could drive the entire interview, without the interviewer losing interest.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Tips for Future Candidates

No matter which domain you prepare for, do not ignore CV and HR preparation.

Uday Bansal

Undergraduate College	Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	B.Com. (Hons.)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Optum - UHG (9 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

Case Interview 1

Your client is a glass manufacturer looking to grow. They need your help.

I: Let's start with a small case.

C: Sure, Sir.

I: Your client is a glass manufacturer which is looking for expansion opportunities. They've hired you to help them.

C: Great. Just to make sure we're on the same page, our client is a glass manufacturer which is looking for expansion opportunities and we need to help them.

I: That's right.

(Firstly, used a CPCC framework to know more about the problem)

C: Okay, I would like to start with knowing a little more about the client. When we say it is a glass manufacturer, what type of glass products do they manufacture. Is it the one used at homes or in cars or buildings or any other use?

I: Yes, so it is a glass used in glass facades in homes for windows and panes.

C: Okay. So, what type of expansion is the company eyeing. Is it looking to expand into new markets or within the same market?

I: The current market in which it operates is pretty saturated, and they are looking to expand into new markets.

C: And by new markets, do they mean new geographies or new product line.

I: They want to operate in the same geographies they have currently been operating in. They are looking to expand their product portfolio. Can you help them decide that?

C: Yes definitely. So new products can be added by either identifying different uses of the existing manufacturing capabilities or adding new ones. Considering that we have less time, the first option seems to be a better one.

I: Yes, that's correct. Can you help them identify what are the alternate uses of the glass that they sell?

C: I would like to first divide the uses into 2 groups. Stationery uses and Moving objects. Moving objects would be the cars, buses, trucks etc. and stationery would include the buildings.

I: You can look into the building use.

C: Okay, so buildings can be then divided as residential buildings and office spaces. Majority of the office spaces have glass facades and very few residential buildings have it due to privacy concerns, which area should I first focus on?

I: We have primarily been selling our product for office buildings. Can you give some uses of the product in residential buildings?

C: Yes, definitely. (Asked for some time and then came up with a few uses)
So, the uses can be of 2 types. One is outside the home use, and another could be inside it.
Outside uses includes the glass railings, windows, staircase railings
Inside the house includes indoor windows, dining tables, fixed cabinets, steam room in washrooms.

I: That's great, Thank you Uday!

(Overall, it was a moderate case. The interviewer focused more on idea generation than anything else.)

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Since the main aspect of my case was idea generation, solving abstract cases with seniors really helped me in my preparation.
What could you have done better?	The bucketing could be better, and more ideas could have been given.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Is this an actual client problem?

Case Interview 2

Second round was a conversational round where no case was taken up.

Questions asked were:

- Tell me about yourself
- How interested are you in joining Kearney?

Round 2 was a casual discussion with the partner.

Tips for Future Candidates

For the buddy calls, focus on framework for solving the case.

For the interviews try practicing abstract cases.



Raj Patil

Undergraduate College	NIT Surat
Field of Graduation	Engineering
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Siemens (36 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Asked some details about under graduation PORs.

What was your role at Siemens?

Any special project that you worked on? What was the methodology adopted? (Explained 8D methodology of problem solving along with example) How did you contribute?

Case Interview 1

Your client is a manufacturer (Assume industry of your choice), and it wants to improve its productivity. Find areas of improvements and make recommendations to the client.

C: Clarified the problem statement and the objective. Defined the industry type. Asked few questions on company profile.

I: Agreed to all the assumptions.

C: Followed the profitability structure - revenue and costs.

I: Focus on operational perspective.

C: Mentioned the major buckets involved in manufacturing in order: procurement of raw material, inbound logistics, loading, manufacturing/production process, testing, storage of final goods, dispatch, distribution channels. Asked if I should focus on any specific bucket.

I: Start with procurement.

C: Suggested probable issues and recommended ways to improve. Further, identified gaps in every bucked and suggested ways of improvements.

(At every stage I linked circumstances with my work experience and mentioned how we used to handle it and suggested better ways of handling. Mentioned lean manufacturing, six sigma, 6S, Kanban, Kaizen and tools used for operational efficiency)

I: Good. Liked your suggestions. Do you have any questions for me?

C: Asked a question curiously on report released by KPMG a week ago. (I had read the report from company website and coincidentally the report was from Partner's vertical)

I: Explained challenges and gave some tips on how one should analyze segments like food and agriculture.

Interview Experience

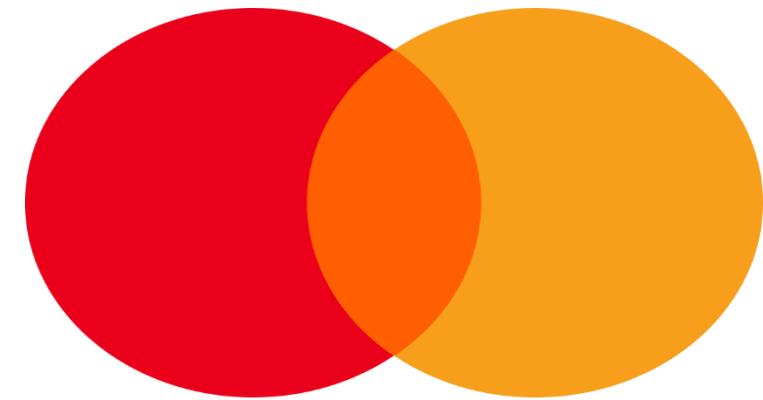
What worked well for you?

I answered CV questions well. I related the case problem statement with prior experience and explained every bucked in detail. Provided recommendations for each bucket mentioned. According to me, asking relevant question on KPMG report showed my interest in consulting domain as a whole.

	Knowledge of KPMG's services helped me relate things a better way.
What could you have done better?	Case solving could have been more interactive. I could have asked for interviewer's inputs at every stage. For most of the cases, I assumed scenarios and confirmed from interviewer.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Be thorough with your CV and have knowledge about all industries mentioned on your CV.



mastercard

Anushruti Singh

Undergraduate College	Bharati Vidyapeeth, College of Engineering Pune
Field of Graduation	Electronics & Telecommunication
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	BRIDGEi2i Analytics Solutions (35 months): Sales Strategy & Operations (B2B)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

Case Interview 1

An airline company came to master card to launch a co-branded card in India. The airlines have seen revenues pick up again in the covid year and we need to formulate a GTM Strategy for the same.

I: Let us formulate a GTM Strategy.

C: (Started with clarifying the problem statement & then moved to asking preliminary questions)

I: (Interviewer gave more context) As travel picked post COVID, ticket prices have gone up and people have resumed traveling, in fact they are keen.

C: Okay. Is our client a low-cost carrier? Also, asked a brand image related question.

I: Yes, client is a low-cost carrier, with a young vibe.

C: (Kept it conversational, took a minute, the interviewer was supportive & sweet) Before we deep dive into the GTM strategy, I would like to understand a few things:

1. Current scenario/Gap
2. Competitor
3. Who can we target?

Does that sound fair?

I: Yes, please go ahead.

C: Mentioned that the customer base should mainly consist of GenY (Business class & travelers of the right age who use air travel often so millennials).

I: Agreed.

C: Asked questions related to current scenarios, like: what loyalty programs, website or app that is operational, how we give discounts?

I: Yes, for the customers. Clients currently don't have a loyalty program in place, they work through already existing aggregators to give discounts. And they don't have an app or website (Interviewer liked one of these questions)

C: What is our competition doing? Do they offer loyalty programs? What do we know about what competition is doing differently? (The latter most question can be framed in many ways)

I: They do offer loyalty programs and hence we have been told they have higher retention. Now, Anushruti, I want you to think on "How can they go to market?", assume we have the

product or card ready we don't need to design the specifics of the product. Take a minute if you like.

C: (Took a minute) I went back saying I would broadly divide the decisions in two parts: 1. Identifying the TAM (STP) 2. Marketing (Awareness & demand gen) and walked her through my thought process briefly.

I: (She gave direction to the conversation, I was confident so the conversation wasn't dropping low at any point neither was she being difficult, so relax and stay at it: focus on building the conversation) Wanted me to think on GTM more, how will I plan?

C: Took a minute before responding and went back with the What/When/How/Who structure (it was a two-level structure). Walked her through it and checked with her before I walked her through all my ideas. (It was conversational, she was satisfied and asked another question)

I: Now, assess if it is feasible for Mastercard to launch such a card, what parameters to consider seeing its validity.

C: In our target demographic, check for patterns based on the data Mastercard has: i) Spend using credit v/s debit (especially in this industry) ii) Check with airlines to see what data they have on bookings made in the region (different channels, traffic) iii) Cobranded card performance, etc. (elaborated on these lines)

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? This was very free flowing interview, the interviewer made me feel at home very soon. Key is to be confident and invested in the conversation (keep calm). Speak your mind out, keep them in loop and do check with them at every point if the thought process is going in the right direction (they help direct better).

What could you have done better? Honestly, I could have done the case better but more than the approach I felt she was assessing my communication skill to hold a meaningful conversation and see if I can pick up hints.

Questions asked to the Interviewer Something related to the project they did for the airlines I asked.

Case Interview 2

Metro stations have huge real estate to offer for brands to market themselves and recently they had started capitalizing on the same by offering the space outside of metro stations as well as inside, capturing larger audience on the road and inside the metros. Now imagine you are an edible oil company, say Saffola and estimate how much you should pay for advertising on this large scale at Gurugram metro station (the last metro station)

I had questions but even before I started thinking about how to solve it, I repeated the guesstimate and my understanding of it. In the process, we discussed how the impact for Saffola will be based on the footfall and the brand visibility created which the interviewer called 'pay per eyeball' (like pay per click): so, we basically want to estimate the number of eyeballs this investment can fetch Saffola. (Guesstimate was fairly simple from here but the application was new with some slight nuances added to it).

Now I started thinking about how to solve it.

Approach: (Clarified some preliminary questions to understand typical customer base and who are we targeting so that I can create target segments). I had established that there can be three types of customers we would have:

1. Homemakers
2. Gen Y: Young professionals (who want to have home-cooked meal, develop healthy habits)
3. Chefs/Tiffin-services/maids: basically, others who influence the decision of buying edible oil at homes

Now thinking about who all from our above segments maybe using the metro station or get exposed to the ads, the 2nd type took the highest priority. Solved the guesstimate using four main levels (starting from taking Delhi's entire population):

1. Age: 20-45 which was 35% of the population (shared the breakup and how I came to 35%)
2. Income level: 70% of the population is either mid or low middle income which I wanted to consider
3. Working in Gurugram: Assuming 3 main work-centers in Delhi i.e., Noida, Gurugram and central or rest of Delhi: took 1/3rd of the population from 2
4. Gender: Split them between men and women + assumed half the men are now actively engaged in cooking or being the direct audience, calculated a number

Here the customer type 1 & 2 were minority, so we didn't consider incorporating them. Though, the interviewer did ask what is missing here?

The people who never used the metros but saw the add on the road crossing the metro is a segment we left out but again a small segment and can be estimated using a logical %. I decided not to (80-20). Now instead of taking a number for how much to pay per eyeball to get a final estimate the interviewer closed the case. I checked to calculate but it wasn't required.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	80-20 rule: But do mention everything and then mention that given it only makes 20% or less chunk of the pie, you won't consider it. Keep interacting, sharing what you are thinking and take a minute or so to think whenever required and once your approach is making sense to the interviewer: do the math vocally.
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What could you have done better?	Just mentioning the potential customers on road that we are missing before declaring it part of 20% in my understanding.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Interviewer had introduced herself in the beginning, so based on that I asked how her experience was in McKinsey (earlier) v/s Mastercard (current): pros & cons.

Tips for Future Candidates

All the best. You have got this. Let your intention be known and still be humble.

Sanchi Gaba

Undergraduate College	Daulat Ram College, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	Economics
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

Why consulting?

Given that you're an Economics graduate, can you explain one related concept to me?
(Explained about "utility" by stating relatable examples)

Case Interview 1

Guesstimate the number of iPhones sold in Delhi.

I: Guesstimate the number of iPhones sold in Delhi.

C: I divided the population of Delhi into different income groups followed by age groups. I also gave an estimated number of the people who would be new users along with the ones who will switch to the new model. Along with it, I brought in the idea of the change in consumption patterns due to the pandemic. I was later asked to give a calculated number

after sharing my approach.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Explaining all the assumptions as I moved forward with my approach helped me narrow down to the most important points to consider out of a bigger pool.

What could you have done better? I could have made the calculations more precise by adding more filters to the figures.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Case Interview 2

Suppose you're a manager at Panasonic and the sales for the Panasonic hair straightener is falling. State the plausible reasons for the same.

I: Suppose you're a manager at Panasonic and the sales for the Panasonic hair straightener is falling. State the plausible reasons for the same.

C: I stated various marketing, demand, supply, online-offline mode and payment related reasons. I emphasized on credit/debit cards here to make an impression of my understanding of the industry.

I: Follow up questions related with each head and my opinion to overcome them. However, no specific emphasis was given on the card-payment system.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Stating personal instances as a customer helped me break the ice with the interviewer which made me confident throughout the process.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Practice guesstimates regularly and go through past interview experiences from the CSC Casebook.

Shivani Pandey

Undergraduate College	St. Stephen's College, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	B.A. (Physics)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Schlumberger (35 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Introduce yourself.

Case Interview 1

Guesstimate the number of table tennis balls you can fit into an airplane.

I started with estimated the volume of one table tennis ball and then estimated the volume of a plane. (Considered the plane to be made of a cylinder and two conical structures at the two ends; I simplified the streamlined body).

Then I estimated the luggage space using the estimate of number of passengers and their 15kg luggage allocation.

I further added a threshold for the extra luggage that is allowed after payment. I also accounted for engines, wings, seats, upper cabin luggage, washroom etc.

What worked well for you?	The breaking down of the problem into simpler figures and not getting into unnecessary details worked well.
What could you have done better?	The calculations could have been done faster.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

Your client is a mall chain owner in Singapore. They have been facing a decline in profits lately. You have been asked to identify the problem and recommend solutions.

C: I would like to know a little bit more about the client. How many malls do they own? Are these typical malls like we have Phoenix Malls in India?

I: Yes, similar to Phoenix malls in India. They have 3 malls in Singapore.

C: Is the problem with all the three malls or any one in specific? If all, is the competition also facing a similar issue?

I: Just one mall and the competition are not facing the issue.

C: Okay. Digging deeper into the profitability issue, is it because of the declining revenues or increasing costs or a combination of both?

I: It's a combination. I would like you to explore revenues first.

C: Okay. Broadly I can divide the revenue streams for the mall into rent and commissions from shops, advertisements inside and outside the mall and parking fees.

I: Let's look at commissions.

C: Okay. The shops can further be divided into premium and normal. For each there will be food, apparels, shoes, accessories, and shops like lifestyle, pantaloons in India where you find everything (except for food).

I: Correct. Let's look at these shops where you can find everything. This is where our commissions have been declining. Can you suggest any solutions?

C: Sure. Customers visit these shops because they can find all the brands at one location though the collection is limited for each brand. They also get discounts in these shops.

The staff can be better trained at handling the customers and identifying what they are looking for exactly.

The mannequins should be carefully displayed as they play a crucial role in converting a sale for a window shopper. (This is coming from personal experience)

I: That will be enough. Good job.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	The initially bucketing of the revenue streams was well appreciated by the interviewer. Further classifications were also received well.
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What could you have done better?	I asked the same question to the interviewer. She said that we could have explored the cost aspect as well, but due to paucity of time she had to cut it short.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	I asked her about the most interesting case she had worked on and what made it different from her other projects. (It was the location, Switzerland, that made it different).

Interview 3

HR & Conversation Questions

What do you know about MasterCard?

Why do you want to join MasterCard? (I have worked as a Geophysicist with Schlumberger for 35 months. They wanted to understand why I want to make such a drastic switch)

Where do you see yourself 5 years down the line?

How do you think you did in the case and guesstimate round?

Tell us about your Scuba diving experience? (It was mentioned in the CV)

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I was confident and relaxed. It was a very fun conversation with the two interviewers.
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What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Your favorite projects till date? Do you miss travelling?

Tips for Future Candidates

Go through the interview experiences in the CSC Casebook to get an idea of what to expect

Nupur Patel

Undergraduate College	Miranda House, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	B.Sc. (Hons.) Physics
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Whitehat Jr. (9 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

Case Interview 1

Guesstimate the footfall of tourists in U.P. in a year. What can be done to increase the number?

I narrowed down the guesstimate by asking scoping questions. I asked whether I had to calculate the number for Indian tourists or international (as I was required to give recommendations as well). Further, I asked which sites have to be considered. They asked me to consider both national and international tourists. I asked them if I could start from estimating Taj Mahal's footfall then adjust numbers for different sites.

I took 52 weeks in a year, bifurcated it into weekday and weekend. Then, I took the capacity approach by considering area of Taj Mahal and its operation timings.

Further, I suggested 4-5 famous places and adjusted the number.

Under suggestions I highlighted easy visa availability, better connectivity, improvement in transport facilities, infrastructure and women safety.

What worked well for you?	I didn't lose hope; I kept trying and kept conversing with the interviewer. (I smiled throughout).
What could you have done better?	I could have considered other variables.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

A bank wants to expand its credit card facility to small and medium enterprises in India. Calculate potential market size. Give reasons which could stop SMEs from adopting credit cards.

I tried different approaches, but I could not come to the number. In end he asked me to summarize and answer the second half of the case. I stated all sort of socio-economic issues and myths which could lead to low adoption of credit facility.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I did not lose hope in between and kept smiling.
What could you have done	NA

better?	
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 3

Calculate the income given to housemaids in India in a month.

I took the household approach and considered tier-1, tier-2 and tier-3 cities. I incorporated the income of households and number of maids required. For each tier, I used my personal experience of living at different places (which seemed to work in my favor).

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Giving personal insights showed observational skills.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	I asked the interviewer how she would have approached the question.

Tips for Future Candidates

What matters is not whether you could solve the case or guesstimate but your attitude; a smiling face and a good conversation with the interviewer is key. Treat the interview like a conversation as the interviewer wants to know you better.



Erica Gulati

Undergraduate College	Hansraj College, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	Commerce
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	McKinsey Knowledge Center (14 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself?

How did you like your work at McKinsey? Which teams were you a part of and who did you work with?

Case Interview 1

Client is the owner of a Research Institute and wants you to estimate the number of sport scientists that he can potentially interview for the position.

C: As per my understanding of the problem statement we are looking to estimate the pool of sport scientists who we can potentially interview. Is that correct?

I: Yes

C: Okay. So, the skills that we'd be looking for would be a combination of nutrition/ medicine and physical education. Would that be correct?

I: Yes, the candidate should have knowledge of nutrition, biomechanics, recovery, physical activity etc.

C: Okay. I would like to divide this estimate in 2 parts. First- I'd like to estimate the potential number of candidates who have graduated recently, Next- I'd like to estimate the candidates who are already working in similar roles. Does that sound fair?

I: Yes, please go ahead.

C: For estimating the number of recent graduates who can be our potential candidates, I'd like to first estimate the number of people who would have taken Biology and Physical Education as their subjects in class 12. For reaching this number, I'd like to start with the total population of the country divide it into rural and urban. I would ignore the rural population as this is a relatively niche field.

I: Here he interrupted me to tell me that this approach is very broad, and we can't possibly reach the solution this way.

C: Got it! So, if we know that approximately 10 lakh people sit for engineering entrance exams each year, we can take a factor of double that i.e., each year ~20 lakh people are looking to join graduate colleges.

I: This is fine. But this approach is similar to the one you used before. (This gave me the clue that he wants me to use the supply side approach).

C: Okay, we can try and estimate the number of colleges in the country and see the colleges that would have these subjects e.g., medical/ home science colleges.

I: Yes, Good. How would you estimate that?

C: We know in India there are state universities and central universities so we can proceed with that.

I: Sure.

