


Always Fresh

Determined to conquer the world with the power of deodorant, the Always Fresh team has set their sites on going abroad. Help them navigate the international intricacies of personal hygiene. Will success smell as sweet outside of North America?

Case Pack: 007

Difficulty (1-5): 

Crack the Case:
How to Conquer Your Case Interviews





Case Answers and Interviewer Notes

Candidates should not read through this pack until completing the case. Remove pages 3 through 6 before beginning the case.

I

Pages
7 - 22

Interviewer

- **Prep time:** This case is rated 3 stars in terms of difficulty and has a few complexities. Expect to invest at least **10 minutes** preparing. Review the following:
 - Interviewer Fact Sheet (p. 7)
 - Case at a Glance (p. 8-9)
 - Math Zone (p. 10)
 - Handout Guide and Handouts (p. 11-20)
 - Re-routers and Heavy Lifting (p. 21)
 - Candidate's "Mine for an Answer" sheets (p. 27-29)
- **Giving the Case:** Start the interview realistically - greet, shake hands, chat and introduce the case. To make the interview more challenging consider taking on an interviewer personality. For tips look at p. 25. After the case is over, fill out the Interview Feedback sheet and discuss strengths and weaknesses with the candidate.

C

Pages
23 - 31

Candidate

- **Working with an Interviewer:** Remove pages 3 through 6 to take notes and do your work. Give the rest of the pack to your interviewer. Interviewer prep is about 10 minutes for this case.
- **After the interview:** Rate yourself using the Self Assessment sheet in the back of the case pack. Review the feedback score and comments from your interviewer and discuss ways to improve. Review the suggested answers in the case.
- **Self-study:** Remove pages 3 through 6 to take notes and do your work. Remove any data handouts and place them face down. Follow the three **Self Study Steps** listed on these sheets. This self study method will help you form your plan, practice asking good questions and improve your ability to pull insights from the data slides. Keep in mind that you will benefit most from working with an interviewer who can evaluate your performance objectively.

Throughout these notes references will be made to the **MVM™ (Maximum Value Model)** and the **FRAME Method™**, the building blocks of the **One Model/One Method™** approach to case interviews. Full descriptions of these unique tools, as well as additional cases, can be found in the book, **Crack the Case: How to Conquer Your Case Interviews**, available at www.consultingcase.com.

The facts of this case, company names and answers are completely fictitious. Any resemblance to actual people, places, companies and strategic outcomes is entirely coincidental.

Self Study Step 1: Read the case question below out loud. After hearing the question, use your Candidate Notes page to write down the most important Case Facts. On that same sheet take about 1 minute to develop your plan in the Form a Plan section.

Case Question

Always Fresh is a subsidiary of a \$30B consumer products conglomerate. The company's main product line is deodorant/anti-perspirant sprays, roll-ons and sticks. Sales over the last five years have been steadily growing in North America, and now the Always Fresh team is ready to take its products global.

As the team's leader, how would you assess whether or not international expansion is a good idea? If so, which countries offer the greatest three-year revenue opportunity?

Candidate Notes

Case Facts

Form a Plan

Self Study Step 2: After taking notes and forming your plan, rotate the sheet to face your imaginary interviewer and present your plan out loud (just as you would if you were standing and presenting your thoughts from a white board). Practice posing questions and thoughts about the main sections of your plan.

Self Study Step 3: After you have presented your plan and practiced asking questions about the different areas of your plan, being working through the data slides for this case. If there are no slides, you can review the answers in the interviewer notes. If there are slides, turn them over one slide at a time and talk through the insights for each slide. When you are done, review the interviewer notes.

Interviewer Fact Sheet

Case Question: Always Fresh is a subsidiary of a \$30B consumer products conglomerate. The company's main product line is deodorant/anti-perspirant sprays, roll-ons and sticks. Sales over the last five years have been steadily growing in North America, and now the Always Fresh team is ready to take its products global. As the team's leader, how would you assess whether or not international expansion is a good idea? If so, which countries offer the greatest three-year revenue opportunity?

A Few Tips from David

- This is a basic market entry case with critical data scattered throughout four different handouts. Star candidates will be on a mission to find certain facts and pull them from the slides.
- Make sure the candidate has all four slides at about the half point in the case. As you evaluate, look for tenacity in finding data as well as an ability to integrate the findings.

Intro Facts

(Tell the Candidate if Asked)

- **Location preferences:** None. Management wants the project team to tell them.
- **Product line:** Any or all of the three deodorant types can be launched into new locations. Each product (stick, spray, roll-on) lasts 3 months long on average.
- **Team:** Internal resources appear sufficient to handle this launch. Candidate is the leader.
- **Capital, production and distribution:** Parent company will support any well defined need. Worldwide production and distribution facilities will help. Relationships with retailers are good.
- **Financial targets:** 25% annual revenue growth for 3 years and year one sales of at least \$50M.
- **North American (NAM) sales:** Last year's sales were \$350M. NAM growth is about 10% per year.
- **Suppliers:** Non-issue, North American suppliers.
- **Government/ Legislation:** No barriers.
- **Financing this venture:** Non-issue.

Key Insights

(Do Not Tell the Candidate)

- **Market potential:** Three countries are much larger than the others in terms of overall size: Germany, Japan and Brazil.
- **Pricing:** AF sells three different types of product that sell at different price points. Also prices vary by country. However, since the three product types are weighted about the same, you can average the prices to develop an average price for all units for a particular country.
- **Country Specific Competitors:** There are strong competitors in each market that AF wants to enter. Brazil and Japan are the most fragmented which would enable AF to take market share from the small, local brands. Although AF is new, their large parent organization will make it possible for them promote their products heavily and to use already established distribution relationships.
- **Global Competitors:** Mann and Rembrant each have solid market share in 3 different countries. They are well established companies like AF and its parent company.

