



180Degrees
CONSULTING
JMC

CONSULTING

TOOLKIT

Beginners' One-Stop Guide To Consulting



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PREFACE

Dear reader,

On behalf of the entire team of 180 Degrees Consulting JMC, we are thrilled to present to you our **Consulting Toolkit**, an all-in-one guide that bundles all key resources required to understand consulting as one ready-to-use document.

The Consulting Toolkit primarily focuses on providing undergraduates the chance to delve deeper into the typical concepts of consulting, without having to refer to a variety of sources online. This Toolkit is not just a compilation of cases and frameworks, but a guide to what goes into solving those cases and what one needs to know before starting off.

From formulae to techniques, guesstimates to financial modelling- we have it all. It's a complete starter package of "How to Become a Consultant". With each topic curated from multiple credible sources to each paragraph being iterated multiple times so that the concepts are easily understandable, the team has ensured that it becomes your starting point in the world of consulting.

- Research & Analysis Team, 180 Degrees Consulting JMC



FROM THE TEAM

While we understand all this information might seem overwhelming at first, it is important you enjoy the process of learning. We would recommend that you refer to the toolkit regularly and keep it handy, to maximize the learning.

We're making this toolkit accessible to everyone with the aim of helping consulting aspirants, irrespective of campuses, to take a step closer to their professional goals. If you have any feedback for us, please do not hesitate in reaching out.

Best of luck!

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Consultant

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ABOUT
CONSULTANCY



CONSULTANCY OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW

Consulting involves giving external advice to organizations that may require technical or special expertise regarding their business performance, problems, improvement, etc.

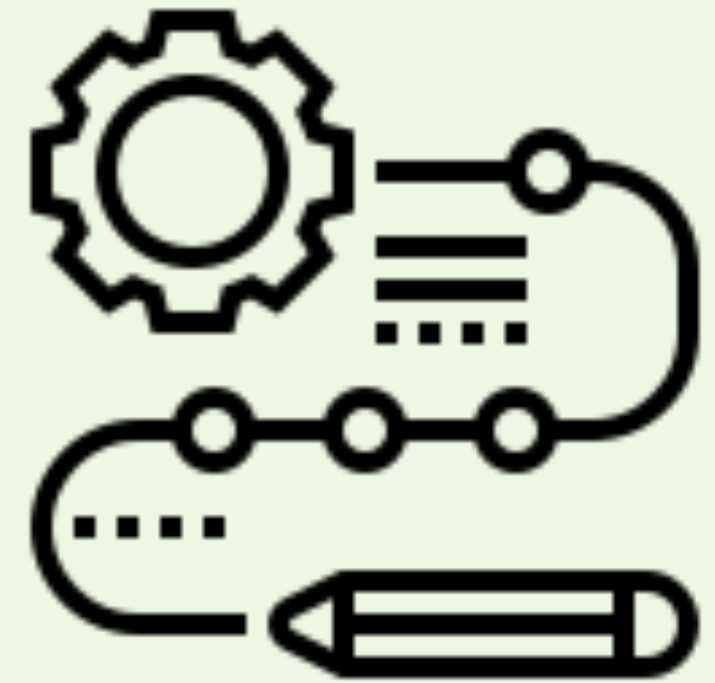
Consultants are hired as **problem solvers**. They provide expert advice for a fee.

Consultants use a multi-pronged approach, involving a lot of research and business intuition based on their extensive experience in the industry to understand business problems and provide recommendations.

LIFE OF A CONSULTANT

Consultants perform a wide range of duties that may vary considerably depending on the industry. The common and major duties performed by every consultant are:

- 1 Engage clients for new projects** - Consultants need to build relationships with clients for prospective clients to sell new work.
- 2 Define outcomes** - Consultants are expected to prepare a detailed summary of the project to be delivered.
- 3 Form team for project** - Consulting Firms recruit a team of consultants for projects.
- 4 Manage project plans** - provide updates to the clients and support to the team when they encounter issues or roadblocks in the project.
- 5 Gather input and data** - from the client and external sources; use statistics to identify trends in the client's data.
- 6 Communicate result:** Present initial recommendations to the stakeholders and make necessary changes.
- 7 Submit final recommendations:** The final deliverables are reviewed with the client, who then signs-off on the completion of the project.

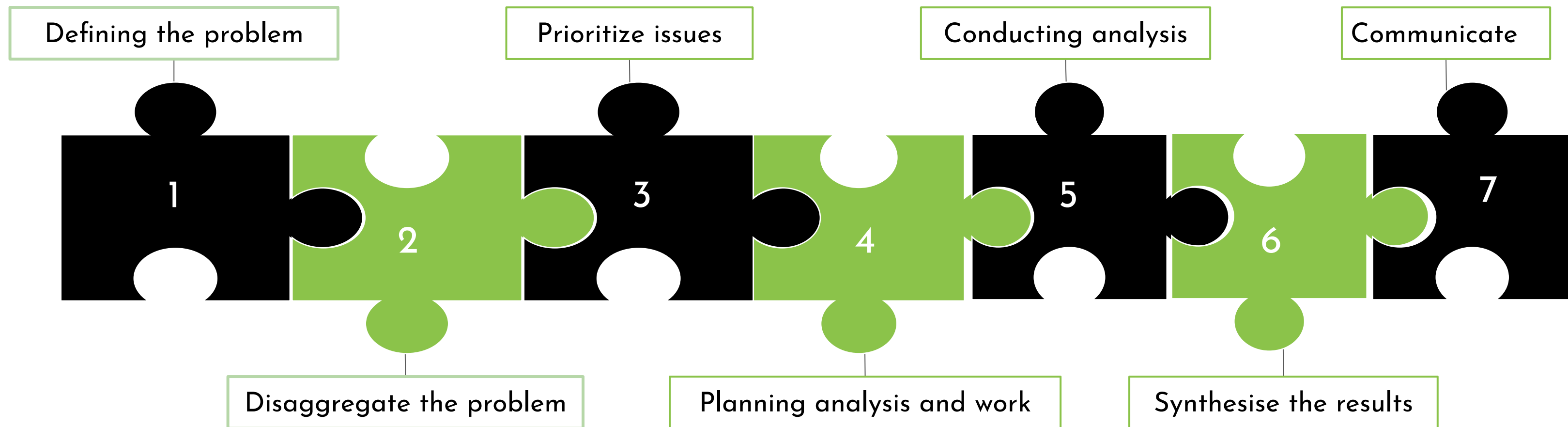


CONSULTING METHODOLOGY

CONSULTING METHODOLOGY

Consulting methodology is the approach that consultants use to develop solutions. It is a framework of information and analysis based on a structured system of tools and actions to resolve a client's problems holistically.

Different consulting firms may have their own consulting methodology/approach which they use to develop solutions to client problems. One of the most commonly used framework is the **7 Step Problem Solving Method by McKinsey & Company**.



7 STEPS TO PROBLEM SOLVING FROM MCKINSEY

Let's take an example: XYZ is a newly launched online company selling 100% natural skincare products. It has been three months since its launch but the company has not had sufficient numbers of customers ordering their products. How will we approach this problem using the 7 step framework?

Here is how consultants move through each of the steps:

Step 1 - Defining the problem

The McKinsey problem-solving process begins with identifying the scope and extent of the problem and clearly defining the client's problem at hand.

In the example, this step involves the consultants clearly defining the problem at hand which is the lack of customers which means fewer sales.

7 STEPS TO PROBLEM SOLVING FROM MCKINSEY

Step 2 - Disaggregate the problem

Involves defining the boundaries of the problems and breaking them down into further small components. Issue trees or the MECE (Mutually Exclusive, Collectively Exhaustive) approach may be used to ensure that the elements are not overlapping.

In the example, this step involves understanding why the number of customers is low and making an issue tree for the reasons. Reasons may include:

- *Low online presence: customers may not be aware of the products*
- *The high price of the product*
- *Competition in the market*

Step 3 - Prioritize issues

Identify the key driving factors of the problem and prioritize those factors which have the biggest impact on the problem and eliminate those parts which have a negligible impact so that the efforts of the consultants are driven to the main core issues.

In the example, in this we may identify the main issue as Low online presence

7 STEPS TO PROBLEM SOLVING FROM MCKINSEY

Step 4 - Planning analysis and work

Before testing each hypothesis, work and process plans for each hypothesis should be developed. Tasks are allotted to the staff, completion dates are set for efficient operation. Hypothesis testing is also reviewed at regular intervals to measure viability and to accordingly make adjustments.

In the example, this step involves making a list of tasks for the analysis of the identified key factors.

Step 5 - Conducting analysis

Involves gathering critical data required to accept or reject each hypothesis. Data analysis and other statistical tools are then used according to the nature of the project. This is often the longest and most complex step of the process.

In the example, this step we may have different hypotheses for solving this issue

Hypothesis 1: Increase online presence via innovative social media campaigns

Hypothesis 2: Improving the company's search engine optimization.

The gathering of critical data may reveal that since people are not aware of the company's products introducing social media campaigns is required.

7 STEPS TO PROBLEM SOLVING FROM MCKINSEY

Step 6 - Synthesise the results

Once the results have been determined, it is important to select the best individual or best combination of solutions from among them to be put into action for eliminating the problem at hand.

In the example, this step involves finding final solutions, which may be to introduce social media campaigns focusing on features of the products like 100% natural and safe, suits every skin type or another solution may be to use influencer marketing and organising giveaways.

Step 7 - Communicate

The final step involves presenting the solutions in such a way that they link back to the original problem statement. Presenting the solutions and the recommendations to the client in concise manner supported by facts and data might be the last step but it needs to be very impactful.

Therefore, final step in the example is presenting the solutions with implementation plans to the client.



SCOPE OF CONSULTING



Strategy Consulting

- It offers the answers to big challenging questions faced by a company by hiring consultants who offer the client an outside, expert opinion on their business challenges.
- Strategy consultants usually have **considerable modelling knowledge** and are expected to assess high-level business issues objectively. It is considered to be the most prestigious and difficult to access track in management consulting.
- **Questions they find answers to** - Is the company making a loss? Are you losing market share? Is the firm losing top-level executives? Is the decision-making process confusing and conflicting?

Financial Advisory

- This type of consulting delivers services that help in building strong financial and analytical fundamentals for the client.
- It includes a **variety of topics** like risk management, transaction services, corporate services, tax advisory, real estate advisory, etc.
- These consultants work closely with the client to provide them with financial advice and company-specific expertise.

Operations Consulting

- This involves consultants working and supporting the client with improving the efficiency of their value chain.
- These services include developing and implementing target operating/service delivery models, executing cost reduction programs, and optimizing business processes.
- This **includes situations like** handling overheads of rent and missed utility payments, dealing with situations like a team member's poor performance, dealing with complaints like the usability of the firm's website, responding to competition and optimising customer service programs.



HR Consulting

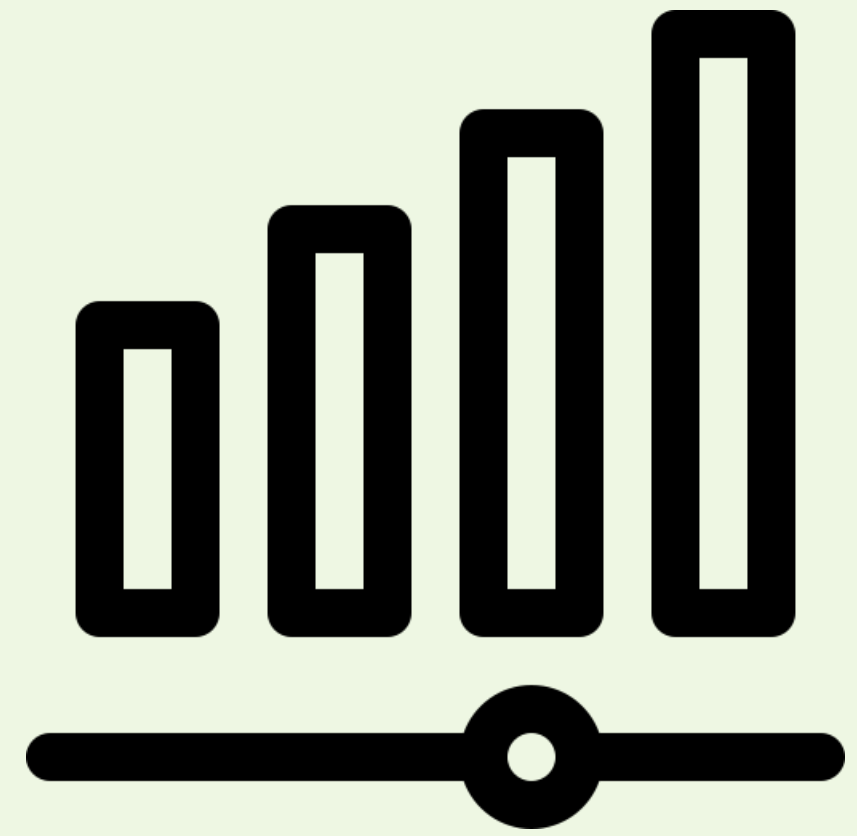
- This type spans the advisory and implementation of activities related to the management of an organization's human capital and the HR function.
- The scope of services ranges from **employee training and development**, their engagement and satisfaction, **resolving conflicts** to overarching work on human capital strategy, the design and deployment of a compensation & benefits framework, down to the transformation of the HR function.
- HR consultants work towards solving **time management among employees** of firms, time-tracking, getting client data as well as growing the labour force in the firm.

Risk & Compliance

- Is directed at assisting enterprises to **identify, manage** and **mitigate** enterprise compliance risk. The consultants often work to develop programs that ensure organization-wide assimilation and compliance.
- Knowledge of **legal regulations, organizational management**, in-depth understanding of compliance parameters specific to their industry or niche, is important for these consultants.
- They work to analyse and solve risks pertaining to certain projects or studies the firm may already have in hand.

IT Consulting

- They are external analysts who evaluate a company's IT system to assist them to meet their business objectives.
- Their primary duties include **analyzing & diagnosing a company's IT infrastructure**, understanding a client's business needs, designing and implementing a technology solution, managing software, and integrating it into systems.
- IT consultants possess an in-depth knowledge of leading applications, analytics software, security practices, cloud computing, etc. They also must keep up with emerging technologies.



JOB LEVELS IN CONSULTING



Partner/Principal/ Director

- Leadership position
- **Typical responsibilities:** Head of the consulting firm's operational activities in a specific country, core client relationship management, business development

Senior Partner/ Manager/Associate Partner (7-10 years)

- Pre-partner position
- **Typical responsibilities:** professional support and oversight on projects, client relationship management, and development, sales and marketing

Engagement Manager (3-4 years)

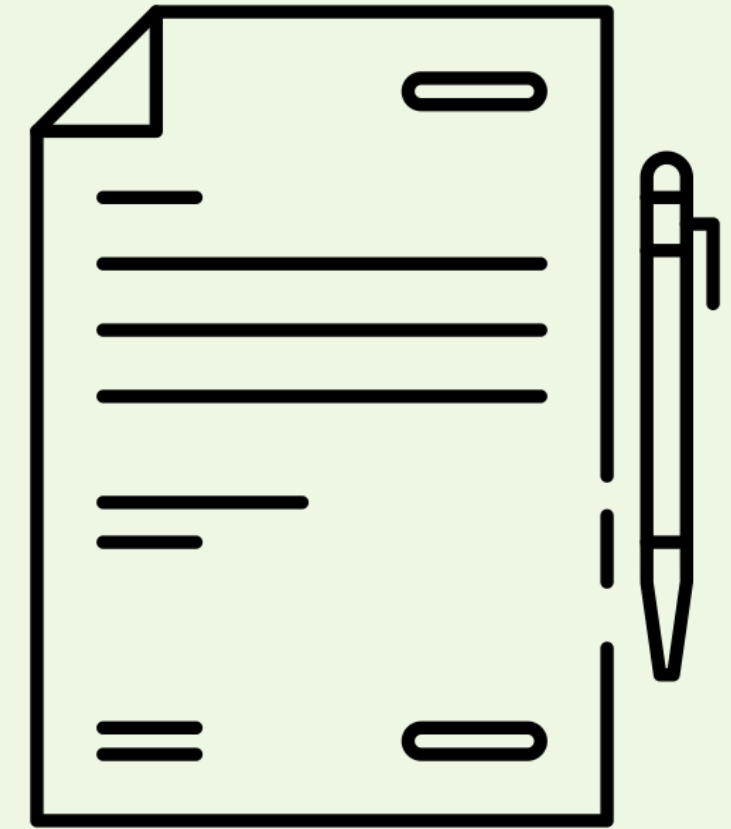
- Middle management functioning in consulting
- **Typical responsibilities:** overall management of consultants and analysts, scheduling and time management, key client interface for the project, relationship management, client development

Consultant (2 years)

- Post-MBA entry-level position
- **Typical responsibilities:** if no prior consulting background, initially very similar to Analyst; with time and experience, growing focus on leading analysts, oversight work, team management, greater client interface

Business Analyst (2-3 years)

- Pre-MBA entry-level position
- **Typical Responsibilities:** data gathering, data analysis, document creation, modelling, interviewing, problem-solving with the team



COVER LETTER



WHAT IS A **COVER LETTER**?

