CONSULTING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

When preparing for an interview with a consulting company, you need to be prepared for both “fit,” brain teasers, and case study questions. Below are sample questions to start your preparation for consulting interviews. Be sure to utilize other resources, such as practice cases that can be found directly on large consulting company websites, such as McKinsey, Deloitte, Bain, BCG, and PwC. Review the Case Interview Guide and Useful Formulas for Case Interview documents in the Career Navigator for strategies and other suggested resources.

SAMPLE FIT QUESTIONS

- Where do you see yourself fitting into the firm?
- Walk me through your resume. (Highlights from experience, skills, education, certifications.)
- Describe your background. How can you connect your past experience into the reason you chose to apply to [insert name of consulting company]?
- Why consulting verses [insert previous job function/industry]? (Applicable if candidate is career switcher)
- What skills and experience do you have that make you a good fit for consulting?
- What skills have you learned in your MBA program at Johns Hopkins that will help you in the field?
- How did you hear about [insert name of consulting company]?
- What attracted you to the field of consulting?
- What attracted you to X firm? What attracted you to X type of consulting?
- Where do you see yourself adding value to the industry?
- What is your competitive advantage?
- What specific tasks do you enjoy completing in a workplace environment?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision under uncertainty.
- Tell me about a time when you had to “think on your feet.”
- How do you build consensus on a team? How do you approach differing opinions in a team setting?
Tell me about a team experience within the past year. What made it positive?

Describe a time you have disagreed with your supervisor. What was the outcome? What resolution did you arrive at and how did you get there?

Describe a time you had an issue working with a team member. OR Tell me about a time when you worked with a team member that was not cooperative. How did this affect your project work? Did you resolve the issue or conflict? If so, how did you work things out?

Describe a difficult professional situation you experienced. How did you handle it?

Describe the last time you made a mistake or caved under pressure. What did you do to recover?

How do you keep yourself informed of current events in your industry?

What is your opinion of [insert relevant current event; for example, quantitative easing]?

Tell me about one recent [insert applicable area; for example, technology] trend that you are following.

Where do you see yourself fitting into the firm?

How would you describe your problem solving skills?

Tell me about a time when you had to act immediately, despite not being armed with all the facts. How did you handle this situation?

Do you consider yourself a more visionary or more pragmatic thinker? Why?

Describe methods you would utilize to diagnose client’s needs. What business frameworks might you use in structuring your approach to a client problem?

Tell me about a time when you had to adjust a project schedule because you didn’t have all the resources that you needed.

Describe a situation in which you had to change your communication style to influence stakeholders from different groups.

Tell me about a time when you supported a difficult client. What was the outcome?

Your project is severely under budget and your project manager asks you to bill for hours you did not work. What do you do?

What would you do if your supervisor asked you to do something unethical? For example, asking you to change time sheets/budget expenditures inappropriately or asking you to discriminate against another employee.

Imagine this client scenario: You have been brought into XYZ Company to study their operational efficiency. Your main client contact is the VP of Operations. The client is very skeptical and hostile of [insert consulting company name’s] presence. How do you build rapport with this client to build a strong working relationship?
• What do you think was the biggest headline in healthcare [or insert field or clients you will be consulting] in 2014 and why?

• Tell me about a time when you worked cross-functionally with another team to achieve a larger organizational objective. What did you do to facilitate collaboration and gain buy-in with that team?

• Have you ever been part of a proposal writing effort? If so, describe at a high level your role in the effort. How did you contribute?

• What do you do in your free time?

• Tell me about one recent _______ trend that you are following. [Specific to what practice area you are interviewing within the firm.]

• For tech consulting: What is the SDLC and what makes it important?

SAMPLE BRAIN TEASER & CASE QUESTIONS

• How many sodas are sold in the U.S. per year?

• How many golf balls are there in Florida?

• How many street lights are there in New York City?

• Estimate the demand for plastic bags in the U.S.

• What is the probability of five people with different ages sitting in ascending or descending order at a round table?

• A scientist puts a bacteria in a petri dish at exactly noon. Every minute the bacteria divides into two. At exactly 1pm, the petri dish is full. At what time was the dish half full?

• How much does the Starbucks in Times Square bring in, in annual revenue?

• Describe the internet to someone who just woke up from a 30-year coma.

• An apple costs 40 cents, a banana costs 60 cents, and a grapefruit costs 80 cents. How much does a pear cost?

Schedule an appointment with a Career Coach to discuss interview strategies and conduct a mock interview.