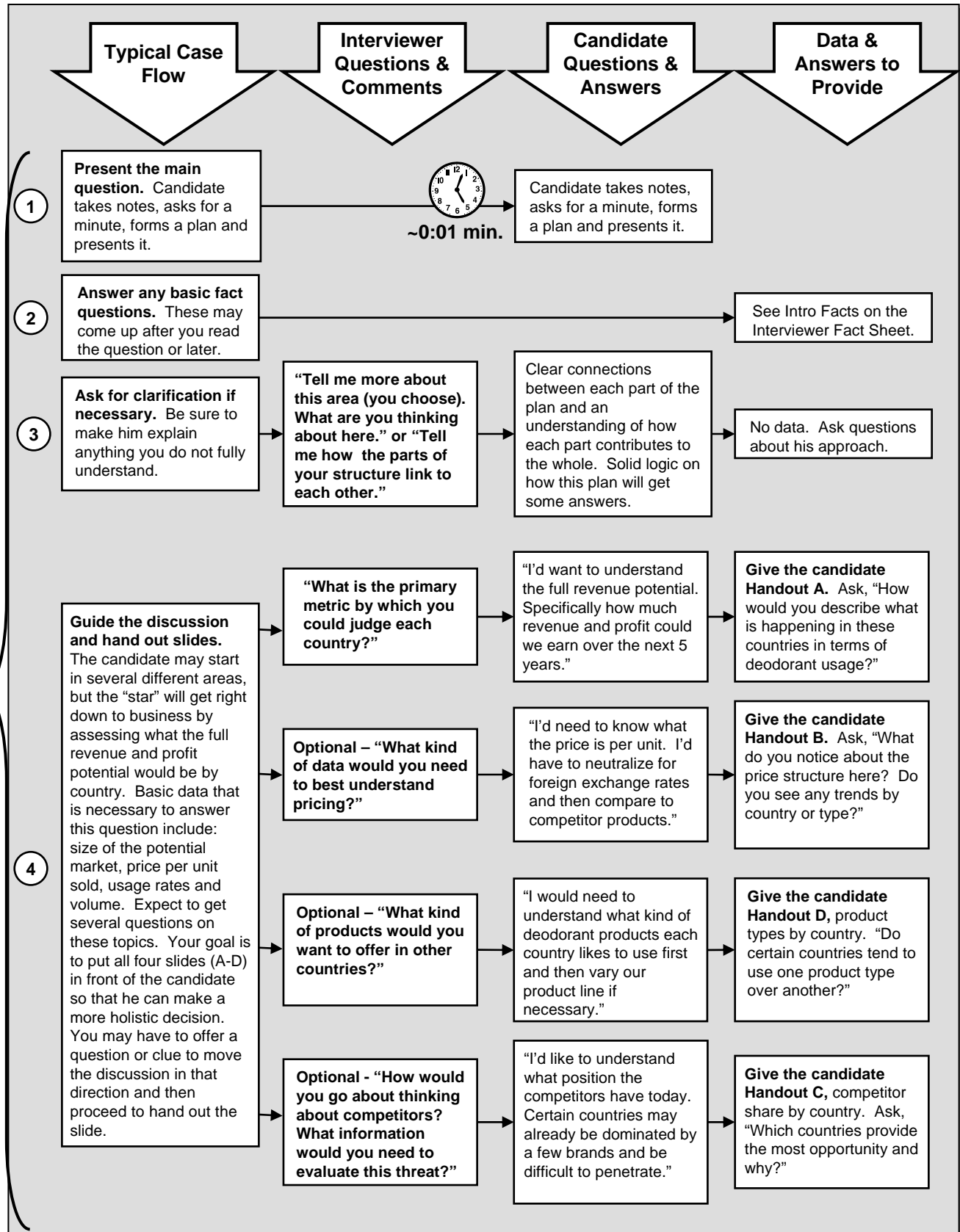
On-Track Indicators

- ✓ **Data driven** – asks for price, volume and usage by country
- ✓ **Results focus** – thinks about getting product to customers by overcoming barriers and ensuring good distribution
- ✓ **Creative** - discusses country specific issues like advertising, product name, perception of product after establishing a data driven strategy

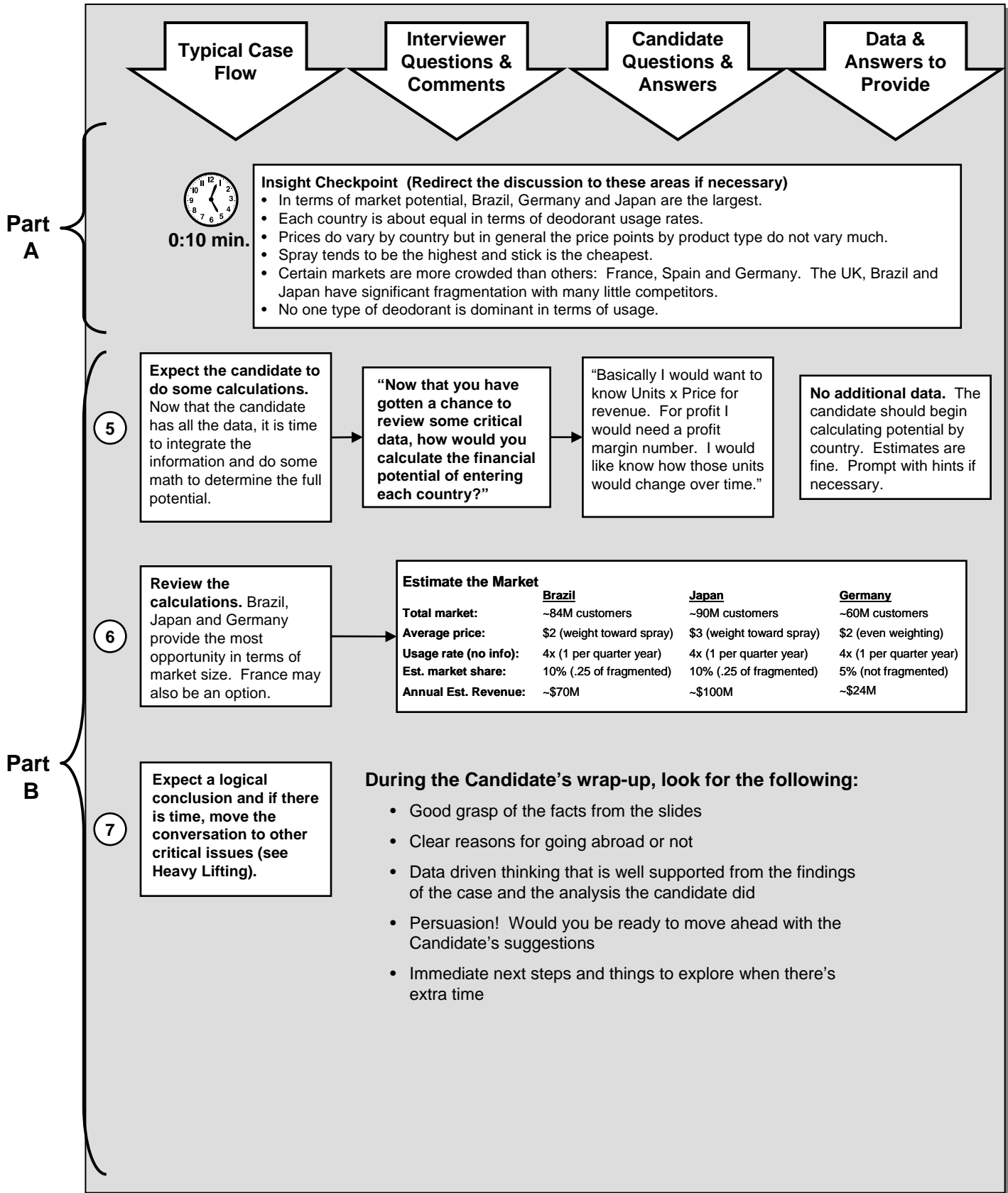
Off-Track Indicators

- ✗ **Creative first** – talks about customers' different needs and how to address them before determining market size and country of focus
- ✗ **Too tactical** – focuses too much on how to distribute, sell or make before developing a data driven strategy
- ✗ **Too micro** – drills too deep and long on a few issues, like which type of product to sell first