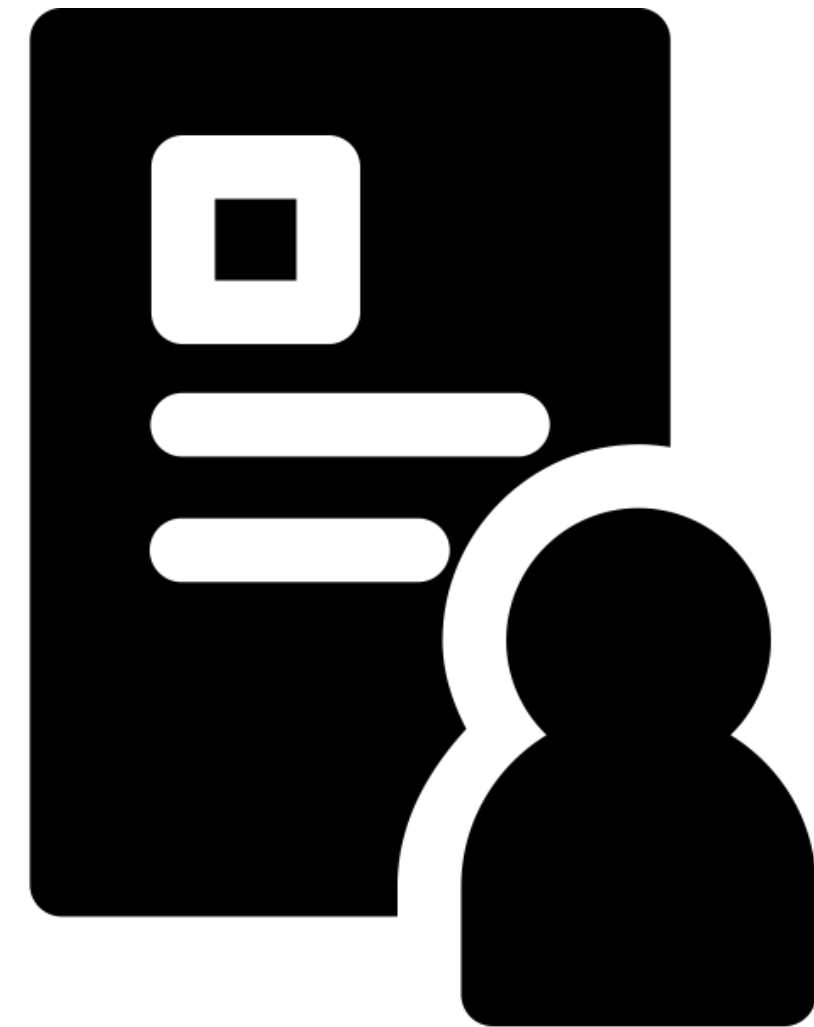
A **cover letter** is a letter of introduction attached along with your resume stating your exact **motivations to apply and role-specific expertise** for the company you are applying to.

It should not be identical to your resume, but in fact, complement your resume to give the employer a detailed picture of who you are as a person.

Attaching a cover letter to your application provides you with an edge over the other candidates. That's why it's important to devote sufficient time to write your cover letter, even if the employer has not specifically asked for one.

This will show that you have put **extra thought and effort** into your application.

The primary goal is to add a **personal touch** to your application.



TIPS FOR WRITING COVER LETTER

Your cover letter should be customized to include:

- 1 The job you're applying for (*mention the job title in your introductory paragraph*)
- 2 How you got to know about the job (*also mention a referral if you have one*)
- 3 Why you are qualified for the job (*be as specific as possible*)
- 4 A thank you email for their time and being considered for the role
- 5 Your offerings to the employer, and your reason behind working at this specific company.

TIP

Make sure to determine your relevance for the job by carefully reading the job description, evaluating the skills required, and matching them to your skills.

FORMAT OF A COVER LETTER

1. Header

Start by giving **contact details** of both you and the employer - name, address, phone number, and email address, followed by the date of writing it. If this is via email, include your contact details at the end of the letter, after your signature.

2. Your contact information should include:

Full Name

Street Address

City, State Zip

Phone

Email

3. Salutation

Begin your cover letter salutation with "Mr./Ms. Last Name." If you do not know the employer's name, you can simply write "Dear Hiring Manager."

4. Introduction

Start by stating the **role you are applying for** at their company and how you heard about the opening. Mention in short **how your skills and expertise match** the position and/or the company value system. This brief introduction will give the reader a preview of the rest of your letter. Your aim here is to **grab the attention** of the employer.

5. Body

The body can be one or two paragraphs long. Mention in detail your **motivations for applying** for the job, and state why you are interested. Also state why you are **perfectly suited** for the role, mentioning briefly the specific qualifications listed in the job description, and elaborating on how you meet those qualifications.

It's important to use **tangible examples** to demonstrate the qualities you have mentioned. So instead of just 'telling' the employer that you are, for example, a great leader, provide examples showing these traits in action.



FORMAT OF A COVER LETTER

6. Closing

Conclude by **reiterating** in short how your expertise makes you an excellent candidate for the job. Clarify when you are going to **follow-up** with them, and the means to do so. Thank the employer for his/her time.

7. Signature

If it is an actual letter, use a **complimentary close**, and then end your cover letter with your signature, handwritten, followed by your typed name. If it is an email, simply include your typed name, followed by your contact information, after the complimentary close.

Additional Tips:

A cover letter should ideally be just **one page long**.

Make sure the letter is **easy to read** and you provide enough spacing between the sections.

While writing your cover letter, remember that the letter is about your **professional expertise** and **qualifications for the job**, and **not about you on a personal level**. Don't share personal information about your family or general life experiences. Just mention the qualifications that you have which the employer seeks. If you don't have a certain expertise that is demanded by the employer, do not mention them and focus on your strengths. If you have **any questions regarding the salary, the work hours, the perks, and benefits, refrain from adding them to your cover letter** since it might seem inappropriate.

It is preferred that the **font used on your cover letter matches the one on your resume**. Use basic fonts like Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, and Verdana. Standard margins of 1" can be maintained on all four edges of the page, along with a font size of 10 or 12.

John Donaldson

8 Sue Circle, Smithtown, CA 08067 · 909-555-5555 · john.donaldson@emailexample.com

August 14, 2020

George Gilhooley
Times Union
87 Delaware Road
Hatfield, CA 08065

Dear Mr. Gilhooley,

I am writing to apply for the programmer position advertised in the Times Union. As requested, I enclose a completed job application, my certification, my resume, and three references.

The role is very appealing to me, and I believe that my strong technical experience and education make me a highly competitive candidate for this position. My key strengths that would support my success in this position include:

- I have successfully designed, developed, and supported live-use applications.
- I strive continually for excellence.
- I provide exceptional contributions to customer service for all customers.

With a BS degree in Computer Programming, I have a comprehensive understanding of the full lifecycle for software development projects. I also have experience in learning and applying new technologies as appropriate. Please see my resume for additional information on my experience.

I can be reached anytime via email at john.donaldson@emailexample.com or by cell phone, 909-555-5555.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking with you about this employment opportunity.

Sincerely,

John Donaldson (signature hard copy letter)

John Donaldson

SAMPLES

Joseph Q. Applicant

123 Main Street, Anytown, CA 12345 · 555-212-1234 · josephq@email.com

July 20, 2020

Jane Smith
Director, Human Resources
Fit Living
123 Business Rd.
Business City, CA 54321

Dear Ms. Smith,

I'm writing to apply for the position of Social Media Manager for Fit Living, as advertised on your website careers page. I have three years of experience as a Social Media Assistant for Young Living, and I believe I am ready to move up to the manager position.

In your job posting, you mention that you want to hire a Social Media Manager who understands Internet and social media trends. During my time at Young Living, I was given the responsibility of increasing follower numbers on Instagram. I explained to my manager that I would be happy to do so, and that I would also work hard to increase follower participation, because engagement has become an important metric.

Within six months, I increased our followers by over 50% and increased engagement by 400%. I'm very proud of that accomplishment. Currently, I'm working to build a following with the best influencers in our niche.

When I saw the job opening, I knew it was the perfect opportunity to offer you both my social media marketing skills and people skills. I've included my resume so you can learn more about my educational background and all of my work experience. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Please feel free to email me at josephq@email.com or call my cell phone at 555-555-5555. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Joseph Q. Applicant (signature hard copy letter)

Joseph Q. Applicant



CONSULTING RESUME

NORMAL V/S CONSULTING RESUME

A consulting resume is a **one-page document** summarizing the applicant's education, work experience, extra-curricular activities, and other skills suitable for a consulting job. They must be **black-and-white**, worded concisely, and highlight a set of consulting attributes: **leadership, problem-solving, and achieving.**

OUTPUT
VS
INPUT

SPECIFIC
VS
VAGUE

IMPLICITLY
VS
EXPLICITLY

COLD
VS
FLEXIBLE

FORGIVING
VS
PERFECT



Output VS Input

Every day a consultant works with huge input. This input will only be useful if it can generate an output. While creating a consulting resume, every bullet should highlight how “**result-oriented**” you are, even if it was a minor activity.

Implicitly VS Explicitly

While talking about yourself in your resume, **be objective**. Ensure a lack of bias, judgement or prejudice.

Specific VS Vague

People from the consulting world are shaped to **be specific and definitive**. These individuals are qualified to ask follow-up questions every time encountering non-specific communication. If you mention something vague in your resume, the panel will note it quickly.

Cold VS Flexible

Strictly follow the **standard format**: one page, black and white, traditional font size, ordinary spacing. The easiest way to get eliminated is to use creative formats. Screeners do like creative people. You have to show your creativity through texts, not through colours or graphics.

Forgiving VS Perfect

In the world of consulting, every consultant spends endless hours perfecting their PowerPoint slides to the finest details. Every space, every dot, every word is perfect. Similarly, your **resume should be flawless**. If you wish to be a consultant and all you can show is the one-page resume, chances are that any small mistakes will be detected and the thing will get discarded very quickly.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

A few things that you could keep in mind while making your resume are as follows-

1. Aim to have a total of **approximately 500 words** (+/- 100) with **font size 10**.
2. The optimal bullet length is roughly **1.5 lines**. Anything more than 3 lines is overkill and probably no screener will read. Less than 1 line usually means not enough content.
3. Each position should have roughly **2 to 4 bullets**.
4. More important jobs should come with more bullets of course.
5. Stick to **one font throughout** the resume

Typically, a **great bullet** has 3 parts:

- A. The work
- B. Explanation of the work
- C. The output

For example:

- I. (A) went grocery shopping - (B) at the most crowded supermarket - (C) ensuring adequate food supply for the whole family for the next 7 days
- I. **Consulting Specific** - "Managed consulting engagements (A) - with P&L responsibilities (B) -generating \$500K in 2020; exceeded profitability goal by 6%.

6 REASONS WHY A CONSULTING RESUME FAILS



Two Pages- If it's 2-page long, 99% of the time it will be discarded right away or in the best case scenario be judged by the first page. It's **hard to get hired** in those situations.



Creative Templates- Creative resume templates are fun to read. However, screeners usually would pick a **good old professional template**. Hence, to be safe, use the official template accepted at the MBB.



Word File - Sending a Word file to apply for jobs is always a risky move, as you don't know how it will turn out on others' screens and printers. Your beautiful formatting may turn out to look terrible. Remember to **export your resume to PDF** so that you know your resume looks exactly how you want it!



Spelling and Grammar mistakes- Numerous candidates make careless spelling and grammar mistakes in their resumes. The key thing, as we have mentioned before, is to **double-check, triple-check** or even quadruple-check your resume, and get someone to help you with proofreading.



Formatting Mistakes- Always put your content with **left alignment, delete unnecessary spacing, organize bullets** structurally. Don't forget to keep various elements' formats consistent throughout.



Bad File Name - You may name your resume "Resume.doc" and it seems to work fine within your computer. But each company receives numerous resumes. Before you forget, rename your file as **"2020_Your name_Resume.pdf"** now to avoid all of these troubles.



ESSENTIAL

TOOLS & TECHNIQUES



CASE SOLUTION STRUCTURING

CASE SOLUTION STRUCTURING

A consultant needs to master the **art of storytelling**, especially via a presentation. Presenting a problem and its solution to an audience effectively is a challenging skill and needs time and attention.

For great storytelling, it is vital to have a **deep understanding of the audience** and the ability to **communicate with clarity**.

It's important to have a basic outline of **what** you want to communicate, **why**, and **to whom**.

A valuable solution is to first create a storyboard - a **drawing and outline** of contents of the PowerPoint presentation made before creating the slides.



SLIDE PREPARATION

It is advised **not to go outside of the margins** into the white space on the side

The title of the slide should be the **key insight or takeaway**

Make sure all the titles throughout the presentation are **1-2 lines long**

The slide area should prove the point, the below slide is an oversimplification of that insight.

Feedback helps in improvement and more presentations you make, the better you will become.

Ensure that the content is uniform in terms of font size and font style

STORYBOARDING

This has **3 major** portions:

1. **The storyline** - framing the story and presenting it most compellingly. The framing should also match the kind of response we wish to receive from the audience. Brainstorm what slides you will need to effectively communicate the story recommendations and conclusions.

2. **The argument** - Building the argument with the pyramid principle. Structuring your points is important and communicating only the key conclusions and recommendations. Keep the following subheadings in mind:

a. **Tagline** - Must be short and precise and communicate your recommendation

b. **Executive Summary** - This must be a one-page section which should give some details about your solution

c. **The Pack** - This is where the charts and illustrations come into play. Keep this simple and clean and show that the data supports your solution

d. **Appendix** - this is the place for details - all kinds of calculations, process clarifications, raw but cleaned data, etc.

STORYBOARDING

3. The structure - Structuring the slides for optimal communication is important. Typically, start with the resolution and then go on to build the story with the situation and complication following the SCQA method (explained later)

You also want to ensure that the ideas you bring together under each group belong together, are at the same level of importance, and follow some logical structure. There are a few different ways of logically ordering ideas that belong in the same group:

- **Time order:** if there is a sequence of events that form a cause-effect relationship, you should present the ideas in time order
- **Structural order:** break a singular thought into its parts, ensuring that you have covered all the major supporting ideas
- **Degree order:** present supporting ideas in rank order of importance, most to least important.

STORYBOARDING

Method 1: The SCQA Logic

01

Situation: Explain who or what you are talking about (e.g. “The client is a leading soap manufacturer”)

02

Complication: In brief, describe the problem (e.g. “the client is recurring losses”)

03

Question: State what you are trying to solve, in a single and simple question. (e.g. “how can the client stop recurring losses?”)

04

Answer: the solution you have worked on to solve the question (e.g. “the client needs to focus her effort on the organic soap segment of the market”)

Define what you’re going to talk about, its importance, problem you’re solving, and its solution. Stating this beforehand will ensure you are on-topic and enable your audience to recognize the logical flow of your preparation.

This exercise can be more complex than it seems. The good news is, when you have done this, your presentation’s introduction is also ready!

Method 2: The Dot-dash

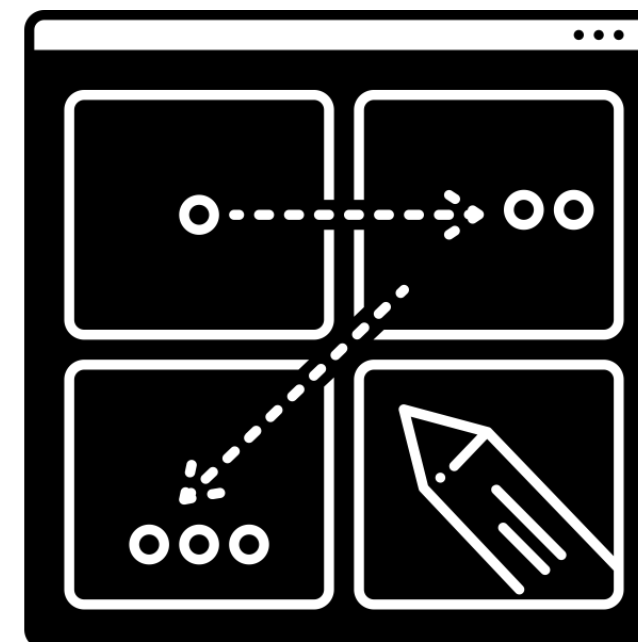
01

Main, top-level ideas that drive the storyline are designated with round, dot-shaped bullets, and

02

2nd level, supporting ideas, facts, and exhibits are indented and designated with dashes

It is a popular format to organize your presentations.





Method 3: The Pyramid Principle

01

The Pyramid principle, developed for consultants at **McKinsey**, is now a widely-used toolkit for every strategy consultant.

02

It is a hierarchical structure to **create a logic and data-supported storyline**. It should be prepared in advance.

To make it short, your presentation needs to start with an introduction that states both the issue and your answer, and the rest of the presentation is here to support your answer.

