

ISSUED BY ARAV SAKSENA · CASEFRAME

Diagnostic *Case Pack.*

A 90-minute snapshot of where you stand — case structure, mental math, and personal experience interview.

WHAT YOU'LL DO

01

Live Case

45 min

02

Mental Math Drill

15 min

03

PEI Self-Assessment

30 min

This pack is part of the free CaseFrame onboarding. Submit your responses and you'll receive a written feedback report and a 20-minute intro call.

GETTING STARTED

How to use *this diagnostic.*

Set aside 90 uninterrupted minutes. The point isn't to ace it — it's to give us both an honest baseline. Be willing to look bad on paper. The harder you push here, the more useful the feedback report.

01 Live Case · 45 minutes

Open the case prompt on page 3. Record yourself on Loom or Zoom (camera + audio). Treat it like a real interviewer-led case: clarifying questions, structure, hypothesis, math, synthesis. Don't pause the timer.

02 Mental Math Drill · 15 minutes

No calculator, no scratch work beyond the page provided. Aim for under 7 seconds per item. Mark your answers in the blanks; circle anything you had to skip.

03 PEI Self-Assessment · 30 minutes

Answer the six prompts on page 6 in writing. The goal is to surface raw material for your DILD / Leadership / EDD stories before we polish them in session 1.

HOW TO SEND IT BACK

Reply to the welcome email with the case recording link, your math sheet (photo or screenshot), and your PEI responses. Turnaround on the written feedback report: 48 hours.

PHASE 01 · 45 MIN · INTERVIEWER-LED CASE

Case 01

Specialty Coffee Roaster.

THE SITUATION

Your client is a US-based specialty coffee roaster — call them Northwind Coffee — that has been operating for 18 years. They source single-origin beans, roast them in two regional facilities, and sell through three channels: their own retail cafés (28 locations across the West Coast), a wholesale program selling to ~200 independent cafés and restaurants, and a direct-to-consumer (DTC) subscription business launched in 2019.

Over the last three years, Northwind's revenue has been roughly flat, but operating margin has dropped from 14% to 6%. The CEO has asked for help diagnosing why margins eroded and what to do about it.

THE QUESTION

Why has Northwind's profit margin halved, and what should the CEO do about it over the next 24 months?

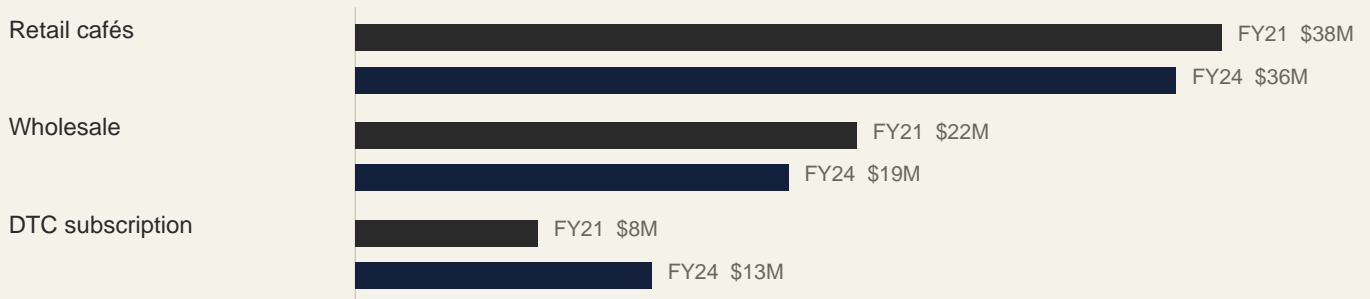
NOTES FOR THE CANDIDATE

- Spend 90 seconds clarifying scope before structuring.
- Build a structure tied to the prompt — not a generic profitability tree.
- When you get to math, narrate your assumptions out loud.
- Plan for one 60-second synthesis at the end. Do not skip it.

CASE 01 · EXHIBITS 1–3

Exhibits.

EXHIBIT 1 — CHANNEL REVENUE MIX, FY 2021 VS FY 2024 (\$M)



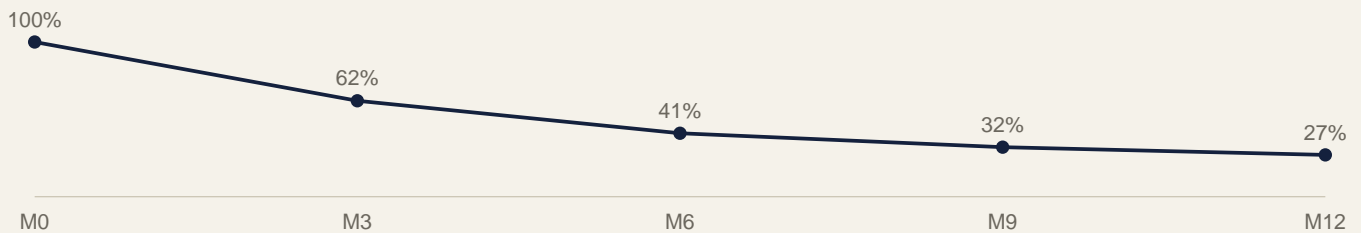
Source: Northwind finance team. FY ends Dec 31. Excludes inter-company transfers.