Case at a Glance



Case at a Glance



Math Zone

Potential Approach

Estimate the Market

	<u>Brazil</u>	<u>Japan</u>	<u>Germany</u>
Total market:	~84M customers	~90M customers	~60M customers
Average price:	\$2 (weight toward spray)	\$3 (weight toward spray)	\$2 (even weighting)
Usage rate (no info):	4x (1 per quarter year)	4x (1 per quarter year)	4x (1 per quarter year)
Est. market share:	10% (.25 of fragmented)	10% (.25 of fragmented)	5% (not fragmented)
Annual Est. Revenue:	~\$70M	~\$100M	~\$24M

Total Annual Revenue: ~\$194M (will vary according to your assumptions, e.g. how many units of deodorant do you use per year? Round this number to ~\$200M)

Gut Check It

- \$200M for the first year seems high, given that after 5 years NAM has \$350M.
- This may be high due to market share and usage estimates. Don't recalculate, stay calm and create a range.
- If you arrive at an answer that feels off, quickly estimate a range by percent. In this case 20% error in either direction would result in a range of ~\$160M – \$240M. Be conservative and go with \$160M.

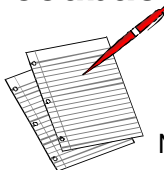
Calculate Required Growth

- First year sell about \$160M
- Second year grow at requested 25% (\$40M), so sell ~\$200M.
- Third year, grow at requested 25% (\$50M), so sell ~\$250M. After three years, Always Fresh would be about \$250 (international) which seems reasonable since NAM is \$350 after five years.

Interpret the numbers

- Establishing the business during the first year is important and will be difficult. Germany especially is not fragmented, and gaining shelf space may prove difficult.
- Growing at 25% may be possible given that Brazil and Japan are so fragmented. It does seem aggressive, however, given NAM's 10% growth rate.
- **We may have the option of entering only two countries and still reaching our targets.**

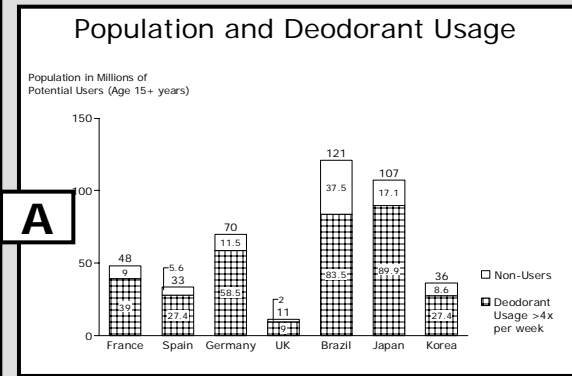
Feedback



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|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Data oriented | <input type="checkbox"/> | Quick to interpret | <input type="checkbox"/> | Collaborative style |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Facile with numbers | <input type="checkbox"/> | Questions are specific | <input type="checkbox"/> | Explains gut check |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Focused, not flustered | <input type="checkbox"/> | Nimble thinker | <input type="checkbox"/> | Ballparks numbers first |

Notes:

Handout Guide



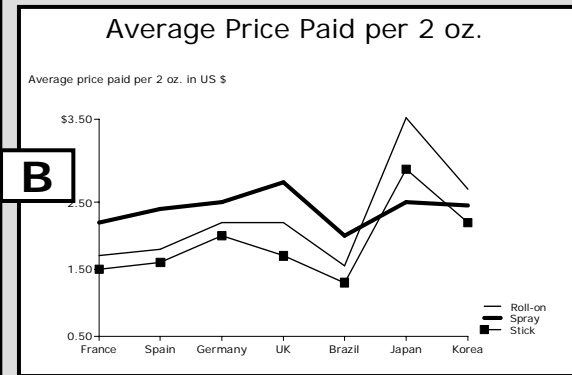
Candidate: How big is the market by country? or Do you have any market data?

Interviewer: Here's some market data. What do you see?

To Help, Ask: What jumps out to you on this chart? Any countries you would consider over others?

Main Insight: Big markets to consider are Brazil, Japan and Germany.

Candidate got the insight?: Yes No



Candidate: Do we have any pricing information?

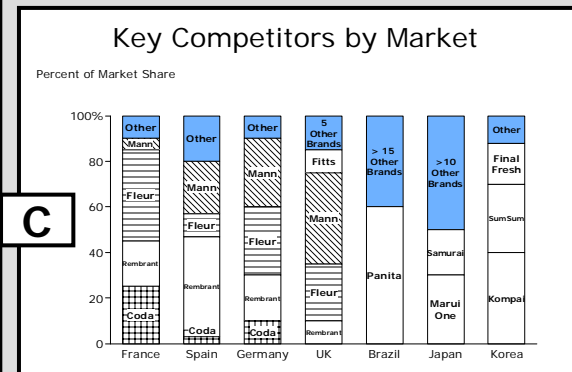
Interviewer: Here's some pricing by country. What do you think?

To Help, Ask: What pricing trends do you see by product? Are there any exceptions?

Special Note: Gross margins are the same for all products.

Main Insight: Pricing for spray is often higher. In Japan roll-on prices are higher.

Candidate got the insight?: Yes No



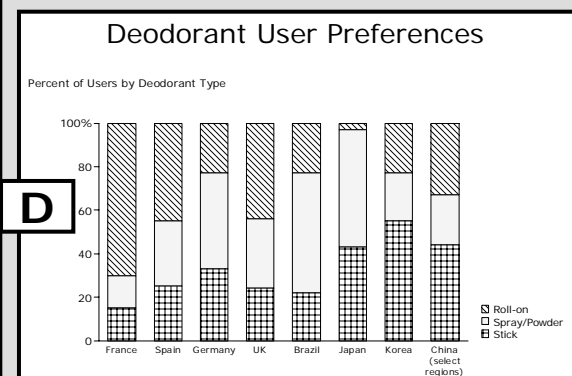
Candidate: Do you know who the competitors are by country and their market share?

Interviewer: These numbers are rough – what the the team could pull together in a day. What jumps out at you?

To Help, Ask: Who seems to be dominant by market place?

Main Insight: Brazil and Japan are fragmented, creating opportunity to take share.

Candidate got the insight?: Yes No



Candidate: Do we know what type of deodorant people like best?

Interviewer: Here's some quick data we got from street interviews. Survey population size may be a little low.

Main Insight: Spray is preferred by Brazil and Japan. France likes roll-on. No deodorant type dominates across countries in terms of usage.