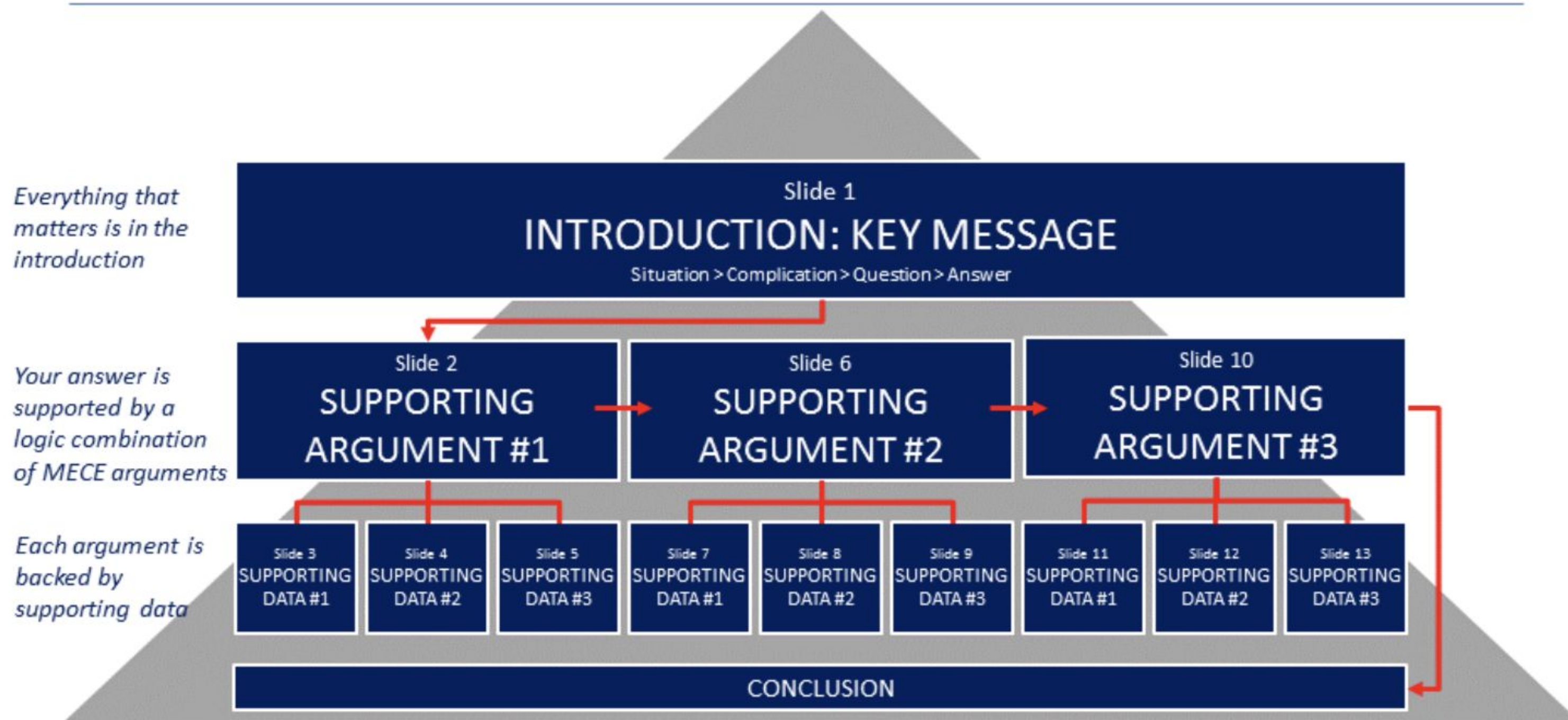
03

Add your key message/goal/recommendation **on top** for the given problem statement, and support it by adding 3 (or more) supporting arguments that are distinct from each other.

04

Along with being **distinct**, these supporting arguments should build on each other, creating a logical storyline leading up to proving your key message true. When combined, they give a basic picture of what the company should do, and what your overall solution is. Each of these points can be a **separate section and can have multiple slides** of information proving the message with irrefutable data.

How to structure a presentation: the Minto Pyramid Principle

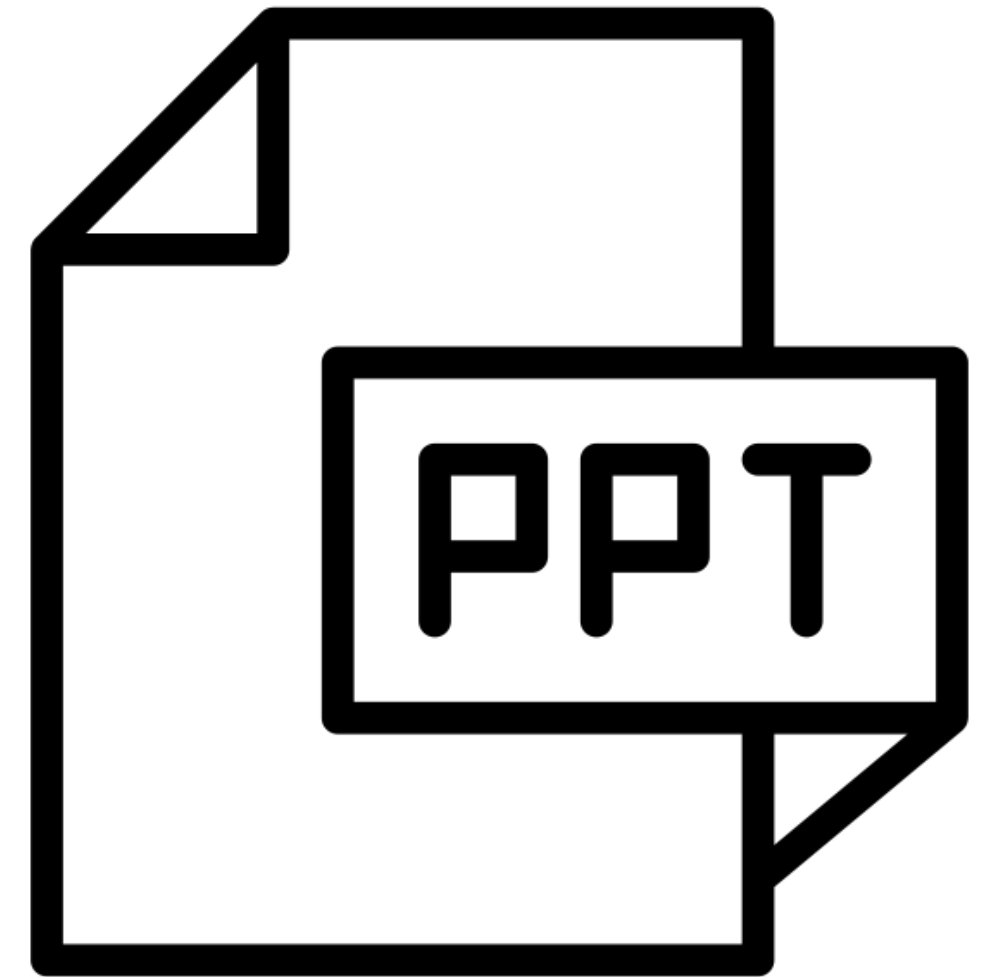


Source: <https://www.poweruserssoftwares.com/post/2016/07/31/give-a-brilliant-structure-to-your-presentations-with-the-pyramid-principle>



FREE RESOURCES FOR SLIDE DECKS & PPT

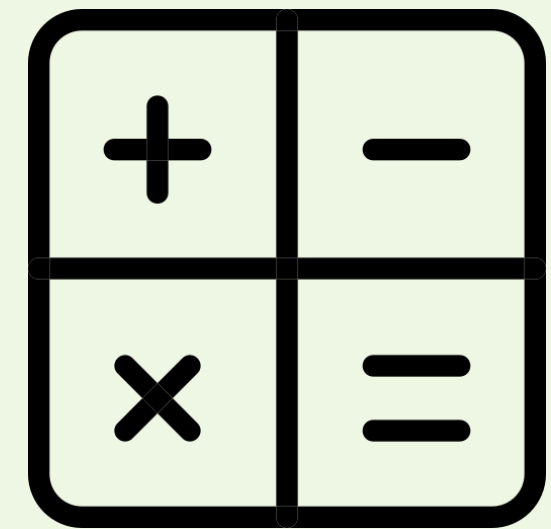
1. 24slides.com- <https://24slides.com/>
2. Slidesgo.com- <https://slidesgo.com/>
3. <https://slidesgo.com/theme/mooveo-abstract-pitch-deck#search-Pitch+Deck&position-16>
4. <https://slidesgo.com/theme/environmental-protection-meeting#search-Marketing&position-2>
5. <https://slidesgo.com/theme/minimalist-pitch-deck#search-Pitch+Deck&position-2>
6. <https://slidesgo.com/theme/minimalist-project-proposal#search-Project+Proposal&position-13>
7. <https://slidesgo.com/theme/construction-project-proposal#search-Project+Proposal&position-7>
8. [Notebook laptop and coffee cup on black table PowerPoint Templates](#)
9. <https://www.free-powerpoint-templates-design.com/business-man-shirt-with-red-tie-powerpoint-templates/>
10. <https://slidesgo.com/theme/minimal-charm#search-Corporate&position-3&variant-109>



FREE RESOURCES FOR SLIDE DECKS & PPT

1. <https://slidesgo.com/theme/data-science-consulting#search-Business&position-10&results-18>
2. <https://slidesgo.com/theme/business-consulting-toolkit#search-toolkit&position-1&results-7>
3. <https://slidesgo.com/theme/technology-consulting#search-Consulting&position-10>
4. 2019 green black European and American urban planning construction PPT template | PowerPoint PPTX Free Download
5. Business Case & Financial Modeling Toolkit | By ex-McKinsey & Deloitte Consultants





MATHEMATICAL FORMULAE

Percentage Change- Percentage change can be applied to any quantity that you measure over time. Let's say you are tracking the quoted price of a security.

If the price increased, use the formula [(New Price - Old Price)/Old Price] and then multiply that number by 100.

If the price decreased, use the formula [(Old Price - New Price)/Old Price] and multiply that number by 100.

Simple Interest- Simple interest is a quick and easy method of calculating the interest charge on a loan. Simple interest is determined by multiplying the daily interest rate by the principal by the number of days that elapse between payments. This type of interest usually applies to automobile loans or short-term loans, although some mortgages use this calculation method.

$$\text{Simple Interest} = P \times R \times T$$

where:

P=Principle

R=Rate of Interest

T=Time

Compound Interest- Compound interest (or compounding interest) is the interest on a loan or deposit calculated based on both the initial principal and the accumulated interest from previous periods. The rate at which compound interest accrues depends on the frequency of compounding, such that the higher the number of compounding periods, the greater the compound interest.

$$A = P \left(1 + \frac{r}{n} \right)^{nt}$$

A = final amount

P = initial principal balance

r = interest rate

n = number of times interest applied per time period

t = number of time periods elapsed

FRACTIONS AND DECIMALS



$1/2$	0.5
$1/3$	0.334
$1/4$	0.25
$1/5$	0.20
$1/6$	0.1667
$1/7$	0.1428
$1/8$	0.125
$1/9$	0.1111
$1/10$	0.1
$1/11$	0.0909
$1/12$	0.0833
$1/15$	0.0667
$1/16$	0.0625
$1/18$	0.0555



ACCOUNTING FORMULAE

Revenue - Revenue is the total amount of income generated by the sale of goods or services related to the company's primary operations

Gross Profit Gross Profit is the income a business has left, after paying all direct expenses related to the manufacturing of a product.

$$\text{Gross Profit} = \text{Revenue} - \text{Cost of Goods Sold}$$

Net Profit - Net profit is the gross profit (revenue minus COGS) minus operating expenses and all other expenses, such as taxes and interest paid on debt

$$\text{Net Profit} = \text{Total Revenue} - \text{Total Expenses}$$

Depreciation - The monetary value of an asset decreases over time due to use, wear, and tear, or obsolescence. This decrease is measured as depreciation.

Operating Profit - It refers to the profits earned by a corporation from its core business operations, where interest and tax deductions are removed from the measurement.

$$\text{Operating Profit} = \text{Gross Profit} - \text{Operating Expenses} - \text{Depreciation} - \text{Amortization}$$

$$\text{Operating Profit} = \text{Net Profit} + \text{Interest Expenses} + \text{Taxes}$$

Income - Income is money that an individual or business receives in exchange for providing labour, producing a good or service, or investing capital.

Net income - Net income, also called net earnings, is sales minus the cost of goods sold, general expenses, taxes, and interest.

$$\text{Net Income} = \text{Revenue} - \text{Cost of Goods Sold} - \text{Expenses}$$

Cost of goods sold - Cost of goods sold (COGS) refers to the direct costs of producing the goods sold by a company. This amount includes the cost of the materials and labour price decrease directly used to create the good. It excludes indirect expenses, such as distribution costs and sales force costs.

$$\text{Cost of Goods Sold} = \text{Beginning Inventory} + \text{Purchases} - \text{Ending Inventory}$$



Gross Margin - Gross margin is a company's net sales revenue minus its cost of goods sold (COGS). In other words, it is the sales revenue a company retains after incurring the direct costs associated with producing the goods it sells, and the services it provides. The higher the gross margin, the more capital a company retains on each dollar of sales, which it can then use to pay other costs or satisfy debt obligations.

$$\text{Gross Margin} = \frac{\text{Revenue} - \text{COGS}}{\text{Revenue}}$$

COGS = cost of goods sold

Inventory Turnover - Inventory turnover is a financial ratio showing how many times a company has sold and replaced inventory during a given period. Inventory turnover measures how fast a company sells inventory and how analysts compare it to industry averages.

$$\text{Inventory Turnover} = \frac{\text{Net Sales}}{\text{Average Inventory at Selling Price}}$$

EBIT- Earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) is a company's net income before income tax expense and interest expense have been deducted. EBIT is used to analyze the performance of a company's core operations without tax expenses and the costs of the capital structure influencing profit.

$$\text{EBIT} = \text{NI} + \text{IE} + \text{TE}$$

where:

NI = Net income

IE = Interest expense

TE = Tax expense

EBITDA - EBITDA or earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization is another widely used indicator to measure a company's financial performance and project earnings potential. EBITDA strips out debt financing as well as depreciation and amortization expenses when calculating profitability. It also excludes taxes and interest expenses on debt.

$$\text{EBITDA} = \text{E} + \text{I} + \text{T} + \text{D} + \text{A}$$

EBITDA = Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization

E = net income

I = interest

T = taxes

D = depreciation

A = amortization



Markup - Markup (or price spread) is the difference between the selling price of a good or service and cost. It is often expressed as a percentage over the cost. A markup is added to the total cost incurred by the producer of a good or service to commodity-backed cover the costs of doing business and creates a profit.

Return on investment - Return on Investment (ROI) is a performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency or profitability of an investment or compare the efficiency of several different investments. ROI tries to directly measure the amount of return on a particular investment, relative to the investment's cost.

$$\text{ROI} = \frac{\text{Current Value of Investment} - \text{Cost of Investment}}{\text{Cost of Investment}}$$

Operating Margin - Operating margin measures how much profit a company makes on a dollar of sales after paying for variable costs of production, such as wages and raw materials, but before paying interest or tax. It is calculated by dividing a company's operating income by its net sales. Higher ratios are generally better, meaning the company is efficient in its operations and is good at turning sales into profits.

$$\text{Operating margin} = \frac{\text{Operating income}}{\text{Revenue}}$$



STATISTICAL FORMULAE

Mean - Mean is the arithmetic average of a data set. This is found by adding the numbers in a data set and dividing by the number of observations in the data set.

$$\text{Mean } \bar{x} = \frac{\sum x_i}{N}$$

Median - The median is the middle number in a data set when the numbers are listed in either ascending or descending order

$$\text{Median} = \begin{cases} \frac{(N+1)^{\text{th}}}{2} \text{ term; when } N \text{ is odd} \\ \frac{\frac{N}{2} \text{ term} + (\frac{N}{2} + 1) \text{ term}}{2}; \text{ when } N \text{ is even} \end{cases}$$

Mode - Mode is the most frequently occurring observation or value

Variance - It is the average of the squared differences from the Mean

$$\text{Variance} = \frac{\sum (x_i - \bar{x})^2}{N}$$

Standard deviation - Standard deviation is a measure of how spread out numbers are. Its symbol is σ

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (X - \bar{X})^2}{n - 1}}$$

Correlation - A correlation is a statistical measure of the relationship between two variables. The correlation coefficient is a value that indicates the strength of the relationship between variables. The coefficient can take any values from -1 to 1.

-1: perfect negative correlation

0: no correlation

1: perfect positive correlation



BASICS OF ECONOMICS



DEMAND

Demand is the desire to buy a commodity, backed with sufficient purchasing power and willingness to spend.

Demand and price are ***negatively related***.

At a higher price, the quantity demanded by a consumer is less and at a lower price, the quantity demanded by a consumer is more.

Determinants of Demand

- Own price of Commodity
- Price of Related goods (Substitute & Complementary goods)
- The income of the Consumer
- Tastes and Preferences of the Consumer
- Expectations of the consumer

SUPPLY

Supply refers to the quantity a producer or firm is ready to sell at different prices of a commodity.

Supply and price are ***positively related***.

At a higher price, the supplier will sell more quantity while at a lower price, they will sell a lesser quantity.

Determinants of Supply

- Own price of the commodity
- Price of related goods
- Number of firms in the industry
- The goal of the firm
- Price of factors of production
- State of technology
- Business expectations
- Government Policies

DIFFERENT MARKET STRUCTURES

Perfect Competition

A market with a large number of buyers and sellers of a commodity. The product sold is homogeneous and its price is determined by the forces of demand and supply.

Monopolistic Competition

Monopolistic Competition includes the features of both, monopoly and perfect competition. There are many buyers and sellers of the product, but the product of each seller is different from that of the other.

TYPES OF MARKETS

A monopoly is a form of market in which there is a single seller or producer of a commodity. There are no close substitutes of the product and the monopolist has control over price and can practice price discrimination.

Monopoly

An oligopoly is a form of market in which there are a few big firms and a large number of buyers of a commodity. Each firm has a significant share of the market.

Oligopoly



RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

Useful research and reliable insights are very important for making analysis and for smart decision making. Organizations have separate research teams, analysts solely devoted to these purposes.

Consultants often make use of solid scientific research techniques for solving client problems.

