

Case Interview Resources

Overview

Companies and organizations hire consultants to strategize solutions to business, organizational, or industry specific problems. The value in hiring a consultant is a fresh perspective, objectivity, and/or a specific knowledge base or expertise. In the 1990's the consulting industry was at its peak with the rise of Dot coms.

In general the consulting industry has experienced a decline similar to that of the Dot coms. The economy has greatly affected the use of consultants.

The Consulting Industry can be divided into the following areas:

- *Management Consulting*: Focus is on how a company or organization works to achieve its stated goals. This can include working on strategy, operations, and information technology.
- *Strategy Consulting*: Focus is on identifying the direction, goals, and growth of a company or organization within a specific industry.
- *Information Technology (IT) Consulting*: Focus is on using technology to help an organization become more efficient and achieve its goals.
- *Industry Specific Consulting*: Focus is on a specific industry and can include strategy, management, IT, scientific or technical consulting.

Case interviews may be used in the screening process for all types of consulting firms, with the exception of IT Consulting, which does not typically use the case interview approach.

How Case Interviews Are Used in the Hiring Process

Consulting is a very conservative industry, be sure to follow industry specific interview protocol. Recruiting for entry-level consultant positions typically begins in the fall. The process includes a case interview in which the candidate is asked to analyze a problem and provide a solution based on the information given. Case interviews are used to assess a candidate's thought process and analytical skills and are not focused on the answer arrived at by the candidate. A few firms recruit PhDs (a few recruit masters also) from top schools for the Associate level, same track as MBA's. Other firms recruit only undergraduates, or will consider graduate students for the same level as undergraduates.

Resources to Help You Prepare for Case Interviews:

Books

Case in Point: Case Interview Preparation, 3rd Edition, (Marc P. Cosentino, 2004). (Dewey Library HD69.C6.C674)

Crack the Case: How to Conquer Your Case Interviews, (David Ohrvall, 2005). (Dewey Library HF5549.5.I6.O347)



Case Interview Resources (Continued)

Management Consulting: A Complete Guide to the Industry, (Sugata Biswas and Daryl Twitchell 2002) - Includes 100 case interview questions. (Dewey Library HD69.C6.B537)

The Harvard Business School Guide to Careers in Management Consulting, (Maggie Lu, ed., 1999). (Dewey Library Reference Collection [HD69.C6.M36](#))

Vault Case Interview Practice Guide (Rajit Malhotra et al., 2002). (Dewey Library HD69.C6.M356)

Vault Guide to the Case Interview, (Mark Asher et al., 2002). (Dewey Library HD69.C6.A84)

Websites

Learn about the diagnostic, analytical, and communication skills that will make you successful. Try out three kinds of cases: calculation, problem and probing:

Boston Consulting Group case interview preparation on-line:

http://www.bcg.com/join_bcg/interview_prep/default.aspx

McKinsey Corporation "Case Interview" on-line:

http://www.mckinsey.com/careers/how_do_i_apply/how_to_do_well_in_the_interview.aspx

Inside Consulting <http://www.insideconsulting.com/Case%20Interviews.htm>

Strategies for handling case interviews:

http://www.imahal.com/careers/management/interviews/interviews_case_strategies.htm

Novantas case interviews online: http://www.novantas.com/careers_cases.php

Another good site for case interview prep:

http://www.campusaccess.com/campus_web/career/c4job_inca.htm

Many more actual case questions that students can find on the individual company's web site. For example, go to Bain's web site for an interactive case:

http://www.bain.com/bainweb/Join_Bain/case_interviews.asp

Ace the Case: <http://www.acethecase.com/>

MIT Resources

Alumni Association - <http://alum.mit.edu/>

- Good resource for networking with alums in the consulting industry and locating potential internship, externship, and job leads.

Science and Engineering Business Club – <http://mit.edu/sebc> Many events on consulting careers.

Sloan Management Review - <http://sloanreview.mit.edu/>

- Publication which may be of interest to those seeking consulting careers.