C: There are 30 states in India. We can assume that each state has at least 10 medical colleges. So, we get 300 medical colleges. We can multiply this by a factor of 1.5 to incorporate other home science and colleges of the related field.

I: Okay.

C: Now, in these 450 colleges we can assume that there are 1500 students on average. This gives us a pool of ~650000 students. Of these 650000 students, we can assume that 50% go into pure sciences (medicine) 30% go for PHD/ other higher education and 20% want to change their field. This gives us 130000 students. Out of these we need students who have the combination of skill set that we are looking for (knowledge of nutrition and body mechanics). Since these are niche subjects, we can take a factor of 0.2 to get to our potential pool of graduate candidates which is 26000 candidates.

Now we can move to the second part of the guesstimate which is number of people who are already working in some related vocation.

I: By this time, the interviewer was getting late and asked me to rush a little.

C: (Since there was a shortage of time, I started by laying down the approach first) For estimating the number of people who are in a similar vocation, I would first define the type of vocations. So, we can have people who are currently in the sports industry working as physiotherapists etc. We can have dance trainers and gym enthusiasts as one category, The next category would be freelancers like dietitians etc. The last category would be 'others' primarily comprising of those graduates who had opted for research roles after their

graduation and now want to return to the industry.

(After I laid down this framework the interviewer seemed satisfied. I continued with the calculation) First we estimate the number of potential candidates in the sporting industry. Let's assume there are 16 IPL teams, each of these teams would have 10 people with the required skillset. Let's say there are 20 such sports and leagues. We get a pool of 3200.

I: Thank you we can end the case here.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Clearly stating the parts and the process of solving before deep diving into the specifics.
What could you have done better?	I could have caught the hint of solving the guesstimate with the supply side approach a little sooner.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Don't lose your cool, even when the problem statement is not entirely clear. State your understanding and validate it with the interviewer.

Khushboo Gupta

Undergraduate College	St. Xavier's College, Kolkata
Field of Graduation	Economics (H)
Professional Qualifications	Actuarial Science
Work Experience	D. E. Shaw & Co. (24 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself?

Where have you worked? Describe your role.

Case Interview 1

Your client is a large FMCG company, and you are speaking to their supply chain head. This is post COVID second wave and he wants you to suggest some interesting things that they can do with their supply chain.

C: Started with asking about the business, geography etc. but was interrupted.

I: Assume it to be similar to Unilever. I don't want more questions, tell me how you would approach such a question.

C: Sure, I'd start by looking at their value chain, starting from R&D, forecasting, raw material

acquisition, logistics, manufacturing, distribution, sellers, after sales activities.

I: Great, now what are the few main things you would want to know before evaluating?

C: I would want to know more about the network that the company has, how they handled the 1st wave of COVID and how those changes helped with the second wave.

I: They have 100 suppliers, 50% of the material is imported, 25 plants pan India, 3000+ distributors. During COVID, the plants were shut down for 2 months, and the whole supply network was shut as well. Manpower was reduced. Later, warehouses were increased to stock more, increased inventory days. So, let's look at forecasting and logistics. Let's start with forecasting.

C: Sure. When looking at the forecasting efforts I would look at it from a business and technical perspective. On the business end, the demand and supply would be coordinated. On the technical front, I would look at the kind of tools we have been using and if there is a scope for an upgrade.

I: Which tools?

C: Advanced analytics, machine learning, IoT etc.

I: How can IoT help?

C: It can provide some real time data, can help us identify consumer spending patterns, store traffic, improving communication between distributors and retailers.

I: Great. Let's move to logistics. Suppose the diesel price has doubled and the transporters are asking for double the money we used to pay them. What should we do then?

Data:

- Initial Cost of Diesel: 50/L
- Truck runs 200 Km/day, 25 days a month
- FC: 60,000/month
- VC: (2+price of diesel) per Km

C. Since there are fixed costs, the transporter is obviously not facing double the costs. To calculate the proper rise in costs, can I also get the number for mileage?

I: 5 Km/L

C: Sure, I would like to take a minute to calculate the rise in total costs.

I: Sure.

C: Initial cost = $60000 + [2*200 + (200/5)*50]*25 = 1,20,000$

New cost = $60000 + [2*200 + (200/5)*100]*25 = 1,70,000$

Percent change = $50000/120000*100 = 41\%$

The actual rise is 41%. Do we want to compensate them exactly or do we want to negotiate?

I: No, we want to be fair. Can you explain the methodology?

C: Explained my calculations step by step.

I: Great, we can end the case here.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I didn't get nervous and was able to stay confident.
What could you have done better?	I messed up the calculations a little in the middle which could have been avoided.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Can you tell me what large FMCG companies actually did during the COVID 2nd wave?

Tips for Future Candidates

Build some business acumen because you could be asked to generate ideas on spot.

Rishika Agarwal

Undergraduate College	St. Xavier's College, Kolkata
Field of Graduation	B. Com. (Hons.)
Professional Qualifications	CFA Level 3 cleared
Work Experience	JP Morgan (23 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about your prior work experience.

Challenges faced in JPM.

Case Interview 1

You have been approached by the CEO of a gym chain, currently having 5-6 outlets in India. Due to COVID, they are experiencing lower footfall, with their revenues falling. You have been hired to help the company adapt to the new normal.

[The flow was conversational. It started with calculating revenue numbers, explored various streams of revenue and potential areas of improvement. Concluded the case with recommendations for increased subscription and retention]

C: Started with asking questions about the location of the gym, capacity, target customer segment (Low, medium or high-income brackets)

I: Location: Metro cities; capacity: 50 people; Income bracket: Medium to high.

C: What are the services currently provided by them apart from gym equipment and professional trainer? Do they have planned alternate sessions on say, Yoga or Zumba as well?

I: No, just traditional gym facilities.

C: Since we are considering the covid era, were there any restrictions imposed by the state/central government?

I: Yes, strict regulations on sanitization, temperature check and 50% capacity utilization were imposed. All of which has been duly obliged by the chain.

C: What was the fall in revenue and was the decline evident before Covid or sudden due to Covid restrictions?

I: The decline was sudden. Let me provide you with some case facts to better evaluate the situation.

Current revenue: 10,000 per customer per month, average capacity utilization pre covid 80% and post covid 10%.

C: Based on the data, pre-covid revenue: $10,000 * 12 * 50 * 0.8 * 5 = \text{Rs } 24 \text{ crore}$ across 5 outlets. Post-covid: $10,000 * 12 * 50 * 0.1 * 5 = \text{Rs } 30 \text{ lakhs}$ i.e., 85-90% fall in revenue.

I: That's correct.

C: For our analysis, should we also consider the cost aspect as some of the trainers may not be full time employees or were laid-off due to low footfall at the gym?

I: Assume all trainer to be full-time employees and no lay-off as it was against the company

policy. We can focus only on the revenue aspect for now.

C: Since they have a traditional setup, can we explore potential avenues for revenue generation?

I: Sure, go ahead.

C: Gym has 2 targets currently, to acquire new customers and retain existing ones.

Recommendations to address both are:

- Starting transport facility: pickup and drop facility from home to gym
- Invite celebrity star to the gym and use social media handles to promote assurance and safety in opting for their services
- Personal reminder and motivation calls from trainers
- Develop online platform like Cult fitness and offer services like Yoga, Zumba and Mindful meditation sessions
- In-house restaurant: providing healthy food alternatives

Tips for Future Candidates

Keep the flow conversational and be confident.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Keeping my composure.
What could you have done better?	Could have avoided calculation error by asking for more time.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Interviewer's feedback.

Shombit Dhar

Undergraduate College	BITS, Pilani
Field of Graduation	Mechanical Engineering (Minor: Finance)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Flipkart (32 months) and Attentive AI (4 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself

Why McKinsey?

Case Interview 1

Case 1: Guesstimate the amount of cash withdrawn from an ATM in a day in BITS' Pilani campus.

[The original case was to estimate the money withdrawn from an ATM in a day at IIM-L but was changed since I had never been to campus. A few facts to be known about Pilani before we start: The population of Pilani is very low, and a huge chunk of the town's population is students of BITS. There is only 1 ATM on campus (ICICI Bank): This question was asked to I in his interview at IIM-C]

C: Great! Wanted to clarify a few things: Are we speaking about a Covid scenario? Also, since

BITS is a college campus, I wanted to understand whether we are speaking about any particular time period: vacations/ or should we consider it to be a time period during the semester?

I: Let's take a pre-Covid scenario and you can consider that all students are on campus.

C: Great! I'd also like to know whether I should consider a normal day: i.e., no festival/ college event etc.? and whether we are looking at a weekday or a weekend as trends might be slightly different.

I: Consider a normal day on campus, and if there are any other factors you would like to scope, feel free to make assumptions and state them.

C: Awesome. There are two ways to approach this problem: First, we can look at the traffic at the ATM, and try to guesstimate the daily volume by analyzing the number of transactions and their ticket size. I'd like to take a second approach though, i.e., estimate the total cash spent on campus/ by the campus population in a month. I'd then try to figure out how much of that cash is withdrawn from the ATM on campus and get a daily value by dividing by the no. of days in a month. Does that seem like a fair approach?

I: Sounds good. Let's proceed.

C: There are two sets of people who would withdraw money from the ATM. Those residing on campus and those residing outside campus. Those residing on campus would be students, faculty and support staff, and restaurant and shop owners who transact heavily in cash. Those from outside campus, would be residents of Pilani who would come to withdraw cash from the ATM because there is no other ICICI ATM in the town. There would also be speakers/ guests visiting the campus, and a small set of other people. For the sake of this discussion, I wouldn't consider the last 2 cohorts of people as their relative size would be very small.

Does this breakdown seem fair and is there a particular cohort you would like me to analyse first?

I: Fair. Let's proceed: choose any cohort you would like to analyze further.

C: Sure, let me start with students. I would break them down year-wise and also break them on the basis of low and high spending capacity. I would factor in whether someone's family had to take a loan to fund the education as a proxy for whether someone would have a low or high spending capacity.

1st, 2nd and 3rd year students would have a certain spending habit. I would estimate this at a low and high level. 4th year students (since they have savings from a 6-month internship) and master's students would have higher spending patterns, so I would take in different multiplier factors over the base numbers to estimate their spends.

I: Sounds good.

C: I would now break down the spends into major buckets: Food, travel, utilities, stationery & merchandise, alcohol & cigarettes, and luxury spends/ indulgences.

[Broke down the values: also mentioned that most students budget their expenditure, so the individual breakdown didn't matter as much as the total value. Used my personal budget and spending patterns as a benchmark. Used a friend's spending patterns as a benchmark for the other spending capacity cohort]

C: There is one major difference now though, from when this question was asked to you during your interview. BITS has an ID card system, where a lot of Food, travel, and merchandise spends are loaded onto the ID card and paid at the end of the semester, thus requiring no cash. Furthermore, a lot of tuck shops also use Paytm/UPI. So, I would factor in

cash transactions as a percentage of total spend for each of the buckets.

[Broke down numbers: Gave a rough figure for students]

I: Sounds good. Let's move on to the next case.

Case 2: Chelsea Football Club is entering the Indian market: list down the possible revenue streams and then analyze some nuances it must consider while making an entry (Market Entry + Growth Strategy Case)

C: I want to confirm whether we are speaking of CFC as a brand, or as a football team trying to enter India over here.

I: We want to analyze revenue streams for CFC as a brand.

C: Sure. CFC already exists in India, should I assume a hypothetical situation where the brand has not yet entered the market, or should I try to drive growth for the current operations. I also want to understand the objective are we looking at profit/ revenue maximization or are we looking to use this entry to increase our fan base. I'd also like to understand timelines and constraints.

I: You can consider a hypothetical situation, though let's try to first list down all possible revenue streams. The objective is profit maximization and let's not think about timelines and constraints at the moment. If there are any more questions, feel free to make assumptions and state them.

C: Sure. I would break down the revenue streams into two parts: Those coming from core football operations and those coming from other operations.

Non-football operations would majorly be:

1. Merchandise (jerseys, bobbleheads, signed memorabilia, partnerships with other brands etc.)
2. Events (trophy tours, meet the legends, fan meet-ups etc.)
3. Fan Clubs
4. Infrastructure (e.g., The Chelsea Pub: sports bars for screening/ fan meets etc.)
5. Sell Exclusivity (e.g., pay for featuring on our social media handle, paid subscription on the Chelsea 5th stand app to get exclusive benefits)
6. Partnerships would be an overlapping bucket, and we could boost revenue streams by partnering with other brands.

Football led operations would be:

1. Host tournaments
2. Partner with a local club
3. Training players: Coaching/ Chelsea Academy
4. Training coaches: Certification courses etc.

[The idea generation process was conversational in nature: I laid down my L2 and L3 structures and we discussed a bit on the points that I found interesting/ wanted to probe on as I proceeded. We had a fair bit of discussion on selling exclusivity. I mentioned that I had featured on the club's official page for free, because I had a friend handling their social media account, but I would gladly pay a bit for the same. I also, constantly benchmarked v/s Arsenal and Manchester United, both of whom had a good brand presence in India].

I: Sounds good. Now assume that the club is entering the market. What are a few things you think your client should consider before entering?

C: [Scoped a bit on what the I exactly wanted: He was looking at whether I could identify nuances in the business, especially specific to football]. Great: so, I think since Chelsea is a

European club it should consider the following:

1. When entering the football operations, the positioning and brand image considerations should be clear. Would the coaches be European? If yes, how do we handle the country change process from an HR and cost perspective. If not, how do we maintain Chelsea's brand image if Indians will be coaching students under the CFC brand. What would certification criteria be? Are we looking at a direct strategy or a franchise model?
2. The mindset of European consumers and Indians is very different. Pricing merchandise in India would be challenging, and we would have to know whether we are targeting volume or margins. Indians have a variety of good options in the black market. I've been a Chelsea fan myself and have more than 10 jerseys spanning over a decade but only 2 of them are original. The counterfeits are of great quality and range between 5%-25% of the cost of an original.
3. While we are looking at revenue streams, I would also like to analyse long term customer LTV. New fans would mean increased broadcasting revenue shares and we should factor this into feasibility calculations.

I: Sounds good, let's wrap up.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?

The first two minutes of the interview, extremely critical: getting comfortable, having a conversation with the interview, and lightening the mood instead of getting straight to business.

Conversational nature of the interview.

Business/ Consumer nuances included wherever possible. Benchmarking versus personal experience.

What could you have done better?	Communication could have been less verbose but felt overall it was a great experience.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	About product innovation at McKinsey and his experience at McKinsey over the years.

Tips for Future Candidates

Fair out your cases. Sound cliched but identify strengths and weakness after each case. Focus on quality over quantity.

Find administrators that give you confidence and pointed feedback.

Don't worry about impressing your administrators. Show growth. Buddies/ mentors give the best and most interview-like cases: try to solve challenging cases rather than trying to impress.

Everyone bombs. Relax.

Focus on HR answers and guesstimates: most neglected.

Shreya Aggarwal

Undergraduate College	Shri Ram College of Commerce, University of Delhi
Field of Graduation	B.A. (Hons.) Economics
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Quality Council of India (22 Months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Illustrate (in not more than a minute) as to why you are good at teamwork/ drive/ leadership.

Case Interview 1

Our client is a wall paints manufacturer. They have 12% market share (by volume) and want to achieve a 20% market share over next 5 years. They want to grow organically; M&A is not an option. Advise the client.

(Reiterated the problem statement to ensure it is noted down correctly and started the discussion with a few clarifying questions to scope the problem)

C: Where does the company operate?

I: The company manufactures and has a sales footprint all over India.

C: How old is the company? Is Asian paints a good proxy?

I: Yes, you can assume it to be of similar size.

C: What kind of paints does the company manufacture?

I: The company manufactures different varieties of decorative wall paints for residential use

C: How does the competitive landscape look like?

I: There are 4 main players including us with the following market shares:

A	B	C (us)	D	Others
40%	17%	12%	7%	24%

C: What are the channels of distribution?

I: We typically distribute through a network of over 25K multi-brand retailers.

C: What is are USP?

I: Quality of paints.

(Took a minute to lay down a structure to evaluate different growth alternatives)

C: In order to grow its market share, the client can explore the following options:

1. Market penetration through improvements in product, change in price or channels of distribution
2. Expansion into new market (geography/customer segment)
3. New product development

I: This is an exhaustive list. We have the following data about the market size and respective

market shares of each player in each category:

Paint Segment	Market Size	Market Share
Premium	20%	A 40%, B 5%, C(us) 40%, D 5-8%
Mid	40%	A 40%, B 30%, C(us) 10%, D 7%
Economy	40%	A 40%, B 20%, C(us) 0%, D 0%

C: From the data it is evident that top 2 players in the market, A & B are penetrated into the market for economy range of paints, and we are absent in this category.

I: Yes. There is no scope for expanding the product portfolio, but the company can penetrate into the economy segment. We have two options:

1. Plan A: Enter economy segment while retaining market share in existing segments
2. Plan B: Increase market share in premium and mid-range segment

Why don't you run some quick calculations to decipher how much expansion would be necessary?

C: In order to increase market share by going into the economy segment, the company will have to capture 20% of the market. Alternately, it can increase market share in premium and mid-range paints by 50% and 25% respectively.

I: Good. What do you think are the challenges the company will face if it goes ahead with plan A (expansion into economy)?

C: Since A & B have reasonable market share in the economy category, they have a strong hold over the distribution. We can expect the company to experience a challenge in establishing its distribution network in this category.

I: That is a good insight, distribution indeed is a challenge in the paints industry. I think this is good, let us end the case here.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Went in with a lot of confidence which was noticed by the interviewer. This helped to start off the case discussion on a positive note. The case was number heavy, and I took my time to make sense of them and arrive at the figures.
What could you have done better?	I could have laid down more pros and cons while evaluating the two growth alternatives
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Experience at the firm -- What is your McKinsey? Feedback on case solving.

Tips for Future Candidates

- Stay very confident and keep the interview conversational.
- Spend time on HR/Fit related questions.
- Bring in industry specific insights wherever applicable.

Sonakshi Agarwal

Undergraduate College	Hansraj College, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	B.A. Economics (Hons.)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Matrix Partners (7 months) and Bain Capability Network (16 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why the trajectory of going to IIM Lucknow after Matrix?
- What did you do yesterday apart from preparation?

Case Interview 1

Your client is "CFA" a credit card issuer based in UK & West Europe. They are involved in issuing & servicing of credit cards. Currently are the 2nd largest player. 90% of the customers are retail consumers and 10% are small businesses. Further, CFA divides the customers as 'revolvers' and 'convenience'. Revolvers carry a balance & pay interest; Convenience customers pay the balance every month (i.e., do not default). They have built a strong reputation for consumer service.
However, they are currently facing a decline in profitability over past 5 years. We need to

look into the reason and suggest a strategy for the same.

C: (Clarified the problem statement, all the points mentioned by the interviewer and the objective) (Took a minute to gather my thoughts)

I would like to understand what function comes under servicing of a credit card: is it payments, partnerships?

I: Yes, servicing is basically end-to-end payments.

C: Alright, also, do they offer multiple types of credit cards for example a premium version, exclusive version etc.?

I: No, just one credit card.

C: Okay. The decline in profitability was seen just by CFA or was it an industry wide issue?

I: This was just limited to CFA.

C: Got it. I think I have all information I need to approach the case at hand. In case I need more information, I'll ask that as and when we are solving.

Now, I would like to take a minute to lay down my approach.

I: Sounds good.

C: (Made my approach chart, laid down the revenue & cost approach)

I: This looks good. However, I have some numbers with me that I would like for you to look and make sense out of it.

(Showed the following Exhibit)

		5 years ago	Now
	Avg. customer tenure	3	2
	Customer servicing cost	\$3/customer/month	\$3/customer/month
Revellers			
	Revenue	\$1800	\$1200
	Percentage of total custom	50%	40%
	Acquisition cost	\$50	\$100
Convenience			
	Revenue	\$360	\$240
	Percentage	50%	60%
	Acquisition cost	\$50	\$100

C: I'll just take a moment to note down these numbers & analyze these numbers
Are these revenue & cost numbers per customer?