Data collection can
be classified as

I. Primary data collection

Primary data is the first-hand data collected by the researcher directly from the main sources for some specific goal. It is the original data that has not been used in the past.

II. Secondary data collection

It is the data collected from secondary sources like published reports, articles, books, existing surveys, etc. In this case, the researcher makes use of the data already collected by some other researcher often for some other purpose. This is second-hand data.



PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

Primary data collection methods can be broadly classified as Quantitative and Qualitative.

1. Quantitative Methods

Quantitative techniques make use of mathematical and statistical analysis while collecting and analyzing numerical data.

It focuses on testing theories and hypotheses. It can be used to find averages, make predictions, test relationships between variables.

Some quantitative
methods
of analysing data

Time series analysis: With this method demand for a firm's products and services can be predicted in the projected period

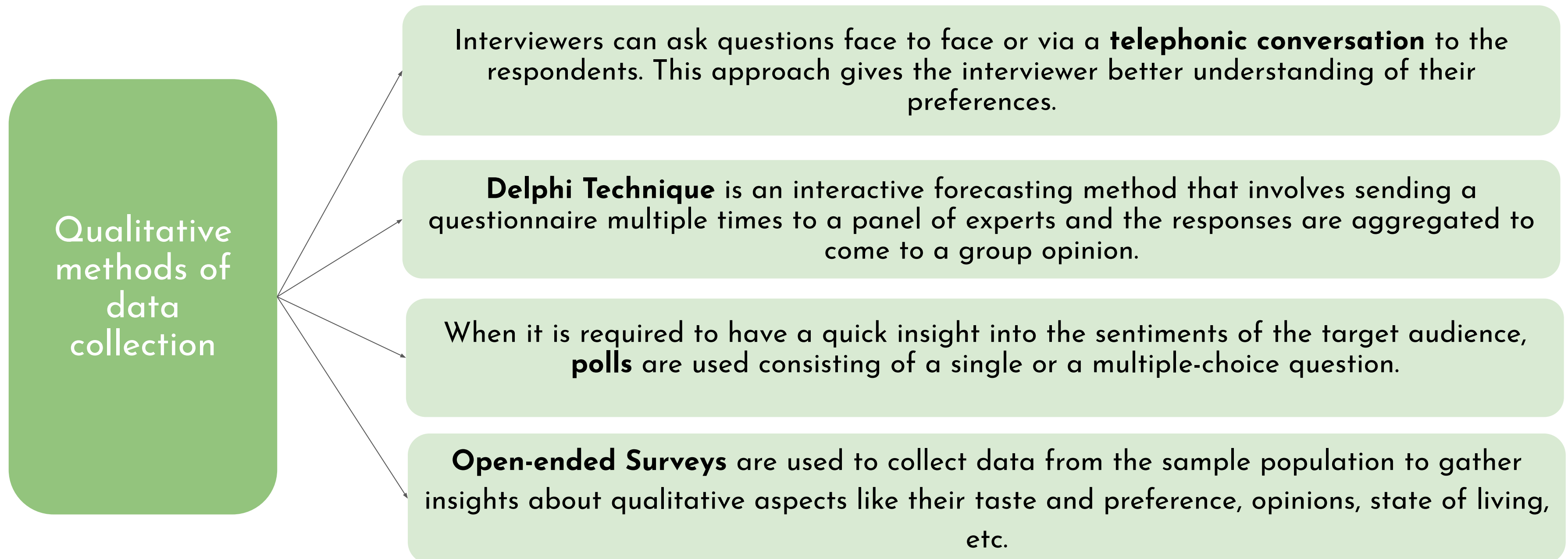
Smoothing techniques: In cases where the time series analysis lacks significant trends, these techniques help to eliminate random variation from the historical data.

Barometric method: Researches use this method to speculate future trends based on current developments

PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

2. Qualitative Methods

Qualitative research involves collecting and analyzing non-numeric data to gather insights regarding a problem or concept. It is commonly used in social science and humanities.



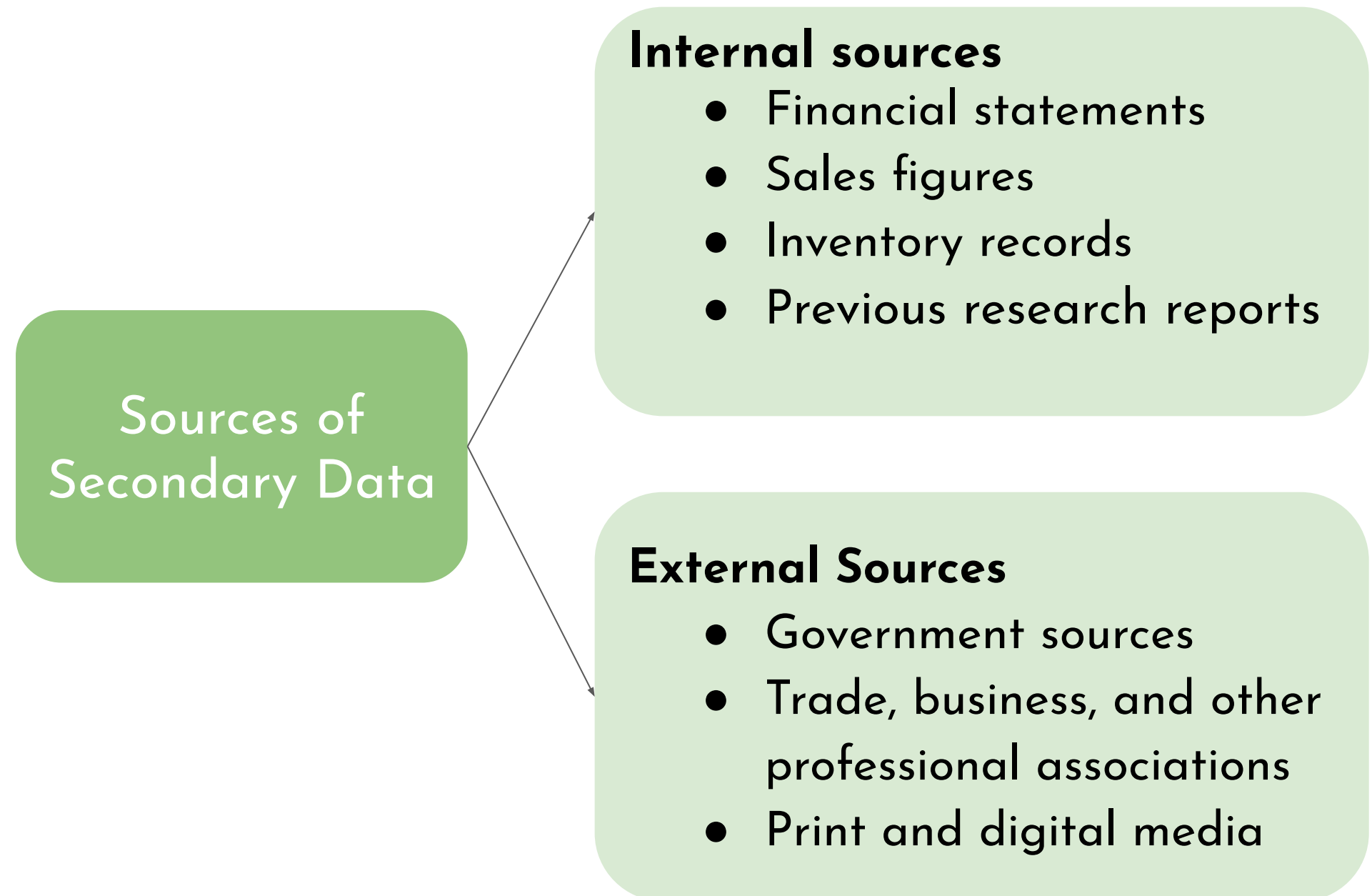


SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION

Secondary data can be obtained from data sources both internal and external to the organization.

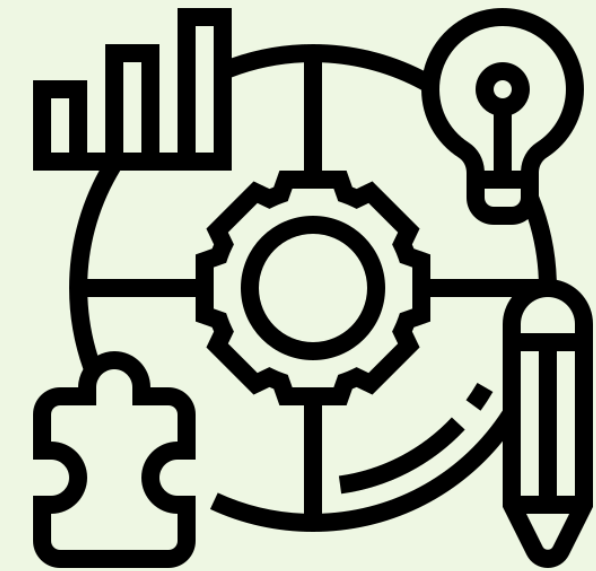
Secondary data can be both qualitative and quantitative.

Secondary data is freely available so data collection is less expensive and less time-consuming. However, the data collected may not be authentic





**CASE INTERVIEWS
& COMPETITIONS**



PROBLEM-SOLVING METHODOLOGIES

HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis is “a testable statement that needs further data for verification”. It’s an educated guess that could be the answer to the problem.

A hypothesis is not always true as it is a guess. Instead, it is a starting point that ultimately leads one to the endpoint.

Suppose your client comes to you with a problem. The root cause for the problem can be anyone out of the five options - 1,2,3,4 or 5.

Forming a hypothesis, you will start with 1 and gather data to see if it’s correct. If it’s correct, then this will be the root cause and if not, move onto B. You then keep going this way until you get to the right answer, which is the right root cause in this case.



BACKWARD INDUCTION THEORY

Backward induction refers to the process of reasoning backwards in time, i.e. reasoning from the end of a problem or situation to determine a sequence of optimal actions.

It starts by examining the last point at which a decision is to be made and then identifying what decision would be most optimal at that moment.

Using this information, we can then determine what needs to be done at the second-to-last time of decision. This process continues backwards until we determine the best action for every possible situation at every point in time.

This theory can be used whenever one faces a problem in generating new ideas or when one can't find an appropriate framework. Backward induction provides a new perspective of solving the problem.

MECE PRINCIPLE

“MECE” stands for **mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive** – meaning all points listed cover the entire range of ideas while also being unique and differentiated from each other.

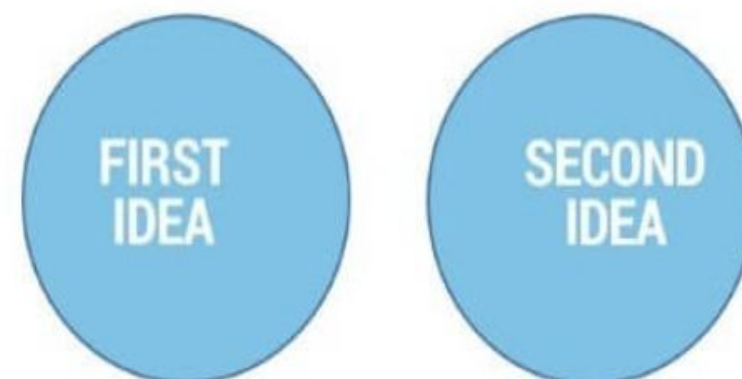
It is a way of segmenting information and dividing them into sections.

The mutually exclusive portion aims at **reducing the complexity** of the problem at hand by **avoiding overlaps**, while they collectively exhaustive part ensures a collection that is comprehensive **including all alternatives**.

MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COLLECTIVELY EXHAUSTIVE

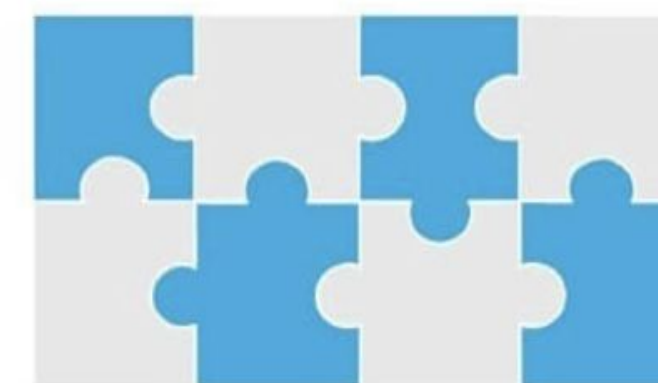
MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE (ME)

- Each idea in the list is distinct from each of the other ideas
- No overlap between ideas



COLLECTIVELY EXHAUSTIVE (CE)

- Collectively, all the ideas in the list cover all possible components of the idea
- No gaps





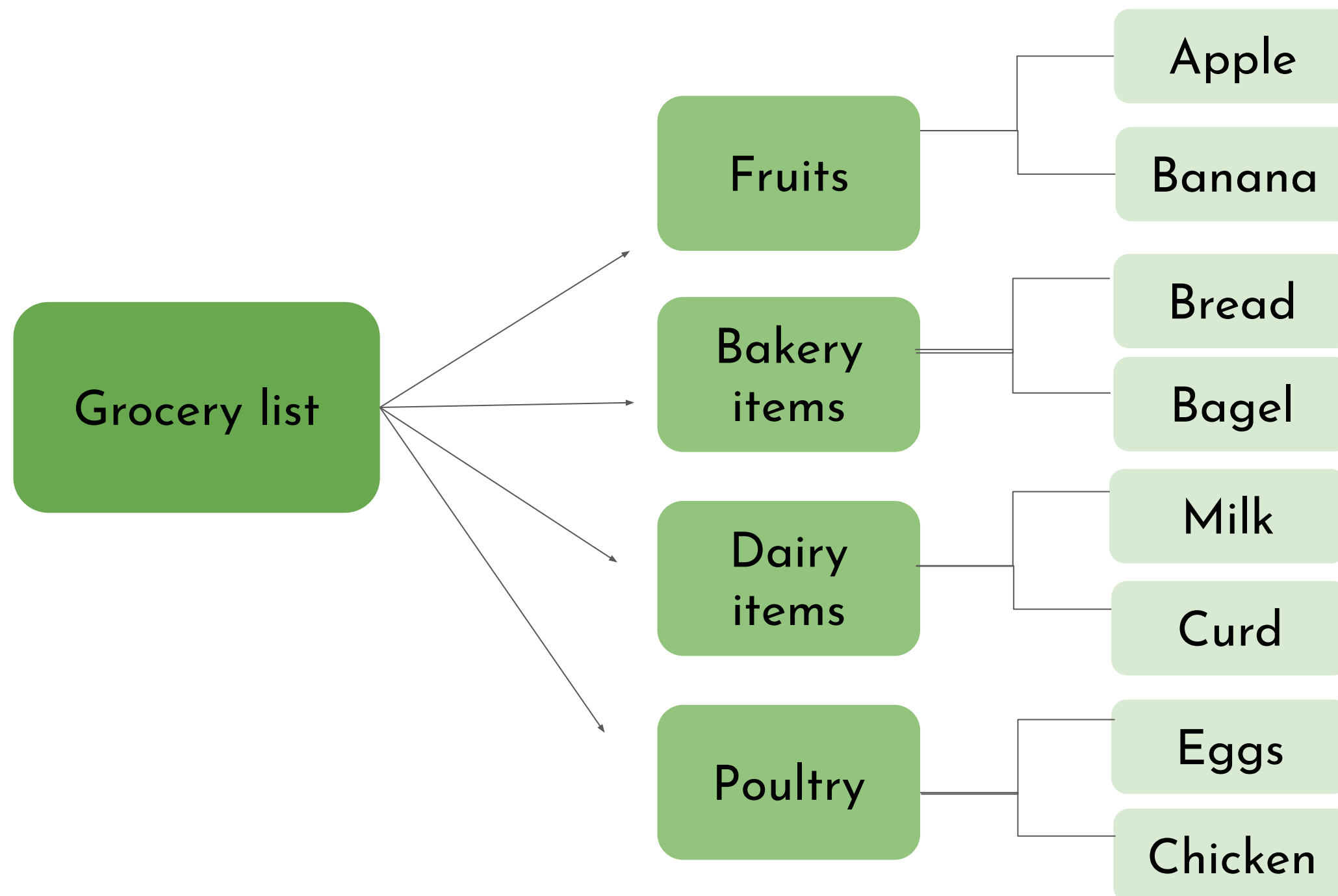
Examples for the MECE framework:

