

**CRACK**  
THE CASE

# STRUCTURING SECRETS

**Sunday, November 19**

**CRACK**  
THE CASE

TRAINING

**Fall Webinar Series  
with David Ohrvall**



**David Ohrvall**  
CEO, Zintervū



**ICU**

國際基督教大學  
INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY  
Expanding Potential



**Zintervū**  
**CRACK THE CASE**      **INTERVIEW LOGIC**



# Deborah Resnick

Workshop facilitator & coach



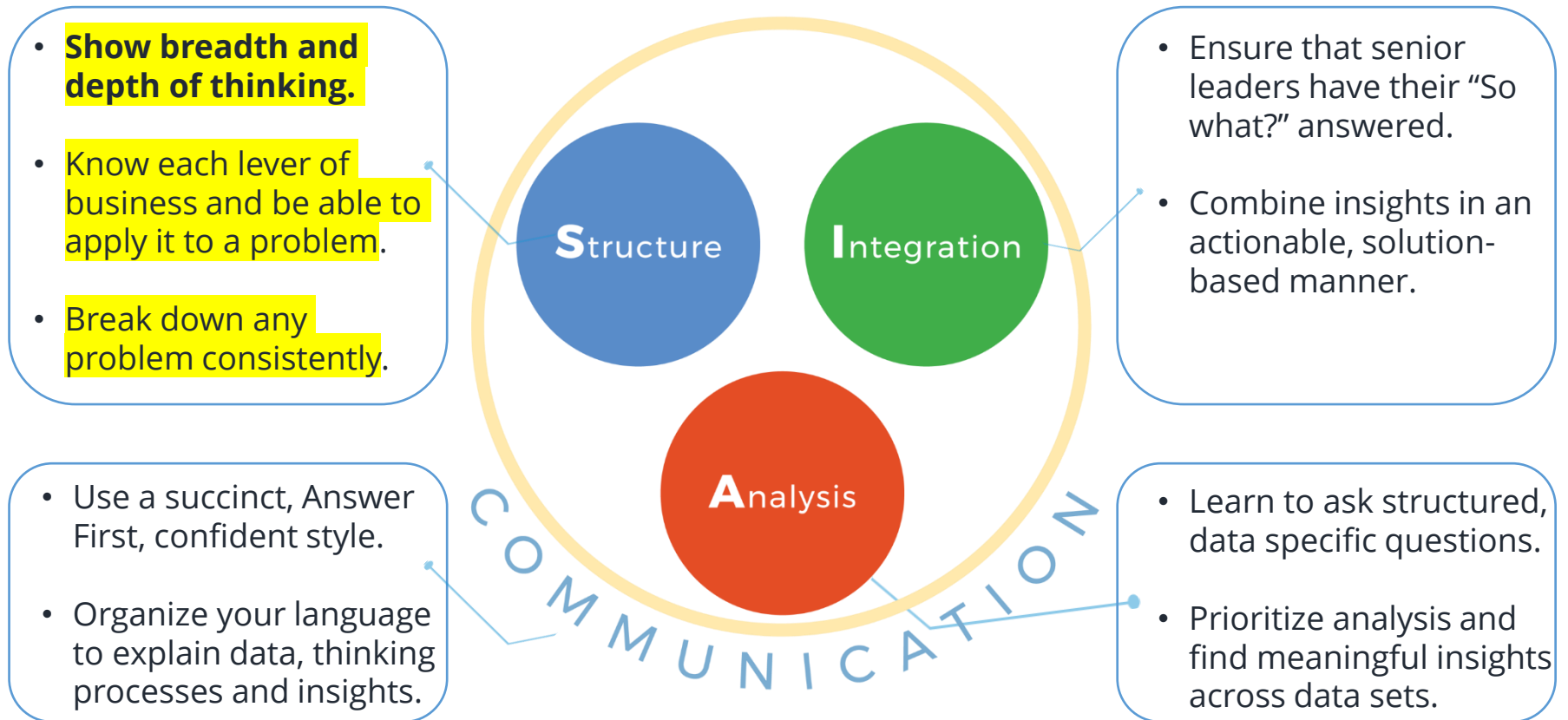
**HARVARD  
BUSINESS SCHOOL**



**Zintervū**  
**CRACK**  
THE CASE      INTERVIEW  
LOGIC

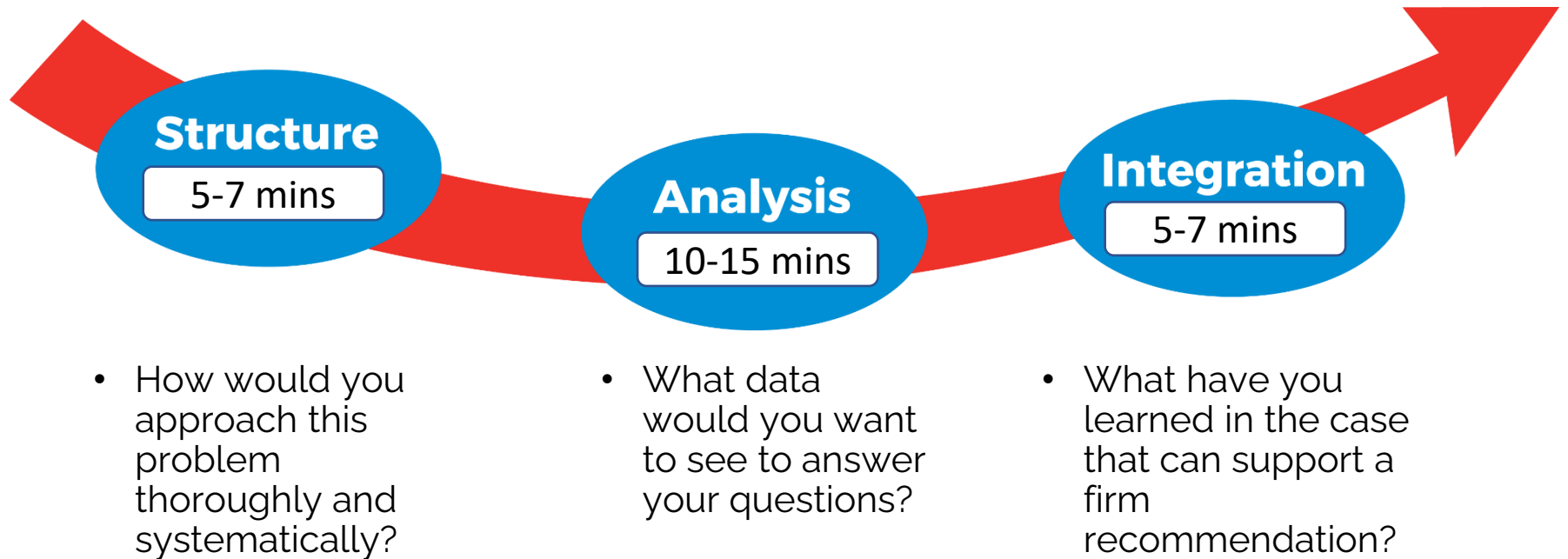
# What do interviewers (and managers) look for?

