

Target

"Retail strategy at scale"

FOUNDED 1902, Minneapolis MN	STORES 1,900+ locations	REVENUE \$106.6B (FY2025, ended Feb 2025)	KNOWN FOR Design, owned brands, 'cheap chic' positioning
FORMAT Screen → case exercise → behavioral rounds	CASE STYLE Retail strategy, category growth, brand investment	BEHAVIORAL Customer focus, collaboration, leadership	RETAIL KNOWLEDGE Margin, loyalty, channel dynamics expected

WHO THEY ARE

Target (founded 1902) is the seventh-largest U.S. retailer with ~1,900 stores and \$109B annual revenue. Its core differentiator is "cheap chic": design-driven positioning that appeals to middle-income consumers in ways Walmart and Costco do not. The strategy team tackles retail's hardest problems: competing against Amazon's selection using physical stores, building owned brands (Good & Gather, All in Motion, Threshold) that drive margin and loyalty, and matching Walmart's supply chain excellence while preserving brand identity. Target's strategy work sits at the intersection of assortment, merchandising, brand building, and operational execution.

WHY PEOPLE WANT TO WORK HERE

Target attracts candidates serious about retail strategy as a business discipline, not a stepping stone. Working here means grappling with how physical retail survives and thrives post-e-commerce, one of the most practically important strategic questions in consumer business. The owned brands portfolio is a proven strategic asset and active investment area: developing and scaling Target-exclusive products across food, apparel, and home combines brand, supply chain, and merchandising in ways unique to retail. Minneapolis headquarters and culture are rigorous and demanding but far less intense than coastal tech or finance. For candidates wanting serious strategy work without Silicon Valley burnout, Target is a solid option.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

Target's process includes a recruiter screen, analytical case or exercise, and multiple behavioral and functional interview rounds. The company invests in candidate experience throughout. Case interviews are grounded in retail and consumer goods contexts: you might evaluate category expansion, assess pricing trade-offs, or develop frameworks for owned brand investment decisions. Retail-specific knowledge differentiates candidates: understand margin structures, inventory turns, customer loyalty drivers, and how physical and digital channels interact. Behavioral interviews emphasize leadership, collaboration, and customer orientation. Target's culture is consumer-obsessed; interviewers want evidence you think about shopper experience, not just metrics.

WHAT THEY'RE REALLY EVALUATING

Target evaluates strategic thinking quality, retail knowledge depth, and customer orientation. The analytical bar is high: cases test your ability to structure retail problems and reason quantitatively about trade-offs. Candidates who explain retail economics (margin, turns, basket size), channel behavior differences, and Target's distinctive positioning stand out over those applying generic consulting frameworks. Cultural fit matters explicitly: Target values inclusive, team-oriented collaboration. Interviewers assess whether you contribute positively to that environment. Strong individual ambition without collaborative instinct signals weak fit; candidates balancing intellectual capability with team orientation and warmth outperform.

STANDOUT QUESTIONS

1. How would you evaluate Target's strategy of investing in owned brands vs. national brands in the grocery category?
2. Amazon is expanding its physical retail presence. How should Target respond strategically?
3. Walk me through the key drivers of profitability in a major retail category and how you'd prioritize improvement levers.
4. Tell me about a time you developed a recommendation that required balancing short-term financial trade-offs against long-term strategic positioning.
5. How would you think about Target's loyalty program strategy relative to Walmart+ and Amazon Prime?
6. Describe a situation where you had to drive a cross-functional strategic initiative. What were the key challenges and how did you manage them?

INSIDER TIPS

- Know Target's business and competitive position specifically. Understand the 'cheap chic' differentiation strategy, how it differs from Walmart's EDLP approach, how owned brands contribute to margin, and where Target is investing in digital and supply chain. Walking in with only generic retail knowledge signals underprepared.
- Retail economics matter in case interviews. Know how margin works in retail (gross margin, operating margin, the role of private label vs. national brands), what drives customer loyalty and basket size, and how inventory management affects profitability. Cases will test these concepts. Shallow knowledge of retail structure will show.
- Customer focus is a cultural filter, not just a talking point. Target is a consumer company and its culture is oriented around the shopper. Show that you think about the customer experience, not just the financial outcomes. Interviewers will assess whether you intuitively connect strategy decisions to customer impact.
- Minneapolis culture is a differentiator. Target is headquartered in the Twin Cities and its culture reflects that: collaborative, Midwestern in tone, and less aggressive than coastal tech or finance. In the interview, being warm, thoughtful, and collegial will land better than projecting big-city ambition.