CREO Case Interview Tips

Applications Due March 10th, 2023, at 11:59PM

Neel Sharma, Managing Partner
Adam Trotman, Managing Director
Jessica Sok, Managing Director

Interview Information
Interview methods and the skills they measure

Interview Details

First Round Interview - March 11th to 13th

Length: 13 minute interview with 2 minute question period

Format: 3 behavioral questions (TMAY +2) and 1 market sizing question

Interviewers: Neel Sharma, Jessica Sok, Adam Trotman

Skills Assessed: Oral communication, structured thinking, critical thinking, quantitative analysis, initiative, and commitment

To Bring: Paper and a pen (no calculator allowed)

Second Round Interview - March 23st to 24nd

Length: 18 minute interview with 2 minute question period

Format: 2 behavioral questions and 1 case exercise

Interviewers: 3 executive members and 1 non-executive member

Skills Assessed: Oral communication, business logic, quantitative analysis, creativity, and past experiences

To Bring: Paper and a pen (no calculator allowed)

Skills Assessed

Problem Solving and Analysis

- Business Acumen
- General Logic
- Qual Analysis
- Quant Analysis

Written and Oral Communication

- Clarity
- Professionalism
- Structure
- Synthesis

Character and Commitment

- Leadership
- Collaboration
- Growth Potential
- Initiative

Creativity and Culture

- Transformational
- Exploratory
- Teamwork
- Interests

Intro to MECE and Answer-First Brainstorming

Introduction to MECE

The theory behind MECE

Answer-First - What Is It?

Structuring thoughts into mutually exclusive, collectively exhaustive buckets that either support a claim or allow you to brainstorm all potential options when given a prompt.

Essentially, MECE thinking provides you with a paradigm through which to view or approach an issue and requires you to fill in the blanks.

How Can It Help Me?

Clarity
Guides your thinking and ensures you stay focused on the issues most relevant to your thesis statement.

Logic
Provides an organized and intuitive way to work through a problem or activity.

Exhaustiveness
Ensures you cover all relevant considerations when tackling an issue.

When Is It Most Effective?

Communicating Important, Yet Complex Insights
Assists in allowing you to deliver all of your key points in a logical, concise way.

Approaching an Ambiguous Problem
Frameworks break down complex problems into small, digestible elements you're able to work through.

When You're In the Hot Seat
When asked an 'out-of-scope' question, ST assists you in gathering your thoughts and coming across as polished.

Introduction to answer-first communication

The theory behind answer-first communication

Answer-First - What Is It?

Also referred to as point-first communication, answer-first communication involves beginning with the answer to your analysis, and then providing the rationale for why that answer is correct.

Answer first communication sharply contrasts with 'persuasion-style' communication, which leads the audience through all the arguments before reaching a conclusion.

How Can It Help Me?

Grabs audience attention
Gets directly to the point, serving as a "hook" so that the audience can instantly understand the relevance.

Reduces audience confusion
Allows the audience to evaluate your thesis (argument) for the entire period, reducing confusion.

Improves your organization
Being answer-first naturally inclines you to think about the MECE-ness of your arguments.

When Is It Most Effective?

Time sensitive situations
Provides time sensitive audiences with exactly what they need to know, and (if necessary) why it is the case.

Low audience engagement situations
Serves as a strong framework to guide poorly engaged listeners to what they need to understand.

Complex situations
Synthesizes the main ideas from complex arguments in digestible insights upfront.

Answer-first vs. persuasive communication styles

Understanding the differences between answer-first and answer-last

Answer First

- The answer is yes/no/concluding Insight…
- … for "n" reasons: reason 1, reason 2, … reason n

- Explain and argue reason 1
- Explain and argue reason 2…
- … Explain and argue reason n

- Summarize the reasons and your arguments for why they support your answer.

> The audience knows exactly what you are arguing, and can see exactly why your reasons support your answer.
>
> Being answer-first forces a top-down approach to your thinking, which is conducive for MECE.

Answer Last (Persuasive)

- Introduce reason 1.
- Explain and argue reason 1
- Introduce reason 2.
- Explain and argue reason 2…
- Consider reason n
- Explain and argue reason n

- Summarize the reasons for your argument, and lead to a conclusion (or answer) that makes sense.

> The audience does not know what you are arguing and can only judge your answer at the very end.
>
> Being answer-last entails a bottom-up approach to your thinking, which makes being MECE more difficult.

> In most (if not all) professional settings, you should aim always be answer first.