I. Grocery List

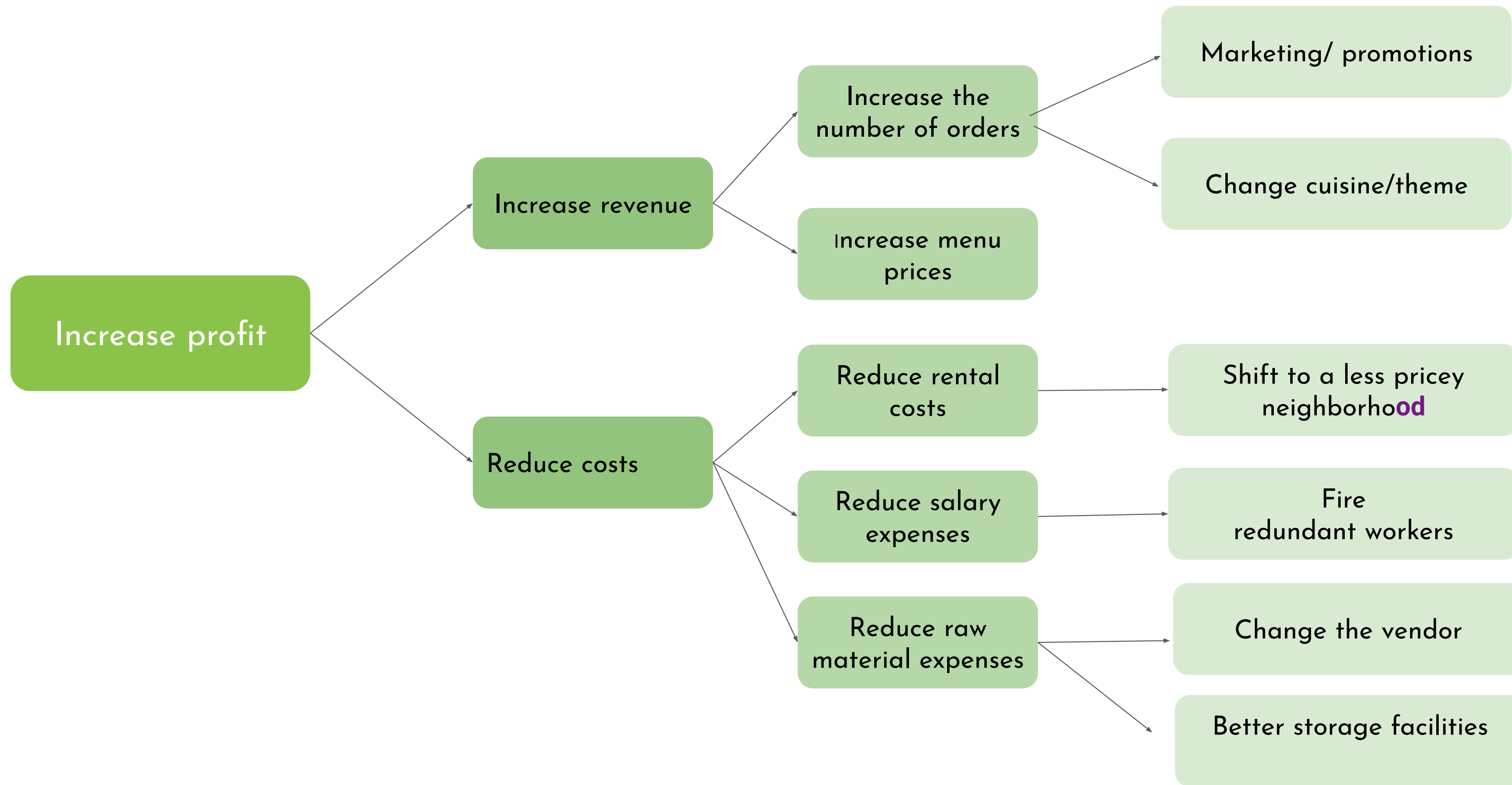
Let us consider a standard grocery list having items milk, bread, eggs, bananas, apples, cheese, strawberries, bagel, curd, chicken.

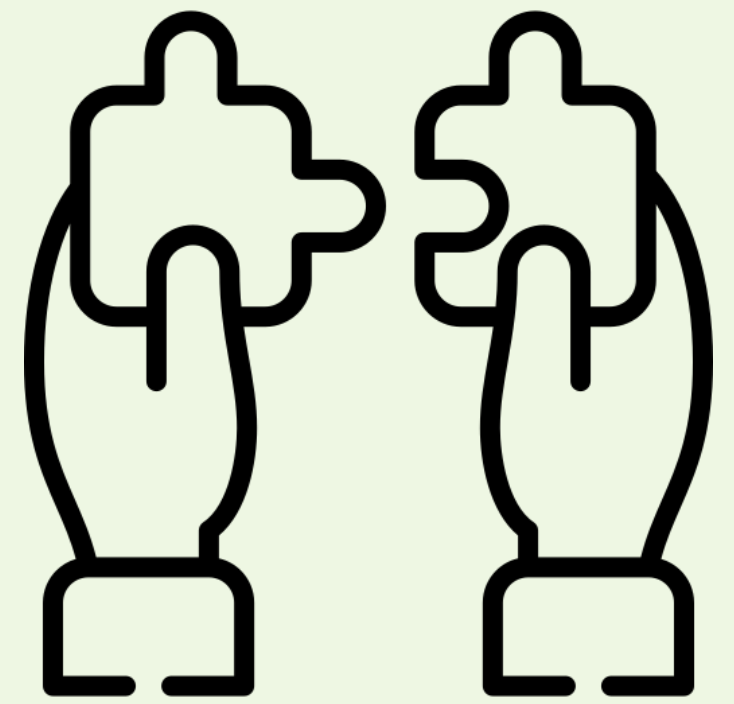
Using a MECE structure, we can try to create mutually exclusive groups as shown.

With the context of this list, the 4 groups we have identified are distinct and without overlap, thus mutually distinct. At the same time, our grouping covers all 10 items in our original grocery list making it collectively exhaustive.



II. Frame a solution for an ice parlour to increase their profit.





FRAMEWORKS



I. PE Investment Framework

This framework talks about investment in a business for financial gain.

Understanding the objective is key to evaluate an investment.

This includes the following relevant questions:

1. **Why do you want to invest** - What is the objective?

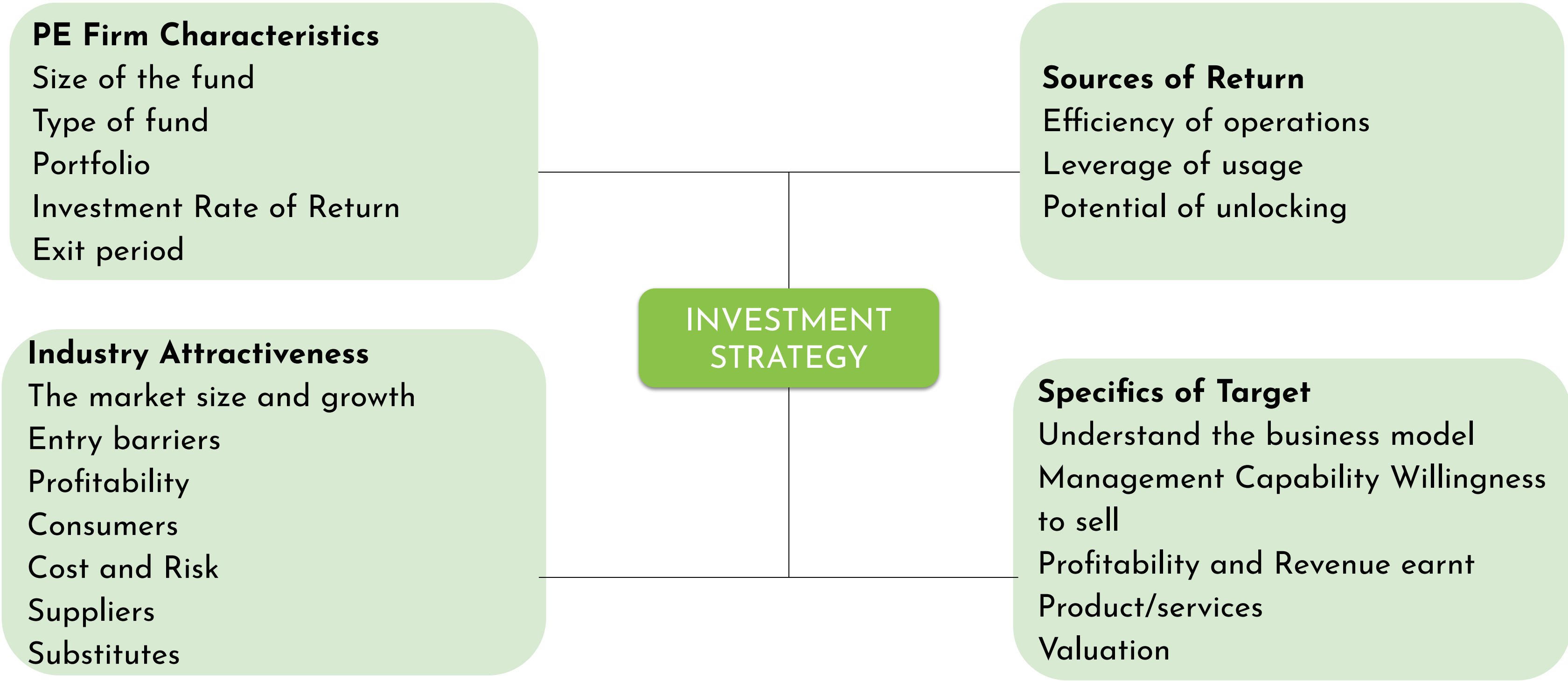
These could be:

- Return from investment
- To incentivize current business
- Synergies, etc.

2. **What do you want to invest** - How much do you want to invest and what is the expected target rate of return from the investment

3. **When do you want to invest** - Timelines are very important to understand how and when the firm wishes to invest.

Once these questions are answered, we can work towards finalizing the investment strategy. This can be calculated keeping the following in mind:



The investment is justified only when - Industry is attractive, target has high potential and the expected return from the investment exceeds the target rate of investment.



Defining the Problem

Step 1 - Identify if it's a bidding, auction, or pricing problem.

Step 2 - Understand the product and the target consumer. This would include:

- if it's a single product or product line?
- a commodity or differentiated product?
- how does the product add value to the consumer?
- is the product a luxury or necessity?
- Is it patented? Can the product be replicated easily?

Step 3 - The objective of the firm with this product. This would include:

- first-time entrant?
- Does the firm want to increase its market share?
- Push the competitor out? Does it want to play price wars?

Adding structure to the case

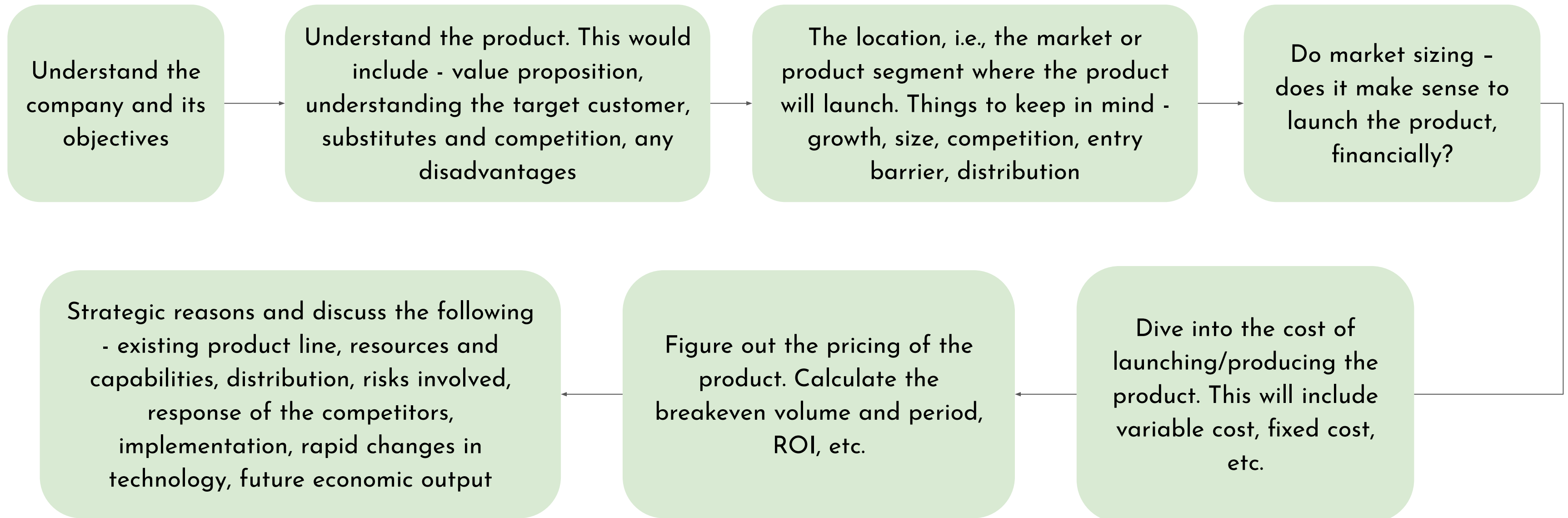
- Start getting in-depth in each bucket as shown in the diagram, i.e., cost-based, competitive, and value-based.
- Establish boundary constraints. This includes government regulations, policies, etc.
- Calculate the lower and upper ends of the pricing and get the pricing approved by the interviewer
- Explain which price range you would choose and why.

TIP: Choose the price lower than value-based pricing and above cost-based pricing.

REASON - Consumer's switching cost, fluctuations in WTP, etc.

II. New product launch framework

This is a very basic **framework** and includes the following steps:



TIP - Always discuss the numbers with the interviewer at each step. Then move forward to talk about the strategic reasons.

III. Pricing Framework

The pricing framework can be based on 3 kinds of metrics:

- COGS & expected margins
- Breakeven period
- Cost of distribution, logistics
- Product line details

This usually forms the **LOWER LIMIT** of the **PRICING STRATEGY**

COST-BASED

- The proxy industry or products for any new products
- Industry structure - consolidated vs concentrated, price wars, etc.

This is usually found between the **COST & VALUE BASED**

COMPETITIVE

- Selecting the target segment
- List the alternatives/substitutes of the product
- Calculate the willingness to pay range for the segment.

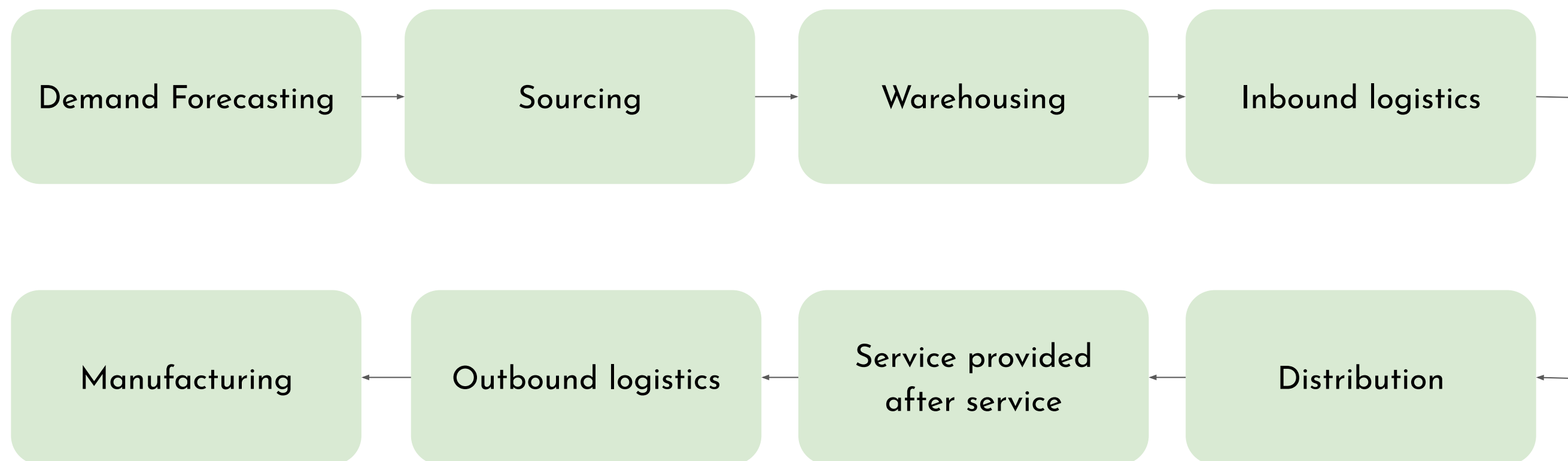
This forms the **UPPER LIMIT** of the **PRICING STRATEGY**

VALUE-BASED

IV. Value Chain Framework

This is an extremely useful tool to solve business problems. The basics for this is to understand different parts of the value chain and find abnormalities and/or inefficiencies at each part of the value chain.