I: Yes.

C: Alright, so what I can see is that Avg. customer tenure has reduced and so has the Revenue across segment. However, the CAC (customer acquisition cost) has increased. Even the share of the customer segment has changed. With this data, I would like to calculate the difference in profit from a customer 5 years ago vs today.

(Calculated profit for revolver & convenience individually 5 years ago, then took an avg.
Similarly, for today and took a weighted avg.)

(Numbers: 5 years ago, average profit CFA was earning: \$922; Today: \$452)

(Made sure to keep the interviewer in loop with my formula and then calculations)

I: This looks great! Let's sum up the case.

C: Yes, sure. So, we can see that overall, the profits have gone down. The points of issue seem to be the following: 2x increase in overall CAC, 33% decrease in the average tenure of

a typical customer and percentage of convenience customers has increased. All this affects the profitability.

I: Perfect, we can close the case now.

C: Would you like me to suggest some recommendations on how CFA can solve the underlying issues?

C: No, not needed. That will be it.

Be confident. Mostly you would have to use your business sense. Keep the interviewer engaged and aligned with your approach. Do not shy away from asking question, mentioning industry terms that might be relevant.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Keeping the interviewer engaged, walking him through my approach and formulas and taking his buy-in on the same. Also, clarifying jargons, metrics being used throughout the case questions and exhibits.
What could you have done better?	Being a bit calmer while working out the calculations and writing down all the numbers a bit more neatly: to avoid any calculation error.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Feedback on my performance. Since he had not introduced himself: asked for his introduction.

Tips for Future Candidates

Sumati Gulati

Undergraduate College	Hindu College, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	B.A. Economics (Hons.)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Bain Capability Network and Flipkart (36 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

How do you feel, what is your take on the session McKinsey organized?

Case Interview 1

How can a paints company expand: company operates in 3 segments Mass, Middle, Premium? Should the company expand in mass?

I covered the growth framework wherein I suggested that we could increase current product, expand the market, develop new product, diversify through forward and backward integration.

I did lot of data crunching in the middle.

I finally concluded that company should not expand in mass as it is dominated by niche players, and they have strong distribution channels. It would be difficult to compete with and would hamper the brand image of the company.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Structure, being confident, clear communication skills.

What could you have done better? Data crunching.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Go through past interview experiences from the casebook.

Case Interview Experience

(Finals 2020)



Anoushka Banavar

Undergraduate College	NIT, Nagpur
Field of Graduation	B.Tech.
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Deloitte Consulting (10 months) Summers: Bain & Company

HR & Conversation Questions

Introduce yourself.

Describe your summer internship experience.

What was the biggest takeaway from your internship at Bain?

Tell me more about your summer internship project. Which module was driven by you?

How did you go about this? Do you think you could have approached it differently, how?
(Detailed discussion around GTM Strategy workstream I had driven & the Middle Eastern vs Indian E-commerce markets).

How interested are you in AI? Have you ever worked closely in this field? (I had done a live project in this area, spoke in depth about what excited me about the potential of AI).

What were the differences/similarities that you saw in the two consulting firms that you have

worked in: Bain and Deloitte? Which firm would you prefer to go back to and work? Why?

Why consulting with Accenture Strategy & not any other firm?

Why did you work only for less than a year at Deloitte?

Interview 1

This interview was focused on gauging my interest in the firm and was taken by a MD at Accenture Strategy, IMU. Was completely conversational and after the first 15 minutes, the interviewer just kept probing me to ask him more & more questions about the firm, his experience, anything else I wanted to know.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Being well prepared with how your CV aligns with Accenture Strategy. Knowing the firm very well, so as to be able to drive a conversation around your interest in Accenture Strategy.

What could you have done better? NA

Questions asked to the Interviewer What are the industries/ practice areas that you have worked in?
Apart from an increased focus on digitization, has there by any other change in the type of projects that have been coming in post-Covid?

How does Accenture Strategy use design thinking as part of their problem-solving toolkit?

Given the One Accenture focus, how does Accenture Strategy leverage the other arms of Accenture such as Accenture Tech, Accenture Innovation Labs in its various consulting projects?

Asked some more questions around consulting in general drawing from my experience at Bain.

Bhawna Gupta

Undergraduate College	Maharani's College, Jaipur
Field of Graduation	B.Com.
Professional Qualifications	C.A.
Work Experience	Wipro Tech (18 months) Summers: Avendus Capital

Tips for Future Candidates

Especially in case of Accenture Strategy IMU, the MD round is critical. To ace this, the key is to leverage your buddy and alumni at the firm so as to be able to ask enough questions that show your genuine interest in the firm (should be able to drive a half hour conversation).

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.

Walk me through your CV.

What do you understand by working capital financing and what is the ideal working capital ratio for FMCG companies.

Detailed discussion around work-ex and internships.

If you met the CEO of a big MNC in a lift. He tells you that they have huge amount of cash lying idle and what should they do with it. (You have only 2 mins).

If the funds are idle for short term (then equity or debt market, as per risk taking capacity) or if long term (current production expansion or acquisition).

3 best things you learned in MBA.

Why Consulting?

Why Accenture?

3 best traits of a consultant.

Case Interview 1

If you were to open a food truck in Civil Lines Area of Jaipur. How would you go about it?

C: Do we have any time or budget constraints?

I: No budget constraints and the client want to start operations as soon as possible.

C: Ok, does the client has any other food truck or any other business?

I: No.

C: What kind of cuisine does the client want to serve?

I: You need to tell the client that.

C: Ok, is the client planning to target any customer segment?

I: What type of customers do you think will come to a food truck?

C: According to me, mostly it would be students. But, since it a sort of posh area, another set of consumers can come from offices and the people living in Civil Lines (mostly limited to children & elderly). How does the competition scenario look like?

I: There are no other food trucks in the area.

C: So, majorly the competition would be from cafes and restaurants.

I: Do you think high end restaurants can also be potential competitors.

C: Not directly, as high-end restaurants and food truck will have different customer segments. For high end restaurants, customers would be majorly going late in the evening and for their ambience & comfort. However, food truck will attract people looking for a break or passers.

(After this the case turned in a discussion.)

Points discussed: Timing of operation: early morning (time for students to go to tuitions) to late evening (when people leave the offices).

Peak timing: Early morning (majorly students), late morning (employees going to offices), noon (office employees going for lunch), evening (children & tea break for employees).

Cuisine: Fast food, which does not require any sitting; like Poha, Kachori, Samosa, or Chinese food (Noodles, Manchurian), Momos, Pasta, Pizza, etc.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Being from Jaipur, knowing about the area mentioned and about the crowd in the area. The case turned into a discussion, so it became easy to drive the case.
What could you have done better?	Case could have been more structured and instead of the interviewer asking, if I gave the details directly, it would have been better.

Questions asked to the Interviewer	Why are there separate teams for India & global business and do they work together on any project?
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Case Interview 2

The client is an FMCG MNC and wants to digitize their operations. How should they go about it?

I: The client is an FMCG MNC and wants to digitize their operations.

C: What is the objective of digitization, is the client looking to digitize any particular process?

I: The major objective is to increase the controls and improve efficiency of operations. The digitization needs to be done for all the processes.

C: Is there any time or budget constraint?

I: No.

C: I would like to get some more information about the client like for how long they have been in operations, which geography do they operate in?

I: The company is pretty old, and they operate PAN India.

C: What are the products they deal in and at what stage of value chain does the client lie?

I: The client is a manufacturer & distributor of household supplies.

C: What is the customer segment, being targeted by the client?

I: All type of customers.

C: How does the competition scenario look like?

I: The client is the market leader and has 3 close competitors.

C: Okay, so just to reiterate the problem statement, the client is a manufacturer of household supplies, operating on PAN India level and wants to digitize the operations. Am I correct?

I: Yes.

C: Please give me a few moments to structure my thoughts.

I: Okay.

C: I have divided the entire operations into 3 broader segments: Manufacturing (includes raw material acquisition to storing of finished goods in the warehouses), Distribution & Selling, Other Administrative functions like Finance, HR, IT, Administrative staff etc.

I: What all is included in the manufacturing segment?

C: I would like to break down manufacturing operation by the customer journey approach starting with raw material acquisition & logistics, manufacturing (including machines & equipment's), warehousing of finished goods & outbound logistics.

I: Okay, just tell me 3 areas where you would digitize the manufacturing process?

C: Digitize the maintenance and ordering of raw materials, using biometrics or cards for maintaining log of the labor, digitizing the machines to ensure fix composition of raw material and reduced wastage & defective products.

I: Okay.

C: Should I move forward with distribution & selling piece?

I: Yes.

C: What is the distribution chain & model followed by the client and does the client has any online presence?

I: The client sells the products through C&FA (Carry & forwarding agents) and sells its product on Amazon.

C: Okay, we can divide the distribution & selling segment into direct sales, distribution through agent & wholesalers, online sales, which could be further divided into own website & third-party platform.

I: Which technology would be helpful in generating online sales?

C: I am not really sure, which particular technology as such would be helpful, but I can make a guess.

I: Go ahead.

C: Search engine optimization, data analytics.

I: Okay, we can close here.

C: Thank you!

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Structuring of the case.
What could you have done better?	Had I been more familiar with technology, it would have been better.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	How has your experience been with Accenture? How do you think is the nature of projects changing post-COVID?

Tips for Future Candidates

Be calm, keep smiling and keep the interview conversational.

Nishant Sharma

Undergraduate College	Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	B.M.S.
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	McKinsey Knowledge Centre (23 months) Summers: McKinsey & Co.

HR & Conversation Questions

Why Accenture?

Why not finance?

What was your McKinsey internship about?

What did you do in your 2 years at McKinsey?

Case Interview 1

Two cases: 1) How would you increase ROE for an FMCG company? 2) How would you increase sales for a CCD outlet located in CP, New Delhi?

I: Do you understand DuPont formula?

C: Yes. (Explained the same)

I: Which industry are you interested in?

C: FMCG.

I: Which aspect of the formula would you focus the most on to increase ROE for an FMCG company?

C: Utilization/Efficiency, given FMCG works on volumes.

I: Okay. How would you increase the sales volume for a soap manufacturer?

C: I would want to look at every point from the concept of the soap till the point it is finally used by the consumer. There can be improvements in design, more fragrances, increase in the life of the soap, or there could be better incentives for retailers to stock our product or have more shelf visibility.

I: Would an increase in life of the soap help increase the sales or reduce it?

C: It depends on the consumer research we've done before working on this feature. If the feature enhances the utility to the customer and consequently the price point at which you can sell the soap, then from a numerical standpoint, you can achieve higher sales even with lower volumes. So, despite lower repeat purchases in, say, a year, you'll make more money.

I: Okay. Let's look at a CCD outlet in CP, Delhi. How would you enhance sales for that outlet?

C: You can look at its sales as a function of number of customers and average order value per customer, if the time horizon we're looking at is a day. To increase the number of customers, we need to either find people who'd come to CP and currently not use any food outlets, or

we can look at customers who come to CP and use competitors' products.

Within the first bucket, we can play with our pricing, our in-store marketing, what other needs does our store help with (Wi-Fi, seating space for meetings etc.). In the second bucket, we can try to penetrate deeper into the following customer segments (given I was based out of Delhi, I knew CP in a bit more detail)- CAT coaching students (weekend), businessmen, families, student groups that visit CP for meetings (given it's a central spot in Delhi).

If we want to enhance the average order value per customer, we can work primarily with our product mix- this could be basis benchmarking with our competitors' highest selling products, consumer surveys, finding patterns of food item + day + time of the day. Once the customer is in the store, their order value is also driven by what else makes them stay in the store- charging ports, Wi-Fi (in case it's a student group took the example of CCD Square on Janpath in CP).

I: Okay, sounds good.

What worked well for you?	Being structured and backing my logic with real life examples.
What could you have done better?	Could have given better explanations for the DuPont part.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	How does the experience differ between simple advisory and advisory + implementation projects, from a project scope POV, given Accenture is deep into implementation and not just advisory?

Case Interview 2

HR and conversation questions

How was my experience in McKinsey?

What was my McKinsey internship about?

What are some of the most prominent problems with Indian banking?

(It was just a brief discussion, rather than a case.)

C: Quality of assets and lack of digitization.

I: Let's talk about digitization.

C: (Built this extensively from my internship, addressing pre-credit disbursal analytics, absence of predictive capabilities for delinquencies/NPAs, sector level trend identification, SOPs for dealing with loans in 0-90 DPD (when the loan is classified as a delinquency), lack of integration between in-house databases and software, paper-based approvals, and filings.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	The fact that it was straight out of my internship, and I had prepared for it.
What could you have done better?	The interview was primarily HR, so just knowing the CV in and out helps.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 3

Calculate the income given to housemaids in India in a month.

I took the household approach and considered tier-1, tier-2 and tier-3 cities. I incorporated the income of households and number of maids required. For each tier, I used my personal experience of living at different places (which seemed to work in my favor).

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Giving personal insights showed observational skills.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	I asked the interviewer how she would have approached the question.

Tips for Future Candidates

What matters is not whether you could solve the case or guesstimate but your attitude; a smiling face and a good conversation with the interviewer is key. Treat the interview like a conversation as the interviewer wants to know you better.

Pratiksha Yadav

Undergraduate College	NIT Raipur
Field of Graduation	B.Tech.
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	ICICI Bank (Credit Risk)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.
What are your strengths/weaknesses?
I had 6 case competitions on my CV, so questions were asked as to what the business problems were and how did you go about it?
Ever reflected on any of the failures; what did you learn from it?

Case Interview 1

How would you use the competency of telecom industry to help SMEs grow?

I: Tell me about yourself and what are your strengths and weaknesses?

C: Introduced myself and touched upon my past experiences.

I: Let's do a case. How would you use the competency of telecom industry to help SMEs grow?

C: I linked the data & reach of telecom industry with SMEs using the example of Jiomart's growth through WhatsApp. I did not have any particular structure in mind, so I just explained the concept and how would I go about it if I were to implement it for some company.

I: Okay, that sounds fair. Thank you.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	They were keener about my HR answers, so my HR prep worked well in this interview.
What could you have done better?	I could have structured the case in a better way.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

Guesstimate: Estimate the annual revenue by selling musical instruments pan India.

Case: If you had to go about creating an e-commerce website with music as a product, how would you go about it? Give 3 reasons why you think it would fail.

I: Let's do a quick guesstimate.

C: Sure.

I: Estimate the annual revenue by selling musical instruments pan India.

C: I used the filters: urban/rural, age demographics, professional/ beginner instruments and then a percentage estimate of people that would buy the instruments. After coming down to the last filter, I took an average estimate for both beginner instruments and professional instruments for coming to a final number.

I: Okay, sounds good. Let's discuss a case now. If you had to go about creating an e-commerce website with music as a product, how would you go about it? Give 3 reasons why you think it would fail.

C: Please allow me a couple of minutes to gather my thoughts.

I: Sure.

C: I exhaustively listed down the customer journey of for buying music from online platforms and discussed about each of the touchpoints.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Being exhaustive and considering all the facets of the problem helped me in the interview.
What could you have done better?	I could have been more descriptive in HR answers.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Sarvamangala Gupta

Undergraduate College	Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	Commerce
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	ITC (Sales & Marketing)

HR & Conversation Questions

Introduce yourself.

What are your strengths and weaknesses?

Why Accenture? Why Consulting?

Summer internship and live project-based questions.

Case Interview 1

Guesstimate the number of chairs in IIM Lucknow

C: Broadly described the areas that I will cover- classrooms, halls, rooms, teachers' block, Utsav, mess, Chintan, etc. I then gave a broad estimation of how many would be there in each block.

I: Okay, Thank you.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Being exhaustive and communicating whatever I was thinking.

What could you have done better? I could have followed a better structure.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Case Interview 2

How would you modernize a traditional retail store (based on my summer project)?

I: Your summers project seems interesting, walk me through it.

C: I mentioned about my project and discussed the findings and actionable.

I: Let's do a short case. How would you modernize a traditional retail store?

C: I asked for some time to gather my thoughts and build the approach. I tried to cover the entire supply chain from procurement to storage to in-store operations and at each step, suggested new methods or improvement in existing methods being followed.

I: Okay, sounds good.

Sheetal Sonawane

Interview Experience	
What worked well for you?	Taking my time to think and then communicate my thoughts.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Undergraduate College	Government Engineering College, Aurangabad
Field of Graduation	B.E. (Mechanical)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Bajaj Auto (16 months) and Neha Engineering (19 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

What was your daily work management (DWM)?

Introduce yourself and don't stop till we ask you to (gave me about 15 minutes in total, hence it got a little difficult to extend this question for long).

What do you see yourself as? Marketer, consultant, HR person, what exactly?

Give us 3-4 values basis which you function.

Tell us of some instances wherein you handled people and a lot of people management was required.

Justification of numbers on CV.

In-depth questions on all work-ex section.

Case Interview 1

Q1. Imagine a situation on a shop floor wherein you see a defect in functioning or something which is malfunctioning; help us out with a detailed root cause analysis (RCA).

Q2. Types of poka-yokes and explain how exactly you can implement at least 4-5 varieties of poka-yokes at vendors location.

Q3. There is demand in market, but the manufacturer is not able to supply the goods. Find probable reasons (raw material, manpower, logistics and financials are not the reasons).

Question 1- I used a scenario of oil leakage from a CNC machine and used 3 RCA tools: 5 Why analysis, Fishbone diagram and FMEA.

Question 2: I gave one example each of implementation (end to end) of poka-yokes such as 1. Elimination poka-yoke 2. Replacement poka-yoke 3. Prevention poka-yoke 4. Facilitation poka-yoke 5. Detection poka-yoke 6. Mitigation poka-yoke.

Question 3: I used value stream mapping, 4M-1T conditions, process capabilities and all 8 TPM pillars such as JH, QM etc.

What worked well for you? Using scenarios from my work experience and leveraging that knowledge in cases.

What could you have done better? I could have asked more clarifying questions.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Case Interview 2

HR and Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

Tell me about your past work experience (mostly on numbers that I mentioned).

Why do you want to join Accenture and why do you think consulting is the best fit for you?

What did a typical day in your life look like, in your previous organization?

Do you have any questions for us?

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Practicing CV related and HR questions.

What could you have done better? I could have studied my CV in greater detail.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Shubham Lohakare

Undergraduate College	NIT Surathkal
Field of Graduation	B.Tech. (Computer Science)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Century Link (10 months) Summers: Microsoft

HR & Conversation Questions

Introduce yourself.

Why Accenture? Why Consulting?

In depth questions about internship and live project. They asked how those things can be applied to some real-world problems.

About my reading hobby and a few follow up questions about Khaled Hosseini's books.

How was your internship at Microsoft?

If you would have met Satya Nadella in a lift and he asked you that Microsoft has a lot of cash and wants to spend the money. Suggest 5 ways in which he can, and he does not have more than 50 seconds.

What 5 things did you learn at your internship at Microsoft?

Tell me something about yourself and your family.

Where do you see yourself in 15 years?

What hidden agendas do you have that Accenture can help you achieve?

Case Interview 1

Guesstimate the market size for an e-tailer selling plants, seeds, and pots for domestic gardens in Delhi. Then after the Guesstimate they asked me to come up with products that the e-tailer should sell.

Asked a few clarifying questions about the business. Then did a standard guesstimate.

Divided the population based on income and worked my way forward.

For different products, I again used consumer insights and what are the requirements of the consumer. And based on that suggested an exhaustive list of products.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? I tried to back up all my deductions on the basis of consumer insights and behavioral aspects.

What could you have done better? They were pretty impressed that I did not have a second technical round and directly proceeded to the MD round.

Questions asked to the Interviewer	Accenture's implementation part of the project and what role does a consultant play in the implementation arena. Interviewer's experience at Accenture.
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Case Interview 2

Mitsubishi motors wants to enter into the auto-finance market in India. Should they or should they not? Guesstimate the number of readers of an English men's health magazine in India.