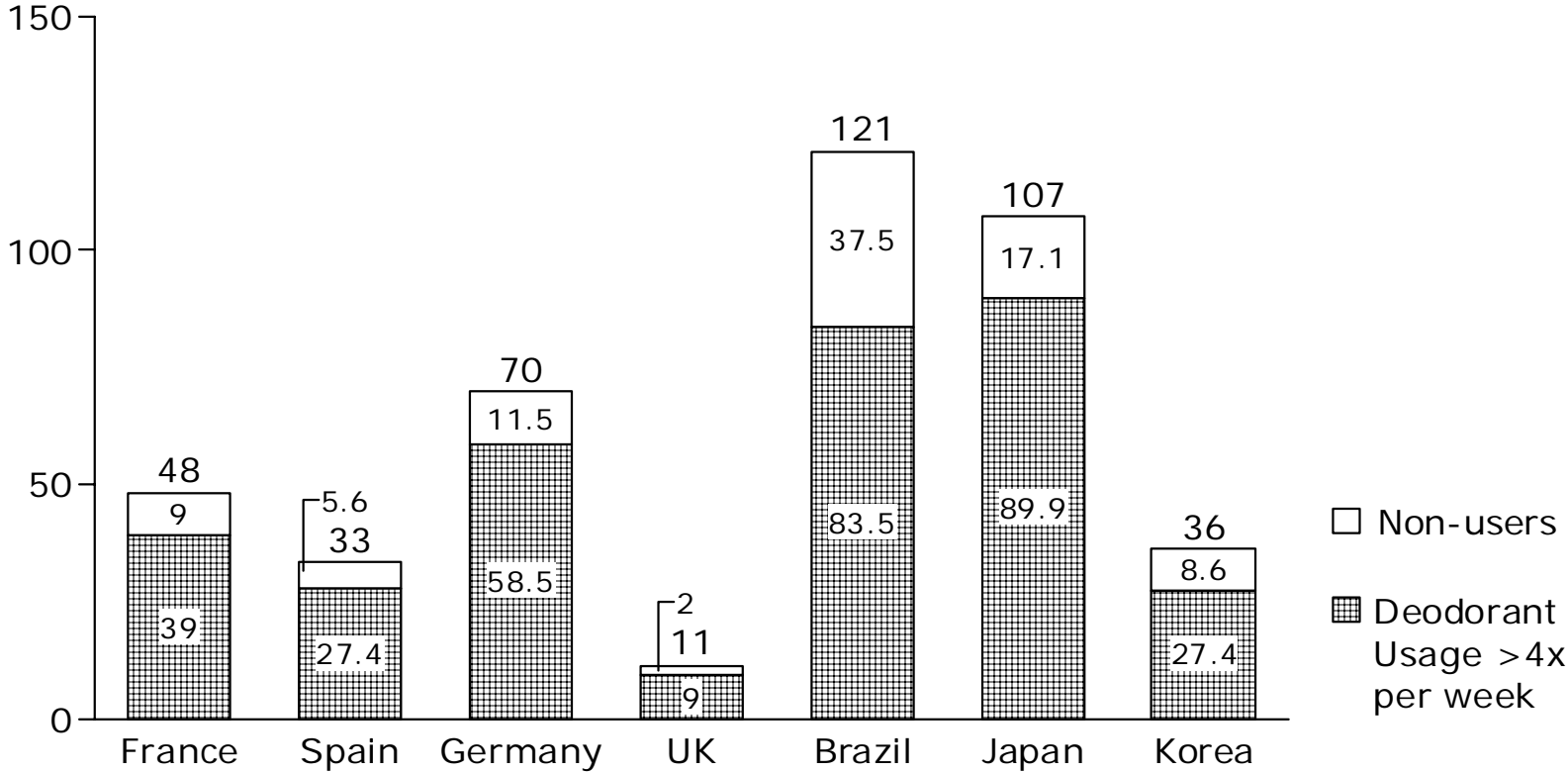
Candidate got the insight?: Yes No

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HANDOUT A

Population and Deodorant Usage

Population in Millions of Potential Users (Age 15+ years)



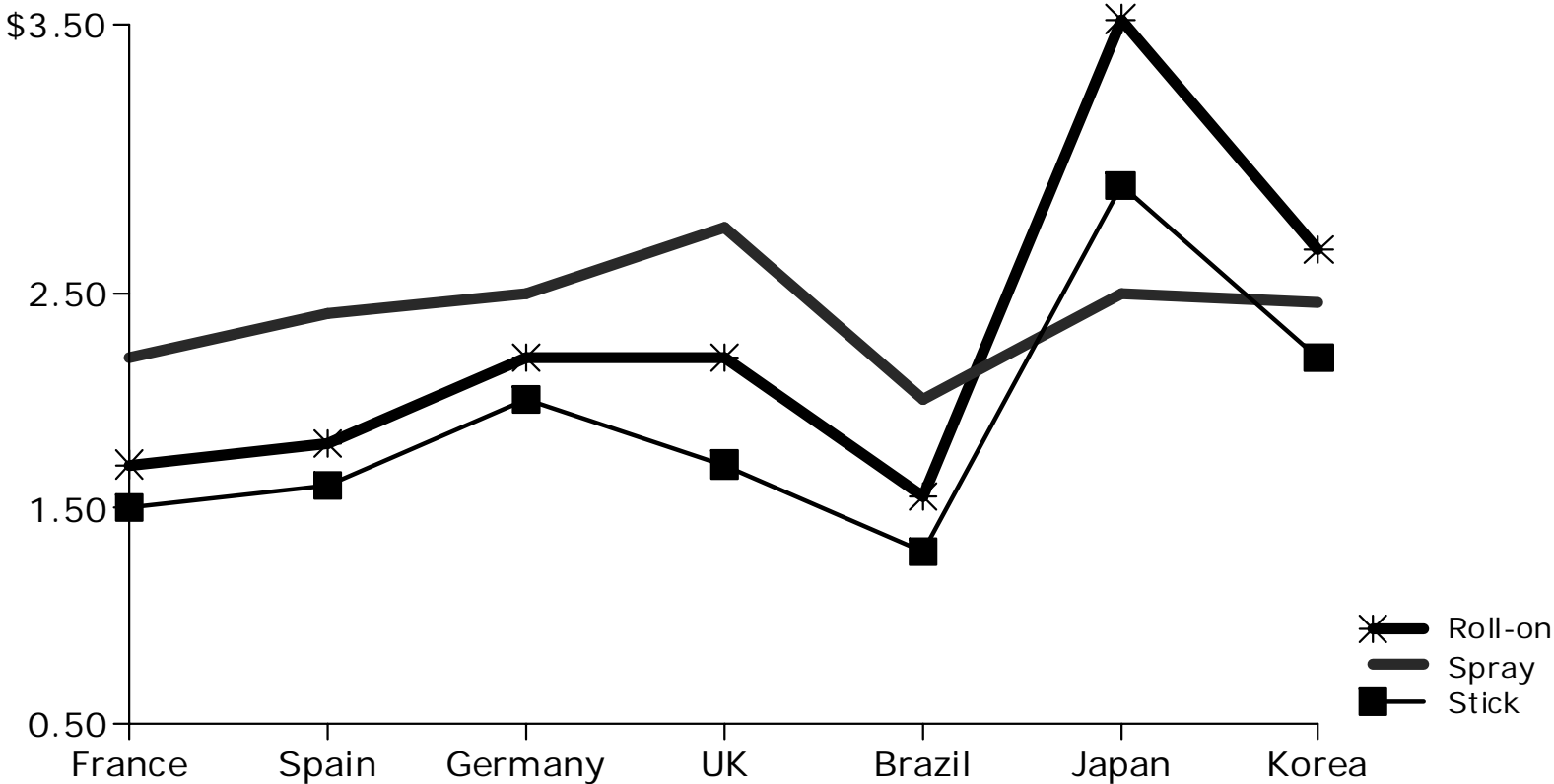
Sources: GeoHive, Theodora.com

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HANDOUT B

Average Price Paid per 2 oz.