## CSAI Skills!



# What's a case interview?

**Question:** Should our fashion retailer open pop-up stores?





# You internship will be a case

**Question:** How would you handle the private label marshmallow problem?



## Structure

2-3 days

- How would you approach this problem thoroughly and systematically?

## Analysis

3-4 weeks

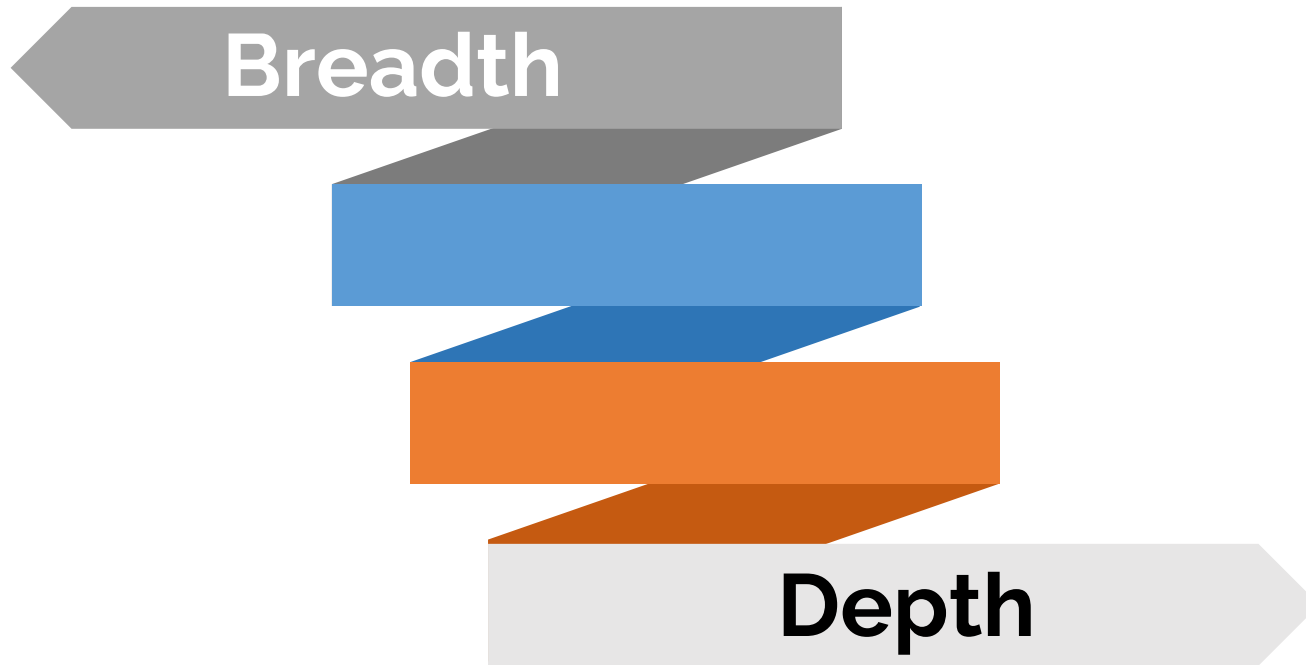
- What data would you want to see to answer your questions?

## Integration

2-3 weeks

- What have you learned in the case that can support a firm recommendation?

# Interviewers (& managers) want to see breadth and depth of thinking!

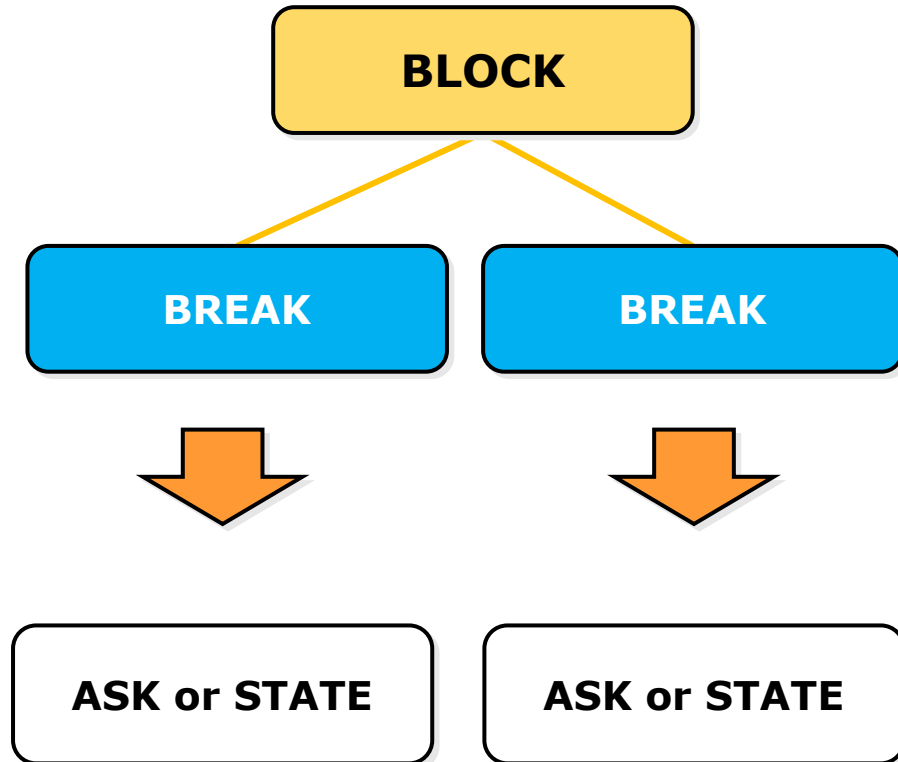






# Block, Break & Ask

Use this technique to show breadth of thinking **AND** the ability to find relevant data