EXHIBIT 2 — SELECTED P&L ITEMS (% OF REVENUE)

Line item	FY 2021	FY 2024	Change (pp)
Revenue	100.0%	100.0%	—
Cost of green coffee	29.0%	37.5%	+8.5
Roasting & packaging	11.0%	12.0%	+1.0
Retail labor & rent	26.0%	28.5%	+2.5
Marketing & DTC ops	6.0%	10.0%	+4.0
G&A	14.0%	6.0%	-8.0
Operating margin	14.0%	6.0%	-8.0

Note: G&A reduction reflects a 2023 reorganization. Marketing line includes paid acquisition for DTC.

EXHIBIT 3 — DTC SUBSCRIPTION COHORT RETENTION



PHASE 02 · 15 MIN · NO CALCULATOR

Mental math gym.

Twelve items. Target seven seconds each. Mark your answer in the blank, circle anything you skipped. Don't write scratch work below the answer line — work it in your head.

1. $18 \times 25 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$
2. $12.5\% \text{ of } 880 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$
3. $\$3.4\text{M} \times 1.18 \text{ (round to nearest } \$100\text{K)} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$
4. $240 \text{ lbs/day at } \$14.50/\text{lb. Daily revenue} \sim \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$
5. Revenue grew $\$42\text{M}$ to $\$58\text{M}$ over 4 yrs. CAGR \sim 6. $3/8 \text{ of } 4,800 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$
7. $9\% \text{ margin on } \$7.2\text{M revenue} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ profit}$
8. COGS rose 8.5pp, revenue flat. EBIT drops by $\underline{\hspace{2cm}}$ pp
9. $1,250 \text{ customers} \times 0.32 \text{ retention at M12} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$
10. $\$186\text{K} / 24 \text{ months} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$ per month (round $\$100$)
11. $22\% \text{ price increase on a } \$4.50 \text{ latte} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$
12. $8\% \text{ monthly churn} \rightarrow 12\text{-month retention} \sim \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$

SELF-GRADE RUBRIC

9 or more correct in 15 minutes: you're MBB-ready on math. 6–8 correct: you'll be tested on this — work the daily math gym before mocks. 5 or fewer: this is your bottleneck. We'll start here.

PHASE 03 · 30 MIN · PERSONAL EXPERIENCE INTERVIEW

Your story bank.

Don't write a polished essay. Write the raw material. We'll restructure it together in session 1 using McKinsey's Distinctive Impact / Leadership / EDD lenses.

Distinctive Impact

Describe a moment in the last 24 months where you delivered a result nobody else around you could have. What did the situation require, and what did you specifically do that nobody else did?

Leadership in tension

Describe a time you led a team or peer through a disagreement where you were not the formal authority. How did you align the group, and what would you do differently?

Entrepreneurial drive

Describe something you started — a project, product, or non-profit — without being asked. What gap did you see, and what was the smallest version you actually shipped?

Failure

Describe a clear failure where you were the cause. How did you find out, what was the cost, and what did you change in the way you operate afterward?

Why consulting

In two sentences, why consulting and not the closest non-consulting alternative for you? Be specific — "I want to learn fast" is not an answer.

Why this firm

Pick one MBB or tier-2 firm. In two sentences, why that one and not the other two? Point to a practice area, a person, or a project — not a brand.

FINAL · WHAT TO SEND BACK

Send it back — *get the report.*

Reply to the welcome email with the four items below. Within 48 hours you'll get a written feedback report and a calendar link to book a free 20-minute intro call.

- Loom or Zoom link to your live case recording (Phase 01).
 - A photo or screenshot of your completed math drill (Phase 02).
 - Your typed or handwritten responses to the six PEI prompts (Phase 03).
 - One sentence: the part of the diagnostic that was hardest, in your own words.
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A NOTE FROM ARAV

If this diagnostic feels uncomfortable, that's the point. Most candidates have never been graded honestly on a case. The whole program — feedback reports, drills, mocks — is built around the gap between how you sound to yourself and how you sound to an interviewer. Send it back. We'll close the gap together.

— Arav Saksena

Founder, CaseFrame · Incoming McKinsey