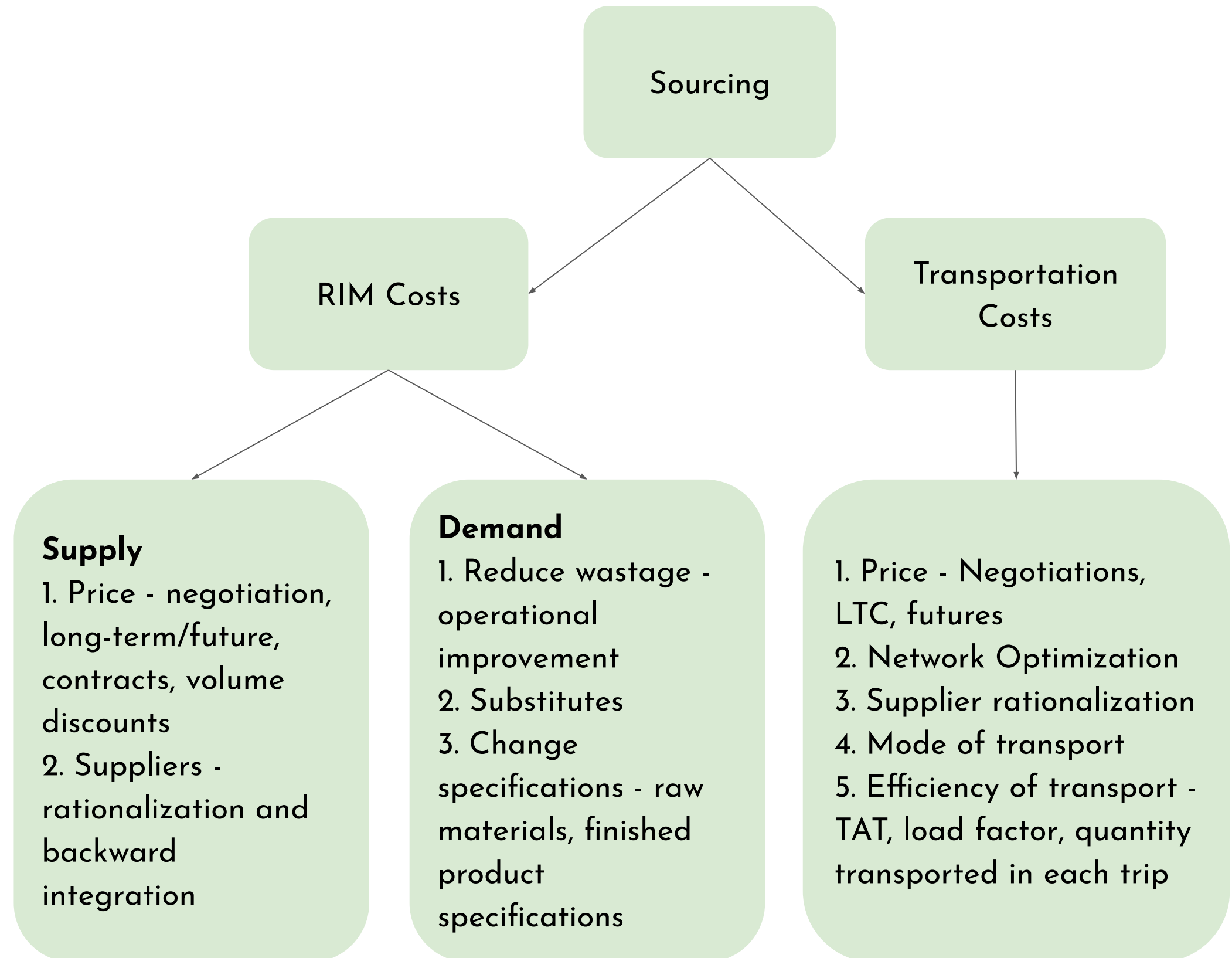
The general value chain looks somewhat like this:



Let us now get into the depths of each segment

1. Demand forecasting - this is used to understand how volatile the demand is. You must understand the method being used for high demand and high volatility raw materials as well as the variability of the products.

2. Sourcing - This is explained by the chart on the right:





3. Warehousing - To understand if the warehousing costs are significantly higher than the industry average. Recommended techniques include - applying EOQ to reduce inventory costs, manpower rationalization, modification of layouts. For this you can ask the following questions:

- Is the warehouse capacity sufficient?
- Is the warehouse optimally utilized?
- What is the visibility of SKUs?
- Are the operations automated or manual?

4. Manufacturing - This is used to understand the entire process of manufacturing. Give recommendations based on the following questions:

- Benchmark all costs with the average of the industry - direct labour and direct material
- What are the overheads involved? And do they reason for the higher costs?
- What is the process being used - parameters, the sequence of functioning, utilization, etc.
- People/labour - incentives provided, skills, motivation, etc.
- What is the technology in use? Is it up to the needs and requirements or is it inefficient/old/obsolete?

Recommendations may include - making vs buying, upgrading technology, people management, etc.



5. **Logistics** - Understand in-depth both, the inbound and outbound logistics being put to use.

- Benchmark the price, network optimization, consolidation, and alternate suppliers for rationalizing the suppliers, mode of transport, etc.
- Focus on the efficiency of the transport by looking into TAT, load factor, quantity transported each trip, etc.

6. **Distribution** - This is used to understand the penetration and number of distributors as well as the shelf space (calculated as a percentage of own items vs percentage of other's items). Look for distributor commission structure, expanding distributor network, discount schemes, etc.

7. **After Sales Service** - This is used to check the service time, quality, and cost being offered. Recommend based on opening more service centres, improving the metrics of time, cost, and quality, relocating centres, etc. Focus on:

- The variety of services offered
- Availability and accessibility
- Benchmarking with the industry average

Demand
Forecasting

Sourcing

Warehousing

Manufacturing

Logistics

Distribution

After Sale services



V. Market Entry Framework -

The market entry framework refers to one which involves entering a new market or an existing one with a new product with the obvious goal of increasing profits.

There are **2 main questions to solve** in this type of cases:

- a. Is it a good idea to enter the market?
- b. How do we enter the market?

Structuring the problem is key in such types of cases.

Step 1 - Assess the market

This is the first step in the market entry framework as we must know if the new market is profitable or not. If it isn't or won't be profitable in the future, there's no point in going further with this case.

Relevant questions to ask here would be:

- What is the size of the market in terms of revenue?
- What is the market's growth rate?
- What is the profit margin on sales in the market?
- What share of the market would the client need to break even? Become profitable?



Step 2 - Define your goals and objectives

You must organize the goals/objectives for the company. This includes both strategic and economic goals for the company.

Defining the motivation to enter the market is important. Understanding why this industry, why a new industry, is making profits the only objective, etc. are relevant questions to ask.

Once decided on that, one can venture into what the targets would be for profitability. This would include things like finalizing timelines, cost of capital, the target Rate of return, target market share in the long run, and target revenues and profits.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Geographic expansion - national and/or international

Empire building

Competition - to maintain an advantage, create barriers to entry/exit and customer lock-ins.

Is there any previous experience in moving to new markets

Synergy with existing operations

Game theory perspectives - How strong or weak is each player in the market

ECONOMIC GOALS

Increase in revenue and profits

Investment vs capital cost

Brand equity

Economies of scale

Supply chain & distribution synergies

Market share gains

Patent/proprietary technologies

Cost-Benefit analysis

Organisation structure



Step 3 - Understand the client's capabilities

This step allows us to understand if the client is even prepared with resources to enter the market. The firm must have the desired levels of investment-ready and geographic understanding.

Some relevant questions to ask would be:

- Does the client have technical skills?
- Do they have a ready cost structure?
- Necessary sales and distribution channels
- Do they have an understanding of how to compete in the new market (geographically)
- What are the customer segments?
- Are they aware of the governmental regulations?



Step 4 - Assess the client's resources relative to investment needs and expected ROI

This is an important step to understand where the client stands in terms of monetary requirements and technical needs.

Some relevant questions to look into include:

- What fixed costs will be required to enter the market? These will include Research & Development, Manufacturing & warehouse capacity, and Marketing launch & sales/distribution
- How long will it take to pay back the company's initial investment?
- Does the company have or can it raise the required capital?

Barriers to Entry

- Intellectual property
- Government regulations
- Political climate

Timing

- Is there any early mover advantage?
- How fast should we work to get the product out in the market to win?

Collaboration

- Should we partner with existing firms?
- What kind of collaboration?
- If we work individually, how long will it take to build capacity in-house?



Step 5 - Finalizing the market entry strategy

After finalizing that the conditions are good to enter the market, we must decide how to enter the market.

For this you must know about the following things and ask the following relevant questions:

PRODUCT OR SERVICE MARKET ENTRY

Creating the capability to build the product or provide the new service in-house?

Partner with someone already in the market?

Buy or license intellectual property?

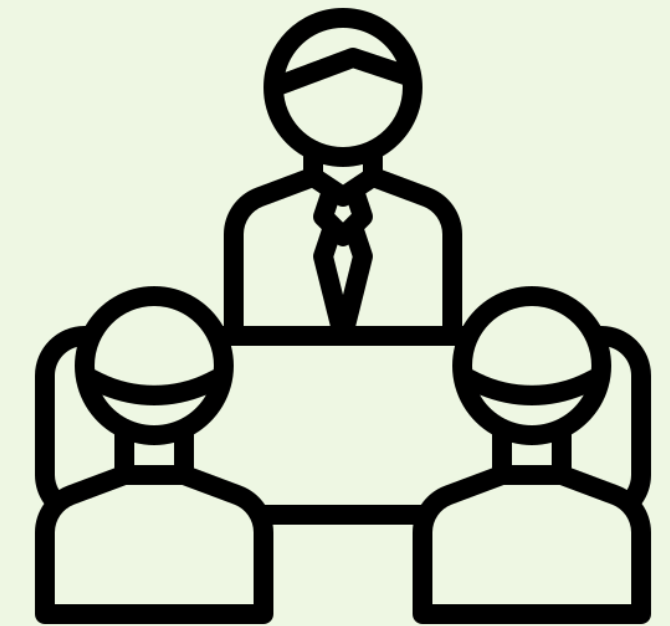
GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION

Export from home country/state?

Build a greenfield presence in the new area?

Partner with a firm which already has a presence in the market?

License the brand to franchises?



CASE INTERVIEWS: PRACTICE CASES

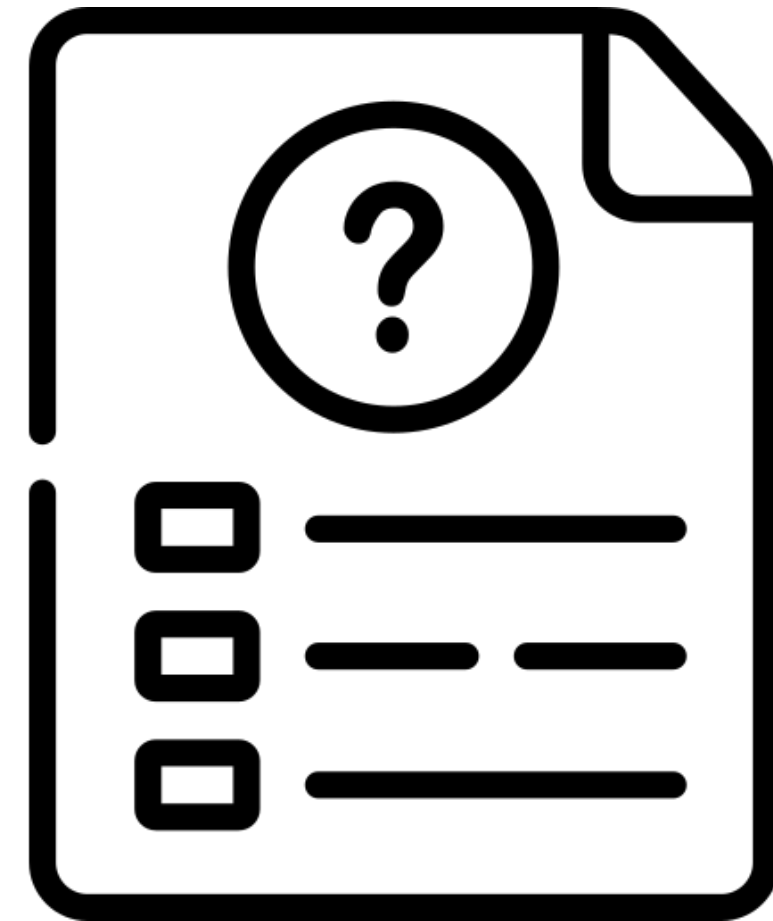


INSTRUCTIONS

Systematically asking questions is very important during a case interview.

Below are the questions that are typically asked by the interviewee during a case interview, **they are not in any particular order.**

Choose the order in which you think the questions should be asked to get the required facts and arrive at a particular solution.



CASE 01



Problem Statement: A major retailer of clothing and household products has been experiencing sluggish growth and less than expected profits in the last few years. The CEO has hired you to help her increase the company's annual growth rate and ultimately its profitability.

- The retailer has 15 stores located in shopping malls in Delhi and NCR.
- Total revenue from the 15 stores has declined, despite major back-end cost savings.

Exercise: Below are the questions that are typically asked by the interviewee during a case interview, they are not in any particular order. Choose the order in which you think the questions should be asked to get the required facts and arrive at a particular solution.

1. Would you say that the current product mix is more suited for the Delhi customer than for the NCR?
2. Do the stores sell the same products?
3. Are some stores more profitable than others?
4. Do consumers in the Delhi areas have different purchasing behaviour than the NCR dwellers?
5. Is there more competition in the Delhi areas?
6. Are there differences in profitability between Delhi & NCR stores?
7. Is there a difference in profitability between the goods purchased by Delhi and NCR consumers?

INTERVIEW SCRIPT



- **Are some stores more profitable than others?**

Yes, they are. We see variations throughout.

- **Are there differences in profitability between Delhi & NCR stores?**

Yes, there are. We see that the NCR stores are more profitable than the Delhi ones.

- **Is there more competition in the Delhi areas?**

No, not really. It's proportionally the same. But new stores are opening up.

- **Do the stores sell the same products?**

Yes, they do. All stores have the same product mix.

[Hint: Given that all stores sell the same product mix and some are more profitable than others, this should lead you to look at consumer behaviour]

- **Do consumers in the Delhi areas have different purchasing behaviour than the NCR dwellers?**

Yes, they do. The Delhi customer tends to buy

more of the major appliances and electronic equipment than the NCR consumer. The NCR consumer buys mostly items such as clothing, small furniture items, and

small appliances. [Hint: You can assume that Delhi consumers have higher incomes and are in more need of major appliances]

- **Is there a difference in profitability between the goods purchased by Delhi and NCR consumers?**

Yes. Major appliances and TVs and stereos are lower profit items than clothing and minor appliances.

- **Would you say that the current product mix is more suited for the Delhi customer than for the NCR?**

Yes. I guess it is.



KEY FINDINGS

- The consumer in NCR has different needs and purchasing behaviour than the Delhi consumer. The stores are not catering to the demographics of their surroundings.
- Unnecessary costs are being incurred through inventory and lost floor space in the Delhi stores, resulting in lost revenue for the retailer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Further, analyze the customer for each of the stores and differentiate purchasing behaviour and income levels.
- Cater the product mix according to the customer research findings.
- Stores that cannot sustain selling low-cost items should consider the possibility of closure

CASE 02



Problem Statement: A major producer of juice is in the business of processing and packaging fruit juice for retail outlets. Traditionally, the producer has packaged the juice in 18-ounce carton containers. Recently, in response to demand from the market, the producer purchased a machine that packages the juice in plastic gallons (36 ounces). Over the next couple of years, sales continued to grow on average 20% per year. Yet, as sales continued to increase, profits steadily decreased. The owner cannot understand why. He hires you to help out.

Exercise: Below are the questions that are typically asked by the interviewee during a case interview, they are not in any particular order. Choose the order in which you think the questions should be asked to get the required facts and arrive at a particular solution.

1. What percentage of gallons versus cartons is sold?
2. How was the cost of the new equipment accounted for in the price?
3. It seems that it costs more to package in gallons, yet the price is not higher on a per-ounce basis. It's lower. Have you done any proper cost allocation to determine which type of product should carry which costs?
4. How much did the producer charge for the 18 oz. carton?
5. What about the cost of packaging? Does it cost the same to package the juice in cartons as it does in gallons?
6. For the 36 oz. plastic gallons?
7. What about overhead costs?

INTERVIEW SCRIPT



- **Looking at the revenue side, how much did the producer charge for the 18 oz. carton?**
\$2.00 per container.
- **For the 36 oz. plastic gallons?**
For twice the size, the producer figured he would provide an incentive to buy by selling them at \$3.50 per gallon.
- **How was the cost of the new equipment accounted for in the price?**
The producer ended up raising prices across the board by \$.50 on all packages, both cartons and gallons, selling at \$2.50 and \$4.00, respectively.
- **What about the cost of packaging? Does it cost the same to package the juice in cartons as it does in gallons?**
Well, I guess not. Plastic is more expensive than the paper carton we have traditionally used. Also, we had to hire more experienced labour to operate the machine because it is a little more complicated than the carton machine. We figured that because the demand was higher for the gallons - we would cover our costs through increased volume.
- **What about overhead costs?**
*All costs for the factory are added together and divided by the number of units produced. [**Hint: This should raise alarm bells. This is now clearly an issue of cost allocation. The price of plastic gallons should be higher due to higher costs. Now you need to see to what extent this is affecting the bottom line.**]*
- **What percentage of gallons versus cartons is sold?**
The more our customers notice the gallons, the more they like them. As the overall volume is increasing, plastic gallons have comprised 60% of the sales. The owner has been very pleased about that.
- **It seems that it costs more to package in gallons, yet the price is not higher on a per-ounce basis. It's lower. Have you done any proper cost allocation to determine which type of product should carry which costs?**
No, we haven't.



KEY FINDINGS

- Sales have been increasing, so revenue is not an issue. The problem must be the costs.
- Because of the change in packaging, the producer has incurred additional costs that are not accounted for, causing profits to decline.
- The major finding, in this case, is the additional costs associated with the plastic gallons were averaged out over all units, including cartons. This resulted in a misallocation of costs and inappropriate pricing.
- The plastic gallon products have been priced at a lower rate than they should have been. Result: the more gallons the juice producer sold, the more profit the company lost out on.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- This firm should conduct a thorough analysis of activity-based costing to determine the overhead costs and direct costs associated with each item in the product line. They should then use this data to price accordingly.

CASE 03



Problem Statement: A major chemical manufacturer produces a chemical product used to preserve foods in containers. Despite an increase in market share, the manufacturer has experienced a decline in profits. The CEO of the company is worried about this trend and hires you to investigate.

Exercise: Below are the questions that are typically asked by the interviewee during a case interview, they are not in any particular order. Choose the order in which you think the questions should be asked to get the required facts and arrive at a particular solution.