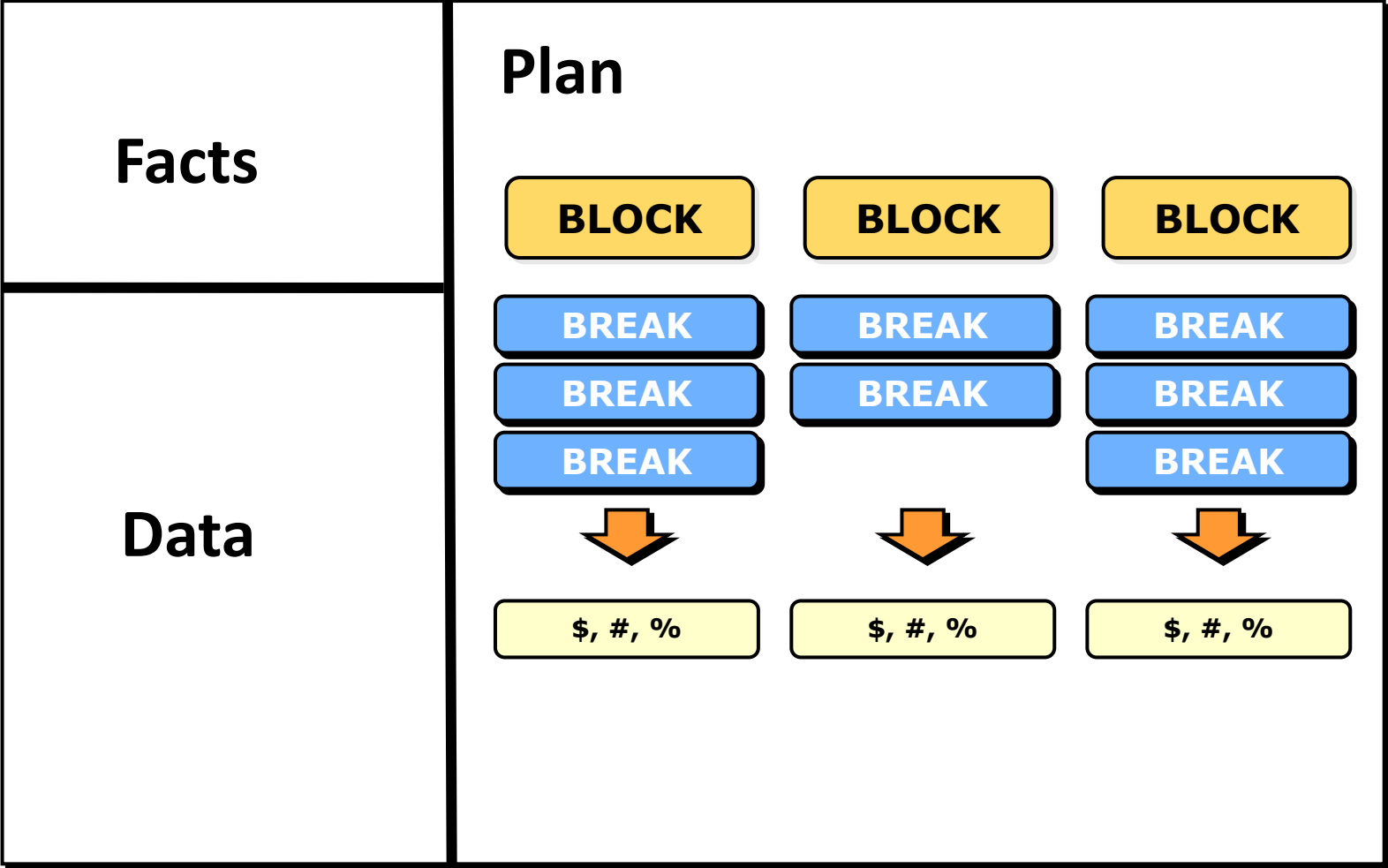


**Gather and group your ideas. Do your categories make sense?**

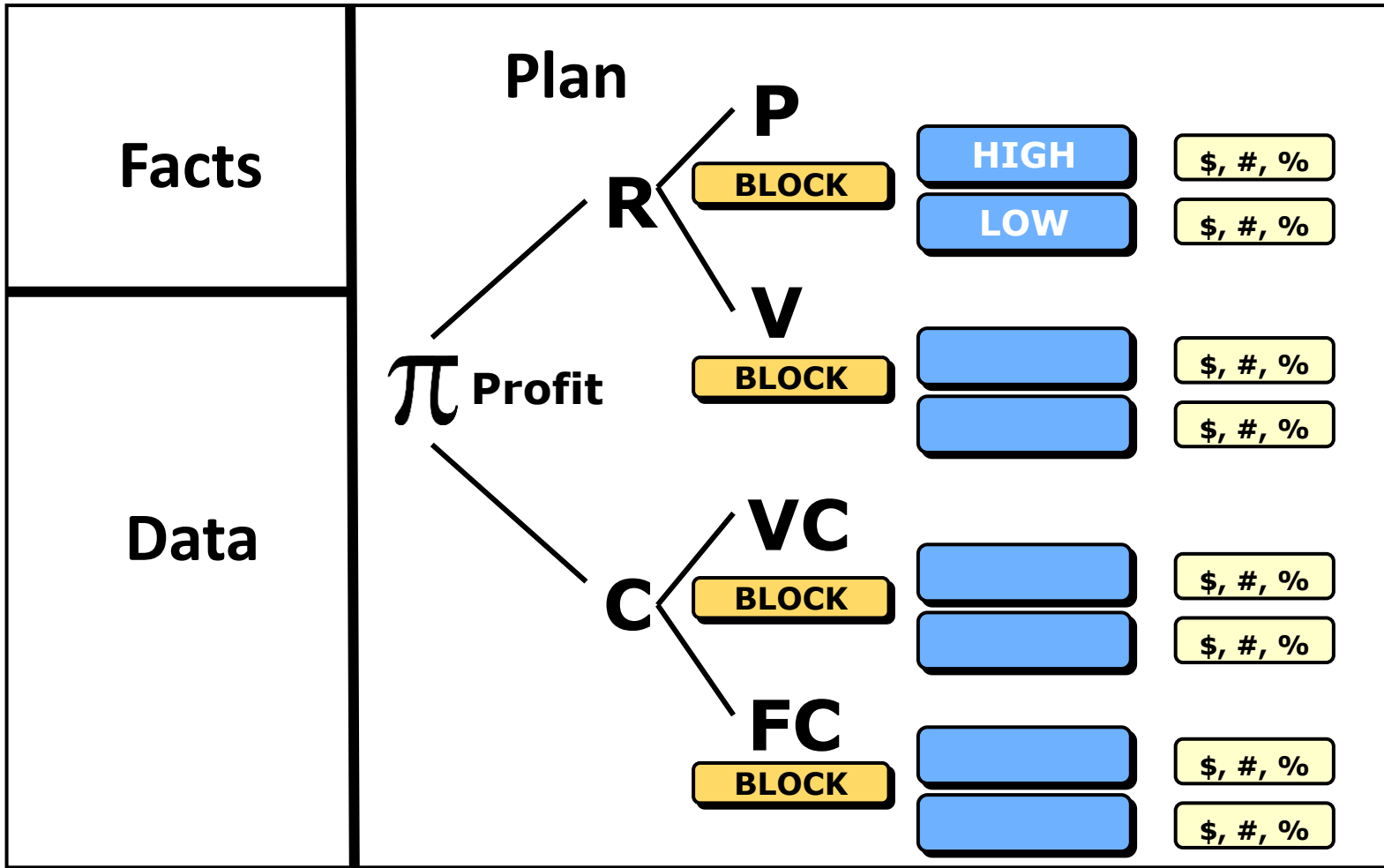
**Be case specific to address what matters for THIS case. This shows you are thinking!**

**Mention the specific \$, # and % that you need. Be ready to explain ALL of your thinking before the interviewer gives you data.**

# Use your plan to connect and explain. Write or talk it through.



# You may choose to show it horizontally (profit tree example)



# Solving problems starts with breaking the problem into solvable pieces.

## ✔ Size or Importance

Some pieces of the problem are more important than others.

