



WORKSHEET

CAPABILITIES TO DEMONSTRATE FOR POSITIONS IN MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

Industry Awareness

Employers want to see that candidates recognize the importance of understanding the client's industry, landscape, and challenges. Industry awareness gives you the confidence to make recommendations and drive change in their business.

Questions related to industry awareness might include:

What is your understanding of what we do?

Demonstrate that you have researched the organization, their competitors and the industry thoroughly using the MASTER SWOT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE. Be sure to show that you did extensive, focused research by citing your variety of sources.

What are the biggest challenges we face in today's market?

Bring up two to three key trends in the industry today and include key statistics and explain how and why they matter to the organization.

What trends in the industry today have you found to be inspiring?

Show you keep up to date with new ideas and innovations in your sector. This shows that you are deeply interested in the industry and will add great value to the organization.



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Project Management

Management Consultants efficiently lead and support their team members to deliver projects on time and within budget. The interviewer will want to see that you can inspire a team and drive deliverables.

Questions related to project management might include:

Can you describe a successful project that you have led? What did you do to ensure its success?

Be sure to show your in-depth understanding of project management (scope, resource and time management) and highlight your systems and processes for actively managing these. Be sure to include at least one specific project where your guidance led to its success.

When working with a team of consultants, how do you ensure everyone is on the same page?

Show your ability to communicate, negotiate and influence your project team to complete the work accurately and on time. Detail how you kept team members aligned.

Describe your process for managing multiple projects at once

Show that you excel at pinpointing and prioritizing the most important and urgent tasks, managing your calendar and choosing the right team members to whom to delegate discrete tasks. Also include the e-tools you use to support successful management of multiple projects (For example Asana, JIRA, or Trello).



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Relationship Building

Demonstrate that you can build long-lasting relationships with your clients and project team. Show that you can build these relationships through developing trust and consistent communication.

Questions related to relationship building might include:

How would you build a good relationship with our company's client?

Emphasize building trust and explain key activities; extensive research of the client's market, consistent communications with the client, and delivery that is on-time and under budget.

Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a difficult client. What did you learn from the experience? What would you do differently if faced with the same situation today?

Explain that, in your communication with difficult clients, you kept what is important to the client front and center, while checking for understanding and consensus as you proceeded. Say what you learned from one or two situations and describe how you might cut to the essence of the project to reach mutual understanding.

Tell me about a time that you had worked with a client or colleague with whom you did not see eye-to-eye. How did you ensure that you got along well enough to make the project a success?

Explain that you paid close attention the client or colleague and your careful listening and flexibility led to reaching common ground. You must demonstrate that you have managed different types of difficult personalities in the workplace.



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Influencing others

Management Consultants often have to deliver challenging messages, to achieve difficult process changes and to persuade individuals to come around to their way of thinking. To be successful in the interview, you will need to demonstrate your expert abilities in persuading others to change their minds.

Questions related to influence might include:

Tell me about a time when you have persuaded someone else to do something they didn't want to do

Demonstrate your ability to offer a logical point of view, backed up with factual information. You should also mention your preparation process.

Tell me about a time you needed a group of people who disagreed with you and each other to follow your recommended course of action.

Summarize the situation and then explain how you demonstrated active listening skills, considered all points of views and countered objections, both individually and in group conversation.

Tell me about a time you failed to persuade someone to accept an idea you had come up with.

Pick one situation. Show how you learned from that by demonstrating honest self-review and ability to adapt quickly.

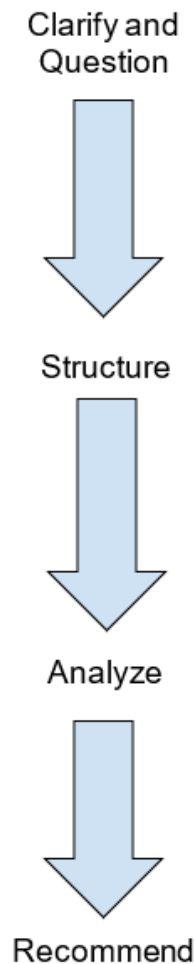
The most complex aspect of a consulting interview is a case interview where you will be given one or more business problems to solve. Often these business cases are ones that the company has already faced or are hypothetical cases similar to the types of projects you would be responsible for.

We're going to walk you through exactly what goes into these types of interviews and how you can prepare for them and ace them!

What is the interviewer looking for?

When carrying out a case interview, the interviewer is looking at how you analyze, justify and prioritize work in an ambiguous scenario. The first thing they'll want to see is whether or not you can think through all of the relevant factors in order to come up with a solution. They'll also want to see if you're able to communicate your ideas clearly, both verbally or on paper.

Follow the fail-safe process below to ace this part of the interview





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Listen, Question, Summarize and Clarify

When the interviewer gives you the case study, take notes. Ask questions and write down the interviewer's answers. Summarize what you have heard and clarify the problem.

Active listening
Synthesis
Attention to Detail

Structure

This is the roadmap to your solution. Take a moment to think through the logical steps you will take to build a solution to the problem you identified. This is your personal framework.

Consider using common frameworks for inspiration, but get creative and demonstrate your business acumen by using your own approach. Take time to explain your framework to the interviewer before you explain the contents of the framework.

Creative thinking
Logical structure
Business acumen

Analyze

Now is the time to explain the different components of your framework. Analyze the pros and cons of all potential solutions that you have brainstormed and narrow down your choice based on the data and information you have been told. The interviewer will want you to explain your thought process, demonstrate your ability to prioritize, and show that you see solutions to any barriers that might arise.

Data analysis
Insightful process
Prioritization
Reasoning
Strategic thinking

Recommend

It is time to provide a summary of your planned approach, with a clear plan to execute. You should explain key takeaways, your recommendation and the expected result. Relate your conclusion back to the original problem statement and make sure you have answered the initial question.

Summarize and explain
Reason and risks
Conclude
Present clearly and logically



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Take one of the following examples and work through the case study, using what you have learned in the process above.

Case study examples

1. Help a health food manufacturer prepare for a new product launch.
2. Help a low-cost airline remain profitable despite a recent fuel price hike.
3. Help a software company evaluate their partner distribution strategy.
4. Help a higher education institution expand to a new continent.
5. Help a national theme park operator understand the reasons for declining profits and make recommendations for reversing the trend.

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Structure	
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Top Tips Before the Interview

- Talk through your case study answer and evaluate your personal performance. What did you do well, what could you improve, and what did you miss?
- Keep up to date with current affairs. The markets are changing every day and there is a good chance that those changes will impact the case study.
- Take time to understand the variety of frameworks used in the management consulting industry and establish your personal framework to analyze and make recommendations on a case study.

Top Tips During the Interview

- Don't be afraid to ask the interviewer clarifying questions. You need to do so that you can identify the interviewer's unspoken, underlying assumptions. You will impress the interviewer, showing you have a thorough approach to analysis.
- Interviewers know that developing a great framework takes time, so they won't expect you to have one right away. If you find yourself flustered or stumped during an interview, don't be afraid to ask for a few minutes of silence so that you can organize your thoughts and ideas into a framework.