1. Are substitute products being used?
2. Are the makers of the food experiencing a decrease in volume?
3. Has the company experienced any significant increase in cost in the last couple of years related to any additional fixed or variable cost?
4. On the revenue side, is there an increase in the volume of output?
5. Is the company in question forced to lower its prices and has its costs stayed the same?
6. Are the makers of the food forced to lower their prices to survive?
7. Have there been any new entrants on the scene? If yes, why has that been the case?
8. Have sales decreased for the industry overall?

INTERVIEW SCRIPT



- **Has the company experienced any significant increase in cost in the last couple of years related to any additional fixed or variable cost?**
No, costs have been steady.
- **On the revenue side, is there an increase in the volume of output?**
Slightly, a little bit higher than the industry average.
- **Have there been any new entrants on the scene?**
Competition has decreased. Several players have exited the industry.
- **Why has that been the case?**
They were losing money. They felt that the industry had gotten saturated, so they left.
- **Have sales decreased for the industry overall?**
Yes, there has been a general negative trend in the last few years. There certainly has been less demand for the product.
- **Are substitute products being used?**
Not really. Preservatives in general are being used less in foods. Fresh food is now the preferred choice for many consumers.
- **What about the makers of food? Are they experiencing decreased volume?**
Yes, the entire industry has been slowing.
- **Are they forced to lower their prices to survive?**
They certainly are. Additionally, to lower costs, they are using their leverage to renegotiate price structures of raw materials.
- **So is the company in question forced to lower its prices?**
Yes. They are gaining market share, but it's because of several competitor fallouts.
- **But costs have stayed the same?**
Yes.



KEY FINDINGS

- The industry overall is shrinking. To survive, the company in question has been competing on price. It has gained market share at the expense of its competition, forcing some to exit the industry.
- Its sales have only increased slightly.
- The price decrease has caused the company to lower its profits, despite the increase in market share.
- The profit margin has been lower on a per-volume basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Focus on cost reduction. If the price is the only way to compete, then costs must decrease.
- Collaborate with the competition to increase leverage in negotiation.
- Diversify into other chemicals that are in demand. Reduce the risk of market trends via a portfolio of products.

CASE 04



Problem Statement: A tire manufacturer in Vietnam, VieTire, has been the only player in that market due to high tariffs on imports. They dominate the tire industry. As it stands, the tariff is 50% of the total cost to produce and ship a tire to Vietnam. Because of the forces of globalization and lower consumer prices, the Vietnamese government decided to lower the tariff by 5% a year for the next ten years. VieTire is very concerned about this change, as it will radically alter the landscape of the industry in Vietnam. They hire you to assess the situation and advise them on what steps to take.

Exercise: Below are the questions that are typically asked by the interviewee during a case interview, they are not in any particular order. Choose the order in which you think the questions should be asked to get the required facts and arrive at a particular solution.

1. Why is X a major cost?
2. What is the cost structure of the competition?
3. What are the major costs associated with making a tire?

INTERVIEW SCRIPT



- **What are the major costs associated with making a tire?**

Raw material comprises about 20% of the cost, labour 40%, and all other costs such as overhead 40%. The average tire cost about \$40 to make.

- **It seems that labour is a major cost, \$16 per tire. Why?**

Things are done more manually. Most technological advances in the industry have not yet been implemented in Vietnam.

- **What about the cost structure of the competition?**

An average tire manufacturer in the US produces tires for \$30 each

Assuming shipping cost to Vietnam of \$4 for each tire, and a tariff of 50%, the average cost of an imported tire in Vietnam amounts to \$51. So currently, even though the cost to produce a tire in the U.S. is much cheaper due to technological advances, foreign competitors are out of luck because of the tariff.



Year	Tariff	Cost	Result of Competition
Now	50%	\$50.00	Will not enter
1	45%	\$47.90	Will not enter
2	40%	\$46.00	Will not enter
3	35%	\$44.50	Will not enter
4	30%	\$43.00	Consideration of entrance if willing to take a cut on price
5	25%	\$41.30	Preparing to enter
6	20%	\$39.60	Entered the market
7	15%	\$38.00	Competing on market



KEY FINDINGS

- Depending on what price they are willing to set, the competition will start to think about entering the market in year four. In year six, the competition will surely enter as their prices become lower than domestically produced tires.
- This analysis assumes that the cost structure for the competition will remain constant. It is important to note that because of the rapid advances in technology, chances are that the costs of producing tires will decrease resulting in competitors entering the market even sooner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- VieTire needs to benchmark against world-class tire manufacturers and reengineer production methods and cost structures.
- They must invest in the latest advances to reduce their labour/operations costs.
- The company should focus on increasing the skills of labour while at the same time contain their hourly wage.
- Need to develop loyalty from their customers/consumers to lock in a certain percentage of the market share.

CASE 05

Problem Statement: A cable TV company from Canada, World View, had recently entered the US market in the northeast to expand its market share. World View saw this move as an opportunity to capture a large part of the US market (4MM consumers) in a market with very little competition. However, in the last couple of years, much to the surprise of management, World View has been unable to make a profit. You have been hired to figure out why and advise them on their next move.

Exercise: Below are the questions that are typically asked by the interviewee during a case interview, they are not in any particular order. Choose the order in which you think the questions should be asked to get the required facts and arrive at a particular solution.

1. What about the local stations? Do they meet most of the needs of the consumer?
2. What about the number of subscribers of World View? Out of the 4MM potential customers, how many are signed up?
3. Did World View incur additional costs per customer on average in the new market?
4. Is World View providing any type of programming that the local stations are not providing?
5. Does the new market have a lower income level?
6. Are other cable companies capturing the remaining market?
7. Do local stations have good reception and how much do they charge?
8. What about substitutes and viewing behaviour? How is the consumer in the northeast US different from the one in Canada?

INTERVIEW SCRIPT



- **Did World View incur additional costs per customer on average in the new market?**

No, based on the potential number of subscribers, they have instituted the same system that was in place. Costs associated with cable wire, debt, maintenance costs, etc. are all proportionally the same.

- **What about the number of subscribers? Out of the 4MM potential customers, how many are signed up?**

Only 2.1 MM.

- **Are other cable companies capturing the remaining market?**

No, competition is not an issue. Those that we have not acquired as customers simply do not have cable.

- **What about substitutes and viewing behaviour? How is the consumer in the northeast US different from the one in Canada?**

Well, the Canadian consumer does not rely much on local stations for watching TV. The cable is a major source of entertainment and news coverage. In the northeast US, we tend to see consumers shy away from paying \$40 a month. They settle for watching local stations.

- **Does the new market have a lower income level?**

Yes, they do, by about 20% on average.

- **What about the local stations? How many are they? Do they meet most of the needs of the consumer?**

There are about 16 local stations that have coverage over the entire northeast. I guess they are doing pretty well by providing programming that the consumer wants. You tend to see the average consumer in the northeast watch regular TV more than Cable when compared with the Canadian consumer.

- **Do local stations have good reception and how much do they charge?**

They have very good reception and they are part of basic TV, so they are free.

- **Is World View providing any type of programming that the local stations are not providing?**

Some, but the consumers don't seem to be interested. They don't feel that it's worth \$40.

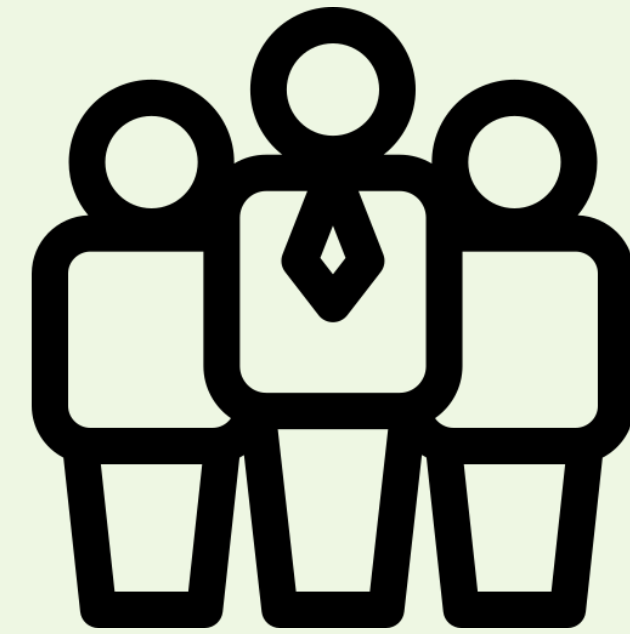


KEY FINDINGS

- There is a great deal of competition in the area, not from other cable companies, but local TV stations.
- The consumer in the northeast US is quite different from the consumer in Canada concerning television viewing habits.
- Consumers are not willing to pay \$40 for a service that they already get for free.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- World View could try to cater for its current channel offering by offering a smaller package for those that would be interested in a couple of cable channels.
- Scale back its operations to a specific region.
- Educate the consumer on the extra benefit and new low price.
- If none of these strategies work, move out of that market.



HR QUESTIONS



- Tell me about something you have accomplished that you are proud of?
- What do you like to do outside of work?
- Tell me about a time you failed or made mistakes?
- Tell me about a time you worked with a difficult person?
- Tell me about a time you disagreed with someone?
- Tell me about a time you created a goal and achieved it?
- Tell me about a time you had to handle the pressure?
- Tell me about a time you had to learn something quickly?
- Tell us about an accomplishment you are most proud of?
- Tell us about a time you made a mistake?
- Tell me about yourself?



- Why did you apply for the job?
- Can you define what comes under the responsibilities of the role you're interviewing for?
- Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years?
- Why do you want to work for this company?
- What would you consider your greatest strengths & weakness?
- What motivates you?
- What experience do you have in this field?
- Why should we hire you?
- Describe the most challenging project you have worked on
- What do you consider to be an effective way of handling conflicts in the workplace?
- What can you offer us that someone else cannot?



GUESSTIMATES

WHAT ARE GUESSTIMATES?

A guesstimate is an estimate based on a **mixture of guesswork and calculation**.

They are usually asked in a case interview along with the case study when interviewing for a consulting role. It is an approximate calculation of the size or amount when you do not know all the facts for sure. You are required to make solid assumptions with a solid justification.

The primary purpose is to check your problem-solving and critical thinking skills and to check how well you can break down a large problem and logically solve it.

Cracking a guesstimate question is about structured thinking, analytical skills, great communication, and general knowledge. There are certain things you can do to prepare for the guesstimate round, which are going to be discussed later.

TIPS & TRICKS TO SOLVE GUESSTIMATES

The process of solving a guesstimate problem is pretty simple: Look at the possible parameters that may affect the final quantity, and estimate its numbers.

How to solve guesstimates:

- 1. Understand the question (Clarify)** - Once the guesstimate is presented to you, try and extract as much information you can from the interviewer. Always ask first before you attempt any guesstimate.
- 2. Devise a logical approach (Structure)** - There is no foolproof way to approach a guesstimate. There are several ways to solve a guesstimate. The trick here is to go with the approach that helps you minimize your assumptions, a simple rule of thumb while you approach guesstimates.
- 3. Decide what approach to take (Analyse)** - Once you have devised the approaches, it is time to decide which approach you want to use. Ideally, think of 2-3 steps ahead of you in the approach you decide to use and see how it works.
- 4. Consolidate your assumptions and numbers (Conclude)** - This is the final and the trickiest step. Once you get this right, you have cracked the guesstimate. However, once you practice enough, you develop a knack for solving it.



GUESSTIMATES

To break down the question in a systematic fashion, try and **filter to zero** in on the exact customer segment.

You can use the below mentioned categories:

- Rural-Urban (Geography-wise)
- Gender Split
- Age Split
- Income Split
- Willingness

The Clinching Criteria

1. Do not be stressed. Try and structure your thinking
2. For effective communication with the interviewer, remember the **3 Vs - Voice, Veracity, and Vocabulary**
3. Build your own stories for making small assumptions, but be logical.

IMPORTANT FIGURES IN GUESSTIMATES (INDIA)

Figures to remember for Guesstimates (India)					
		Rural V/s Urban		Sector Wise	
		Rural	70%	Agriculture	15%
Population		Urban	30%	Industry	40%
India	1.3 Bn	Top 10 cities	7%	Services	55%
Delhi UA	1.6 Mn	Age wise		Occupation	
Mumbai UA	18 Mn	<35 years	60%	Agriculture	50%
Bangalore	10 Mn	<25 years	55%	Industry	20%
Growth Rate	1.20%	0-6 years	15%	Services	30%
Birth Rate	20/1000	7-14 years	15%	Others	
Death Rate	7.5/1000	15-25 years	20%	A) Literacy Rates:	
Life Expectancy	70 years	25-35 years	15%	India	75%
		35-65 years	30%	Youth (18-25 yrs)	85%
Area (in Sq. Km)		65+ years	5%	Male	83%
India	3.2 Mn	Income Groups		Female	65%
Delhi	1500			B) Religion:	
Mumbai	600	BPL	20%	Hindu (75%), Muslim (15%), others (10%)	
Kolkata	205	Low Income	40%	Car penetration	20/1000
Bangalore	700	Middle Income	30%	Internet Penetration	400 Mn
		High Income	10%	Mobile phone penetration	650 Mn
				Smart Phone penetration	300 Mn



GUESSTIMATE 01

ESTIMATE THE NUMBER OF RED SWIFT CARS IN BANGALORE

- The total population of Bangalore ~ 10 MN
- Average household size ~ 3.5
- No of household = 3 MN
- Now spilt the households based on their income
 - Below poverty line = 10%
 - Lower middle class = 30%
 - Middle class = 40%
 - Upper class = 10%
- BPL and lower middle class cannot afford a car in the range of 5L-7L (Price of swift car = 6L)
- Assume no of cars per household, Swifts' market share, and share of red swift cars
- Let's say Swift has ~10% market share in Bangalore
- Swift is available in 4 colours - red, white, blue and black. Assuming that each colour have an equal proportion (25%)

Income Group	%	Number of Household in Lakhs	Approx. No. of Cars per household	No. of Cars	Swift Market Share	No. of Swift Cars	Red Swift Cars
BPL	20	6	0.0001	60	5%	3	~1
Low Income Class	40	12	0.005	6000	10%	600	240
Middle Income Class	30	9	0.4	360000	20%	72000	28800
High Income Class	10	3	1.2	360000	10%	36000	14400

TOTAL NUMBER OF RED SWIFT CARS IN BANGALORE ~ 43,441



GUESSTIMATE 02

NUMBER OF LITRES SOLD IN A BUSY PETROL PUMP IN A MONTH

Assumptions:

- Petrol Bunk is 24x7
- Since it's a busy petrol pump, one doesn't need to worry about the "occupancy rates" during peak hours
- There are 6 gas stations in the Bunk (small station) ; can assume 10-12 gas stations for a bigger petrol bunk
- Peak Hour Estimates are assuming bottleneck from the operations- i.e. fuel refilling part
- 32 litres per one filling station

Assuming on average 6 filling stations per bunk, and 32L/filling station; we have $32 \times 6 \times 60 = 11520$ litres sold per hour

Therefore, **X=11520** (in table 1)

Now, this 11520 litres per hour is for a peak hour.

For the whole day, we calculated it as 11.1x which is approximately **(11.1 * 11520) ~ 127872 litres** of petrol per day

Per month:

22 weekdays, 9 weekends (20% discount wrt petrol consumption):

Therefore, **$127872 \times 22 + 127872 \times 0.8 \times 9$** which is approximately

3733862.4 litres of fuel per month.

Hence, a small petrol bunk (with 6 stations) in a busy area will approximately dispense **37,33,860 litres of fuel** every month.

Table 1: Segmenting time periods

Time	No. of litres sold per hr	Total Litres sold in timeframe	
07 am to 10 am	x	3x	Peak Hours
10 am to 12 pm	0.5x	1x	
12 pm to 5 pm	0.4x	2x	
5 pm to 8 pm	x	3x	Peak Hours
8 pm to 10 pm	0.6x	1.2x	
10 pm to 7 am	0.1x	0.9x	
TOTAL		11.1x	

Table 2: Segmenting Vehicle type

Type	Fuelling Time (Fueling+Misc.)	Total Vehicles per pump (per hour)	Avg. Litres of petrol per vehicle	Total Litres per hour
Car	3 mins (2+1)	8	4	24
Bike	1 min (0.5+0.5)	36	1	36
TOTAL		(Assuming for every 1 car, there are 5 bikes being refuelled)		60



RESOURCE REPOSITORY

FINANCIAL MODELLING

Financial models are tools to help people make business decisions. These decisions include:

1. whether or not to invest in a company, asset, or security; whether or not to invest in a project (project finance);
2. whether or not to do a merger or acquisition (M&A),
3. whether or not to raise money (e.g., do an IPO);
4. and other corporate finance transactions.

Financial modelling is a representation of numbers of a company's operations in the past, present, and the forecasted future.



TYPES OF FINANCIAL MODELS

Absolute Valuation models

Absolute value examines the intrinsic value of an asset or company without comparing it to any others. These models are known as the “discounted cash flow” or the DCF models.

Discounted Cash Flow Analysis					
CASH FLOW (CF)	20X3	20X4	20X5	20X6	20X7
Boat Revenue	750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000
Less:					
Boat Expenses	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Boat Cash Flow	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
COST OF CAPITAL					
Cost of Capital	10.0%				
PRESENT VALUE OF CASH FLOWS (PV of CF)	20X3	20X4	20X5	20X6	20X7
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Discount Factor	0.91	0.83	0.75	0.68	0.62
Present Value of Cash Flows	227,273	206,612	187,829	170,753	155,230
TERMINAL VALUE (CASH FLOW OF BOAT IN PERPETUITY)					
Cost of Capital					
Growth Rate in Perpetuity					
Terminal Value					
BOAT VALUE: PERPETUITY GROWTH RATE METHOD					
Boat Value	PV of CF	+	PV of Terminal Value	=	BOAT

Relative Valuation Models

These models believe that the market may be wrong about a given stock and hence do not value a firm or an asset on its intrinsic value. **Eg: Comps** (comparables) for short, looks at ratios of similar public companies and uses them to derive the value of another business. It is commonly used to value firms by comparing them to publicly traded companies with similar business operations.