## ✔ Connectivity

Some pieces are connected to several others. They share something in common.

## ✔ Urgent

Some pieces need to be addressed immediately given their importance or timing.



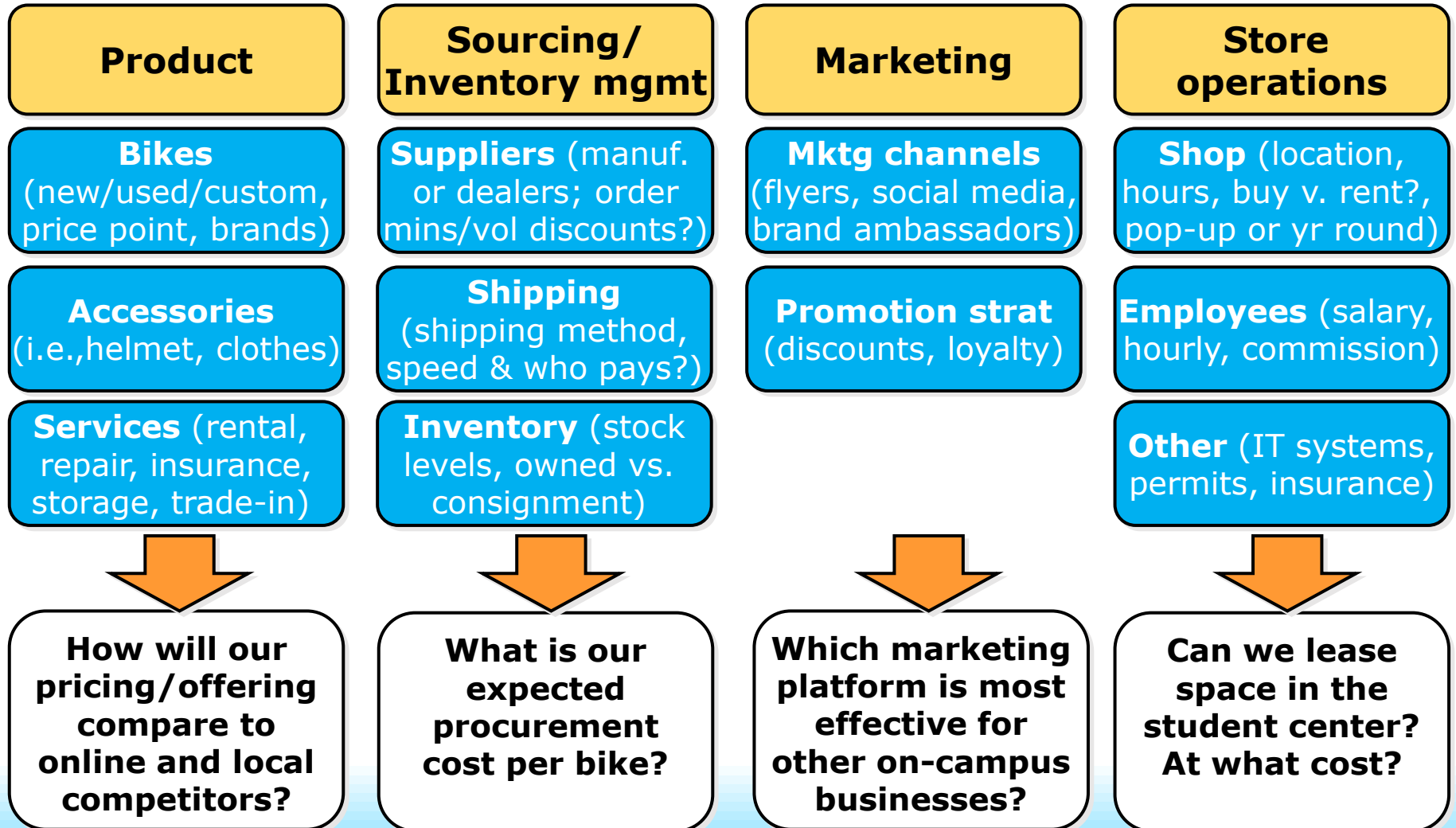


Our client is considering opening a bike shop on campus.

- On your own: **What do they need to consider?**  
**What data would help you create a robust plan?**
  
- Work on your own**
  - Brainstorm case specific words to get warmed up
  - **Then, try to group and divide your ideas in a way that makes sense using Blocks and Breaks**