I started with the CPCC framework. Then followed the market entry framework and tried to explain everything because the interviewer could not see my page as the interview was online. She asked me various grilling questions and came up with counter arguments. Try to give some logical explanation and if completely cornered accept your mistake and correct it as per the suggestion. This shows your honoring other's opinions and accepting your mistakes. After a long discussion, I suggested that they should not enter the market, after analyzing all the aspects of the Market-Entry framework.

The guesstimate was straight forward.

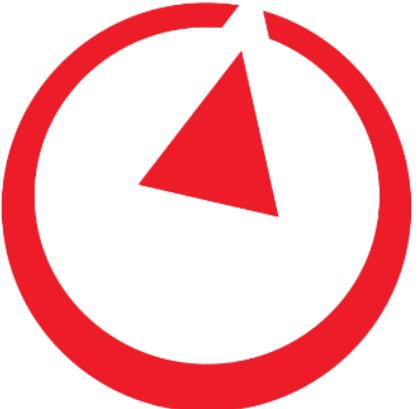
Interviewer	What kind of projects can I expect given my background?
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Tips for Future Candidates

Do case sessions with CSC seniors, your batchmates or Disha. Do a few guesstimates to get hold of the thinking process. Go through the CSC Casebook. It really helped a lot. If you are done with the IIML casebook you can solve ISB cases or IIMA cases. Seek out seniors and ask for some guidance. They will be happy to help.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Staying confident under stress and customer insights in the guesstimate.
What could you have done better?	I could have asked even more questions in the Mitsubishi case and covered more aspects of the auto-finance sector.
Questions asked to the	How is a day in the life of an Accenture Consultant?



BAIN & COMPANY

Aditi Jain

Undergraduate College	NMIMS, Mumbai
Field of Graduation	Economics
Professional Qualifications	CFA Level 1
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

So, I have had a brief look at your profile. Can you please take me through the motivations behind your career choices till now?

Case Interview 1

Your client is in the hospitality industry. They have 2 landmark 5-star hotels in Chennai and Kolkata which have been there established since the last 30-40 years. After COVID, the hotels have been operating at only 70% capacity utilization. Can you help them by creating a sustainable revenue strategy going forward? Focus on making new use cases.

C: Conducted CPCC, found out that 70% of the customers were from the Business segment. The drop in Business customers was more than the drop in Leisure customers.

I: Why do you think that may be?

C: Because of the whole remote working model? Travel by business travelers has decreased.

I: Precisely! Meetings are conducted over Zoom now. Given that, can you help the hotel?

C: Sure, please give me a minute to structure my thoughts. I drew a first level structure by dividing the problem into two: Boosting utilization of capacity within existing use cases & defining new use cases. Divided the first bucket further into 3 different types of customers: Business, Tourists and Locals. The second bucket I divided further into revenue sources: Rooms, Restaurant, Spa, Gyms, Conference Hall etc.

Does this structure seem okay?

I: (Nods) Go ahead!

C: I explored various ideas with each bucket. For example, (First Bucket) Corporate Partnerships, tying up with more tour operators, offering anniversary or birthday packages etc. (Second Bucket) promoting staycations, opening the spa and the gym to outsiders, movie screenings or other ticketed events at the Conference Hall etc.

I: That is all valid and fine. But can you think something for the business customers specifically? Since their need to travel itself has gone down. A different kind of value proposition maybe.

C: I feel that shared capacity might result in a drop in our brand image. Since this is a luxury hotel.

I: Okay, what else?

C: I tried to explore more options but wasn't able to get to what the recruiter wanted. At each step I was letting him know what I was thinking. As soon as I repeated the point about shared capacity.

I: What exactly do you mean by shared capacity?

C: The hotel could save out on fixed costs by leasing out part of the property to a third party!

I: Correct, in terms of business customers this would mean?

C: A co-working space where the remote part of the office could work.

I: Exactly! Can you craft a value proposition for this offering? Also focus on how you will price it.

C: Did a basic STP analysis.

I: Great, and now pricing?

C: Outlined how we will arrive at value-based pricing based on the incremental change in cashflows to the corporate with which we will share capacity: We should focus on two aspects: fixed cost saved by the business & the value of the increased productivity the employees will deliver due to working in comfortable settings.

I: Sounds good. Now, Aditi can you please deliver an elevator pitch to the client about your proposed solution.

C: (Summarized the case as if I was pitching to a client)

I: Thank you!

C: Any feedback for me?

I: I think it went well!

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?

I let the interviewer know how I was approaching the problem even when I was taking time to pin down the exact solution. The structure is indeed more important than the final answer. I also maintained my composure and kept smiling.

What could you have done better?

I ruled out a possibility on my own stating my logic behind it. The manager did not correct me then and let me proceed with the case. Luckily, we circled back to it, and I could arrive at the solution. Do not rule out any possibility on your own.

Questions asked to the Interviewer

NA

Case Interview 2

Your client is a manufacturer of Diesel Generator sets. They were pre-dominantly in the industrial space where they were #1, and they've recently ventured into the retail space (say for individual big houses, shopping complexes, nursing homes etc.) They are #3 in this industry with only 10% market share. They want to go to #1 in 3-5 years. Help them out.

C: Conducted CPCC. Major points were that our sets were priced at Rs 2.2 L while the rest of the market was priced at Rs 2 L. This was because we had a better performance in certain aspects. Can you please tell me how are we performing better? Which metric is this measured on?

I: Why don't you tell me how one diesel generator set can be better than the other?

C: Latest technology, brand image, longer shelf-life, per liter fuel efficiency.

I: Okay, what else?

C: The number of variants offered, safety, ease of usage & installation.

I: Okay, & what else?

C: If it makes any sound or air pollution, how the generator looks, how compact is it for a residential setting.

I: Okay, what else?

C: (Struggling at this point) Availability of service centers, time taken for the generator to start, repair & maintenance cost, if the repair parts are easily available

I: (Smiles) Good. We can stop now. So, what should the client do?

C: Started talking about increasing revenue through a loose consumer journey approach. E.g.: Commissioning influencers (electricians) etc.

I: You won't look at the costs?

C: Of course! The consumers are not valuing our product enough to account for the difference of Rs. 20,000. We should try to come down to the Rs 2 Lakh price tag so that we can have a distinct competitive advantage in terms of quality for money.

I: Yes, that is right. Now, you have walked into a lift at Bain, and you see the client standing there. He asks you for a solution. You only have this preliminary discussion worth of information. What would you tell him?

C: (Understood that he was also asking for an elevator pitch. Summarized the case as if I was pitching to a client)

I: Good.

We had about 3-4 minutes of discussion after this about any questions I had. The Partner then left the zoom call.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I feel being calm and smiling throughout is one of the most important things you can do on Day Z.
What could you have done better?	I forgot to consider costs in the first go but the Partner was kind enough to guide me.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	The Partner and I were from the same school, asked him about his experience there.

Ankit Mahajan

Undergraduate College	BITS Pilani, Pilani Campus
Field of Graduation	B.E. (Hons.) Electronics and Instrumentation
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	Qualcomm (12 months), Texas Instruments (23 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

NA

Case Interview 1

Client is a hospitality chain with properties in Chennai and Kolkata. The chain has been operational for the past 40 years. Due to Covid-19, the chain has witnessed a drop in number of hotel bookings leading to a capacity utilization of 50- 55% which is below the normal level of 60-70% that the chain expects. Keeping in mind the effect of the pandemic, help them in formulating a strategy to improve their capacity utilization.

I: Let us start with a case.

C: Does the client have any operational or budgetary constraints? Do we have any specific timeline or metrics in place to evaluate any strategic option?

I: The client does not have any operational and budget constraints. However, the client would like to see improvement in utilization to the normal levels of around 60-70%.

C: Okay. Can you tell me a bit about the hotels that the client operates, how many hotels the client has in each city, what kind of services are offered?

I: Sure, the client has 2-3 hotels in Chennai and 2 in Kolkata. All the client properties are 5-star hotels under the same brand. The hotels offer a full range of services that would be expected in a normal premium hotel.

C: Can you tell me about the kind of customers who visit the hotel?

I: 70% of the customers for the hotel are business travelers, rest of 30% are primarily foreign tourists.

C: I am assuming that the decrease in the number of customers would be across the two major customer segments. Business travel might have decreased due to increased prevalence of virtual ways of working. Tourism sector has taken a hit which might have resulted in a reduction in the number of visitors coming to the hotel.

I: That is correct. The decline has been across both the customer segments.

C: The utilization of rooms in a hotel is dependent on price. In order to increase utilization, we can look at decreasing the prices. However, such an option can lead to dilution of premium image of the hotel. Also, the price elasticity might be very low considering the kind of customers that the hotel caters to.

I: Yes, lowering the prices is not an option.

C: Is the hotel following dynamic pricing?

I: Okay, this can be one option that can be looked at. What else can the client do?

C: Can you give me half a minute to structure my thoughts?

I: Sure!

C: I would like to look at the issue of increasing utilization from two perspectives, one would be to look at ways to increase the hotel bookings by the current Target Group and the second would be to look at ways to attract different set of consumers to the hotel.

I: Let us look at different customer segments that can be attracted by the hotel.

C: We can divide customers into two groups primarily: Business Customers and Non-Business Customers.

I: Let us look at the business customers.

C: For the business customers we can further divide these according to the needs that the hotel can serve. Historically, majority of the business customers would be those staying at the hotel for 2-3 days while being on a corporate visit. Apart from this, the hotel can be used to organize corporate events or industry conferences, conventions etc.

I: Okay, let us look at the non-business customer segment.

C: The non-business customers can be divided into three major buckets: First, tourists or travelers which will include both domestic and foreign. Second, people who come for weddings, art exhibitions or other cultural events and third, people who come to the hotel for dining or entertainment purposes.

I: Okay, now that we have identified different kinds of customers: can you tell me which of these customer segments should be targeted?

C: The number of business customers will remain low as a lot of companies are starting to adapt to a virtual workplace setup. The hotel premises can be optimized for hosting weddings and other cultural events, but this segment will not really grow significantly in size in the future. I would focus on tourist segment of customers which would be expected to increase once the effects of Covid-19 subside.

I: Fine. How would you go about ensuring that this new segment of customers goes for our client's hotels?

C: We can break down the issue into 4 aspects: Customer Need, Promotion, Accessibility and Service Experience.

I: Can you elaborate on these?

C: Sure, starting with the customer's need. Over the world, tourists seem to be attracted by the value proposition of hotels that give them a flavor of the local culture and lifestyles. Kolkata and Chennai are two cities that are rich in their heritage and the hotels that our clients have can be shaped to reflect the cultural heritage of these cities. On top of this, tourists prefer authentic experiences and hotels which are technologically advanced. We can have a different sub-brand for properties offering this new value proposition.

I: This seems fair. What about the other aspects?

C: Under promotion, we need to ensure that our advertising is consistent with the new proposition in terms of the message and the media on which we promote the client's hotel brands. Digital presence can be optimized using SEO and digital analytics can be used to target high propensity customers. Under accessibility, we need to ensure that our hotel is listed on all the major OTAs such as Expedia along with optimizing our own website. The service experience needs to reflect the new value proposition and changes would be required in terms of tangibles, employees, and the ambience.

I: I think we are short of time. Thank you. Any questions?

C: Not really, thank you.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Being aware of the customer preferences in the hospitality industry.
What could you have done better?	Could have covered more aspects in the case.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

Our client is a 2-wheeler manufacturer based out of India for the past 35 years. In the past 3 years, it has witnessed a drop in market share from 20% to 15% and drop in EBITDA from 18% to 13%. Help the client.

I: Let us start with a case.

C: Can you tell me about the scale of operations of the client in terms of geography and the distribution channels of the client? What is the current capacity under which it is operating?

I: The client is a Pan-India player operating at 85% capacity. It has a 3rd party distribution and dealer network.

C: Can you talk about the kind of vehicles that the client manufactures? How many different SKUs does the client have?

I: The client manufactures motorcycles in the mid-price segment and has 5 different SKUs.

C: I am assuming the client would be catering to the middle-income segment.

I: Yes, that is a fair assumption.

C: Can you tell me about the competition faced by our client? Are they facing a similar issue in terms of the drop in EBITDA?

I: There are 4 major competitors including 2 emerging players who have taken the bulk of the market share that we have lost. The competitors have not seen a drop in their EBITDA margins.

C: I would like to focus upon the market share issue first. Is the market share in terms of volume or value?

I: It is in terms of value.

C: The market share decline in this can be due to two factors: First, the market share of the higher-priced segments in which our client does not operate has increased at the expense of mid-price segment. Second, our own share within the mid-price segment has decreased.

I: It is a case of both. Let me give you some data:

Segment	Share	Price Range	Growth Rate
Premium	10	>95000	30%
High	20	65000: 95000	25%
Mid	35	40000: 65000	12%

Low 35 <40000 15%

C: The mid-price segment has grown at a below average rate of 12% which is one of the reasons for the falling market share of our client.

I: Can we do something about this?

C: Probably enter a new segment.

I: Let us say the client is confused between low and high segment, which one should he choose?

C: It will depend on 4 factors: Size and growth of the segments, profit margin in each segment, level of competition within each segment, client's expected segment share in each segment.

I: Looking at the numbers that I provided, where do you see greater potential?

C: The high-priced segment is more attractive due to its superior growth rate. Keeping the macro-economic trends in mind, this segment will remain highly lucrative for the future. Also, it might be possible for us to upsell the existing customer base.

I: Seems right, the client has also faced declining share within the mid-priced segment. Can we explore what could be the possibilities in this case?

C: Sure, it can be a function of prices and volume of motorcycles sold. Do you want me to look at any one issue in particular?

I: Let us focus on quantity.

C: The quantity can be constrained at either the supply side, at the dealer stage or at the customer end. I am assuming that since we are running at below capacity at 85%, supply side is not an issue.

I: Yes, leave the supply side. Let us look at the dealers first. What could be the possible issues?

C: There could be two levels of issues: The first could be that the number of customers visiting the dealers themselves has decreased due to some factors such as alternate D2C channels or other dealers in the area. The second could be that the dealer is not pushing our product due to a lack of monetary or non-monetary incentives.

I: What can be done about incentives assuming we cannot increase prices or reduce the client margins?

C: Increase the margins for our dealers. We can use our excess capacity to reduce fixed cost per unit leading to a lower overall cost which can result in higher margins for the dealers assuming we do not pass the benefit to the consumers. The other option could be to offer attractive credit support to the dealers.

I: Okay, let us move on to the issue of customer demand. What could be the possible issues here?

C: We can look at 4 things here: Customer Need, Promotion, Purchase and Post-Purchase. For the first issue, Customer Need, do we have some data on how the client products fare against our competitors in terms of Performance, Features and Durability?

I: The product is competitive in these aspects. Do you think the client can introduce a greater number of SKUs?

C: It depends on how heterogeneous the customer segment is. If it is not heterogeneous, an increase in the number of SKUs will lead to an increase in operational costs with no substantial increase in revenues resulting in lower profits.

I: Seems fair. Let us look at the other issues.

C: Yes, assuming that the product is suited to the customer needs, we can look at Promotion which includes both Push-based and Pull-based promotion. Pull-based promotion will consist of advertising and use of digital marketing to ensure that the client product is within the Initial Consideration Set for the customer. The Purchase experience needs to be seamless and the availability of affordable payment options such as EMIs is extremely important. The Post-Purchase aspect consists of servicing/maintenance, warranties and response to customer feedback.

I: I think this is exhaustive. Time is almost up. We can leave aside the EBITDA aspect. Any questions for me?

C: No, thanks.

Interview Experience	
What worked well for you?	Basic understanding of marketing fundamentals.
What could you have done better?	Improved upon the speed of solving the case.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 3

Devising a Go-To-Market Strategy for a smart watch manufacturer.

I: Where are you sitting?

C: (Was sitting in a classroom, told him about that). The internet connectivity at hostel might be an issue, so I decided to give interviews from here. It anyways feels more like home here compared to the hostel room.

I: Great. Let us solve a case then. My client is Titan, and they are currently looking at entering the smart watch segment. Help them in devising a GTM strategy for this.

C: What is the objective behind this move? Does Titan have any budgetary or operational constraints?

I: The share of conventional watches is stagnating, and the client expects huge potential for the smartwatch as an upcoming segment. The objective is to increase market share. There are no budgetary or operational constraints.

C: What is the price range in which its Titan is planning to launch the product.

I: There are two segments that we are looking at: Rs 5K-10K and Rs 10K-20K.

C: Who are the current major players in the smart watch market? What are their current shares?

I: The major players are Apple, Xiaomi and Samsung. The smart watch segment is still in the growth phase.

C: Sure, we can look at any GTM strategy in terms of 4 aspects: Customer TG, Product, Promotions and Distribution/Retail Channels.

I: Let us look at customers. How do we define them?

C: We can define the customers by looking at the needs that a smartwatch can cater to. These needs can be divided into two broad aspects: Functional and Psychological.

I: What will come under each of those broad aspects?

C: Functional needs would include Fitness tracking and Health monitoring, Environment Sensing, Sync capabilities with other devices and Smart Home applications. Psychological needs would include aspects such as Social Status, desire to be seen as cool for having a high-tech product of a brand such as Apple.

I: How do we go forward from here?

C: We need to decide which one of these different needs is going to lead to a significant customer segment. Do we have any data on this?

I: No.

C: I feel that among the functional needs, fitness is going to be a major driver. We can target this segment.

I: How do we define and target such a segment?

C: The customer segment can be largely described in terms of demographics and geography as most technologically oriented fitness-conscious people would be of a younger age group. Use of online channels for promotion and use of e-commerce platforms as well as D2C channels for distribution would be critical to reaching this customer segment. One way to

increase the penetration would be to have tie-ups with certain fitness-based apps such as Cult Fit.

I: How can we ensure that our client gets a decent market share in this segment?

C: One major aspect in this segment would be the ecosystem effect: the greater the number of smart devices that can be connected to the watch, the greater would be its utility. The second major aspect would be the brand image, and this is where competitors such as Apple have an edge over our client due to their technological prowess.

I: But our client also has some complementary assets such as its retail stores like Croma and appliance brands like Voltas.

C: Yes, and it can also leverage some expertise in software from TCS. In addition, the Titan might be the only Indian brand in the segment giving it a unique advantage over others in this regard.

I: How should our client compete against its competitors, on what basis: Brand or Product?

C: The brand of competitors like Apple, Xiaomi and Samsung is too strong to be countered by Titan which is new in this segment. In such a situation, it is always better to compete for product superiority.

I: Interesting. If I were to estimate the size of the smart watches market, how would I do?

C: I would like to use a top-down approach. We can start with India's population. (I proceeded to use factors in the order: Rural/Urban -> Economic Classification -> Age profile -> Propensity to purchase smart watch. I also mentioned the replacement period).

I: What are the factors that can affect the replacement period?

C: Economic prosperity leading to an upgrade in model, Technological Obsolescence, Desire to own new features and aspiration to own a smart watch from a well-known brand.

I: Lets end the case here. This seems good. Any questions for me?

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Covering some of the brand-related aspects of the industry.

What could you have done better? Structuring could have been better.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Tips for Future Candidates

Be genuine, helps in developing a comfortable equation with the interviewer.

Emil Benny

Undergraduate College	St. Stephen's College
Field of Graduation	B.A. (Hons.) Economics
Professional Qualifications	CFA Level 2
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

What do you want to do in the future? What are your short term and long-term goals?

Can you explain to me the major decision you have taken in your life and the rationale behind those choices?

Tell me about your professional experiences.

Case Interview 1

Our client is in the IT industry, primarily working in the USA, with \$1Bn of annual revenue (75% from the USA itself). They operate software development, maintenance, and data center management for BFSI clients, which provides 80% of the revenue. They have recently acquired a software company working in the USA for five years, and its revenue has been constant at \$20 Mn. We must decide whether we should sell this company and invest further

in it.

C: Understood. There are a few questions I have with respect to the problem statement itself as well as some clarifying questions. Why did we invest in this specific company? Were we looking for any synergies?