Average price paid per 2 oz. in US\$

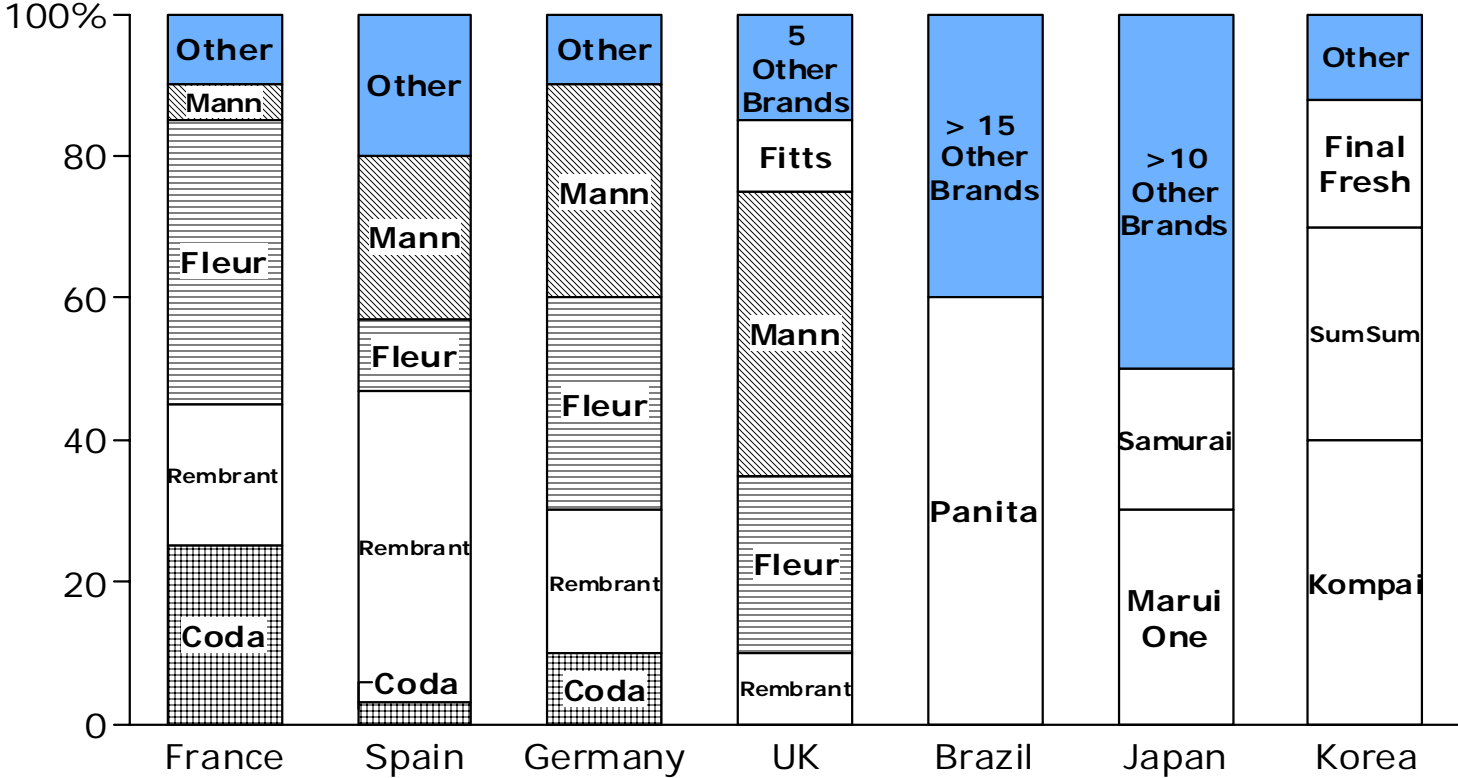


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HANDOUT C

Key Competitors by Market

Percent of Market Share

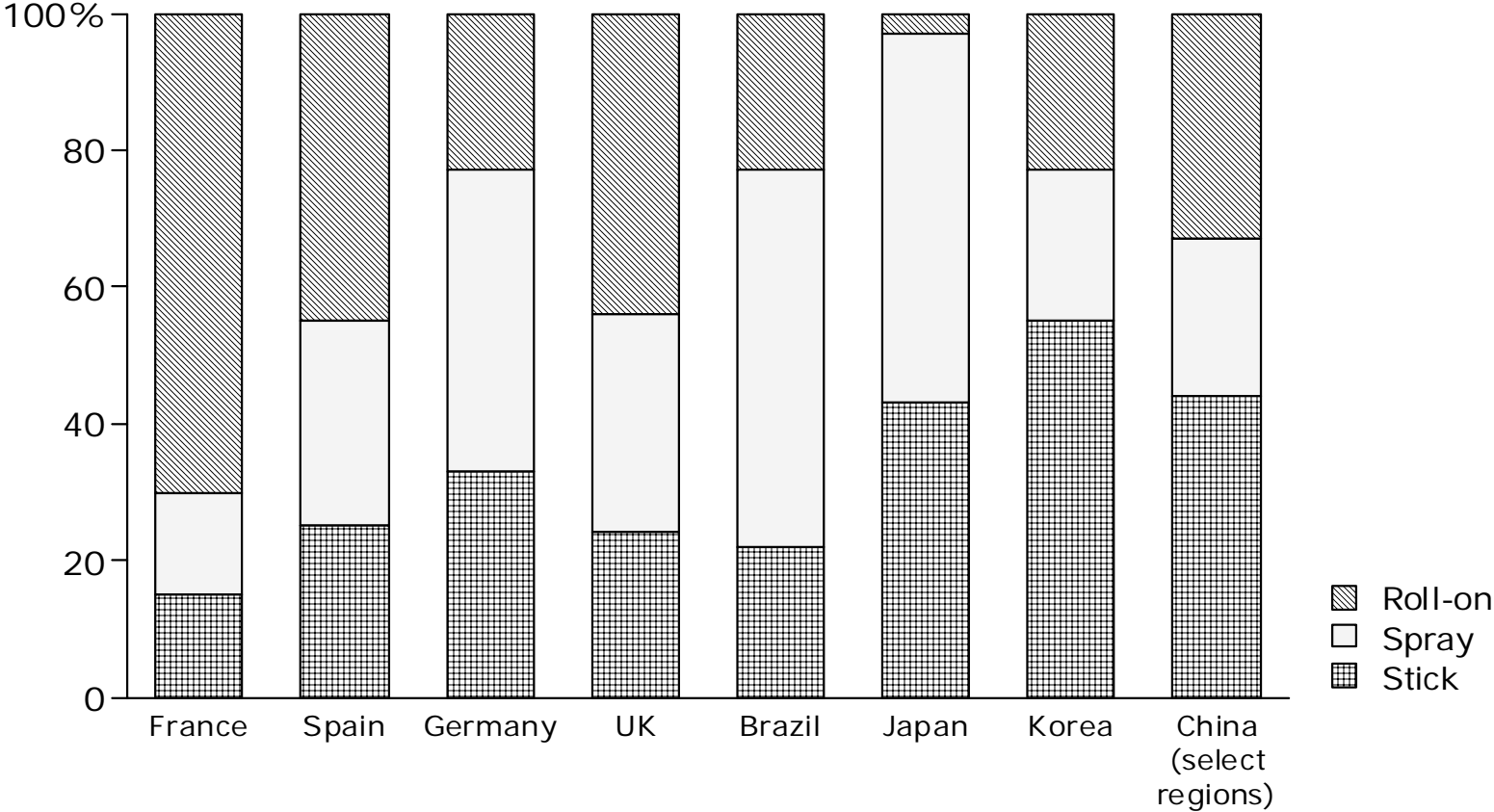


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HANDOUT D

Deodorant User Preferences

Percent of Users by Deodorant Type



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Re-routers and Heavy Lifting



Re-routers *Questions To Keep Things On Track*

- ❖ **What criteria would you use to rank one country over another?**
 - Market size
 - Competitor saturation and relative market share
 - Customer needs
 - ❖ **How would you go about determining the potential market size?**
 - Start with all potential customers and slim down the field according to product preference and usage patterns.
 - ❖ **Now that you have some target markets, what other issues should you consider?**
 - Product distribution
 - Product push (spray vs. stick vs. roll-on)
 - Internal marketing support
 - Sales rollout
 - Retailer relationships and advertising
 - ❖ **What internal organizational issues concern you most?**
 - Leveraging our conglomerate's experience to support expansion
 - IT systems to track the actual success of this venture
 - Senior management support and patience
 - Team dedication – this will be a lot of work
-



Heavy Lifting *Questions To Make the Case More Difficult*

- ❖ **What are some ways to determine acceptable and reasonable first- and second-year sales and profit targets?**
 - Review historical North American data
 - Study competitor launches of similar data
 - Study our conglomerate's other products that have been rolled out abroad

Interviewer Feedback

	<i>Excellent</i> → <i>Poor</i>					
Planning & Logic						
1. I understood your plan to solve this case.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Very clear		Fuzzy		Not clear at all	
2. Your plan was MECE. (Mutually exclusive, collectively exhaustive)	1	2	3	4	5	6
	No overlaps and gaps			Several overlaps and full of gaps		
3. You trusted your plan and referred to it often.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Used it, referred to it often				You basically forgot about it	

Communication & Composure

4. You were calm and collected.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Calm, confident and client ready		Off and on nervousness		Sweaty, shaky mess	
5. You carried the discussion well.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Just the right amount of back and forth		Occasionally awkward		I'd avoid you at cocktail parties	
