



BRIDGE STRATEGY GROUP LLC

## **Case Interview Preparation Guide**

**2007**

# Agenda

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- ❑ What is a case?
- ❑ What are firms looking for in a case interview?
- ❑ How to successfully approach a case?

# A case is a hypothetical business issue or dilemma

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- ❑ A case will require you to:
  - Analyze the situation
  - Identify key issues
  - Develop an approach
  - Evaluate information and generate insights
  - Summarize findings and takeaways
  - Outline recommendations
  
- ❑ A case is a critical part of the interview process—it tries to identify a candidate's ability to solve problems in a logical, insightful and creative way

# Case interviews test skills necessary to be a successful consultant

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## **Analytical Skills**

*Can this candidate solve problems for our clients?*

- Understanding issues
- Framing and organizing the problem
- Developing logical approach
- Analyzing data and drawing sound conclusions
- Identifying key implications
- Prioritizing recommendations

## **Communication Skills**

*Can this candidate interact with a client?*

- Active listening
- Clear articulation of thoughts
- Synthesis
- Ability to engage the listener
- Rapport
- Credibility, confidence

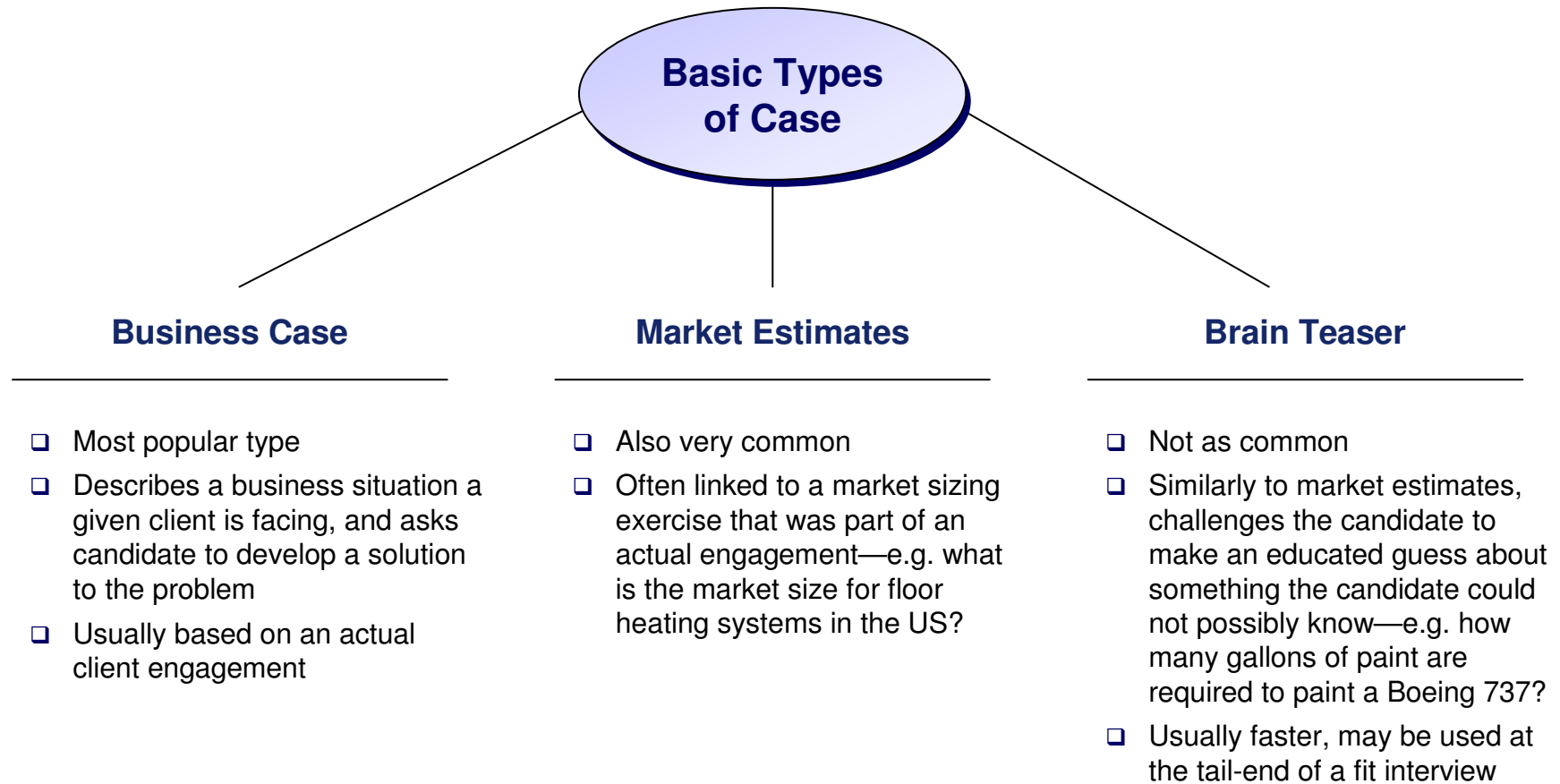
## **“Intangibles”**

*Will this candidate like and succeed in consulting?*

- Intellectual curiosity
- Poise, engagement
- Creativity
- Maturity
- Business acumen

# Three basic types of cases

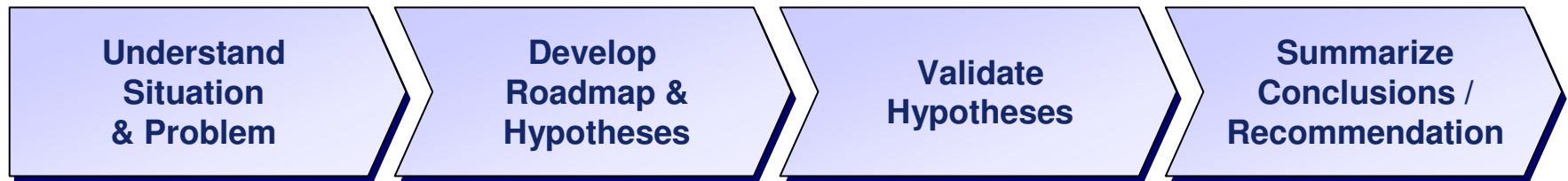
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**Not interested in the “correct answer”, but the “thought process” of how you get to the answer**

# Approaching a case

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## ***Key Steps***

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- Listen carefully
  - Restate problem
  - Ask clarifying questions
