



WHAT IS A CASE INTERVIEW?

The case interview is a scenario-based, problem solving activity. It is used by consulting firms, financial services firms, and other industries to evaluate the following:

Problem Solving Skills

1. How well do you narrow down a problem?
2. Do you ask pertinent questions when appropriate?
3. Can you identify and extract the important issues related to the problem?
4. What framework are you using to solve the case?
5. Is your thinking pragmatic?

Analytical Skills

1. Can you follow a logical line of reasoning?
2. How well do you structure your answers?
3. Can you make quick calculations on your feet?
4. Do you recognize hints that the interviewer offers to keep you on the right track?

Communication Skills

1. Do you think before you speak?
2. Do you express yourself clearly?
3. Are you a good listener?
4. Can you adapt to the information you are given?
5. Can you explain and defend your ideas?
6. How well do you handle pressure?

WHAT ARE INTERVIEWERS LOOKING FOR?

The purpose is not necessarily to find the correct solution to the scenario, but for you to demonstrate the steps you would take to solve the given problem. The interviewer is assessing the rationale behind your strategy and your ability to articulate your thought process (i.e. ability to verbalize your thoughts).

THE CASE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Assessing Your Analytical Skills

Interviewers can use a variety of case problem solving exercises such as analyzing a brainteaser, market sizing problem, or a business strategy problem.



TYPES OF CASE INTERVIEWS

Brain Teasers/Market-Sizing Questions

These types of questions assess your creative problem solving skills. Some popular questions are:

1. Why are manhole covers round?
2. You wake up one morning and there's been a power outage. You know you have 12 black socks and 8 blue ones. How many socks do you need to pull out before you've got a match?
3. How many cell phones are sold in the United States each year?

Business Problems

These questions begin as a description of a typical business-related issue. The interviewer provides background information and you are expected to provide a possible solution.

1. An airline finds that, while its revenues are at an all time high, the company is still operating at a loss. What is going on?
2. A company is thinking about expanding internationally. What issues might influence its decision?
3. How should a company price a new home printer that it wants to start selling?

This is a brief introduction to the topic of case interviews, for more in-depth case preparation refer to the following resources.

- Case in Point and www.casequestions.com (Marc Cosentino)
- [Big Interview](#) (Use for free via the "Resources" link in Handshake)

Many large consulting firms like [Deloitte](#) and [McKinsey](#) provide case examples on their websites.

For additional information, refer to the [Consulting Industry Guide](#) or make an appointment with your Career Consultant.