6. You drove the case.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Clearly in control, you took the case to a conclusion		You took control sometimes, but then let me drive		Adrift at sea	

Analytics

7. You analyzed the data well on a piece by piece basis.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Quick to insights, no math errors		Slow on the uptake, some math mistakes		Lots of mistakes, you didn't get the insights	
8. You integrated data well and reached insights (saw the big picture).	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Quick to "connect the dots" and see how it all ties		You missed some connections		You missed all the linkages between the data	

Recommendation

9. Your final recommendation was to the point and data driven.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Used facts and data to back up your thoughts				You seemed to solve the case from your gut	
10. You were persuasive in making your final points.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Persuasive points, passion and a bottom-line tone				You couldn't even convince yourself, zero passion	

Total Score:
(10-60)

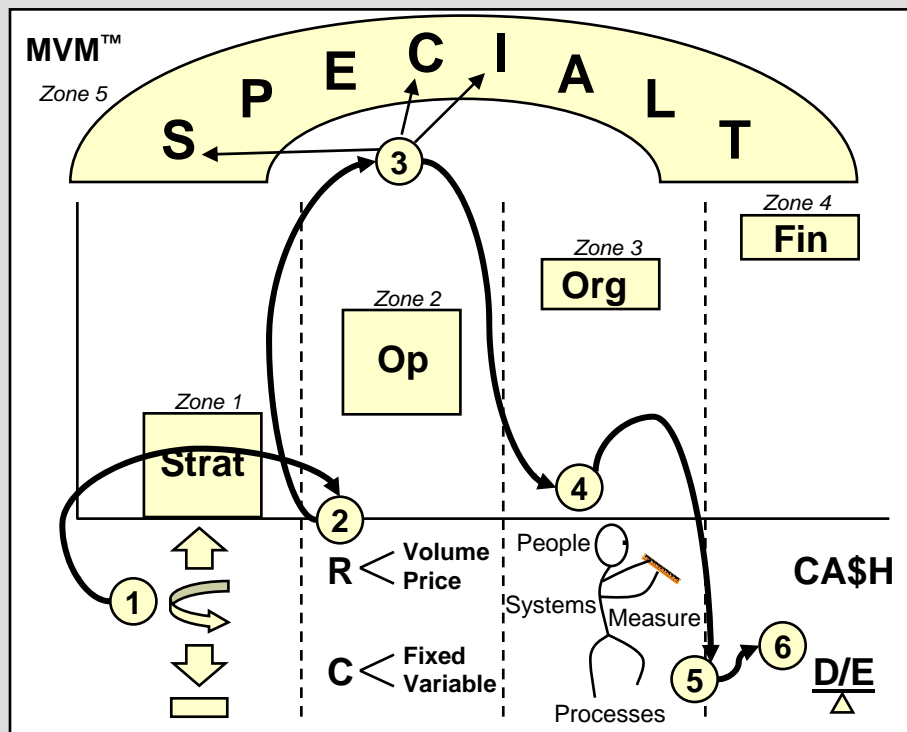
Before giving your score, have the candidate do the Self Assessment at the back of the case pack. What can you tell the candidate that will help him or her prioritize his prep going forward?

Candidate Review Sheets

A Logical Flow Using the FRAME Method™

F - Form a Plan

- Since this is a strategic decision, Always Fresh's business will be affected in many areas.
- Structure a plan to determine whether there are countries worth entering, how much the market is worth and what steps Always Fresh should take to enter these new markets.
- Look for a keen focus on data and how to determine whether entering makes sense. Issues like buyer behavior and usage patterns are secondary.



MVM Roadmap™: Here's a path that will hit the key issues, in order of importance.

1. **Start in Zone 1, Strategy.** Always Fresh is changing direction and looking to start something new.
2. **Move to Zone 2, Operations.** How much demand is there, and what can we charge?
3. **Don't forget key external factors.** As you consider price and volume also consider:
 - Suppliers – are there any raw material problems in our future locations?
 - Competitors – how does our product compare to what they offer?
 - Industry – are there barriers to this industry in our new countries?
4. **Shift to AF's internal team.** Do we have enough people in place and good leaders?
5. **Discuss distribution processes.** How will they be leveraged in the new country?
6. **Move to financing.** What will happen with the company's debt/ equity?