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Comparable Company Analysis

Company Name	Market Data			Financial Data				Valuation			
	Price (\$/share)	Market Cap (\$M)	EV (\$M)	Sales (\$M)	EBITDA (\$M)	EBIT (\$M)	Earnings (\$M)	EV/Sales x	EV/EBITDA x	EV/EBIT x	P/E x
The Coca-Cola Company	38.14	168,041	185,122	46,854	13,104	11,127	7,381	4.0x	14.1x	16.6x	22.8x
Pepsico, Inc.	81.37	123,883	143,824	66,415	12,344	9,878	5,618	2.2x	11.7x	14.6x	22.1x
Dr Pepper Snapple Group, Inc.	52.31	10,326	12,764	5,997	1,319	1,103	620	2.1x	9.7x	11.6x	16.7x
Monster Beverage Corporation	69.62	11,618	11,004	2,246	606	584	357	4.9x	18.1x	18.9x	32.5x
National Beverage Corp.	20.81	964	968	645	78	66	41	1.5x	12.5x	14.6x	23.5x
Average								2.9x	13.2x	15.3x	23.5x
Median								2.2x	12.5x	14.6x	22.8x

RESOURCES TO LEARN FINANCIAL MODELLING

1. Starts from the basics of financial statements, with no prior knowledge required, till **DCF modelling** [Curriculum](#)

1. A guide to the **Comps Model**:

- [Financial Modeling Quick Lesson: Trading Comps \(Part 1\)](#)
- [Financial Modeling Quick Lesson: Trading Comps \(Part 2\)](#)

1. For Beginners:

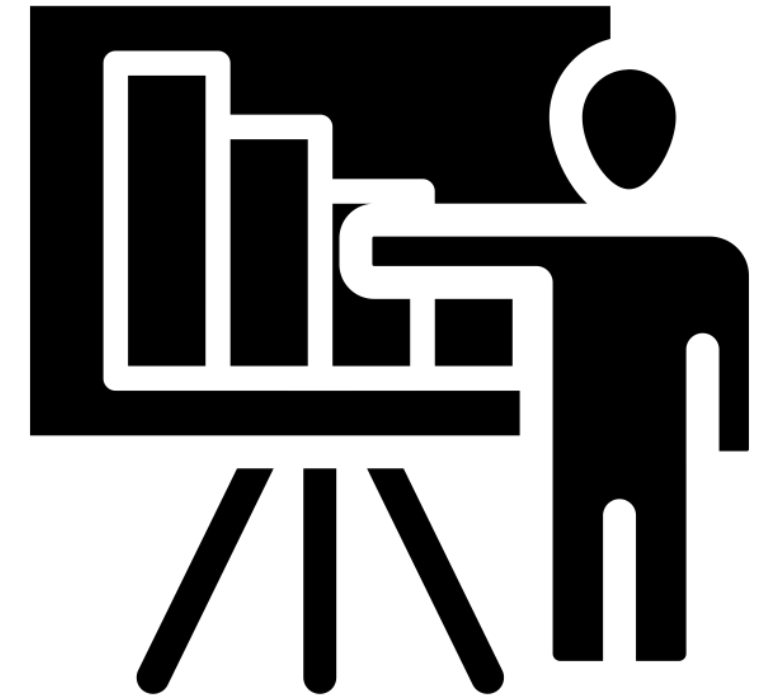
[How to Build a Financial Model in Excel - Full Tutorial for Beginners](#)

1. A guide on Fundamental Analysis:

[Fundamental Analysis - Varsity by Zerodha](#)

1. A free guide to financial modelling:

[Complete Financial Modeling Guide - Step by Step Best Practices](#)



FREE COURSES

1. **Python** - [Free Python Tutorial - Learn Python 3.6 for Total Beginners](#)
2. **Tableau** - [Free Tableau Tutorial - Free Tableau Tutorial - Learning Tableau for Beginners](#)

Courses available on Coursera:

1. [Coursera's IBM Data Science Professional Certificate](#)
2. [Data Analysis and Presentation Skills: the PwC Approach](#)
3. [Free Hubspot Tutorial for CRM](#)
4. [Fundamentals of Management with Goldman Sachs](#)
5. [Data Visualization with Advances Excel](#)
6. [Financial Markets](#)
7. [Private Equity and Venture Capital](#)

Courses available on Corporate Financial Institute:

1. [Finance Courses](#)
2. [Excel Crash Course for Finance](#)

Courses available on Udemy:

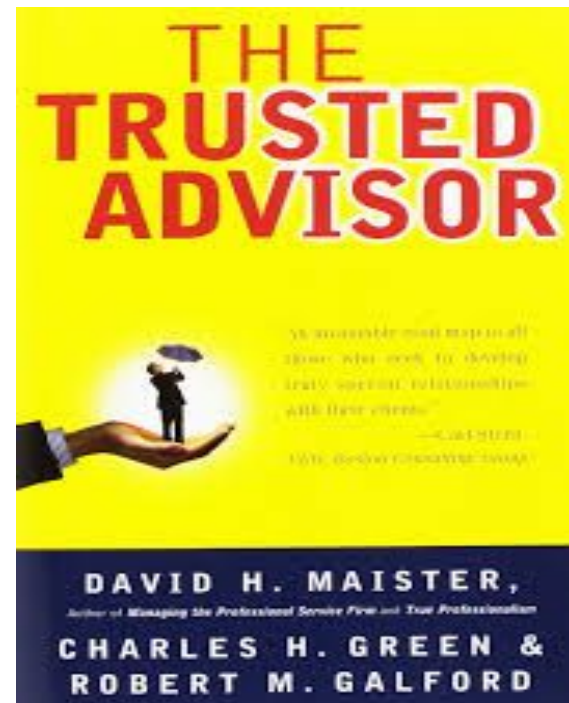
1. [Financial Modeling Tutorial](#)
2. [Introduction to Corporate Finance](#)
3. [Technical Analysis](#)
4. [Introduction to Technical Analysis: Stock Trading](#)

DATA INTERPRETATION TUTORIALS & TEMPLATES

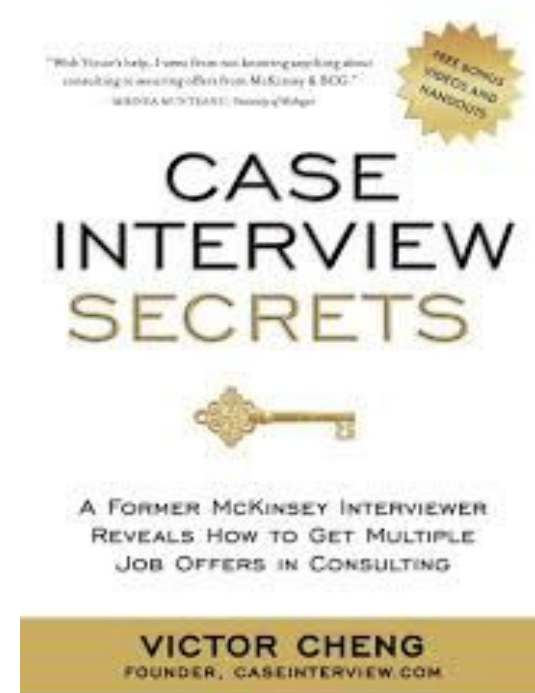
1. [Why Social Media Jobs are so Popular \[INFOGRAPHIC\]](#)
2. [34 Marketing Plan Samples to Build Your Strategy With 7 Templates](#)
3. [Tech Trends for 2013 | Visual.ly](#)
4. [Web consulting, audit infographic | Pre-Designed Photoshop Graphics](#)
5. [Infographics – Setup®](#)
6. [Google Consumer Surveys](#)

BOOKS ON CONSULTING

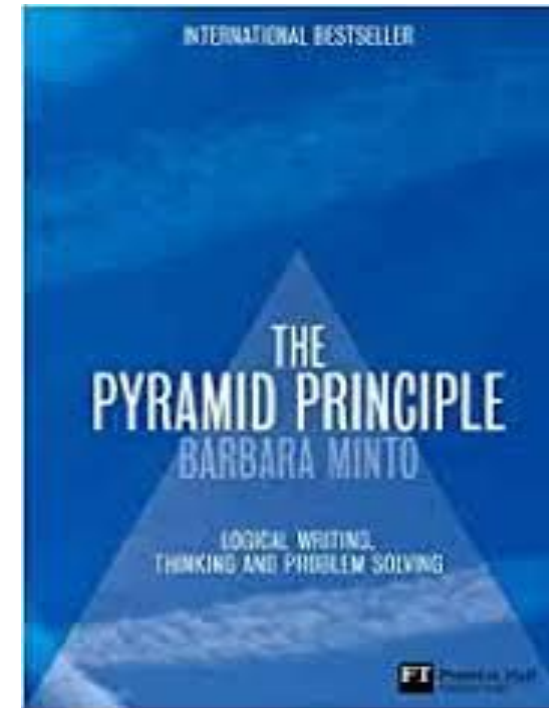
The Trusted Advisor



Case Interview Secrets



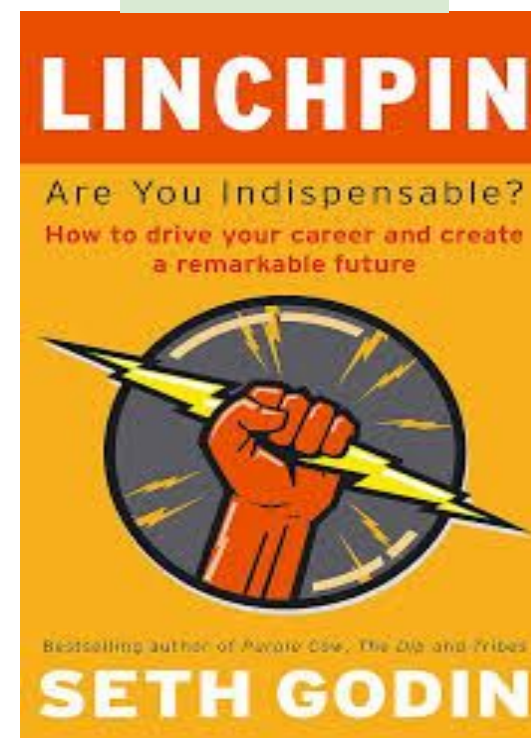
The Pyramid Principle



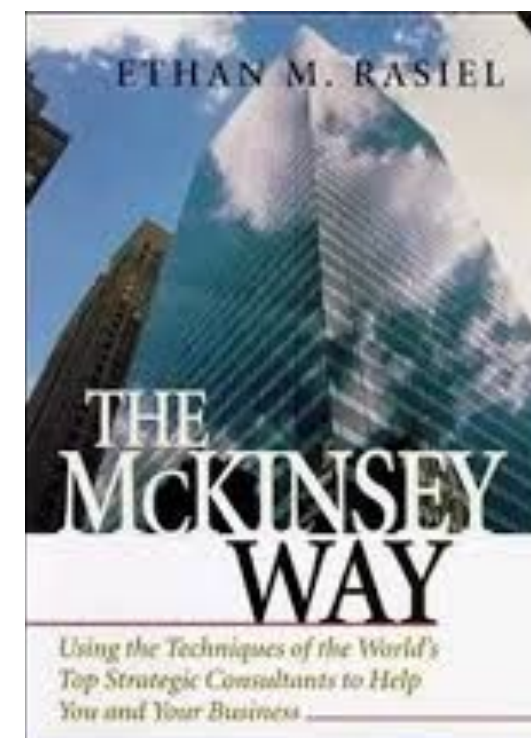
The Essentials



Linchpin



The McKinsey Way



Note: You can find these books as PDFs in the toolkit under "E-Books".

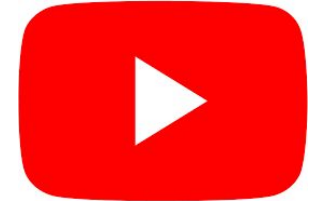
CONTENT ON CONSULTING

1. "Consulting Is More Than Giving Advice," HBR, 1982
2. Management consulting can be a great deal,
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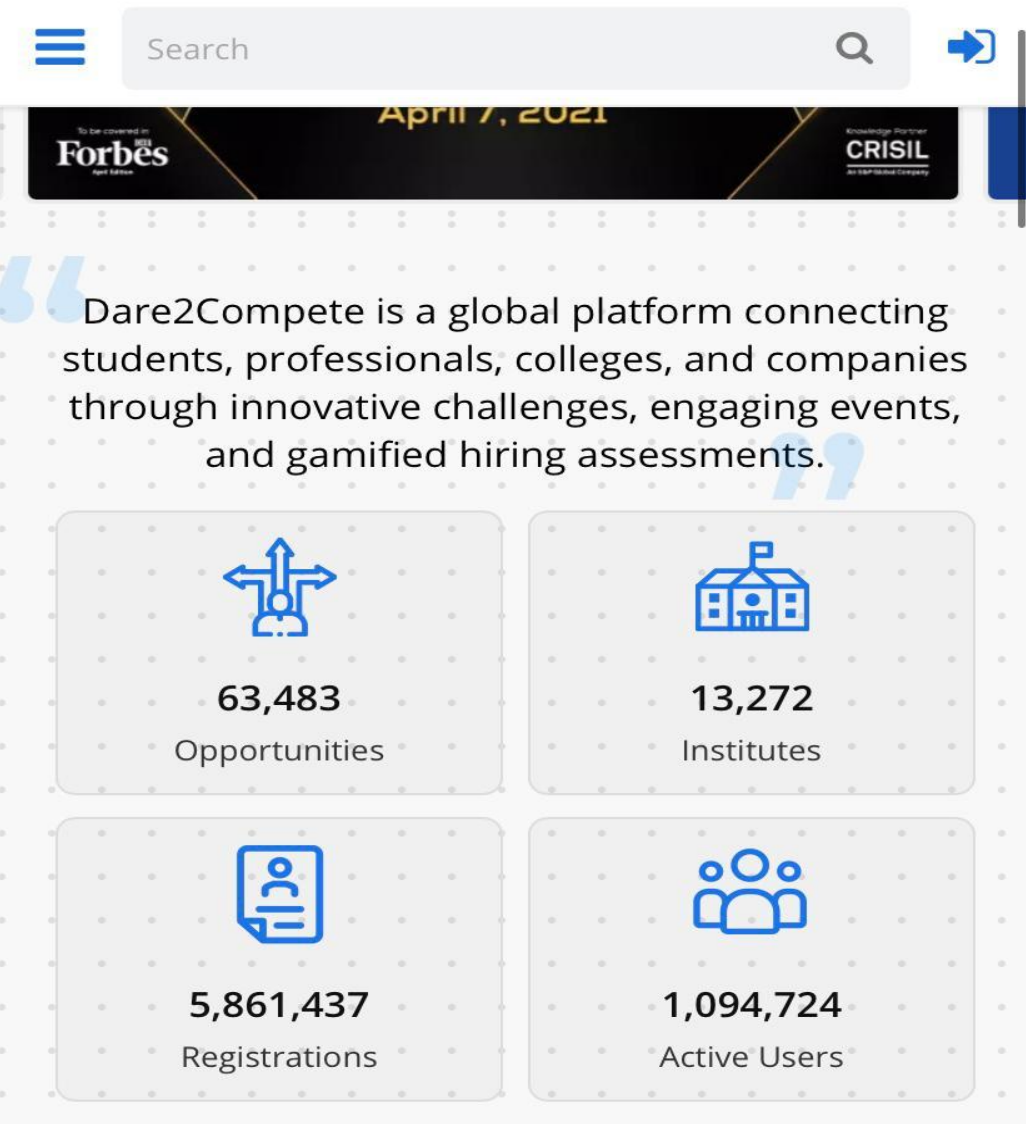
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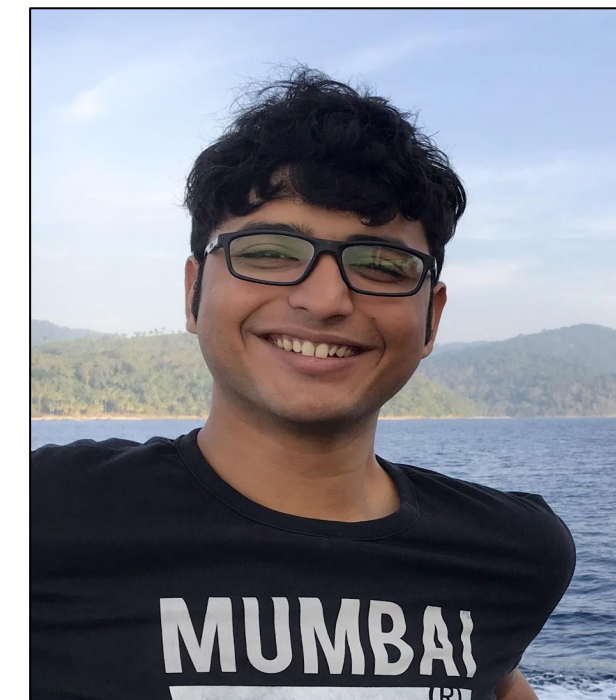
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We would love to **hear** from you!



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