

CASE INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Case interviews – they’re about stacking up your skills against a real business challenge. You’ll be asked to demonstrate your problem-solving skills, your analytical ability, and your strategic and logical thinking. These case interviews also help companies assess your common sense, creativity, and comfort with ambiguity. At the same time, you’ll gain insight into the company’s approach because these cases represent real client projects.

Cases help companies assess a candidate across multiple dimensions, and your answers should project clear thinking, practical judgment, and a professional demeanor. Apply this five-step approach while working through the case interview:

1. Understand the issue; ask clarifying questions as needed.
2. Identify the underlying assumptions.
3. Summarize key issues and findings.
4. State your recommendations.
5. Outline next steps and expected results/impacts.

The interviewee is not expected to provide the ultimately right answer, but rather to clearly convey his/her logic and thought process. Sample case interviews illustrate such thought processes and imitate an actual case dialogue.

Case Interview Tips

To help you demonstrate your best thinking in the case interview, be sure to:

- Take notes throughout the case exercise.
- Be sure you understand the case question.
- Ask questions, but don’t use them as a crutch – companies are interested in how you connect the dots, not in painting the picture for you.
- Develop and articulate a framework and the initial hypothesis that you intend to explore.
- Take time to compose your thoughts – don’t just start talking.
- Structure your analysis into a clear logical story.
- Walk the interviewer through your thinking and explain your assumptions.
- Don’t panic. Engage the interviewer in a business conversation.
- Don’t forget that the case interview is an opportunity to see some of the projects the employer may be working on.

Deloitte has provided helpful links about how to best prepare for their case studies. While these are specific to this company, the examples here may help you prepare: http://careers.deloitte.com/united-states/students/students_internships.aspx?CountryContentID=13912.