# Bike Shop – Sample Structure

*Before opening this bike shop, I would consider...*



# There isn't just one structure that will work per case

**Our client wants to open a bike shop on campus.**

Alternate structure #1

**Sourcing**

**Marketing**

**Store  
operations**

**After sales  
support**

Alternate structure #2

**Customer**

**Competition**

**Costs**

Alternate structure #3

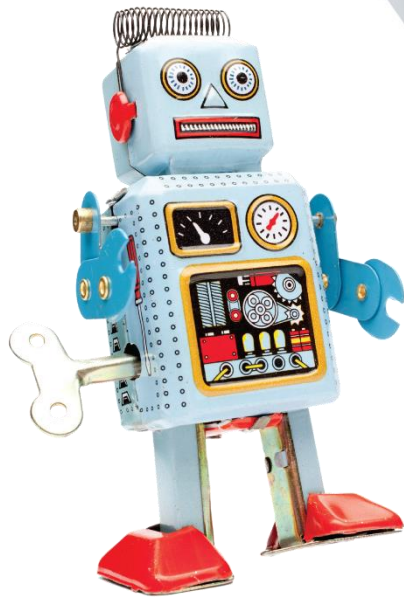
**Revenue  
potential**

**Upfront  
costs**

**Ongoing  
costs**

**Risks &  
alternatives**

# You'll start off robotic, but push for true AI



**Ask-Bot**



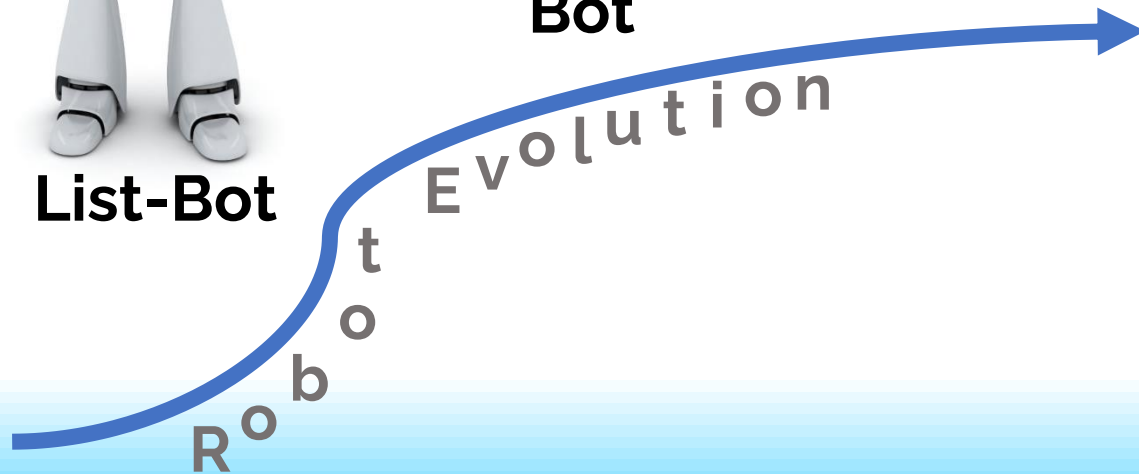
**List-Bot**



**Hypothe-  
Bot**



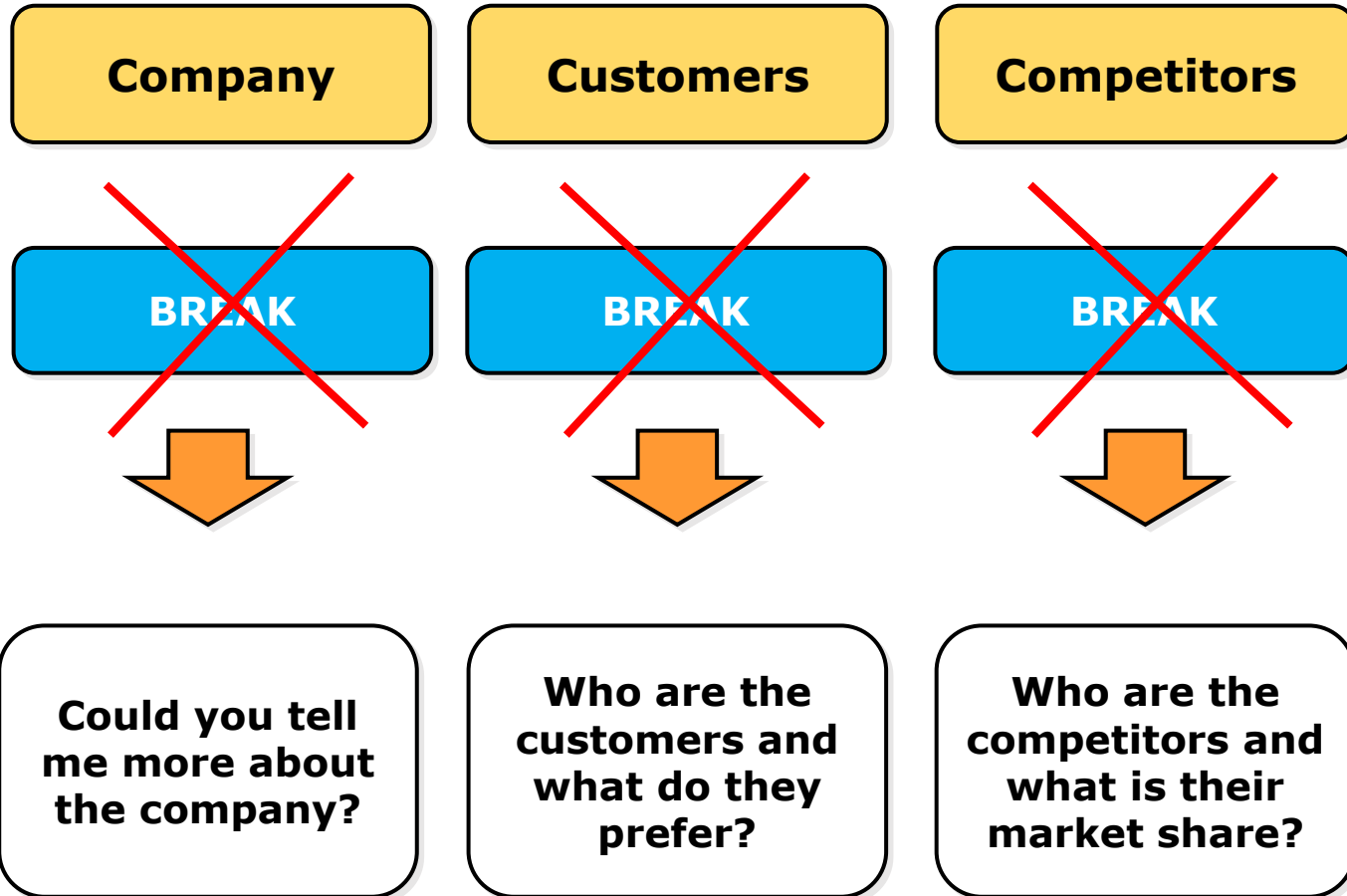
**True "AI"  
Authentic  
Intelligence**





