

FOCUS 2

Mapping the Problem

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Issue Trees

Issue trees are considered the bread & butter of a consultant's life. Making an issue tree is essential for **mapping** the problem. This begs the question, what are issue trees?

In simple terms, it's a method of dissecting a problem to its root cause and finding probable solutions logically. An issue tree is an efficient and logical tool to answer quantitative concerns. Moreover, they aid in categorising ideas which cover all possibilities without going deep into minute details. The issue tree and each sub-tree are a **MECE** structure (see the next page).

Types of Issue Trees



Diagnostic Trees

Answers the question 'why' and identifies and categorises all possible root causes for the problem.



Solution Trees Answers the question 'how' and identifies all possible alternatives to fix the problem.

MECE Approach

MECE stands for Mutually Exclusive and Collectively Exhaustive.

Mutually Exclusive means that the smaller pieces of the issue tree cannot overlap, thus creating more efficiency as no two parts overlap. Hence there is **no repetition. Collectively Exhaustive** means creating an issue tree that sums up all the possibilities by combining all sub-classes. This ensures that it does not miss any new ideas or options.

The components are listed vertically and progress into details as it reads to the right. While creating issue trees using the MECE approach, one should also ensure that the subobjects that the issue is divided into belong to the same class, and one should not use too many sub-objects.



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Creating Issue Trees



- **1. Divide and Conquer:** Start with finding the root cause of the problem and divide it into subproblems keeping in mind the MECE approach.
- **2.** Lay down a structure: Use the MECE approach to segment information. Add mini MECE layers to each subsequent layer. This will help to solve the problem efficiently at each layer.
- 3. Continue until you solve the problem.

Solved Examples

Problem Statement 1

Paramount+ recently updated its streaming app to include an Intelligent Recommender Feature. However, this feature is facing low adoption among its subscribers. Find out the reasons why.

Clarifying Questions

- 1. How long ago did the company update the app? The app was updated just over three months ago.
- 2. Is this issue limited to specific geography? No, the problem is not isolated to a particular region.
- 3. Do other streaming services offer this feature? Netflix and Disney+ provide similar features on their apps, but not on web players. In addition to our apps, we are offering this feature on all supported browsers.

Structure

