

Maxwell School Center for CAREER DEVELOPMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO CONSULTING

OVERVIEW

Consultants are professionals who are trained to solve problems, devise strategies, and improve the general health of clients no matter what the industry. Management consultants help clients solve specific problems (usually focused on the short-term), while a strategy consultant researches and develops strategies for improving the long-term goals of the company. Companies hire consultants not only for their problem solving abilities, but also for their objectivity. In general, the work environment is fast-paced, stimulating and involves long hours. Work weeks of between fifty to seventy-five hours are not unusual.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

There are three main types of consulting firms. First, there are large, diversified organizations, such as IBM's Global Services that offer a range of services, including Information technology consulting, in addition to a management consulting practice. Second are the large management and strategic consulting specialists, that offer purely management consulting, but are not specialized in any specific industry, like the McKinsey & Company. Finally, there are boutique firms, usually small, that have focused areas of consulting expertise in specific industries or technologies. These are usually more technical in nature.

TYPES OF JOBS

- Strategy
- Management
- Systems design
- Research
- Data analysis

QUALIFICATIONS + SKILLS

- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Strong analytical abilities
- Attention to details and deadlines
- Proven leadership and teamwork capabilities
- Project management
- Active listening skills

PRO TIP: Many consulting firms use a "case" style of interview. The applicant will be presented with a business problem and asked to provide a strategy and possible solution in 20-25 minutes. The interviewer is looking to see how the applicant analyzes a problem and how he or she attempts to solve the problem. The interviewer is not looking for technical expertise. Instead, this is a true evaluation of how the applicant thinks. Mock case interviews are strongly encouraged for M.A. candidates.

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SAMPLE EMPLOYERS

- Booz Allen & Hamilton
- Grant Thornton
- Ernst & Young
- Deloitte
- Logistics Management Institute (LMI)
- Public Financial Management (PMF)
- KPMG
- McKinsey & Company
- Boston Consulting Group
- Mercer Management Consulting
- Accenture
- PwC Consulting
- The Parthenon Group
- Beck International Inc.
- Centre for the Promotion of Imports
- DC Consulting
- Whitehouse Associates
- Foreign-Trade Zone
- Excellence Consulting Group
- Global Prospects Ltd.
- 4M Consulting Group
- Prisma Consulting
- The Stern Group, Inc.
- Hagerty Consulting
- IBM Global Services
- Active International
- BHP Capital
- Public Sector Consultants
- Sequent Consulting LLC
- Albright Stonebridge Group
- Kazakis International
- Zisser Group
- Europartnership
- ... And more!

SAMPLE MAXWELL CLASSES

- Business and Government in a Global Economy
- Challenges of International Management and Leadership
- Human Resources Management
- Nonprofit Management and Governance
- Managing Interpersonal, Group and Systemic Conflicts
- Financial Management in State and Local Governments

RESOURCES

- WetFeet
- Association of Management Consulting Firms
- Vault.com
- Consulting Magazine
- IMC USA
- Business trade publications (Forbes, Fortune, Business Week, Wall Street Journal, etc.)

RELATED CAREER GUIDES

- State and Local Government
- U.S. Federal Government and Capitol Hill
- Government Relations and Lobbying