

Case Study → Rahul Kothari COO Round: Mapping Guide

What to Pull, What to Reframe, What to Skip

TIER 1: HIGH-IMPACT LINES — USE THESE VERBATIM OR NEAR-VERBATIM

These are already COO-level and land perfectly with a BCG-trained, P&L-minded operator.

The IPO Readiness Frame (Slide 1)

“Support is not just a cost centre — it’s an IPO readiness function. Every unresolved merchant complaint, every inconsistent SLA, every attrition-driven knowledge loss is a risk that shows up in due diligence, in merchant retention numbers, and in the NPS scores investors & analysts will scrutinise.”

Why it works for Rahul: This is the single most powerful framing you have. Rahul is thinking about IPO readiness every day. This line tells him you’re already thinking at his altitude. Use it early — within the first 2 minutes of the conversation.

The Sub-Linear Scaling Argument (Slide 3)

“2x merchant growth does not mean 2x support volume. If we build the right self-service infrastructure, improve FCR from 52% to 72%, and invest in proactive communication, we could absorb 2x growth with 1.3–1.4x the team.”

Why it works for Rahul: This is the exact capital efficiency argument a COO wants to hear before IPO. Investors will scrutinize cost-to-serve ratios. Reframe slightly: “This is the story we’d tell on an IPO roadshow — that Razorpay’s operational leverage means growth doesn’t come with proportional cost.”

The Engineering Time-Back Metric (Slide 7)

“Reducing escalations from 30% to 12% frees roughly 150 to 200 hours of engineering capacity per month. That’s half an engineer’s time back to build product instead of debugging tickets.”

Why it works for Rahul: This translates support improvement into product velocity — a language Rahul speaks fluently. It also shows you think cross-functionally, not in a support silo.

Support as Career Launchpad (Slide 8)

“The best retention strategy is not keeping people in support forever — it’s making support the best first step in a Razorpay career.”

Why it works for Rahul: This connects to his mandate around inclusive work culture and talent development. It’s also an IPO story — “we develop talent internally, not just retain them.”

The Revenue Risk Framing on Segmentation (Slide 7)

“2 large managed accounts have flagged support quality during renewal conversations. That’s not a support issue — that’s revenue risk.”

Why it works for Rahul: Revenue protection language. He’s accountable for revenue growth across all lines. This tells him you see the P&L implications of support quality.

The Merchant-First Incident Communication (Slide 7)

“The first message to merchants during an incident is the most important one. It should say: we are aware, here is what we know, here is what we’re doing, here is when you’ll hear from us again. That message builds more trust than a perfect resolution 2 hours later.”

Why it works for Rahul: Customer experience ownership is his #1 mandate. This shows you understand that perception management is as important as resolution.

TIER 2: REFRAME BEFORE USING — GOOD CONTENT, NEEDS COO-LEVEL PACKAGING

The Vendor In-Sourcing Argument (Slide 6)

What you said: "A 12-point CSAT gap and double repeat contacts... cost-neutral with quality upside." **COO reframe:** "The vendor model was built for cost optimization, but the hidden cost is merchant trust erosion. At pre-IPO scale, I'd rather spend the same amount on in-house quality than subsidize a vendor's learning curve. The math is cost-neutral; the merchant experience impact is significant."

The Escalation Matrix Fix (Slide 7)

What you said: Technical detail about criteria, diagnostic visibility, reason codes. **COO reframe:** "Today, 15% of engineering escalations are avoidable — agents escalate because they lack diagnostic access, not capability. Fixing this is a cross-functional partnership: I give engineering 150–200 hours/month back, they give my team read-level access to transaction traces. That's a trade both sides win from."

The 90-Day Roadmap Logic (Slides 9–10)

What you said: Detailed phasing across days 1–90. **COO reframe:** Keep the sequencing logic but simplify to three buckets: "First 30 days: diagnostics and quick wins that cost nothing. Days 30–60: structural changes that create leverage. Days 60–90: scale plays that position us for the next 12 months. Nothing in the first 90 days depends on tooling investment — it's all people and process. Automation accelerates; it doesn't unlock."