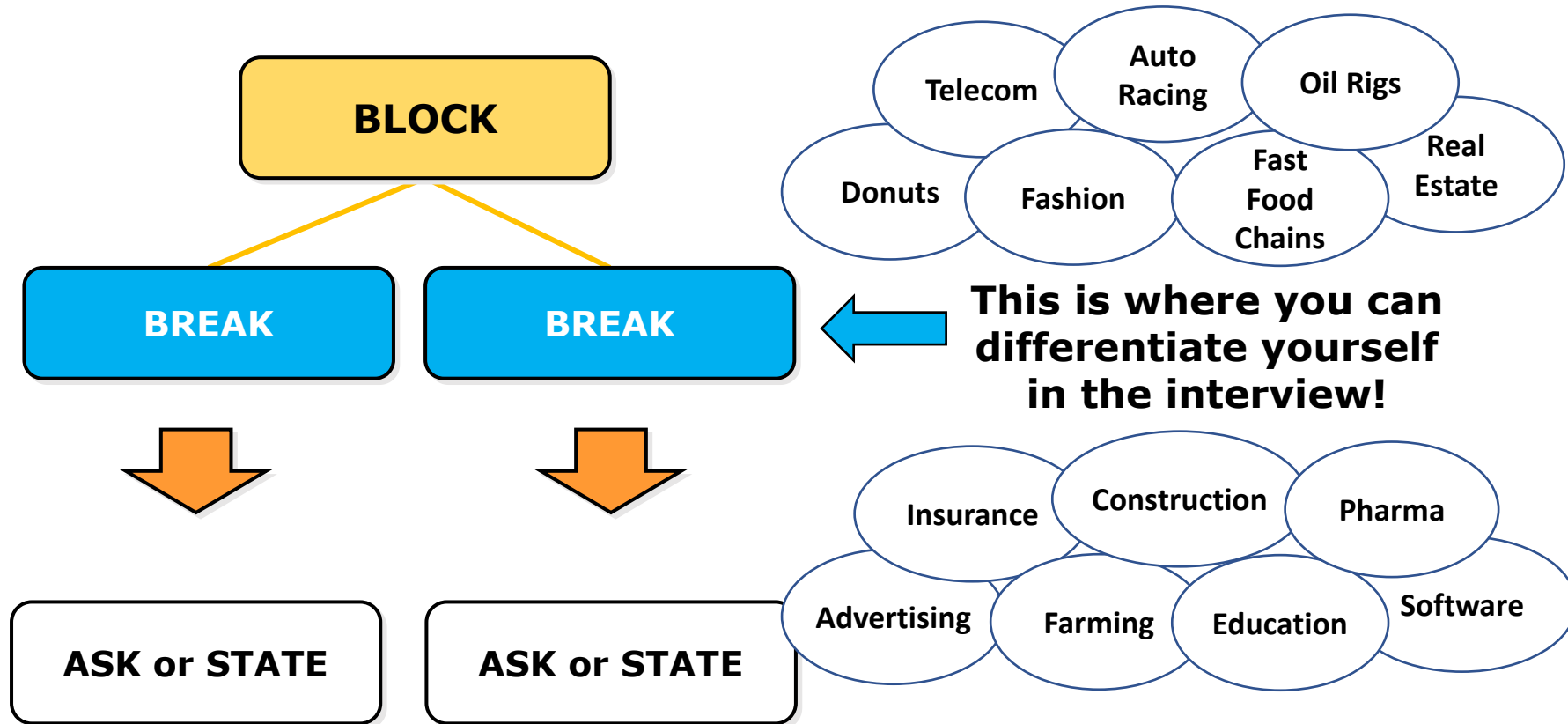
# Ask-bots only ask questions

Children could do this! Please think.



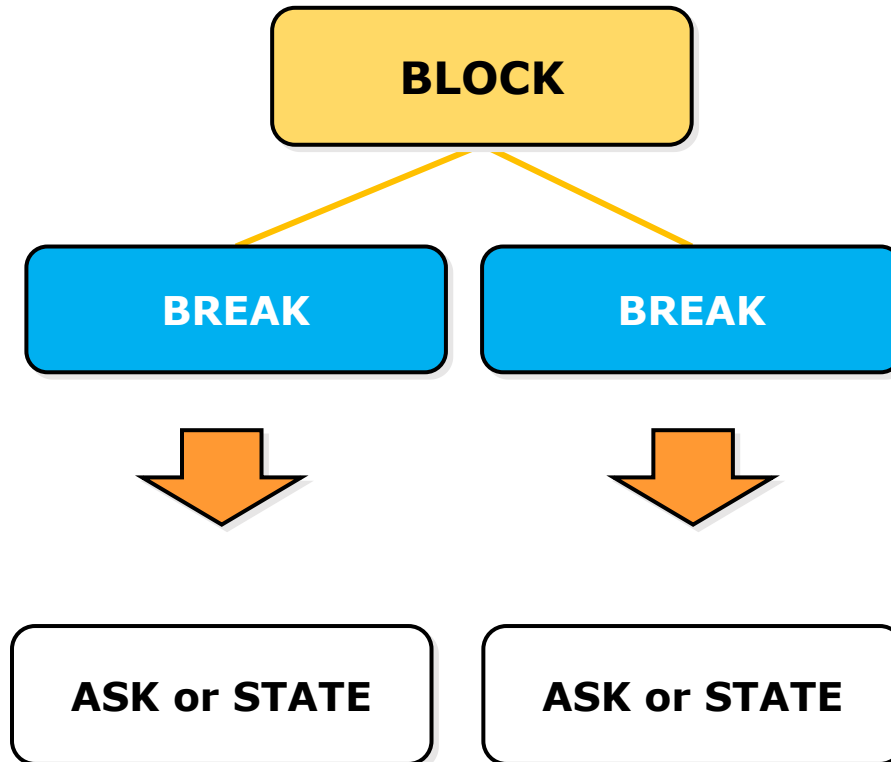
# Show thinking with your breaks

Be case specific and hypothesis driven



# Prioritize your data

You can't ask for everything



Here's a simple question to remember:

**“If I got the data, what decision could I make?”**

# Block, Break & Ask Tips

Remember these as you practice

## BLOCK

- Practice structuring the **same case multiple ways**.
- Work on thinking, not just reciting something you memorized. **How would you break up the work if this was an actual project?**

## BREAK

- Self-assess: **Could I say exactly the same thing if we were talking about a completely different industry or product?** If yes, you have NOT been case specific enough.
- Have your practice partners ask: **“What else...”**