I: This new company is operating in an emerging industry, with a lot of potential. We acquired it at a reasonable market price and were looking for long-term profits and not synergies.

I: Is the company profitable? Did we focus on improving the revenue in the last five years?

I: Yes, it's profitable, and we haven't made any investment till now.

C: Can I know about the market landscape in terms of market share and revenue growth?

I: The market is dominated by 5-6 large players having 70% of the market share. They are growing at the industry growth rate of 7-8%.

C: I would also like to understand this new company we acquired, specifically their business model and major revenue streams.

I: Let's not focus much on the company because the IT sector and the company will be very new to you, but to give a basic understanding, this new company provides core software solutions to insurance clients in the USA, helping them to serve the clients. (He talked about CRM/ERP, which I could not follow up on completely).

C: Should I also exclude the product-related aspect and take it up further in the case?

I: Yes, you can assume a standardized product for the time being.

C: Also, who runs this company, separate management?

I: Yes, they are run independently as a subsidiary.

C: Since it's in B2B, what are the primary customer segments we are serving?

I: We price the product at a premium. There are four major customer segments: Large private players (50%), Govt (20%), regional players (20%) and local players (10%). We primarily serve the local players, which are geography-specific, which have a niche client need.

C: I think I have a fair bit of understanding of the business problem. Can I take a few moments to structure my thoughts?

I: Yes, sure.

C: My decision to invest or not invest will be based on three factors: Current market value of the firm, future market value with investment, future market value without investments but with better management or operations.

I: Okay, and how will you go about doing this?

C: I will try estimating the revenue/incremental revenue under each of this category and compare it with the additional investments.

I: Okay, Emil, that's a sound approach. Let's focus on the investment bucket, assuming the current market value is only \$18 Mn. How will you proceed with the same?

C: Also, I want to understand the quantum of investment we are making because it will affect my future value and growth.

I: Let's take a step back here, Emil. If you exclude the investment amount, how will you approach this?

C: I will look at the future value and growth potential. What are the avenues for the firm to increase the revenue in the future specifically?

I: Yes, perfect. Let's focus on this.

C: I think we can focus on our current operation, looking at the revenue from the existing and new clients, or looking at new operations concentrating on new products or new geographies.

I: Let's exclude the new geographies since we want to focus on the USA. What do you mean by new products?

C: New products for our current customers or targeting a new customer segment.

I: Okay, and would you like to add anything?

C: Can I take a few moments to think through this situation?

I: Yes, take your time.

C: For our current clients, we can focus on any cross-selling opportunity with respect to our parents' offerings, bundling of our products, and customization.

I: Yes, useful suggestions, let's focus on new clients now.

C: We can focus on new customers from the current segments or try serving govt or large private players. For the former, we can focus on S&M techniques along with better product differentiation. For the latter, since there are larger players than us, it won't be easy to compete. We need to look for a niche product/space we can enter initially.

I: Okay, make sense. Let's assume we have decided to enter the larger private players segments. How will you go about doing this?

C: Can I take a few moments to think?

I: Yes, sure.

C: I will approach this from the demand and supply side. From the supply side, I will look at my current and potential capabilities in terms of servers and software developments, R&D and the quality of my employees, sales team and their reach, and marketing techniques. I will focus on these larger clients' product and price requirements from the demand side, offering customized/niche products, value-added service and long-term contracts, and differentiation from current market players.

I: Good points. Now let's try estimating the value of the company if we incorporate all these suggestions.

C: Do you want me to estimate the future revenue of the company?

I: Let's try focusing on your approach here first, specifically for the new segment we are entering.

C: To estimate revenue, I need to know the price, the product mix/range of offerings, and the number of clients we will have. For estimating the price, I will look at our competitors' current market price, our cost of entry, and the future price growth/bargaining power using inflation, GDP growth rate, and industry growth rate as proxies. Also, due to the Covid outbreak and boom of the insurance sector, we might be able to price our products better in the future. To estimate the number of clients, I will start calculating the total number of local insurance players in the local market by assessing the need for insurance products (using proxies like population, age, income, insurance affinity, average customer base per insurance player) and multiply it by expected market share.

I: Emil, this is the bottoms-up approach. Let's focus on the top-down approach, and for the new segment we are entering, the potential market or the projected market share.

C: I will start with the current market for large private players and estimate how much we can acquire while competing with other similar B2B players. Since there are large established players in the market, it won't be easy to get a fair market share initially. I would like to look at proxies that will help me understand the market we can capture.

I: What are those?

C: Since IT is a sales team-based industry, revenue/employee can be one metric. Also, the server capability or any patent-related information can be useful. Marketing expenses can also indicate how aggressive the competitors are. And finally, since we are looking for at large players, data regarding long-term contracts and customer retention is critical.

I: Thank you, Emil. Can you explain the approach you have taken to solve the problem?

C: Yes (I then summarized the case, and the interview ended there).

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I was able to structure the initial parts of the interview well. Also, I was confident in my responses and have followed the cues from the interviewer.
What could you have done better?	I could have done the guesstimate better.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

Our client is a manufacturer of nets used in the fishing industry, agriculture, and construction. Their revenue has been growing at the rate of 3-4% for the last five years. They would like to accelerate their growth to 15% YoY. Can you help them?

C: Why precisely 15% here? Does the client think they have the potential to grow at this level in the future?

I: That's something we must decide internally. So, you have a dual problem here: understanding our company's potential and finding out ways to grow the revenue! Also, let's focus only on the fishing net industry for the time being.

C: What is the timeline for the same? Also, any specific budgetary constraint I should keep in mind?

I: Probably as soon as possible. Also, we have enough cash in our account.

C: Understood. Where does our client operate in the value-chain? Do they have their production and distribution facility?

I: Yes, the client operates across the value chain, from production to distribution through 3rd party dealers. Retailers buy it from them and sell it in the market.

C: What are the major product segments we are having?

I: We are into all product categories that the industry requires.

C: How is our product priced with respect to our competitors?

I: There is a 5% premium on our product, mainly because of the quality. It is the best in the industry in terms of quality.

C: What is the market share of our company? And what has been the industry growth rate?

I: We are the market leaders with 70% of the market share. The rest of the market is captured by the unorganized sector. The industry is also growing at a rate of 3-4%.

C: What are our primary customer segments? I believe organized fishers buy the products from the dealers and unorganized fishers from retailers in rural areas.

I: Yes, this is how the industry operates.

C: Can I take a few moments to structure my thoughts?

I: Yes.

C: The approach I want to follow is to look at our company's potential in terms of production and supply chain specifics to see if we can support a 15% YoY revenue growth (focusing on the volume part) and looking at the current capabilities and capacity utilization. And then try to understand avenues available for us to increase the revenue through organic and inorganic routes.

I: Let's focus on revenue maximization first and focus only on organic growth.

C: I want to focus on three aspects here: Customers, dealers, and logistics/supply chain.

I: Let's focus on customers first.

C: There are two kinds of customers: Bigger organized players and smaller unorganized ones. For the more prominent players, we can look at establishing a long-standing relationship with

them. Customize nets according to their needs, in-house maintenance and repairing of the nets, bundling of the products, or discounting since purchasing in bulk quantities. For the smaller players, we can try getting closer to the end-user, probably the D2C model. For them, word of mouth matters a lot and bases their purchase decision on historical purchase experience and usage. We can set up small retail shops along the coastal lines, trade fairs or discount periods during the major festival season, and some engagement activities for the local people sponsored by us.

I: Anything else?

C: Since our product is at a premium price, there is an internal trade-off we must make between price and quality. Since the customer and the local players are price-sensitive, we can help them buy the net with suitable price incentives like EMI, partnership with local panchayats or banks, and replacement of old nets.

I: Okay, agreed. What about the distributors?

C: We can integrate forward to have our exclusive distributors or increase our presence in areas where we are not a market leader.

I: How do you assess and bridge the gap in the current distribution network?

C: Can I take a few moments to think here?

I: Yes, of course!

C: For assessing the gap, we can look at proxies like the number of dealers per area or the number of retail customers per dealer. Also, revenue per dealer or total orders served, along with the growth rate in orders, can be used here. For bridging the gap, you can look at the hub and spoke model, like having regional centers on major shores. Also, you can focus on an

exclusive dealership, a better incentive structure for the dealers to push our products and focus on areas where we currently don't have any presence.

I: Okay, that is it, Emil. How will you estimate the annual revenue for the client?

C: After taking time to structure my thoughts, I gave my approach to estimate the total units sold per year. I started from the total population and then used filters like age, average employment rate, and percentage of workers in the primary and fishing industries. Then I took an estimate of people working as fisherman among the people working in the value chain. Then I estimated the total number of fishing boats by segmenting the customers into organized and unorganized. I also incorporated product lifecycle and reserve nets per boats within the model. He was also looking for the numbers and my rationale for each assumption I made.

I: That's it, Emil. We can end the case here.

C: Thank you!

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	The guesstimate went well. Also, the initial scoping questions helped in understanding the client better.
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What could you have done better?	I could have been more structured when I was talking about the customers and dealers.
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Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA
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Tips for Future Candidates

Be confident and trust in yourself. There is no right or wrong answer, it's about whether your answer makes logical sense or not.

Kaushik G

Undergraduate College	IGNOU
Field of Graduation	B. Com.
Professional Qualifications	CA
Work Experience	EY (28 Months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.

Case Interview 1

Case: The client is in the industrial sector and is a manufacturer of ropes and nets for the agricultural, fishing, and construction industries. It is a mid-size firm, and its growth has stagnated at 3-5% over the last few years and has margins in excess of 15%. Help the client realize its full potential.

I: This was an actual problem faced by one of our clients that we solved a few years ago.

C: Reiterated the problem statement and got it confirmed to ensure that I didn't miss out on anything specified by the interviewer. Dissected the problem statement and got a few things clarified before proceeding further.

C: Before we start off, I want a little more clarity on the problem we are staring at. Could you please help me with a few points here?

1. What growth are we referring to, topline/bottom-line/others?
2. How do we define full potential? Is there any specific metric and quantum that we are looking at?
3. What is the timeline that we are looking at?

I: We are referring to stagnation of topline growth and by full potential, there's no specific number, but we want to improve our business scale and grow rapidly in the short term, say two years.

C: So, it's essentially the topline that we're focusing on. I'd then like to get a little idea about the firm, the products they deal in, its customers, and the competitive scenario before I delve deeper into the analysis (basically, I asked the clarifying questions).

I: Sure, go ahead.

C: Firstly, can I get a little information about how established the firm is?

I: It's an established firm and has been operating for quite a few years.

C: Where do they operate?

I: Pan India.

C: Does that mean that they only manufacture in India or is their market also restricted to India.

I: They serve only the Indian market currently.

C: Are they facing any issue with a specific geography within India or is it across?

I: It's a firm level issue.

C: How many different variants/SKUs of fishing nets do they deal in?

I: They have all variants of fishing nets: size, shape etc., approximately 100 SKUs.

C: How about the customers that they cater to? Broadly I can think of two types of customers: one, the unorganized and second, the organized. Would that be right?

I: What do you mean by unorganized and organized?

C: Unorganized would be the local fishermen, while organized would be commercial fishing.

I: Yeah, so they deal with both B2C and B2B customers.

[I missed asking the distribution model here, realized it towards the fag end of the case where I was proposing solutions]

C: So, how is the competitive scenario?

I: Our client is the dominant player in the market, with a 70-80% market share.

C: Ok, how is the remaining market, are there any major players or is it fragmented?

I: There are 3-4 other players.

C: Thank you. Can I take a minute here to structure my thoughts and get back to you please?

I: Sure.

C: Jotted down a broad approach and checked with the interviewer for his buy-in. So, here we are looking at topline growth of fishing nets. We can break it down into two aspects, one, the market potential and second, the firm's growth.

I: Lets come to market potential later. Before that let's explore what can be done around the firm's growth.

C: Sure, just one more piece of information before I dive deep. At what rate is the industry growing?

I: Around 5%.

C: Ok, and how was the firm fairing in the past?

I: It was growing at 10-15% earlier.

C: Ok. Sure, getting back to evaluating the firm's topline growth prospects, there are again two ways to start off with: one, the organic and second, inorganic ways. Do you want me to evaluate any specific area?

I: Let's start off with organic and then come to inorganic later.

C: Ok. Under organic ways of growing, the client can focus on 2 things again, existing, and new. When I talk of existing/new, it could be both in terms of the market or product. Do you want me to look at any specific aspect?

I: Let's take some time here and quickly figure out the market potential for fishing nets in the unorganized sector that you had spoken about earlier.

C: Sure. Can I take a minute again to lay down my approach and we can then proceed with the calculations?

I: Sure.

C: Jotted down the factors I would be considering estimating the market size of fishing nets and then discussed it with the interviewer.

Firstly, I'd look at the geography: there can be coastal areas such as the seas/Indian ocean on one hand, and inland waterways on the other. Then rural vs urban, followed by the income split, which would in-turn determine the various professions that people could be engaged in these areas (largely agriculture, fishing, labor, street vendors etc.), take a factor for the number of people involved in fishing which can be divided by the average number of people per household, to arrive at the number of households. Then consider the number of people per household involved in fishing. Usually, from what I've seen around beaches in Chennai, they do not go individually for fishing. Rather, a group of 4-5 fishermen go together. So, we would have to divide the fishermen by this factor to arrive at the number of boats. Then a factor for number of fishing nets used per boat, life of a fishing net, which would determine the replacement factor and then finally incorporate the average price of a fishing net to arrive at the market potential.

I: Sounds good. Proceed. Take simplistic assumptions and arrive at a number.

C: Was asked to consider only the coastal areas and not inland waterways. Went on to calculate the number. Arrived at the coastline length basis India's dimensions (length and breadth of 3000 and 2500 km approx. basis some facts I had gathered beforehand). Then went down the wrong way in calculating and arrived at 14000. Quickly realized that there was something wrong with it. The interviewer also asked if it seemed right given India's population of 140 crore. Took a step back, sought a minute and recalculated ~2 million fishermen.

I: So, let us consider whatever is the number you have arrived at: 2 million fishermen. How will you arrive at the market potential from here?

C: Specified the factors stated before.

I: Ok. So, what would you do to address the growth stagnation issue now?

C: Ok. So, broadly we can look at expanding to new markets: basically, going international.

Within existing geographies, can evaluate from 4 different standpoints

- a. Price
- b. Product
- c. Place/distribution
- d. Promotion

Do you think this is a fair approach to follow?

I: Sure, go ahead.

C: From a pricing standpoint, we can evaluate the quantum by which we can reduce prices depending on the price elasticity of the product. This could help us gain significant volume without compromising on absolute profits earned, since volume could offset the reduction in price.

From a product standpoint, we can look at the type of material used, if there's any better-quality material which could hold a better value proposition to customers, be it in terms of the life of the net for example (didn't have much scope from a shape/size perspective, given the wide presence with about 100 SKUs).

From a distribution standpoint, [realized I had not asked the current distribution mechanism in place] if we currently reach out through distributors, we can evaluate our distributor's presence, whether there is any geography that we are not catering to currently. We can also engage in direct selling instead of the distributor route. However, that would involve an evaluation of how it could pan out. Since the distributors could hold some influence on the unorganized sector where the buying behavior of customers is person dependent. This leads us to our last leg, promotions.

In the B2C sector, there could be certain local influencers in the fishermen colonies. So, targeting them could help receive our products better. In the B2B sector, it is all about personal selling.

I: Ok. So, by doing all of this how much do you think that you can push the growth to?

C: Well, that's a very subjective evaluation, and to attribute a number basis this would be a long shot. However, if we still want to look at a possible number, I might consider anything between 15-20%.

I: Ok. We have 3-4 minutes left. Let's do a quick calculation here. You said that the client who holds a market share of 70% is likely to grow at 15%, while the market is growing at 5%. What would be the potential market share that it would hold after 3 years.

C: Arrived at a number in excess of 90% [helps to round numbers. I was calculating up to 5 decimals, which isn't required. Will save a few seconds].

I: Ok. So, what do you think will happen in this scenario where the client might end up with a market share in excess of 90%?

C: Is the market regulated? If so, there could be restrictions from regulatory bodies.

I: No. The market is not regulated. What else?

C: There could be two other things that might happen. One, the competition could grow weaker and find it difficult to survive, resulting in scope for the client to acquire these players.

I: Do you think that would be possible?

C: Well, given the scenario and the projected market share, there could be concerns that might be raised by the competition commission.

I: What else?

C: The other possibility could be that the market consolidates with competitors coming together, basically merge like what Vodafone and Idea did to survive competition from Jio.

I: Ok. Thank you. All the best. Do you have any questions for me?

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Taking the interviewer's buy-in at each step. Staying calm and maintaining composure throughout, despite making an error in calculation. Realizing my mistake in calculation and timely correction. Took a step back and rechecked my calculations before the interviewer delved deeper into it. The case solving exercise was more like a conversation and that is what interviewers seem to expect during the process.
What could you have done better?	Guesstimate calculation.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Had some insight into the partner's background. Asked a couple of questions around what drove him towards Bain.

Case Interview 2

A well-established client is in the hospitality sector and basically operates hotels in South and East India. These hotels are in landmark locations, bang in the middle of the city and are about 30-40 years old. Post COVID-19, the company believes that it needs to achieve at least 35% occupancy to break even (i.e., to cover employee and operational costs). Usually, the utilization is in the range of 65-70%. Given the aftermath of COVID and associated lockdown restrictions, travel has reduced resulting in reduced utilization, especially the business segment (dominant segment) is down by 50%. To clarify, if there are 100 rooms in total, about 70 rooms used to be occupied, 50 by business travelers and 35 rooms have to be occupied to break even. How do we solve this problem and help bring the utilization back to pre-COVID levels? Also, can they continue with the current business model?

I: So, we don't seem to have much time. Let's directly jump into the case and then discuss other things if we have time.

C: Sure.

I: Problem statement.

C: Reiterated the problem statement. A few questions before we commence the case: first, what is the timeline we are staring at, i.e., should I consider that we are in the initial phase of lockdown / otherwise?

I: You can consider a timeline where we are beginning to get out of lockdown.

C: What restrictions are in place for commercial activities?

I: Commercial activities can take place without any major restrictions.

C: The second question would be on what timelines we are looking at for implementing the solution/ideas and whether we have any financial constraint?

I: 5 years, no capex constraint.

C: Ok. Now, to start off with, I'd like to understand a few aspects of the company, its offerings, customer segments and competition.

I: Sure, go ahead!

C: So, what type of hotel are we looking at: a basic one or luxury?

I: It's a 5-star hotel.

C: What are its offerings and revenue streams?

I: Room rent obviously is the major source of revenue, while the other broad segments are broadly classified as F&B, comprising of bar, restaurant with various cuisines, events & conference revenue.

C: What is the customer mix that we have?

I: 70% business travelers, 30% leisure (foreign travelers, i.e., from abroad).

C: How is the competitive position in the market?

I: Overall, the demand and number of rooms have increased over a period of time pre-covid, given that our hotels are in the center of the city.

C: Sure, one last question before we deep-dive into the analysis, how many hotels do we have in total, and have we faced an issue in any specific ones or across the board?

I: They run 10-12 hotels, all owned, of which 4-5 are important and in major cities. We can focus on these for now.

C: Sure, can I take say Chennai as the reference for subsequent analysis.

I: Sure.

C: May I take a minute here to gather my thoughts please?

I: Sure.

C: Given it was an issue with scaling up topline, jotted down my broad approach by splitting it into room and ancillary revenue (the F&B / events), further split room revenue mathematically considering that it would be the major revenue stream and laid it down to the interviewer for his buy-in.

I: That's fine. But let us first focus on the customer segments and their use cases before getting deeper into this.

C: Sure. Can I take a minute to jot down the different possibilities?

I: Sure.

C: Split it into business travelers and other individuals and then wanted to evaluate the need, availability, affordability, awareness, and contractual arrangements that they might have in this setup. Emphasized more on the need and contractual legs, given the new normal working style post covid (basically resulting in reduced travel). Specified a few options such as:

- a. Having contractual arrangements with a minimum commitment from the companies in return for more favorable offerings/services.