The Knowledge Concentration Risk (Slide 8)

What you said: "4–5 senior agents holding all complex case knowledge is a Day 1 risk." **COO reframe:** "We have single points of failure in our knowledge architecture. If two key people leave, our complex case resolution capability drops significantly. That's not just an ops risk — it's an audit risk for a company approaching public markets. Knowledge extraction and distribution is my first-week priority."

TIER 3: KEEP IN YOUR BACK POCKET — USE ONLY IF ASKED

These are operationally solid but too granular for an unprompted COO conversation.

Topic	When to use

Shift optimization & staffing models (Slide 6)	Only if Rahul asks "how would you fix the off-hours SLA gap?"
4-week onboarding programme detail (Slide 8)	Only if he asks about ramp time or attrition solutions
Quality rubric redesign (Slide 7)	Only if he probes on how you'd change measurement
Specific FCR phasing (Months 1–3, 4–6, 7–12) (Slide 6)	Only if he asks "walk me through the FCR improvement plan"
SWOT/Risk details (Slide 11)	Only if he asks "what could go wrong?"
Launch readiness gate process (Slide 8)	Only if product-support boundary comes up specifically
Ticket hygiene / resolution confirmation culture fix (Slide 7)	Only if he asks about quality culture

THE METRICS TABLE — USE THIS STRATEGICALLY

Your 12-month targets from Slide 9:

Metric	Current	12-Month Target
SLA Consistency	88% (72% off-hours)	95%+ all windows
FCR	52%	72%+
Escalation Rate	30%	12%
Attrition	24%	Below 15%
KB Coverage	60%	100%

How to use with Rahul: Don't walk through the full table. Pick 2–3 metrics that connect to his priorities and say: "At 12 months, the numbers I'd want ready for a board conversation are: FCR above 72% — because every FCR point directly reduces cost-per-resolution; SLA above 95% across all windows — because merchant experience can't have a weekend discount; and attrition below 15% — because knowledge retention is what makes everything else sustainable."

LINES TO AVOID REPEATING TO RAHUL

These worked for Saurabh (hiring manager, operational lens) but would feel too tactical for a COO:

- “Like asking a mechanic to fix a car without opening the bonnet” — too informal for this stage
 - Detailed vendor CSAT gap numbers — summarize the insight, not the data point
 - “Read the 3 pointers from the deck” references — obviously, but a reminder to not default to slide-reading mode
 - Specific tool/system names unless Rahul asks — he cares about outcomes, not implementation
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SUGGESTED FLOW FOR THE RAHUL CONVERSATION

If he asks you to walk through your thinking (likely), here’s the ideal 10-minute arc:

1. **Open with the IPO readiness frame** (30 sec) — “I see support as an IPO readiness function, not a cost center.”
2. **Sub-linear scaling argument** (1 min) — “2x merchant growth with 1.3–1.4x team. Here’s how.”
3. **Three highest-leverage moves** (3 min):
 - FCR from 52% → 72% (cost-per-resolution drops, engineering gets 200 hrs/month back)
 - Merchant segmentation (protect the revenue in your top 50 managed accounts)
 - Proactive incident communication (merchant trust > resolution speed)
4. **The talent story** (1 min) — “Support as the best first step in a Razorpay career. That’s how you solve attrition structurally.”
5. **90-day logic in three sentences** (30 sec) — Quick wins → Structure → Scale. No automation dependency.
6. **Close with conviction** (30 sec) — “These are the numbers I’d bring to a board conversation in 12 months: FCR 72%+, SLA 95%+, attrition below 15%. That’s the support story that strengthens the IPO narrative.”

Total: ~7 minutes. Leave 50%+ of the time for his questions — that’s where you win with a

BCG-trained mind. He'll want to probe, challenge, and pressure-test. Let him.