## ASK or STATE

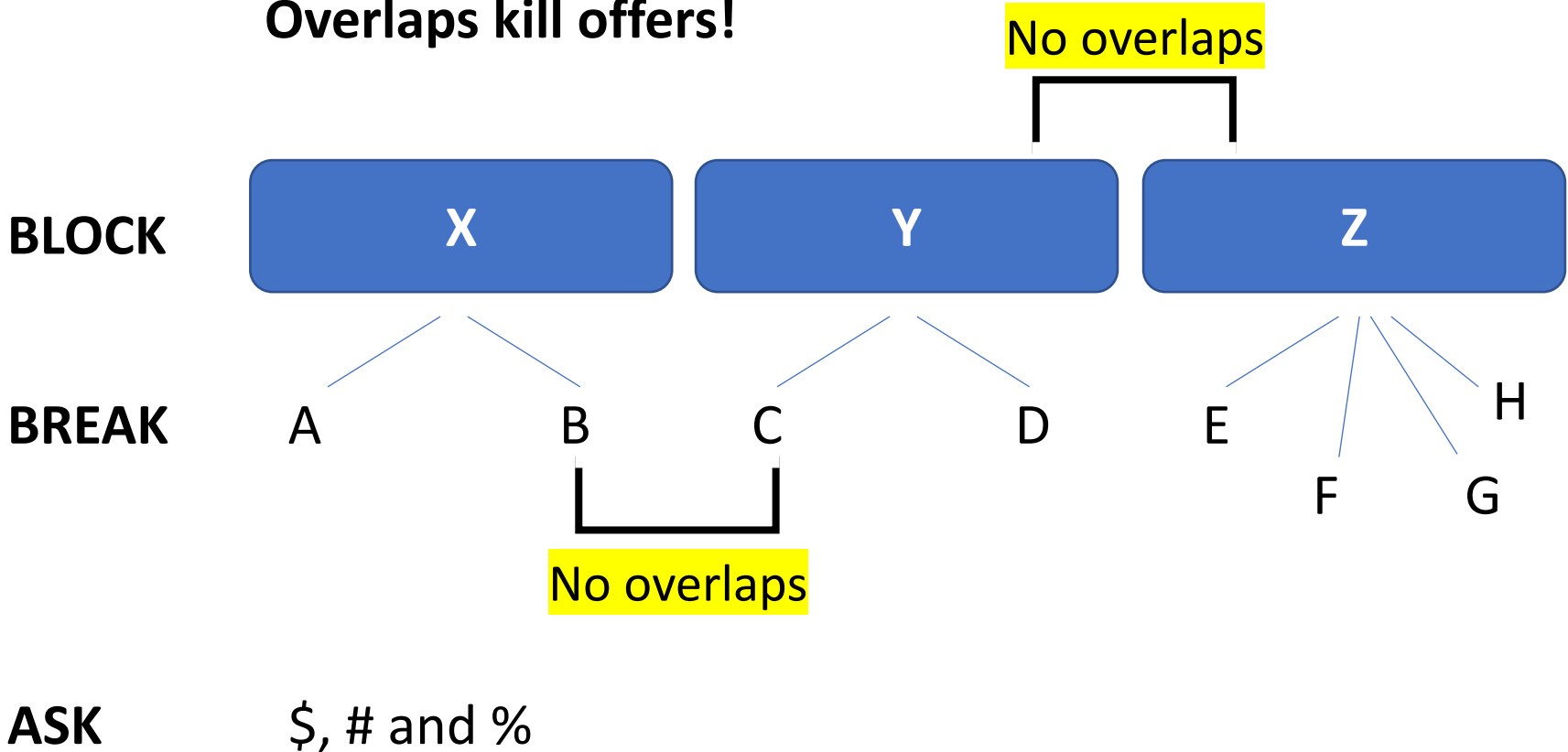
- Practice previewing key data you’ll want to analyze as you share your plan but **hold off on asking for the data** until you’ve finished sharing your plan.
- After sharing your plan, **dive into the data pool** by proposing where to start and asking a question





# Not focusing on the ME in MECE for both blocks & breaks

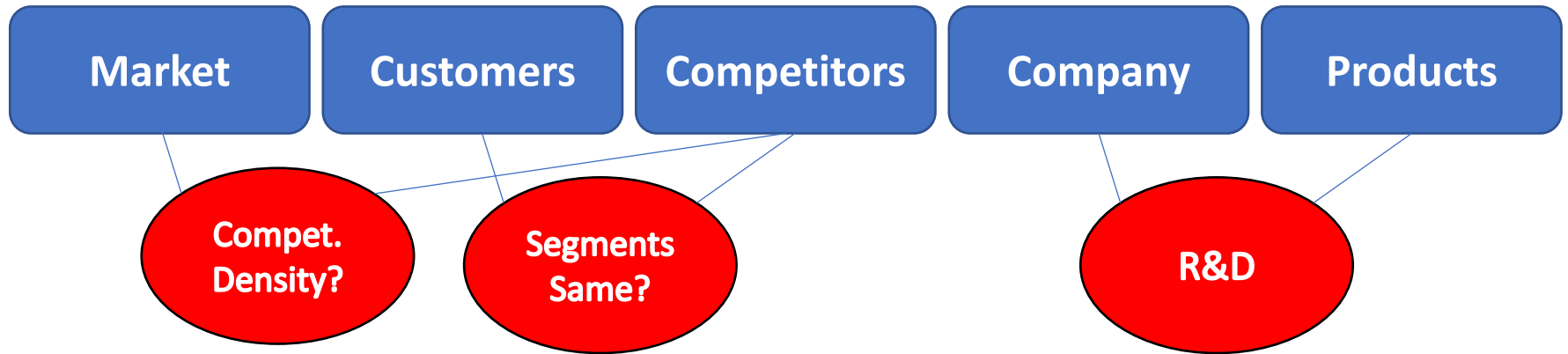
Overlaps kill offers!





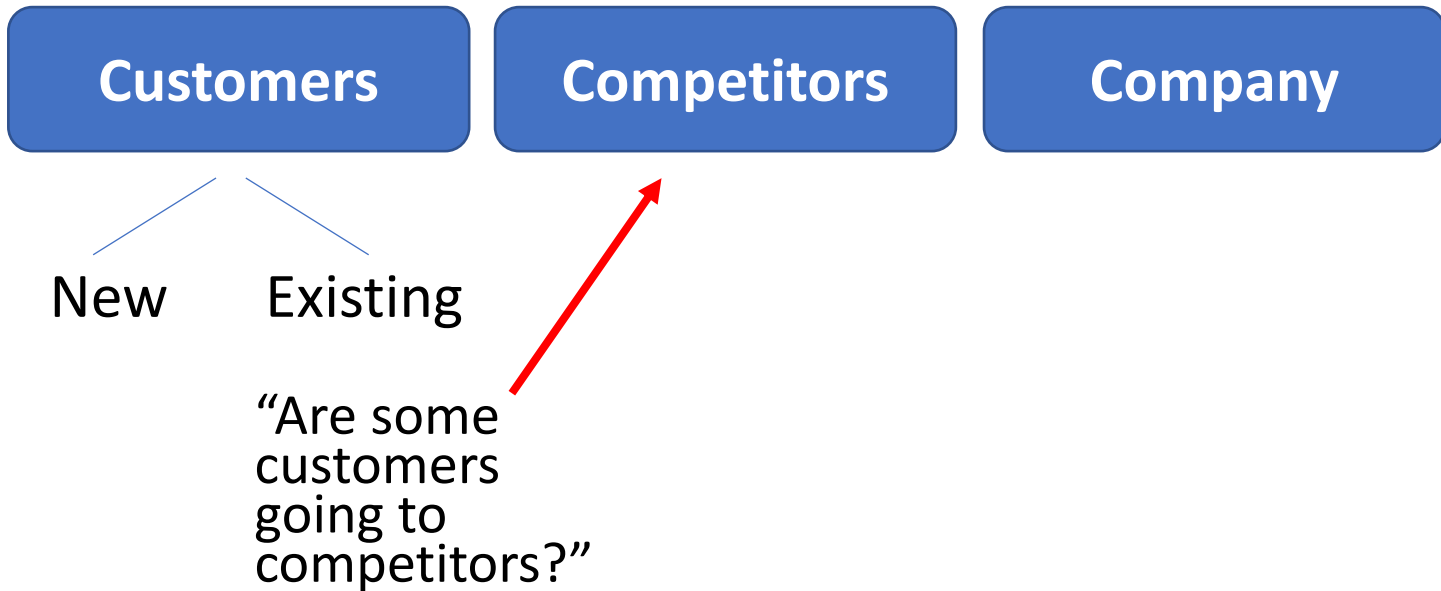
# You may be creating a block structure that is tough to keep ME.

