



## TenStep Supplemental Paper

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### The Case Interview

A Harvard University study traced 80% of employee turnover to poor hiring decisions. Not only is a bad hire costly in terms of increased turnover, but it can also cost a company thousands of dollars. Even outstanding hires can be expensive when managers ask the wrong interview questions or fail to assess the suitability of the candidate's personality for the organization.

#### Case Interview

Corporate recruiters are now using a different form of interview question - the Case Interview question. In this format, the interviewer presents a hypothetical business problem and the candidate has to develop a detailed process for answering the question clearly. In most instances, the actual answer is not obtainable.

A five step approach to case interview questions follows:

- **Step 1.** Interviewers should tell the candidates to develop a framework for the question. They should be told to use "Big Picture Thinking" (working from the general to the specific) using the information they are given, what they already know and additional information that the interviewer might give them if asked.
- **Step 2.** The candidates must prioritize and identify the basic issues contained in the problem and use problem-solving logic.
- **Step 3.** Potential answers should be narrowed down to the most logical using the 80/20 approach.
- **Step 4.** Interviewers should instruct the candidates to analyze the problem from all perspectives. Working from the "Big Picture" information, they can derive the best possible answer.
- **Step 5.** Finally, the candidates should draw conclusions from their analysis and demonstrate results based on information and logical conclusions.

For example, a major Idaho potato producer wants to increase demand for his product and stumbles upon the idea of vending machines for french fries. The machines would have a stock of frozen fries, heating and dispensing them into a bag for the customer. Assume this process yields tasty fries. What factors would determine the economic feasibility of the venture?

The case interviewing approach helps the interviewing managers gain an understanding of the candidate's thought process. It can also help make a decision on the candidate's fit for the position. This approach naturally identifies the best and helps the company reduce employee turnover and hiring costs.