- b. Conversion of the facilities basis the space available: split the analysis into two aspects, something inside the hotel building and the second, any open area outside the building. Within the hotel building, we can convert the rooms and offer them for people to work out of it (co-working spaces), improve the revenue from restaurants by making it more affordable, have more variety or a new model of home-delivery of food, which ITC, Marriott started during lockdown (ancillary revenue). Outside the building, the options would be depending on the area available, to make the hotel more attractive.
- c. Leasing out certain facilities altogether.
- d. Demolishing the current setup and redesigning the hotel rooms to make them more friendly in terms of pricing, so that the rooms are more attractive.
- e. Another converting a few locations basis the demand into a quarantine facility, subject to the timelines we're looking at, given this may not be a long-term fix in light of the covid scenario.

I: Ok. So, one of the things that you mentioned is what is happening, i.e., conversion of facilities into co-working spaces model where companies are moving away from having their own facility (owned/leased). How about the other individuals, whom will you target?

C: So, here firstly, we need to focus on domestic travelers too, given the restriction on international travel. Although it would be less to start off with, given the timeline we are looking at, could be a good proposition in the long term.

I: Ok. But how would you go about attracting localities to stay in hotels, say people from Chennai to stay in Chennai?

C: Well, there are two things to consider here:

- a. I may be wrong here, but I believe there are certain police restrictions on localities checking in to hotels.
- b. Typically in the Indian scenario customers are price sensitive, so, for localities to check in to 5-star hotels, seems a distant possibility. However, if I relate it to a personal experience,

we can have rooms booked for guests attending a wedding, that would be a feasible option. We can change the customer behavioral pattern/mindset in the long run to promote localities checking in to hotels (subject to there being no regulatory restrictions), like Kellogg's had taken 13 years to change the breakfast pattern in Japan.

I: Ok. Now, how would you go about pricing this for the workplace model and what would be your TG?

C: TG would be tech companies as we had discussed earlier.

I: But what size would you target?

C: We can target large companies and get the rooms booked upfront for a defined period.

I: Don't you think that will change the core of the co-working space model in itself?

C: Well, yeah. I agree. It will become more of a lease than a co-working space setup. In that case, I would target mid-size firms and startups since they might be looking to save on facility costs in the aftermath of the pandemic and go for co-working spaces on a need basis.

I: Right, so, let's wrap it up quickly. How would you price it? Let's only discuss the approach.

C: Specified the different pricing models with cost plus providing the base price and value based the ceiling. Went ahead with value-based pricing: essentially how do the customers gain value from the services offered. Specified the different costs that tech cos would otherwise be incurring like facility & maintenance (including operating charges such as rental, electricity), staff: admin & maintenance, internet & telephone connectivity. The other aspect would be a convenience factor that the companies would not have to spend their efforts any more in managing the infrastructure and upgrading it.

I: Thank you. That would be it from my side. The team will reach out to you.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Ability to strike up a conversation and move in the direction of the interviewer's expectations.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Last week before the process: Adjust your sleep/food cycle and solve a few cases in the morning during the process time, so that your mind is active at that time, and you stay fresh on the day of the interview.

Preparatory phase: Focus on quality over quantity of cases. Do not get into any sort of peer pressure, looking at your friends solve x no. of cases. Try to keep track of your progress and see which areas you are consistently doing well in and the areas you need to work on. Try to cover all case types so that you are not startled on the day of the interview".

Tips for Future Candidates

Interview day: Try to go into the process without any expectations in terms of what could come your way. Approach with an open mind, stay composed, smile and stay confident. Interviewers are evaluating how would you present yourself in client meetings. So, consider the interviewer as your client and strike a conversation. Do not try to cram frameworks and force-fit them, rather try to use first principles. Interviewers typically try to facilitate during the process by throwing hints. Listen well to the interviewer and pick up the cues that they throw at you.

2 days before the interview: Relax, do not solve fresh cases. Briefly revise the ones you'd have solved already. Take a cut off and stop preparing post lunch, a day before the process. Indulge in anything that you like, be it watching movies, playing games etc. Sleep well (at least 6-8 hours).

Siddharth Sridhar

Undergraduate College	BITS Pilani, Goa
Field of Graduation	B. Tech. (Mechanical Engineering)
Professional Qualifications	CFA Level 1
Work Experience	ZS Associates (34 Months)

HR & Conversation Questions

NA

Case Interview 1

Client is a steel manufacturing company. It was acquired as part of the bankruptcy process as a bankruptcy asset. They need your help in turning them around. Please advise.

Reiterated the problem statement.

C: Who bought the company?

I: The new owner, details of whom are not relevant.

C: What are their targets?

I: They paid 1 billion dollars for the company and took a loan for the same. They need to pay back the loan plus interest in the next 3-4 years.

C: Where does the company have its operations?

I: East India.

C: How many plants?

I: 1 plant.

C: What is the current performance of the company?

I: Negative 5% EBITDA.

C: Who are their key customers? I imagine them being in the B2B space.

I: Yes.

C: Where are they in the value chain? Do they have mines for raw materials and then manufacture steel? How do they sell it?

I: They do not have mines for the raw material. They procure the raw material and then manufacture steel. Then the steel is manufactured into a finished product and then sold.

C: And selling is via sales reps?

I: Yes.

C: Got it. I will just take a couple of seconds here to gather my thoughts.

C: Alright, since we need to pay back our loan, we need to improve our profits. In order to do that we can either increase our revenues or look at reducing costs. Is there a particular bucket you would want me to look at first?

I: We will look at both but let's start with costs.

C: With costs, I would look at the value chain and try to bring down costs at each stage.

I: Fair enough.

C: To start with there will be procurement costs, then processing, then distribution, sales and marketing and after sales costs.

I: Why after sales costs?

C: To service any requirements the customers have post sales.

I: The product in our case is a "sariya" (steel rod). There won't be any after-sales costs. Chuck that.

I: What other costs would you look at?

C: I think I missed transportation and logistics costs.

I: Right.

I: Let's move ahead. Pick any one cost bucket and tell me ways to reduce costs.

C: I would look at procurement costs first.

I: Sure. So, our client procures two raw materials. One is iron ore, and the other is coal. Coal is imported from Australia and Iron ore is procured from Indian mines. Take any one raw material and let's begin.

C: I'll look at Coal first since we are procuring it from Australia.

I: Ok. What are the 3-4 levers you would focus on in order to reduce costs?

C: Firstly, I would look at why are we importing this from Australia and not from any other mine in India.

I: This is not available in India.

C: Alright, so why Australia particularly. There would be countries which are closer to India from where we can procure. This would reduce transportation costs.

I: Fair enough, which other countries would you suggest?

C: I would look at other Southeast Asian countries or African countries. Probably prioritize Asian countries due to proximity.

I: Any country in particular? We know Australia is rich in minerals, but which Asian country has such mineral resources? You would have heard about this in the news some days back.

C: I haven't been following the news recently but based on my previous understanding: Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia come to mind.

I: Yup, Indonesia is what I was looking for. Carry on.

C: The next lever I would look at is the number of orders that we are making.

I: Right. So, we currently order 16 shipments of 30,000 tons each. So, the total requirement is for 480,000 tons a year.

C: How is the coal consumption pattern? I am asking this because based on this we could look at either increasing / decreasing the number of orders depending on shipment costs and inventory storage costs.

I: Coal is consumed continuously. No trend as such. But why do you say by reducing the number of orders we can save on costs?

C: The decision on optimum number of orders depends on two types of costs: inventory storage costs and ordering costs / shipment costs.

I: What are ordering costs? There is nothing called ordering costs.

C: By ordering costs I meant to place an order someone would have to sit and place it manually. In addition to it within ordering costs I am also including the shipping costs.

I: Okay, the costs for physically placing the order are negligible. Let's focus on shipping costs.

C: Alright. With lower number of orders, the ships will have to make less trips. Hence in essence we would be saving on the fuel costs for the additional trips.

I: How? I still don't get it.

C: So, let's say that we earlier had 16 trips with 30,000 tones. Now we will have 8 trips with 60,000 tones being carried.

I: Yes, so how will you save on costs?

C: So, less trips would mean less money paid overall to the logistics provider.

I: Siddharth, you are fudging this. Don't give me high level answers. You should be able to defend your point when challenged, so think hard and let me know how we will save costs.

C: Probably with bigger shipments we can rent out space in bigger vessels where the costs would be shared with other manufacturers as well.

I: Okay, let's stop. I was thinking that you would mention we would have less costs per tonne as bigger ships have better fuel efficiency as compared to smaller ships. It is like the car and truck case where trucks are more efficient than cars in transporting. Let's continue.

C: Got it. Next, we could look at the price per tonne being charged by the supplier. We could look at entering in long-term contracts to reduce prices.

I: Please elaborate.

C: So currently it might be the case that we are ordering coal on a per-year basis. Since the company owners now have a target timeline in mind, we could look at entering in a contract for the next 3-4 years with our supplier for coal. Since we would be guaranteeing the demand for coal for the next 3 years to the supplier, there will be less risk for the supplier in terms of demand uncertainty and hence he would be able to give us a better rate per tonne of coal.

I: Makes sense. Let's move onto the revenues now. How can we increase revenues?

C: To increase revenues, I would look at Price and volumes both. I will start off with ways to increase volumes.

C: Before starting though, I just wanted to understand who our current customers are.

I: Contractors of NHAI.

C: Alright. So, we are catering only to the public sector. Any reason for this?

I: The size of the pie is huge and so it seems attractive.

C: Ok but have we investigated the private sector? Why aren't we selling to them?

I: Not yet. That is a fair point, and we should be doing that.

C: Alright. So, in terms of our current customers, what market share do we have?

I: 2-3%.

C: Ok. So now I will look at why do we have a low share here and then think of ways to improve it.

I: Got it. But to make the discussion more pointed, tell me whether we should focus on: the government sector or private sector?

C: We currently have a 2-3% share in the public sector. I believe one of the reasons could be that we have a bad image in the market due to the fact that we are a bankruptcy asset. My understanding of the public sector is that they would need to have dealings with a well-known and credible brand because at the end of the day they are answerable to the public. In addition to this, I believe the ordering cycle in the public sector is larger because they go through the tendering process which is very lengthy and places high thresholds on the quality of products. The private sector on the other hand will have shorter buying cycles and the quality restrictions or levels will be lower as at the end of the day they would need to minimize their construction costs. Hence, I believe the private sector would be a better segment for our client.

I: Alright. We are done here. Any questions for me?

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Was able to ask the right questions and give responses to follow-up questions convincingly.
What could you have done better?	At one point the interviewer pressurized me, and I got stuck there. Started rambling. Should have kept my cool and avoided that.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Q1. How have you sustained your life at Bain? Q2. Which industries / sectors are driving Bain's current growth?

Case Interview 2

Client is a ropes and nets manufacturer. Has been seeing growth rates of 3-4% and wants to target 15%. Help them.

Reiterated the problem statement.

C: How long have they been in business?

I: Decades.

C: What are the different products that they have?

I: Fishing nets and other sorts of ropes. For this case let's focus only on fishing nets.

C: What market share do they have? Which markets?

I: 70%. Indian market only.

C: What sort of customers do they cater to? All types of fishermen?

I: Yes, they have a whole range of fishing nets and hence they sell to both small and big fisherman.

C: What are the timelines they are looking at for the 15% growth?

I: Next 3 years.

C: I'll just take a couple of moments here to come up with a structure. To increase revenues, I'll first look at trying to increase our market share within the Indian market and with the same set of products. Then I'll look at what other markets we could expand to. Finally, I'll also look at what new products we can launch in order to increase revenues.

I: Fair enough. Let's proceed.

C: To increase existing revenues I'll look at ways to increase both prices as well as volumes. I'll start with prices. Currently what sort of a pricing strategy do we follow?

I: We have a product which is of higher quality and hence we can charge a 5% price premium.

C: Got it. Since we already have a price premium, it seems tough to increase prices as we already have a 70% share. I'll move on to strategies for increasing volumes.

I: Fair enough.

C: To increase volumes, I would first like to know that the 30% market that is occupied by the competitors, who are the sort of customers and who are the key players?

I: The other players are local players and consequently the customers are smaller scale fishermen.

C: So, it seems that for the smaller fishermen segment, the value proposition of local players is more attractive. That could be because they might have a cheaper product, or they might just be more accessible in that region, or it could just be an issue with brand awareness. To tackle these issues, we could partner with more distributors/retailers to increase our reach, provide better trade margins to our channel partners, introduce a new product line for smaller fishermen and charge a lower price and finally rollout promotions specifically for these sorts of customers to improve awareness.

I: Okay. What else?

C: Another way to increase volumes is focusing on the frequency of purchase. Since you mentioned that ours is a high-quality product, I would assume that the lifetime of a net would be high. To increase frequency, we could focus on modifying the quality of nets to have a shorter lifetime.

I: Wouldn't this be exactly opposite of our value proposition leading to customers shifting to a different brand?

C: Not exactly, since we have been in the business for decades and have a 70% market share, we would have a huge chunk of brand loyal customers and hence shifting to a different brand does not seem likely.

I: Fair enough. What else?

C: Apart from the Indian market, we could look at entering other countries.

I: Before evaluating that, let's estimate the size of the Indian market.

C: Okay. There would be two markets for fishing nets: coastal and inland fishing. I'll estimate the size of the coastal market and then add a certain percentage for inland fishing.

I: Lets focus only on the coastal market.

C: Alright, I'll start off with the population of India. Considering 1.2 billion people, I'll only consider half the population since we have a coast only in the southern part of India. So, we now have 0.6 billion people. To estimate the coastal population, I'll consider the state of Maharashtra. In Maharashtra we have 7 out of the 35 districts on the coast so approximately 20% of the population lives on the coast. Accordingly, we now have $0.6 \times 0.2 = 0.12$ billion people. Dividing by 4 for the number of families, we have 0.03 billion families or 30 million families. Out of these coastal families about 50% would be involved in agriculture and about 50% of them would be involved in fishing which gives the total number of families as 7.5 million. Each family will need on average 2 fishing nets and hence 15 million nets is the total demand. Factoring for the life of a net and considering 5 years as the average life, we have 3 million nets per year. Considering 1000 Rs as the average price, we have sales of 3 billion or 300 crore.

I: Right, this is very close to the actual amount. One last question: do you think the client can achieve 15% growth?

C: Since the client currently has 3-4% growth, even after following the above-mentioned strategies, it will be very tough to achieve this sort of growth in the Indian market. If we expand to other geographies, then it's a possibility but not in the Indian market alone.

I: Alright, we are done. Any questions?

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I had read this case in the previous year's casebook, so I had a decent idea on how to approach it.
What could you have done better?	If your case is repeated from the previous years, do make sure you make it seem as if you haven't practiced it before.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	How is staffing managed at Bain?

Tips for Future Candidates

Do read the casebook diligently. The last 3-4 days you can stop practicing cases and focus only on revision and casebook reading. I personally referred to casebooks from IIMA, B, C, L, ISB and XLRI.



Harshini Sankaranarayana

Undergraduate College	NIT Trichy
Field of Graduation	B.Tech. (Electronics & Communication)
Professional Qualifications	CFA L1
Work Experience	Aurigo Software (23 Months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me something about yourself.

Share instances demonstrating your strengths and weaknesses.

Case Interview 1

Your client is a non-profit organization that hires young graduates to teach in local schools is not able to meet their recruitment needs i.e., hire enough numbers. Can you help them chart out an effective strategy?

C: Asked scoping questions (how established is the organization, where are we based out of, profiles & number of hires; how and where we currently hire from, expectations from hires, how long have we been facing this problem and any major increases in hiring needs etc.).

I: We are a well-known organization, 12+ years since establishment. Tied up with schools across the country, across multiple cities: both Tier 1 & Tier 2. We hire fresh undergraduate students

from diverse academic backgrounds, the expectation is that they are required to teach for 2 years, a post which they will have to move on to other career prospects. The pay is at par with their peers who work in the industry. We have a grassroots approach to hiring; we engage in physical outreach; our team has tied up with multiple campuses. There has been no major jump in hiring needs, steady increase but we have been increasingly lagging in fulfilling requirements over the last 2 years.

C: I'll divide the recruitment funnel into 4 broad buckets: number of candidates we reach out to, number of applications we receive, number of selections made, number of final joiners. Do you want me to focus on any specific bucket?

I: These are exhaustive, let's explore each of these factors and figure out what are possible problems and recommendations could be under each of them.

C: I'll start with the first bucket. I'm assuming there have been no major demographics and psychographics of our target segments. Number of students made aware through.

1. Campus relations- target more universities/ change the portfolio mix based on the application to engagement ratio: determine which segments are performing better basis discipline (science, arts, engineering colleges) or city (metro, tier 1, tier 2 cities) / increase frequency of engagements
2. PR activities to improve awareness in the larger student population: such as webinars with alums, news reports etc.

I: We don't want to target more universities, but the portfolio mix makes sense. We are also lagging on PR. We can explore the next bucket.

C: Number of applications we receive will depend on willingness of those who are aware about the join program and the ease of application.

I: Can you explore what can be done to have more people interested?

C: Given that the participants in the program will be expected to find other opportunities in the future, they'll either work in the industry, pursue higher education or start up. So, promotional material should involve messaging catering to these three segments, leveraging the alumni network providing information and alumni who have gone on any of these paths.

1. Industries looking for candidates with this background
2. Higher education prospects
3. Access to a network for those interested in starting up

I: Yes, messaging is a major area we'll have to work on, are there any other factors outside these you want to explore that may affect willingness?

C: (Thinking out aloud for other factors to improve number of applications).

I: (Cue from the interviewer) I didn't say that number of applications is the problem.

C: Can we explore the other factors like improving acceptance % among those selected: reducing those dropping off by ensuring selection happens early on: before application cycle for master's programs/ negotiating exclusivity in acceptance of offers with the campus/ letting them know of location mapping early on, so drop offs can be covered with buffer offers early on.

I: We've covered good ground here, let's end the case.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Initial structure: thinking out aloud helped the interviewer give a cue when I went off track with the number of applications instead of the number of final hires.	C: Do we have a target rate of return in mind? I: Assume 12% hurdle rate.
What could you have done better?	Stopped referring to the initial buckets after I was done with the first two; so, missed exploring one of the factors I'd mentioned earlier (selection of candidates) which would have covered expertise of the recruitment team.	C: We'll need a fixed investment and operating costs, and we will have to project cash flow for the 30 years. I: What are the different revenue streams?
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA	C: Tolls, rent from petrol pump, commissions from shopping and retail establishments: restaurants, bars, advertisements billboards, signage by the government. I: How will you price tolls? C: We could use value-based pricing i) using fuel costs saved from travelling 23 kms less each way. ii) Time value of money saved: assuming that average speed is 60 kmph, a person would save 40 minutes both ways (since most of them travel for work) and this would improve their productivity by a certain %. So, if an average employee is billed Rs. 2000 per hour, we can calculate the costs saved due to improved productivity. I: Fuel costs are easy to calculate, but time value of money will be difficult. Now let's say we've priced toll; is there any important consideration you want to make while projecting revenue? C: Due to reduced distance (from 30 km to 7 km), this will lead to increased economic activity, we may have to revisit our initial assumption about the number of vehicles: it could be much higher, a multiple of the current figure: 100,000. I: True, I don't know what that figure will be, but it'll be much higher now that they won't behave like two different cities. That'll be it. Do you have any questions for me?

Case Interview 2

A&B are two cities at 30 Kms distance from each other. An established structure player wants to see if we can build a bridge over the river reducing the distance to 7 Kms. What are the factors you'll consider while evaluating this proposal?

C: Can I have more information on the type of cities, purpose of travel to these cities, both number of vehicles passing: passengers and commercial vehicles; model used: BOT?

I: 100,000 vehicles pass through the road each day, 60% passenger & 40% commercial, passenger travel mostly involves travelling to workplaces and visiting friends & family, model is Build Operate Transfer, for the first 30 years the company will receive toll revenue, post which it will be transferred to the government.

