



Career Advice for the Start to Your Journey: I want to be a Management Consultant.....

Really? Are you sure? Let's discuss this before taking the leap.

First, what are your perceptions of what a management consultant is?

There are many definitions for this role. One of the cleverer and humorous ones is:

1. "The consultant is an expert in something and is from out of town". Or, another.....
2. "The consultant is an expert in something and in between jobs".

At this point you're probably saying to yourself that you're not being taken seriously by asking for this career advice. What you need to know is that your request for this advice is being taken very seriously and intentionally from a person who has spent much of their working life as a management consultant.

What are the top three attributes you will need to convince a consulting firm to take you on out of college?

1. An MBA from one of the top 25 business schools in the US with a grade average of 3.5+.
 - a. I have an MA from a vocational school; took me a little longer to convince my first consulting firm I was worthy.
2. A resume of results-oriented internships that brought value to the team you were on and by extension, the client with which the team was working; preferably with several noted connections.
 - a. My resume was filled with performing arts accomplishments; I got lucky and one of the senior managers figured out it took a lot of discipline and hard work to accomplish what I had so they gave me a little break.
3. Willingness to travel everywhere and anywhere working a minimum of 60+ hours a week; having international connections is a plus.
 - a. Had this one in spades from career number one in the performing arts.

At a certain point in your career, you are an "expert" at something or perhaps several things. That said, it does take a while to become an "expert". You are not an expert because you got a 4.0 average on all the courses in a specific subject. You become an expert when you have applied your knowledge and refined and honed your skills.

Here are my top three suggestions to break into the business:

1. Pinpoint which industry interests you most; once you have identified that, research the consulting firms that specialize in that industry.
2. Network, Network, network. This cannot be stressed enough. Connections are hugely important when you start out. Recommendations even more important. You will have to start with who you know versus what you know.
3. Be willing to do all the menial tasks; just get your foot in the door. I literally set-up meetings rooms and got refreshments for the other consultants when I started. But my willingness to do what the team needed paid off and I became a project manager within 6 months.

Every success to you and please reach out in the future and let me know how you made out. www.consultdonna.com