Candidate Review Sheets

F - Form a Plan (cont.)

Suggested Answers, Diagrams and Behaviors



Good

“Our goal is to enter a new country so I want to determine which countries offer the best revenue and ease of entry. Issues like suppliers, competitor response and industry barriers will be important. Time permitting, I also would like to discuss internal support issues like our team, marketing, distribution and financing. Before I go down this path, does management have any specific goals for our team? For instance, the number of countries or revenue or profit targets?”

(Sets a frame, keeps the big picture in mind and allows the interviewer to redirect early in the case).

OK

“Since the team wants to enter new markets, I’m going to assume that they want to go where underarm deodorant usage is the highest. My goal would be to find out where that is true and whether or not we have the organization strength to execute. I also want to understand what competitors are doing.”

(Sounds good. Sets a frame but makes a strong assumption about usage too early. Sounds like he’s solving the case already rather than setting a structure.)

Weak

“Do you have any more information about which products they want to launch first and which countries they’re interested in? From my experience not all these people are going to be interested in deodorant the same way Americans are.”

(You asked two questions before letting me know what’s going on in your head. Personal opinions may have a place later after we talk numbers. By the way, North America consists of Canada, US and Mexico.)

Self Check



- | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | MECE (Mutually Exclusive, Collectively Exhaustive) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Natural, not memorized |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Bottom line tone | <input type="checkbox"/> | Clarifies if necessary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Fluent, not stammering | <input type="checkbox"/> | Clearly driving the case |

Notes:

Candidate Review Sheets

A Logical Flow Using the FRAME Method™

Suggested Answers, Diagrams and Behaviors

R - Read the Audience

Interviewer: Play the Data Man/Ma'am covered in the book. Challenge the candidate regularly with questions such as:

- How would you go about getting that data?
- What would be a better approach?
- Are you sure your analysis would answer the question at hand?
- If the data were inconclusive what would you do?

If your candidate typically excels at data questions and analysis try a Chatty Bob or Kathy approach. Ask about tangent issues like these:

- Do you really think that the French will use as much deodorant as Canadians?
- Which product scents do you think will be more popular, flowery scents or citrus scents?
- Will the name Always Fresh work in foreign languages?



Good Reactions/ Body Language:

- Firm, dry handshake, leaning slightly forward
- High energy
- Consistent eye contact during the introduction
- Warm smile, worn most of the time
- Relaxed manner in small talk and getting situated
- "Ready to talk" body language, sitting on the front half of the chair, eager to discuss the case

Average Reactions/ Body Language:

- Half-hearted handshake
- Average energy
- Frequently breaks eye contact (indicates nervousness or insecurity)
- Forced smile
- A little tense and awkward in getting set up
- Moving around a lot in the chair, leaning or sitting back too far, indicating disinterest or laziness

Poor Reactions/ Body Language:

- Soft, weak or moist handshake
- Low energy
- Little to no eye contact
- No smile
- Awkward conversation; palpable tension
- Sitting completely in the back of the chair; slumping over the desk; putting arms on knees in the football coach position

Self Check



- Firm, dry handshake
- Consistent eye contact
- High energy but calm

- Attentive listener
- Friendly, warm smile
- Engaging

- Good sense of humor
- Fluent with small talk
- Strong confident voice

Notes:

Candidate Review Sheets

A Logical Flow Using the FRAME Method™

Suggested Answers, Diagrams and Behaviors

A – Anchor a Hypothesis

What did you really think? What was your hunch? As you put together your plan and thought about trying to prove your hunch, you should have considered the following:

- **Logical thinking** to support the hypothesis
- **Common sense** about which locations may be good, rather than a jumble of business terms
- **Big picture thinking** that stays focused on key issues



Potential Hypotheses

Keep in mind that your hypothesis is just a starting point, a place to anchor your initial thoughts. If you and a team of consultants had four months to do a project, your hypothesis would be an anchor below which you could structure several projects. Each project would help prove or disprove your initial thoughts.

Even though in this case you only had about twenty minutes to get to a solution, did you take advantage of some of your initial thoughts about this decision? By anchoring your thoughts around a hypothesis, you can give yourself a natural focus for your questions as you move through the different elements of your plan. Ultimately the data from the case will tell you what the right answer, proving or disproving your initial thought. The hypothesis helps you focus early in the case and find that data.

AF Should Expand

“Because of AF’s parent conglomerate and its likely advantages with distributors and retailers in different countries, launching this product seems like a natural fit. I need to figure out where we have the best relationships.”

AF Should Wait

“Just because we have been successful in the North America does not mean that we will naturally have the same success abroad. I suspect that the costs of ramping up will outweigh the advantages.”

Self Check



Notes:

- Mental anchor in place
- Logical supports
- MECE

- Actionable approach
- Prioritized approach
- Defends thoughts

- Keeps driving
- Practical
- Sees the big picture

Candidate Review Sheets

A Logical Flow Using the FRAME Method™

M – Mine for the Answer

Now you can mine for data. Use your plan as a guide as well as your initial hypothesis. Try to ask 2-3 questions in any section you explore.

Mining Zones

Demand

- **Do we have evidence that people want this product?**
- Deodorant users are plentiful.
- **Can we estimate demand? How about price?**
- We do have rough demand and price.
- **Where do we see demand to be highest?**
- Brazil, Japan and Germany provide the most opportunity.

Product/ Competitors

- **What is unique about our product?**
- We have no information on what's unique.
- **How can we differentiate?**
- Competitors are fragmented, so they may be slow to react.
- **How will competitors respond?**
- There is a good opportunity to take market share.

Internal Support

- **Is the team in place? Do we have a strong leader?**
- Yes. You are the leader.
- **How will we sell and distribute the product?**
- Distribution relationships are in place. We can leverage the conglomerate's relationships.
- **Is our financing in place?**
- Yes, there are no financing issues.

Product Line

- **Does AF provide a product line that will work in several different countries?**
- Yes. Every country they want to enter uses their main products: spray, roll-on and stick.
- **Do certain countries demand certain product attributes that the AF product line does not have?**
- No. Initial research indicates that the AF product line will be well accepted at all the countries

Financial Targets

- **What are management's goals with this international expansion?**
- Ultimately management wants to see about half of AF's sales come from outside of North America. For the first 3 years, they expect 25% revenue growth.
- **Are there any other financial goals in place?**
- None at this time.

Suppliers

- **Will our product be made abroad or in the local country?**
- Initially to take advantage of production efficiencies, all products will be made in the US. In the long term, making the products locally may be an option.
- **Are there any suppliers who will react negatively to AF importing products?**
- We have no information at this point. AF's parent does have good relationship with suppliers.