Let's enter a new market. I want to find the most attractive market.



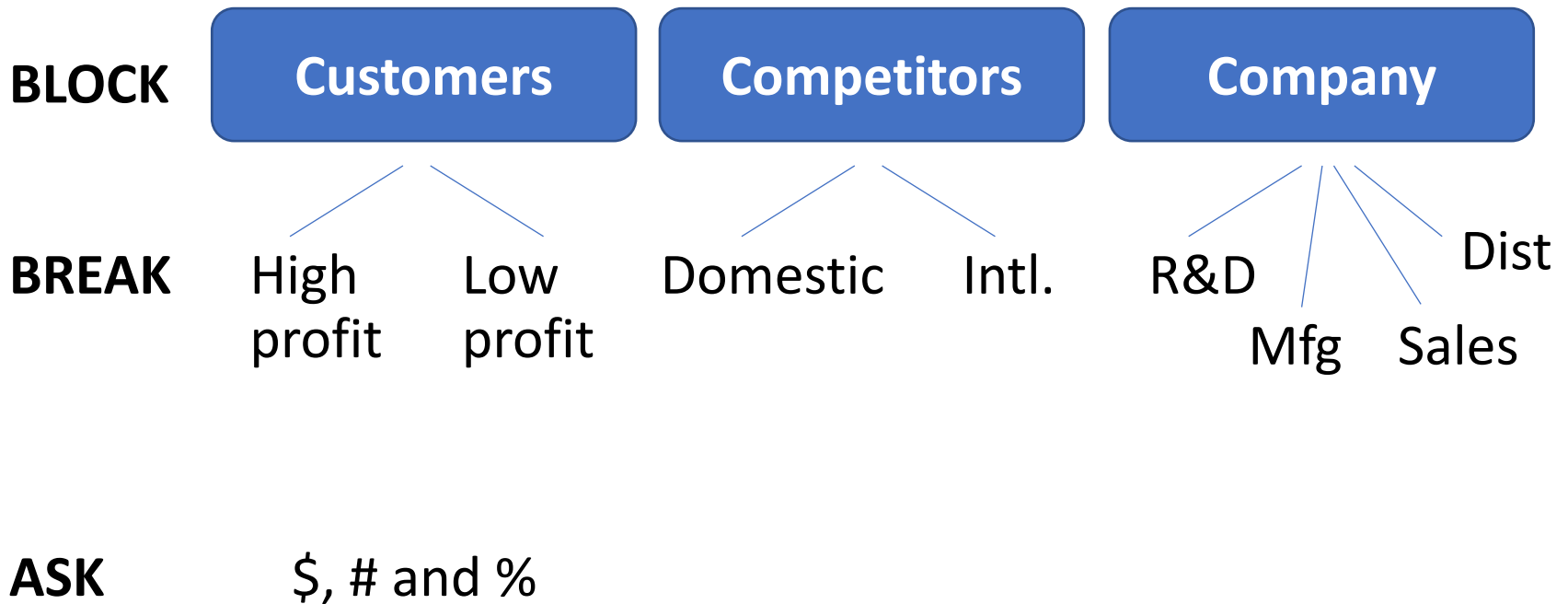


# Or sometimes you say too much and create an overlap.





# Highlight your skill at showing ME with your breaks



# Winter Camp

We'll learn so much together!

How to handle  
**crazy "cow"**  
questions

When to use a  
**hypothesis** and  
how to make it  
sound sensible

How to ensure you  
start your case  
**confidently** every  
time

When it might be  
appropriate to use  
a **standard  
framework**

**BLOCK**

When to **skip a  
MECE** approach to  
ensure discussion

**BREAK**

**BREAK**

How to make sure  
your **blocks** are  
**MECE**

**ASK or  
STATE**

**ASK or  
STATE**

How to show you  
are **data oriented**  
but not  
directionless

How to create a  
structure that  
**improves your  
recommendation**

How to **prioritize  
your data** and  
speed up your  
analysis

# Recap

- **Structuring well is critical**
  - Makes your first impression
  - Shows how you think
  - Conveys your communication style
  - Sets up your data search
- **Block, Break and Ask skills will ensure you are thinking rather than reciting**
- **Practice breaking down everyday objects at first**



# What past campers are saying:



**“Practicing with folks from other schools really helped me see different styles.” (Tepper MBA, McKinsey offer)**

**“Summer Camp was instrumental in getting me here.” (Stern, MBA, LEK offer)**

**“Thanks for pushing me so hard”  
(McCombs undergrad, McKinsey offer)**

**“I was able to power through their exhibits and extreme data . . .” (Duke MBA, McKinsey final round, ZS offer)**

**“Thanks for setting such a strong foundation.”  
(Amherst undergrad, Bain final round, Oliver Wyman offer)**



# Crack the Case Winter Camp 2023! Registration Now Open



**CRACK**  
THE CASE **WINTER CAMP**



- Be “offer ready” by Jan 1.
- **6 topics / 1 month.** Recordings available.
- **Bonus behavioral session:** Interview LOGIC workshop and 12-month online course.

- Winter Camps typically have 100+ campers from all over the world!
- **2 Tracks: Foundational and Advanced**
- World class trainers: David (ex-Bain) or Deborah Resnick (ex-McKinsey).
- Learn/See/Do. Each session there’s an assignment and 2 new cases.
- Work with your assigned team partners or others.
- Plus a Case Arena with Q&A every session day.
- Focus on building consistent skills that lead to offers!
- **SAVE THE DATE: Camp begins Sunday, Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>.**



[CTC-Winter-Camp-23-details – Crack the Case Camp Site \(mbacase.com\)](https://mbacase.com/CTC-Winter-Camp-23-details)



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