C: We'll have to analyze this both from a financial as well as qualitative.

I: Let's start with financials.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? NA

What could you have done better? NA

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Case Interview 3

We are a large pharmaceutical company, into innovative large molecule drugs for cancer, arthritis, nephron-disorders. Our drug can cure a certain type of breast cancer but is not patented in India. So far, we have enjoyed a monopoly, but our competitor has managed to copy the formulation in Phase 2 of trials and will launch in 3 months. What should our defense strategy be?

I: We don't have much time (courtesy zoom link expiring), I just want to see your approach to the problem.

C: How is our competitor's product priced, and does the drug differ in anyway with respect to efficacy and side effects, and how is our product sold and how is it paid for?

I: Competitor is pricing at 30% discount, the drug is exactly like ours. Sold through oncologists' prescriptions in hospitals. It could be subsidized by the government or self-funded.

C: Since the competitor has priced this at a 30% discount, we will have to find ways to reduce switching:

1. Not altering product mix: leverage existing salesforce' existing relationship with oncologists to incentivise doctors to continue prescribing our drug: sponsoring conferences etc.
2. Value added services: We could explore adding new services such as tying up with hospitals for all round comprehensive cancer care: the disease influences multiple systems, and patients also suffer from psychological effects of the disease. This will allow us to continue charging a premium. In the long run: we could invest into differentiate our product through innovations- improve potency, reduce frequency of use and side-effects further.
3. Do we know what our current margins are, is price reduction an option?

I: Comprehensive services with premium pricing is a good point. Reducing prices is not an option as it may lead to a price war. Anything else you'd want to add since we're almost out of time?

C: Improve accessibility for the existing drug by obtaining insurance covers that can cover at least part of costs.

I: Thanks, that'll be it.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? It helped that I was able to answer the point.

What could you have done better? Structure it better, was in a hurry to give solutions as we didn't have enough time.

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA

Pranjali Bangani

Undergraduate College	IIT Bhubaneswar
Field of Graduation	B. Tech. (Metallurgy)
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

1. Introduce yourself.
2. Walk me through your work experience.
3. Couple of questions related to GST policy as they were relevant to work experience.

Case Interview 1

Our client is a large infrastructure player, who wants to build a 10km-long tollway bridge connecting 2 cities divided by a river. Please advise them on its profitability.

C: Noted. (Asked some clarifying questions).

I: The cities are currently connected by a 30km-long 4-lane bridge (no toll). Our client wants to shorten this distance to 10 km with a new 8-lane bridge, with a profitability objective. Major use cases of the bridge users: work, education, personal/leisure activities.

C: Noted. My approach to this problem would be first doing a qualitative check for size of opportunity & risks, followed by a quantitative approach where we can calculate the NPV to check if it is positive.

I: Works. Let's start with the Qualitative part.

C: Great. Here, I want to break it down into 2 parts: opportunity & risk. By opportunity, I want to look at what will be the traffic between the cities across the 2 bridges and its spread across each bridge. And in risk, I will have a look at major sources of risks such as Political risk, Regulatory risk and Relocation & rehabilitation risks.

I: Great. You already know the reasons why people travel between the 2 cities. What are your thoughts on the Opportunity bit?

C: Given that the distance between the 2 cities has reduced by 20 km (30-10), I would imagine a lot more people would be interested in travelling between the cities now, despite the additional toll to be paid.

I: Definitely. Let's assume that qualitatively the risks don't seem major as well. Let's move onto the quantitative part of it.

C: Alright. Here, I want to estimate the NPV of the project and if positive, compare that with the infra company's existing profits: if it is significant in comparison, only then will we go ahead with the project.

I: Perfect. Let's begin.

C: I want to first look at the major revenue segments: toll, proceeds from rent & sale of real estate assets on the bridge, advertisements, tourism opportunities and parking. Fair to assume these heads would encapsulate most of the revenue earned, am I missing something?

I: No. How will you estimate the revenue earned from toll, say in a day?

C: To estimate the revenue earned from toll in a day, I would first guesstimate the number of vehicles travelling between the 2 cities in a day and estimate what will be our bridge's share of the traffic. After that, I would estimate a fair price of a toll ticket.

I: Great. Please lay down your approaches for each estimate.

C: Number of vehicles guesstimate: Used the Supply side: divided a day into Low/Medium/High traffic hours. Low traffic: one vehicle passes the tollgate every 20 seconds, medium: 10 seconds, high: 4 seconds. From the number of hours in each L/M/H traffic segments, will guesstimate the number of vehicles in each lane. Multiply by 8 lanes. Toll Pricing: Used value-based pricing (alternate: cost-based, but the interviewer asked for value-based); By using our bridge as opposed to the existing bridge, each commuter saves time and petrol (thanks to lesser distance). Petrol saved = 20 km worth of petrol, if the average vehicle's mileage is 20 km, then we save 1 liter of petrol each way (~Rs. 70). To calculate the monetary value of time saved (45 mins. (10 km at 40 kmph vs 30 km at 30 kmph average): we can multiply 45 minutes with the hourly salary of the commuter of the bridge with the minimum earnings/car owner. This way we can ensure affordability for all. Final toll price (one way) = value added due to time saved + value-added due to petrol saved (Rs. 70). This can then be further discounted for monthly pass or return passes.

I: Great. Your thoughts on using the demand side approach for calculating traffic volume?

C: We can do that by estimating how many people would want to travel to the other city for each use case, despite the distance. For example, we need to estimate the number of school students for which the following equation is true ->
[Value (Schooling in same city) < {Value (Schooling in other city): Cost (Monetary & Hedonic) of travelling to the other city}]

However, this is a difficult estimate with a lot of room for error. Hence, I would prefer the supply side calculation.

I: Great. Your thoughts on the cost side of NPV?

C: There will be a large capital expenditure, followed by periodic maintenance expenses.

I: Okay. How will you estimate the NPV from these?

C: Subtract costs from the revenue estimates over time, & discount it by the COC of the project.

I: Okay. Thoughts on the cost of capital of such projects?

C: Mostly high. These projects are mostly financed via non-recourse loans, with lenders having first claim to the cash flows emanating from the project till such time the project is paid for. Since this is a risky proposition for the lender, the cost of capital is usually high.

I: Great. Let's do some calculations for the NPV and wind up.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Being confident and conversational.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Shivam Sahu

Undergraduate College	Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
Field of Graduation	Textile Technology
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

Quickly run me through your CV.

Where did you intern? What kind of work did you do? What were your deliverables? Why did you reject the PPO from Goldman Sachs?

In Round 2: How was your previous case? Did you sleep well? Do you want to directly get into a case or care for some chit chat?

I: Introduced himself, told me about his practice at BCG, how long he had worked. Later found out he was an IIML alum. Asked me to introduce myself and quickly run him through my CV.

I: I see some people have mentioned their CGPA whereas yours is not mentioned.

C: Yes, it's usually the IR (Institute Rankers) who chose to disclose their CGPA, I was part of PlaceCom and managing 14 hours of work with Academics and Campus life I feel, a 6.84 was a decent CGPA, considering also that I was specializing in Finance.

I: Tell me more about your Summer Internship with Goldman Sachs. Why did you reject the PPO?

C: Described how the role was not good enough, compensation was on the lower end and already had a job offer in undergrad with similar pay. Described my deliverables during the internship as 2 research reports on Mobile Gaming in India & OTT Video in India.

I: What do you think has been the reason for the boom in OTT Video in India?

C: Reduced handset rates, reduced data charges (entry of Jio in 2016), Rise of Local/regional content & developers are the fundamental drivers.

I: Let's jump into a case then, "Your client is Media Conglomerate, they want to expand their digital presence, they want you to size the Digital Market, primarily the OTT Video market by 2025."

C: Asked clarifying questions regarding the Company (found out to be Zee Network), country of operations, current online/digital presence, any segment to focus on for sizing, whether or not should we be looking at a roadmap, constraints w.r.t time and investment.

I: Zee Network has 1% revenues currently from their online/digital operations. Consider all segments (age), forget the roadmap, give me a ballpark revenue figure for the CEO to chase or benchmark by 2025.

Case Interview 1

What is going to be the size of the OTT Video market in India by 2025? (From my Summer Internship, OTT Video in India was my area of research).

Interview 1 (25 mins)

C: Discussed my initial approach, Started with Indian Population, split it by Urban & Rural. Next filter of Income (Low, Middle, High), Next filter of Age 0-15 yrs., 15-25 yrs., 25-35 yrs., 35-55 yrs., 55+ yrs. Choose the middle 3 for consideration. Next filter how many would own Smartphones, Next filter of those how many would have active data packages to support Streaming services, of those how many would actually subscribe to Streaming Services.

Now midway realized that OTT Video is not just streamed on Phones but also on Laptops & Smart TVs. Quickly moved to augment my approach by saying that for the purposes of Guesstimate and my previous work with Goldman, our primary research revolved around smartphone users. Asked whether I should include the Laptop & Smart TV users, but the interviewer urged me to continue having acknowledged the missing customer segments.

After arriving at the number of people who would actually subscribe to the services, I mentioned that subscription revenues contributed to almost 20% of total revenues. OTT Video monetizes primarily by 3 methods SVOD (Subscription Video on Demand), TVOD (Transaction Video on Demand) & AVOD (Advertisement Video on Demand).

AVOD makes about 80% of revenues whereas SVOD (Netflix, Prime Video, Hotstar) make up about 20%. Assumed annual premium of INR 1000 per person and took 30-40% haircut on total revenues due to account sharing practices to arrive at revenue estimates.

I: This seems like a fair approach, what do you think could be a major roadblock to achieving these projected revenues.

C: Investment by Govt, Rollout of 5G, Growth of Local Content. Couldn't think of more.

I: Data rates cost are decreasing but they still will factor into adoption behavior, data rates would be the bottleneck for the projected growth for the industry.

C: Agreed, that would alter my percentage factors in my guesstimate driving down revenues as people with internet connections may not subscribe to Streaming Apps as their data plans may not be able to service the data requirements in terms of free data, bandwidth, etc.

I: I think that's out time, do you have any questions for me?

C: No, I think I'm good, thanks for your time.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	The fact that I knew about the industry, the terminologies, methods of monetization, driving factors and customer behavior were some reasons which helped me confidently go ahead with my structure.
What could you have done better?	Even though I forgot Laptop & Smart TV customers initially, always better to sincerely re-introduce how you were focusing on a particular channel and you could include the missed segment into your calculations.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	NA

Case Interview 2

Your client is Global Pharmaceutical Company, they have come up with a treatment for breast cancer which cures the disease completely. The Company has been in the global market for 10 but recently a local competitor has come up with a knock off and is planning to price it at a discount of 40%. We are tasked to come up with a defense strategy for the client.

Interview 2 (25 min)

I: Hi Shivam, how are you doing? Introduced herself and asked me how did my previous interview go?

C: Told her, I was feeling a little anxious and was surprised how quickly the previous interview ended. Hoping that I could keep up the same in this one.

I: Smiled and asked me to calm down, said I'd been going well and to keep up the same. Asked whether I wanted to talk initially or directly jump into the case.

C: (Obviously I wanted to talk) Could you tell me a little bit more your time with BCG and what practice you were a part of.

I: Described her practice, how she coped with work with a 2-year-old kid. Firm was very supportive, in laws also helped out. Now managing work and spending time with family became easier with time.

C: Tried to relate with her, how important spending time with a newborn child could be for a new mom. Talked about how even my mother's in-laws helped out during her surgery when I was small. Tried to engage in small talk, constantly listening, engaging and empathizing. (Spent almost 10 mins)

I: Okay quickly run me through your CV.

C: Placecom, IIT Delhi, Football, Reading (Fiction/Non-Fiction), Summer Internship from Finance to Consulting.

I: Rejecting a PPO isn't easy, hopefully you wouldn't regret it. Okay so let's jump into the case. "Your client is Global Pharmaceutical Company; they have come up with a treatment for breast cancer which cures the disease completely (I was very happy assuming that it would be a pricing case). The Company has been in the global market for 10 but recently a local competitor has come up with a knock off and is planning to price it at a discount of 40%. We are tasked to come up with a defense strategy for the client."

C: Scoped with CPCC. Tried to identify all stakeholders in the procedure. Hospitals, Doctors, Patients & Insurance Providers. Initiated to approach each factor. Misidentified the treatment as a pill, was corrected 10 mins into the case that the treatment was an IV (intra-vein drip) taken at Hospitals. Tried to adopt the customer journey approach to identify areas of disparity for the client & competitors.

I: Can you stop with this approach and list down the factors, let's identify the levers and then work toward the solution.

C: Hospitals (Location, Type, Treatments offered, Size, Beds), Doctors (Compensation, Incentives, Relationships with Big Pharma), Patients (Pre-Diagnosis, Diagnosis, Post-Diagnosis phases) to analyse different factors to touch upon & Insurance Companies (Medical Insurance, Terms, Tie-Ups, etc.)

I: Why would Location of Hospitals be of importance?

C: It would be important as even for medical tourism, I would want to maintain & develop relationships with hospitals in major metros (due to density of operations and adjacent auxiliary services).

I: How would existing treatments offered be of relevance while deciding target hospitals?

C: Most major treatments also require pre-operative and post-operative procedures which tie-in the entire experience. Customers may need to visit different outlets/hospitals to get necessary pre/post procedures, but if we could somehow include them as a one-stop-shop, this would certainly be able to justify the 40% premium over the local knock-off.

I: You mentioned incentives for doctors, our competitors may indulge in passing on commissions for treatment recommendations, but firm-policy is to not give unethical/morally ambiguous recommendations.

C: We could work to highlight how the competitor is using the same and instead focus on organically retaining relationships by incentivizing Doctors using non-monetary factors.

I: Can you think of any other recommendations which might be helpful in either defending or justifying the price premium for the client since reducing treatment costs isn't viable?

C: I am not able think of any more suggestions, if you could give me a minute to think.

I: No that's okay, do you have any questions for me?

C: Was this a real case, and if yes, what were your recommendations?

I: Yes, this was a real case, we went with somewhat similar recommendations where we tried to justify the price premium by making the whole treatment as an integrated experience. This was very helpful. You'll be hearing from us shortly. Feel free to reach out to me!

C: Thank you for your time.

What worked well for you?	Remaining calm even after being cross-questioned multiple times. Interviewer blatantly disagreed with me multiple times, but it pays off to remain calm and identify why your reasoning differed from that of the interviewer.
What could you have done better?	Taken more inputs from the interviewer, taken more time to develop a structure rather than rushing to solve the problem or suggest recommendations. The problem may not always require the solutions exactly how it may be demanded in the problem statement, the interviewer may guide you toward a specific section of the problem.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Was this a real case, what were your recommendations?

Tips for Future Candidates

Majority of the interview evaluation would revolve around the fit test, communication, confidence & ability to think on your feet. Almost every shortlisted candidate's case preparation would be on point and nearly similar.

Interview Experience

Thanu S Reddy

Undergraduate College	Institute of Chartered Accountants of India
Field of Graduation	Commerce
Professional Qualifications	C.A.
Work Experience	Ramraj & Co., Chartered Accountants (17 months)

HR & Conversation Questions

Casual conversation about myself, under-graduation and my experience at IIM L.

Explain internship project. (Case 2 was created out of my answer to this)

Case Interview 1

Client in a global pharma company. It is an innovative company manufacturing biologic. It has a one-of-a-kind cancer medicine that has been available since a decade. The company has patents on this product elsewhere, and not in India. A pharma company in India will be launching a local copy of the same drug. Design defense strategy.

C: Reiterated my understanding of the problem statement. (This was very important since the statement was very big with lot of details)

C: What is the time available before the drug is launched by the Indian company?

I: 3 months.

C: We have to design a defense strategy in the sense that the client's market share must be protected. Is that correct?

I: Yes.

C: How old is this global pharma company? Where is it located? What are its other products?

I: Established firm in US, leading player. Other products include medication for arthritis etc.

C: Can you explain more about the particular drug in case?

I: One-of-a-kind drugs curing a specific kind of breast cancer.

C: Can I get more details about the Indian company and its drug?

I: Large global player. The local drug is 30% cheaper than the current drug.

C: Is only the price a point of distinction here? Is the API, formulation, administration, and efficacy of both the drugs same?

I: Yes, that's correct.

C: I can primarily divide the defense strategy into two: 1) if we can stop the launch of the local product 2) If not, what should be our steps post launch.

I: Launch cannot be stopped since there is no patent or any other legal right available in India.

C: In that case, I'd like to delve deeper in the second bucket of post launch actions.

I: Sure.

C: I can primarily think of 4 strategies. I'd like to explore each of them sequentially.

I: Go ahead.

C: I'm assuming that this is primarily a B2B sales scenario wherein our customers are hospitals.

I: That's correct.

C: In that case, doctors would be the influencers of purchase decision of the product. The end users (patients) would have little say. So, we can create customer lock-in with the doctors by say, demonstrating value addition provided by the product or incentivizing the doctors to procure our products.

I: Good. How would you demonstrate the value addition here?

C: Tried giving examples but interviewer kept cross questioning and dismissing all my ideas. So, moved on to next strategy.

C: Since price is the problem here, can we bring down our price by rationalizing cost structure and/or reducing margins?

I: Not possible to reduce price since the medicine is priced at the same level in all other countries. If price is reduced in India, other countries can leverage on this arbitrage opportunity.

C: Is there any way to create barriers to avoid exploiting this arbitrage opportunity? For example, in India, certain products are priced at a particular price if sold in certain states and higher price if sold in other states.

I: Doesn't seem feasible. Move on.

C: My third idea was to explore if we can acquire the Indian company. This would avoid all the complications and competition. This would however be subject to not being anti-competitive according to the Competition Act.

I: Not possible to acquire. The Indian company too is a large established global player.

C: In that case, can we get into some kind of agreement with the Indian player with regards to the drug, in exchange of probably something else that's attractive to the Indian company?

I: Doesn't sound feasible.

C: Okay. So, my last strategy would be somewhat similar to the 1st strategy but create lock-ins with the supply chain players/distribution network. Again, we'll have to ensure that Competition Act is not contravened with respect bro these exclusive supply and tie in arrangements.

I: Okay. Any other better ideas?

C: These are the strategies that I could think of at the moment.

I: Okay. Let's end the case. Do you have any questions for me?

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?

Industry knowledge on pharmaceutical sector. In such not so typical cases wherein you are put on the spot by dismissing most of the ideas, it is very important to stay calm and not get tensed. Interviewer is not judging just on the case solving skills but on how you tackle an unfamiliar, stress situation. Also, it is highly recommended to demonstrate all the relevant knowledge that

	you may have (here, I was able to show that I understand how pharma sector and drugs work and legal implications specific to India, with regards to the Competition Act.)
What could you have done better?	Could have probably thought of more ideas. But may not be possible realistically within the given short time frame.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Experience at BCG so far. How the case problem was actually solved (Very important to ask this. Demonstrates interest to learn)

Case Interview 2

Company X is looking to enter India. It manufactures baby foods. Evaluate if it should enter India.

Calculated the market size to assess the attractiveness of the expansion opportunity

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Could calculate numbers quickly and explain various factors to be considered in market sizing and share exhaustively
What could you have done better?	Should have known the birth rate statistic of India
Questions asked to the Interviewer	How would market sizing be done in this case in reality?



Vamsi Krishna V

Undergraduate College	PSG College of Technology
Field of Graduation	Mechanical Engineering
Professional Qualifications	None
Summer Internship	Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages (Sales and Marketing)
Work Experience	NA

HR & Conversation Questions

Tell me about yourself.

Why Consulting? You did your summers in marketing, now why are you switching to Consulting?

How do you think you'll be able to manage the fact that you have no work ex?

What according to you is success?

What did you do in your Summer Internship?

What did you do as part of the Bombay Shaving Company project?

Case Interview 1

Calculate the number of transactions for Paytm in India in a particular day?

I: How will you go about calculating the no. of transactions for Paytm in India in a particular day?