  - Think about what type of case it might be
- Define a roadmap
  - Use appropriate frameworks to help understand key drivers and identify main variables
  - Develop your hypotheses
  - Communicate how you will be attacking the problem
- State your initial assumptions
  - Ask questions to validate / disprove your hypotheses
  - Perform calculations (when required)
- Summarize findings and outline recommendation
  - Make additional considerations if appropriate, such as expected impact, anticipated risks, and implementation steps

# Basic frameworks

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- ❑ Competitive strategy
  - Porter's 5 (or 6, or 7) Forces
  - SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats)
  
- ❑ Sales & Marketing
  - 4 P's (Product, Price, Place, Promotion)
  - 3 C's (Company, Competitors, Customers)
  - Growth / Share Matrix
  
- ❑ Organizational
  - 7-S (Strategy, Structure, Systems, Style, Staff, Skills, Shared Values)
  
- ❑ Profitability
  - Profit = Revenue – Cost
    - Revenue = Price x Quantity
    - Cost = Fixed Costs + Variable Costs + Overhead

**A framework provides structure to guide your analysis; choose one that fits the problem**

## A few tips to consider

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- ❑ Relax—many candidates fail just because they are too tense to reason clearly
- ❑ Listen to carefully to what the interviewer is saying
- ❑ Ask questions and clarify information given (paraphrasing)
- ❑ Do what is best for you in thinking through the issues
  - Silence
  - Think out loud
- ❑ Feel free to write things down so that you remember and come back to them
- ❑ Interact with the interviewer and show your reasoning and thought process
- ❑ Remember to think about organizational, cultural and regulatory issues
- ❑ Develop your own style
- ❑ Practice, Practice, Practice!



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[www.bridgestrategy.com](http://www.bridgestrategy.com)

One North Franklin, Suite 2100 ■ Chicago, IL 60606 ■ 312.357.6740