Ace The Case Program

Study Guide

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Study Sequence

This is a complete list of all of our Ace The Case Program Videos:

No	Case Study	Format	Industry	Problem Type
1	Online Newspaper Advertising #1	Candidate-led	Advertising	Growth Strategy
2	Online Newspaper Advertising #2	Candidate-led	Advertising	Growth Strategy
3	Hot Sauce #1	Candidate-led	Small Business	Profitability
4	Hot Sauce #2	Candidate-led	Small Business	Profitability
5	Education in Vietnam #1	Interviewer-led	Non-Profit	Non-Profit Policy
6	Education in Vietnam #2	Interviewer-led	Non-Profit	Non-Profit Policy
7	Goods Retail #1	Candidate-led	Retail	Mixed
8	Goods Retail #2	Candidate-led	Retail	Mixed
9	Ubike #1	Interviewer-led	Technology	Pricing and Investing

Each person with specific situation and needs may need a different order of study. These following recommendations are useful in helping you prioritize, design and sort your own study.

- Pick cases with format that match your target firm. McKinsey interviews are interviewer-led while Bain and BCG are candidate-led. Second-tier firms and boutique firms tend to be candidate-led as well.
- The learning experience is gradual, with basic yet essential recommendations in the beginning and more advanced techniques later on. So we recommend that you watch the videos according to the sequence.

Study Tip: The best study strategy is to *pause the video whenever a question is presented to think of the answer yourself*. What would you do in that situation? Then listen to the candidate version, take some notes, then pause again to see if your thoughts match with the candidate's and match with my standard answers. You will realize that you will learn more by doing this rather than just take a passive role listening to cases.

Commonly-used Scripts

This guide will help you on what to say in certain important circumstances in a case interview. By thoroughly and smoothly saying these phrases, you will feel more comfortable in your own case interview.

In this guide, we have given you our version of some of the most popular phrases in important situations. But we recommend you to state these phrases using your own words and reinvent the wheel, as it can cater better to your own habits.

Good luck and let's get started.

SCRIPTS

After getting the initial problem statement:

This is a very interesting case. Thank you very much. I would like to reiterate the key facts in the problem statement, just to make sure I got everything correct.
So you said … (only reiterate the key points, no need to repeat word for word)
I have some clarifying questions I'd like to ask.
Can you explain to me … (ask about things that you don't understand, the business model, etc.)

Laying out your framework:

(Turn your notes to the interviewer)
So this is how I want to approach this problem. Fundamentally, this is a profitability problem, and profit is revenue minus cost. On the revenue side, revenue is the number of items that we sell times the price we charge for each of them. On the cost side, cost is the volume of items we sell times the cost per unit, which can be further segmented into the fixed and variable cost per unit. I would like to go into the revenue side first before digging deeper into cost. Can you give me any information on…?

Proposing a hypothesis:

That is a very interesting fact. Given all that we have seen so far, I would like to propose a working hypothesis for the problem. My hypothesis here is that the reason for the cost increase is because of…

Validating a hypothesis:

To test that hypothesis, I would need to know if … is true or not. Do we have any data on … or do we have any information on this?

Natural transition:

With that information, I believe we have gotten most of the things that we needed on the revenue side. To drive the case forward, I would like to shift gears and dig deeper into the cost side. Is that ok?

Reacting to charts/exhibits:

Great! So after looking at these charts, I see 3 insights that are relevant to our problem.
  1. …
  2. …
  3. …

Tying back to the original problem:

So I want to take a small pause here and assess where we are at in the case. So the initial problem that we have is … and our goal for the problem is …
Give this new information, we see … about the initial problem, but we still need to figure out … So I would like to continue onto that part of the problem

Reacting to interviewer's challenge:

Yes. You have mentioned a very important point and I see where you are coming from.
However, given the facts that you have given me in the case, I still believe that … is the right move going forward. And my belief is based on these facts and findings.
  1. …
  2. …
  3. …

Asking for hint from the interviewer:

So this is what I have been thinking about… and this is what I have been trying to do…
However, it seems like that these areas are not exactly where we should be going in the case. I'm a little bit lost here. Is there a particular direction that you would like me to go into or is there something that I am missing from the facts?

Final Recommendation:

So, as the CEO of … you have come to us with this problem … and has asked us to find a key reason for it and a solution to turn it around.
After our analysis, we have found that the underlying reason of this problem is …
To solve that problem, here are the three recommendations that we have:
1. *…*
2. *…*
3. *…*

(Potentially you can add risks and next steps)
However, there are some risks to these recommendations, namely…
So for next steps, if given more time, our team would like to dive deeper into…

We hope that this guide has been helpful in your preparation for the Case Interview. Please help us better serve future candidates like you by dropping us a few notes on your progress!

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