C: Solved the guesstimate by following the basic structure. (1st step: Urban/Rural, 2nd step: Income Group, 3rd step: Age Wise, some of the other factors taken into consideration are Mobile and Internet penetration and also the probability of the person paying through Paytm out of all other possibilities)

I: (seemed convinced)

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? My communication and being able to confidently deliver my answers

I tried to be calm and took some time for questions I was not prepared for.

What could you have done better?

NA

Questions asked to the Interviewer What is the type of projects that KPMG usually gets involved with?

Tips for Future Candidates

Practice guesstimates and read about different industries



Madhusmita Ghadei

Undergraduate College	NITK Surathkal
Field of Graduation	Civil Engineering
Professional Qualifications	NA
Summer Internship	Goldman Sachs (Finance)
Work Experience	Wells Fargo (11 months): Credit Risk Analytic Consulting

HR & Conversation Questions

Introduce yourself.

How has been your experience in MasterCard so far?

Case Interview 1

Your client is a 2-wheeler tire manufacturer seeing decline in sales for the past 4 quarters. They have asked for your help.

Started off with CPCC and understood that the decline was in South Indian cities. Client has a B2B business model wherein they'd sell to auto OEMs and also has a B2C arm as well selling to retail market. The sales were primarily offline sales and decline was witnessed across all products. Client is one of the top 4 players pan-India and is losing customers to all

competitors, no one specific (asked this to eliminate the possibility of the competitor doing something differently and focus only on internal issues).

C: Please allow me a few moments to structure my thoughts. A decline in revenues can be either because of tweaking our prices, the product mix or the overall number of units sold.

I: Yes, focus on the overall number of units sold.

C: Units sold could have gone down because either we are unable to manufacture enough and thus it's a supply side issue or there isn't sufficient distributor push or customer pull.

I: We have sufficient supply. Let's start off with what the issue could be with respect to distributor push and then customer pull.

C: Before I dive deep into the distributor side issue, do we have stand-alone distributor, or the distributor sells our competitors' products as well.

I: Yes, they do sell the competitor's products as well.

C: Okay then issue can be either because there's a change in the number of distributors, location of distributors or the distributor relationship.

I: What do you mean by distributor relationship?

C: Primarily the incentive structure, our distributor could be preferring the competitor because we have changed our terms, or the competitor has changed their terms.

I: That's right, the competitors are providing a higher cut and thus our distributors are pushing their products. Now let's move on the customer pull.

I went the customer journey route splitting to Need, Awareness, Affordability, Awareness and

Experience (per-purchase, during as well as post-purchase). She asked me to dive deep into awareness, so I split it to Personal Selling, Advertising, Sales Promotion and Public Relations. Before we could discuss more on the customer side issue, she asked me to summarize the case and we were done.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	I was calm and kept the interview conversational.
What could you have done better?	Could have asked fewer clarifying questions.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Something related to the project they did for the airlines I asked.

Case Interview 2

Guesstimate the annual revenue of your favorite restaurant in your city.

Clarified if the focus is only on offline or online delivery sales as well. He asked me to stick to dining sales.

Made the below assumptions:

Working hours: 12

Service time: 1 hour

Split the day into peak and non-peak hours and split the week into weekdays and weekends to give varied occupancy rate.

Average order value per table = Rs. 1000

Average order per person = Rs. 300

40-seater restaurant

Got a weekly sales number and multiplied by 52 to arrive at yearly sales (he tried to check my attentiveness by saying I will be multiplying the sales number with 365 days, right?)
After all the calculations, the yearly revenue came out to be Rs. 3 Cr/annum.

He then asked me to summarize the case as I would to the restaurant owner using a crisp structure.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Drew from personal experience and kept the interviewer engaged.
What could you have done better?	NA
Questions asked to the Interviewer	How much of travel is involved at MasterCard as a consultant?

Case Interview 3

Client is a credit card issuer (think ICICI Bank) who has launched a product that gives 4% discount on online spend. The profitability is going down. They have asked for your help to increase profitability.

Asked clarifying questions whether this was as per-COVID or post-COVID issue. The issue spanned both timelines. Target audience was millennials, digitally savvy with inclination to spend online. 1% discount on offline sales but the usage was almost exclusively online by customers.

C: To increase the profitability we can try to reduce our costs or increase our sales.

I: Focus on revenues.

C: Revenues can be split into fixed revenue (such as annual fees) and transaction-based revenue from merchant, late fees, etc.

We discussed extensively on above talking about increasing the APR, reducing the discount we give, reduce period of default, increase revolving income, increase size of transaction.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	My experience in credit card industry helped.
What could you have done better?	Could have been structured better.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	Difference between a traditional consulting firm (interviewer was ex-Kearney) v/s MasterCard.

Tips for Future Candidates

Don't think of the interview as make or break. Try to build a rapport and enjoy the conversation.

McKinsey & Company

Pankhuri Gupta

Undergraduate College	Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies
Field of Graduation	Finance and Investment
Professional Qualifications	CFA Level 2 Cleared
Work Experience	NA
Summers	JP Morgan Chase & Co. (Global Corporate Banking Coverage)

HR & Conversation Questions

I have gone through your CV, but can you tell your life story and some key things from your resume?

If we don't make an offer to you today, what will you do and how would you react?

You said that McKinsey is your dream company, what is that about McKinsey?

Tell me about a situation when you were leading a team, and the team didn't perform to its potential, what did you do?

Case Interview 1

I am running a very niche NBFC targeted at MSMEs. I offer hassle-free small ticket loans of

about 5-10-15 lakhs through digitization. We are not growing as per our expectations, please help.

C: Since when are we facing the problem and what is our target for growth?

I: We want to grow 3x-4x in a year, and the problem is happening for the last 12-18 months.

C: Which cities are we targeting currently? And MSMEs in which sector particularly?

I: We are currently focused on top 10-15 cities of India, on front end, we don't have any sectoral preferences, however, in the backend, most of our loans have been granted to MSME construction firms, restaurants and garages.

C: Can I know more about the loan terms: Collateral, documentation needed, time taken to disburse loans, Interest rates, payment terms etc.?

I: Loans are collateral free, we do full documentation check: where we need bank statements and P&L statements of the MSME for cash flow estimation, GST linkages etc. As I told the process is hassle free, we provide loans in 1-2 days, and since the loans are provided quickly, interest rates are little on higher side.

C: What is the time frame we are looking at? Is there any budgetary constraint?

I: Time horizon is 6-12 months and definitely no NBFC would be burning money like that.

(CASE SOLVING: STRUCTURE)

C: As we wish to grow the number of loans disbursed, we can divide it into:

Number of customers * number of loans per customer

Focusing on number of customers: we can look at 3 dimensions:

- 1) New markets: Outside India and Inside India (Tier 2-3 cities where most of the MSMEs are based out of)
- 2) New products: Expanding into banking, Fintech (Digital payments, digital insurance, wealth tech etc.)
- 3) Market penetration: Attracting more no. of customers in the existing market.

I: Start with 3rd part.

C: Can I know more about the distribution model, is it all digital or we also have salesforce?

I: We operate largely online, however, salesforce is used to spread word amongst MSMEs.

C: I would like to structure this ahead in terms of

- 1) Awareness of our NBFC
- 2) Loan terms attractiveness
- 3) Accessibility of our salesforce and digital platform
- 4) Experience: issues in loan disbursal process

I: Okay, start from the first one then.

C: I would like to explore all possible mediums of lead generation like telephone calls, face to face visits, emails, website, apps and affiliate marketing. Is there problem across any?

I: No.

C: Based on my prior case competition experience, where I did personal surveys with 30+ MSMEs, most of the mails etc. are made in English and loads of calls and emails are considered as SPAM by MSMEs, thus I would suggest calls and mails should be made in the regional languages of the MSMEs, and for greater trust and credibility, we should reach out to trade associations like Shankar Market Trade association in Delhi. Generally, the MSMEs.

are organized into trade associations and thus reaching out directly to these trade associations and their presidents, provide greater credibility and support from MSMEs.

I: Yes, this could be done, what else? You talked about Amazon; how can we leverage them?

C: Yes, we can do affiliate marketing on Amazon and their home page.

I: What about the various sellers who are selling on Amazon, aren't they also our target market?

C: Yes, absolutely, we should rather partner with Amazon to list us as SME loan provider while a seller is registering and creating a profile with Amazon, to target them in the beginning only.

I: Yes, this could also be done. What next?

C: I would like to shift to loan terms now.

I: Okay.

C: You mentioned that our rate of interest is higher, is it a possibility that we can reduce them a notch?

I: The problem is that we have little data, and thus interest rates are charged higher due to limited data.

C: In that case, for gathering more data, we should make use of open banking, partner with various digital payments providers like Paytm, PhonePe, Google Pay that these MSMEs use for collecting payments so that we can estimate cash flows of the MSMEs with greater accuracy based on this data, as a result, our interest rates can also reduce.

I: Okay, what else?

C: We can also look at the tenure and frequency of payments (EMIs), increasing the tenure of loans, provides greater cushion to MSMEs and flexible loan payment terms like balloon payments, quarterly, half yearly or yearly installments rather than monthly payments, would ease the pressure on the clients. Also, we can facilitate Auto debits, ECS/NACH mechanism so that MSMEs are regular in their payments, and they don't default.

I: We are already having auto debit facility, what else?

C: I would now like to look at accessibility part. Is our app present on Android/Apple phones?

I: Yes.

C: Is there any problem with loading of the website/app and working speed?

I: No.

C: Ok, then I would shift to our salesforce. Here, I would look at quantitative and qualitative factors. Quantitative: number of salesforces, number of visits made by each. Qualitative: quality of engagement with the MSMEs, negotiation skills, training, experience etc.

I: (Abruptly ended the case, and asked to tell 2-3 major ideas from the entire discussion)

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? Bringing ideas from previous case competition experiences, bringing actual problems of MSMEs, maintaining my cool even

	though the Partner was asking me to hurry again and again and was not co-operative at all.
What could you have done better?	Being more out of the box, and speeding up a little. Maybe a better structure as well. Always complete one bucket and then shift to the next, even though interviewer may distract you here and there.
Questions asked to the Interviewer	How is the TIC industry in India? Could TIC and the continuous health monitoring technology be useful in Amusement Parks as well?

Case Interview 2

Numerical Problem

I: We are a cellphone manufacturer, we are facing the following issue -

Current price: 1000\$

Margin per unit: 200\$

Currently selling 2 million units

Sales head has come with the following proposal:

Reduce price by 5%, and volume would go up by 25%.

Evaluate the proposal on contribution margin basis.

Now, if you don't want your contribution to get impacted, by what percentage should your cost reduce.

C: Solved the numerical based on my course knowledge.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Patience, connect with the interviewer, honesty and bringing instances from McKinsey dinner conversations, linking it with why McKinsey.
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What could you have done better?	One calculation mistake, because I quickly jumped into it.
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Questions asked to the Interviewer	You heard my answer for why McKinsey, now I would like to know that why did you choose McKinsey back then and have remained with the same firm for so long?
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Tips for Future Candidates

Always reflect your positive attitude, eagerness to learn and improve. Don't get bogged down even if you commit any error.
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Radhika Chhapolia

Undergraduate College	Miranda House, Delhi University
Field of Graduation	Economics
Professional Qualifications	NA
Work Experience	NA
Summers	Citi Markets

HR & Conversation Questions

Why McKinsey?

Why Consulting?

Think of a failure in life and how it changed you?

Situational questions on teamwork & how to deal with team members?

Finance as a specialization: what are your key learnings?

Social projects done at Miranda House & difficulties and uncertainty faced in those: how did I overcome them?

Experience at Citi: what was your project, key learnings, first corporate experience?

Case Interview 1

McKinsey is working with an auto components supplier for automotive vehicles. Design a strategy to increase its revenues in the next 3-5 years.

C: I'd like to ask a couple of clarifying questions-

I: Is there a target revenue increase?

I: Doubling in next 3 years.

C: Which geography is our client located in?

I: India

C: Who are the takers of these auto components and where are they based?

I: Indian companies: likes of say Maruti (for 4 wheelers) and Honda (for 2 wheelers).

C: What parts/components of the automobile exactly do they manufacture?

I: Exteriors (steel fabricated parts visible externally: say doors of the car, roof).

C: Should I focus on OEMs for 4 wheelers & if yes, which specific types of 4 wheelers (say passenger vehicles or commercial vehicles)?

I: Yes, both are serviced by the client. Focus on them.

C: I'd like to understand the industry landscape: growth rate of the company vis-a-vis industry.

I: Industry has been growing steadily. Our client is present & it's not losing market share.

C: What are the distribution channels: any direct-to-consumer touchpoint?

I: They supply to OEMs and also sell replacement parts via client --> distributors --> retailers --> car owners who need replacement.

At this point, I thought I fairly understood the case-at-hand and took a couple of minutes to think.

My structure was as follows:

Step 1: Identify the different sources of revenue existing and potential: Sales to car manufacturers & replacement market (existing), new product lines (car interiors like seats/steering): potential lines.

Step 2: For each revenue line, demarcated the markets (existing geographies v/s new ones)

C: What are the KPIs in this industry for the current geographies?

I: What do you think? Focus on existing product & market.

C:

- 1) Interoperability among different models/carmakers
- 2) Quality & longevity of product
- 3) Service guarantee
- 4) Price point

(Discussed each point in-depth and what I meant by them in this context)

I: Point 1 & 4 were the key to success in this space.

C: Could you tell me about the players in the current space & if there are any foreign forces?

I: Mentioned Chinese players and how they were flooding the market with cheaper components to which the current costs stood no competition. Please recommend both short term & long-term solutions to combat this.

C: Mentioned few points like their source of low costs was cheap steel which was 80% of the auto-body. Short Term Solution: Demand exclusivity from OEMs to sign long term contracts. Long Term Solution: Procurement Lever, Rationalizing steel usage, alternative material R&D, brand name development.

I: Thanks, that'll be all. Please synthesize the case for me.

Interview Experience

What worked well for you?	Keeping calm: the interviewer had worked in the auto space for years and I needed to keep the conversation up by discussing my understanding with him
What could you have done better?	Could have been more interactive & crisper: the case could have ended faster if I trimmed my arguments
Questions asked to the Interviewer	You've been at the firm for 15+ years. Did you ever think you'd make it to partner level when you joined?

Case Interview 2

Guesstimate the market for niche home products for smart personal devices for households.

It was more conversational. I did not realize when the case started.

Laid out the structure: number of HHs in India --> Urban/Rural Split --> Income split.

I: Please do the entire calculation and give me the numbers.

C: Started calculating & speaking the figures aloud.

The interviewer interrupted me.

I: Tell me the specific customer segments to target at the outset.

Identified the following target segments: 1) Rich & affluent urban nuclear families 2) Double Income No Kids segment 3) Tech-inclined singles 4) Old aged rich grandparents looking for convenience. (Started to discuss each of these)

I: That'd be all, thanks.

Tips for Future Candidates

Be calm; everything else syncs

Interview Experience

What worked well for you? NA

What could you have done better? Should've started the calculations myself

Questions asked to the Interviewer NA



Appendix



PESTLE Framework to conduct industry analysis (detailed)

Political

- Forms of Govt.
 - Stability of Govt.
 - Stability/ Continuity of Law
- Outlook towards industry
- Current political scenario

Economic

- Is economy growing?
- Sectoral growth
- GDP per capita (especially of our target customers)
- Credit availability
- Investment Environment
- Expenditure/ Discretionary Spending

Socio-Cultural

- Societal/ group level
 - Religion
 - Caste/ Ethnicity
 - Gender
- Individual level (Habits)
 - Existing Product Usage
 - Demographic Patterns – Gender, Income, Region based, Rural/ Urban

Environment

- Environmental Regulations

Technology

- Core Technology
 - Technology Availability
 - Manpower
- Enabling Technology
 - Internet
 - Smartphone

Legal & Regulatory

- National
 - Entry barriers
 - One time permit
 - Compliance requirements
 - Taxes & Duties
 - Police & Judiciary
- State/ Federal – Within state and Inter – state
- International
 - Trade Agreements
 - Trade Barriers
 - Import restrictions

Infrastructure

- Product/ Service specific infrastructure (ex- availability of stadiums if launching a sports event)
- Enabling Infrastructure
 - Transport Connectivity
 - Land & Buildings
 - Utilities – Water, Electricity
 - Waste Disposal

Cost Value Chain (detailed)

1. Raw Material

- What? - Quality Specifications, Quantity, Types – Product & Packaging related
- How? - Procurement process
 - 1st time/ one time – Market Survey, Policy, Approvals, RFP, Tendering, Selection and Contract terms, Payments
 - Repeat procurement – Demand Forecasting, Purchase requisition process, delivery & returns, payments
 - When? – Demand forecasting, seasonality, lag time
 - Who – Suppliers
 - No. of suppliers, Quality (capability & performance)
 - Cost
 - Where – Distance, route, transportation mode, damages & pilferages

2. Transportation (In/ Outbound)

- Transport mode and route factors
- Service provider related factors
- Operating factors

3. Storage

- Warehouse facilities/ features, Cost
- Accessibility of warehouse, availability of space
- Process of storage, Inventory Management, (LIFO/ FIFO), Inventory levels and Inventory control

4. Production

- Material
- Manpower
- Machine
- Method
- Measurement

5. Distribution, Sales & Marketing

- Trade Promotion
 - Salesforce – Size, Efficiency
 - Channel Incentives (Commissions) – Monetary & Non Monetary
- Advertisement - Modes (ATL/ BTL/ TTL), Cost per impressions, effectiveness
- Discounts, offers, loyalty schemes

6. After Sales Costs

- Installation
- Customer Service (Online, IVRS, E-mail support)
- Service Centres
- Returns & Warranties
- Feedback Mechanism

7. Other Costs

- Research & development (Manpower, equipment, patents/ IP, Trials)
- HR and admin costs
- Infrastructure costs (Machinery, Land, Building – Factory, Warehouse, retail outlets, offices)
- Product/ Technology development

Key Data Points for Guesstimates

1. Population

- A. India: 1.4 Bn (140 Crores)
- B. Lucknow: 3.5 Mn
- C. Uttar Pradesh: 230 Mn
- D. Delhi : Mn
- E. Mumbai : 20 Mn
- F. Kolkata : 14 Mn
- G. Bangalore: 12 Mn
- H. Growth Rate: 1.2%
- I. Birth Rate: 20/1000
- J. Death Rate: 7.5/1000
- K. Life Expectancy: 70 years
- L. Sex Ratio: 950/1000

2. Area (In Sq. Km.)

- A. India: 3.2 Mn
- B. Lucknow: 600
- C. Uttar Pradesh: 0.25 Mn
- D. Delhi: 1500
- E. Mumbai: 600
- F. Kolkata: 205
- G. Bangalore: 700

3. Rural v/s Urban

- A. Rural: 70%
- B. Urban: 30%
- C. Top 10 cities – 7%

4. Age

- A. 0-6 years: 15%
- B. 7-14 years: 15%
- C. 15-25 years: 20%
- D. 25-35 years: 15%
- E. 35-65 years: 30%
- F. 65+ years: 5%
- G. <35 years: 65%
- H. <25 years: 50%

5. Income

- A. BPL: 25%
- B. Low: 30%
- C. Lower Middle: 30%
- D. Upper Middle: 10%
- E. High: 5%

6. Sector- wise (%age of GDP)

- A. Agriculture: 15%
- B. Industry: 30%
- C. Service: 55%

7. Occupation

- A. Agriculture – 50%
- B. Industry – 20%
- C. Services – 30%

8. Others

- A. Literacy Rates
 - A. India – 75%
 - B. Youth (15-24 years) – 85%
 - C. Male (83%), Female (65%)
- B. Religion
 - A. Hindu – 80%
 - B. Muslim – 15%
 - C. Others – 5%
- C. Car Penetration – 20/1000
- D. Internet Penetration – 50%
- E. Mobile Phone Penetration – 80%
- F. Smart Phone Penetration – 35%



The Consulting & Strategy Club, IIM Lucknow



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