Math Zone

M — Mine for the Answer***Make estimates and round your numbers.*****Estimate the Market**

	<u>Brazil</u>	<u>Japan</u>	<u>Germany</u>
Total market:	~84M customers	~90M customers	~60M customers
Average price:	\$2 (weight toward spray)	\$3 (weight toward spray)	\$2 (even weighting)
Usage rate:	4x (1 per quarter year)	4x (1 per quarter year)	4x (1 per quarter year)
Est. market share:	10% (.25 of fragmented)	10% (.25 of fragmented)	5% (not fragmented)
Annual Est. Revenue:	~\$70M	~\$100M	~\$24M

Total Annual Revenue: ~\$194M (will vary according to your assumptions, e.g. how many units of deodorant do you use per year? Round this number to ~\$200M)

Gut Check It

- \$200M for the first year seems high, given that after 5 years NAM has \$350M.
- This may be high due to market share and usage estimates. Don't recalculate, stay calm and create a range.
- If you arrive at an answer that feels off, quickly estimate a range by percent. In this case 20% error in either direction would result in a range of ~\$160M – \$240M. Be conservative and go with \$160M.

Calculate Required Growth

- First year sell about \$160M
- Second year grow at requested 25% (\$40M), so sell ~\$200M.
- Third year, grow at requested 25% (\$50M), so sell ~\$250M. After three years, Always Fresh would be about \$250 (international) which seems reasonable since NAM is \$350 after five years.

Interpret the numbers

- Establishing the business during the first year is important and will be difficult. Germany especially is not fragmented, and gaining shelf space may prove difficult.
- Growing at 25% may be possible given that Brazil and Japan are so fragmented. It does seem aggressive, however, given NAM's 10% growth rate.
- **We may have the option of entering only two countries and still reaching our targets.**

Candidate Review Sheets

M — Mine for the Answer

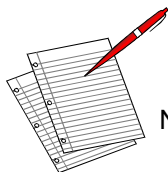
What did you learn?

- In terms of market potential, Brazil, Germany and Japan are the largest.
- Each country is about equal when it comes to deodorant usage rates.
- Each product lasts about 3 months.
- Prices do vary by country but in general the price points by product type do not vary much.
- Spray tends to be the most expensive and stick is the cheapest.
- Certain markets are more crowded than others: France, Spain and Germany. The UK, Brazil and Japan have significant fragmentation with many small competitors.
- No one type of deodorant is dominant in terms of usage.

How does it tie together?

- Looking for large markets makes good sense. Unless there are some unique barriers to a market that is larger or has more dollar potential, go there first.
- When making calculations you have to find ways to simplify the numbers. Try to “ballpark” (get it in the range) your numbers before going for detailed precision. You needed to know volume and price for calculating country specific revenue.
 - **Volume:** What is the common unit to count? Since each product (stick, spray or roll-on) is being used in the same manner and likely lasts the same length of time, each sale can each be counted as one unit. To get the number of units you need to know: total available users x market share AF has x units used per year. You can get the user data from Handout A, the market share data from Handout C and the number of units per year by asking the interviewer (4 units per year per person).
 - **Price:** As for price, a quick solution is to eyeball the chart and come up with an average. If you have more time, you could weight the price, but that is not necessary.
- After determining the revenue potential, you need to apply some business judgment to the results. The Math Zone covers some of that logic.
- When you present your final answer, it is natural to caveat some of your numbers and talk about what you would like to investigate if you had more time.

Self Check



Notes:

- Data oriented
- Facile with numbers
- Focused, not flustered

- Quick to interpret
- Questions are specific
- Nimble thinker

- Collaborative style
- Explains gut check
- Updates hypothesis

Candidate Review Sheets

A Logical Flow Using the FRAME Method™

Suggested Answers, Diagrams and Behaviors

E – End the Case

Did you have a clear ending? How logical was your thinking? Did you use the facts from the case to prove out your logic? Here are some good things to consider for any case:

- How would you wrap this up?
- So, what’s your conclusion? Which countries are we entering and why?
- I just got a call from the CEO; she’s going to drop by in a few minutes and wants to hear your thoughts on our global rollout. What are your conclusions?

Other Questions to Anticipate

- You chose three countries in three different regions of the world. Is that practical?
- Are there any sales synergies among the three countries?



Good Ending: “Always Fresh should definitely move ahead with international expansion. After assessing total potential market share, three countries—Brazil, Japan and Germany—rise to the top of the list. It appears that we can capture share quickly in the first two, with total projected conservative revenues for all three at about \$160M the first year. Additional growth at 25% may be aggressive in Germany since the market there is less fragmented. Also, distribution, IT and sales processes will need monitoring.”

(Very focused on the numbers and to the point—a CEO’s dream.)

OK Ending: “Brazil and Japan are where we want to be. Germany seems locked up, but we should still be able to hit our growth targets with those two. It will take a good deal of internal work to figure out all of the issues: salesperson time, getting good shelf space and leveraging our other relationships.”

(I know where we should go, but what about revenue and return? I crave numbers. This response is a little too weighted toward the internal challenges.)

Poor Ending: “Expanding globally is a mixed bag. A few countries seem like pretty good entry targets, but the data is based on several assumptions. We need to clear those up before we’ll know where to go. Also, internally we’re talking about a lot of change in sales and distribution, and I’m not sure we can handle it. Everyone agrees, though, that going abroad seems like a good idea.”

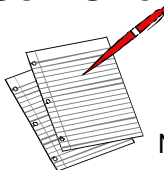
(This answer makes me want to yell, “So what?!” Your answer didn’t give me any data that I didn’t have before. Your analysis has not moved us along at all.)

Self Check

Several clear points
Confident

Well integrated
Includes next steps

Concise
Credible



Notes:

Candidate Self Assessment

	<i>Excellent</i>	—————→				<i>Poor</i>
Planning & Logic						
1. I had a plan to solve this case.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Very clear		Fuzzy		Not clear at all	
2. My plan was MECE. (Mutually exclusive, collectively exhaustive)	1	2	3	4	5	6
	No overlaps and gaps				Several overlaps and full of gaps	
3. I trusted my plan and referred to it often.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Used it, referred to it often				I basically forgot about it	

Communication & Composure

4. I was calm and collected.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Calm, confident and client ready		Off and on nervousness		Sweaty, shaky mess	
5. I carried the discussion well.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Just the right amount of back and forth		Occasionally awkward		I didn't hold the interviewer's attention	
6. I drove the case.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Clearly in control, I took the case to a conclusion		I took control sometimes		Adrift at sea	

Analytics

7. I analyzed the data well on a piece by piece basis.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Quick to insights, no math errors		Slow on the uptake, some math mistakes		Lots of mistakes, I didn't get the insights	
8. I integrated data well and reached insights (saw the big picture).	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Quick to "connect the dots" and see how it all ties		I missed some connections		I missed all the linkages between the data	

Recommendation

9. My final recommendation was to the point and data driven.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Used facts and data to back up my thoughts				I tried to solve the case from my gut	
10. I was persuasive in making my final points.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Persuasive points, passion and a bottom-line tone				I couldn't even convince myself, zero passion	

Total Score:
(10-60)

Do this self assessment before asking the interviewer for feedback. How did your numeric score compare to the one the interviewer gave you? What is your top priority going forward?