**Leadership and Initiative**

Consulting firms are looking for individuals who thrive in positions of responsibility and have intuition for leading a team and stepping up to a challenge. If you have led a team or society on campus, organised an event or founded a group – all of these are great examples of your leadership potential.

**Perfect Presentation**

Presentation is critical success criteria for any Consulting applicant. If you are successful in becoming a Consultant you can expect to be charged out to clients for several hundred pounds an hour, and so demonstrating your attention to detail and high standards from an early stage is imperative. The firm need to be able to trust you to develop documents for FTSE100 companies and to attend meetings with their CxOs so you need to show you are up to the task. This includes everything from a typo-free, clear and well-articulated application form, a well-structured CV with consistent formatting, readable font and good grammar and a well dressed, shoe-polished, clean and confident interview attendee.

**Consulting Fit**

Once you’re through to interview stage, a Consulting Firm is looking for someone who is absolutely cut out for Consulting, rather than just any other corporate role. Your CV will have given them confidence in your academics, now it’s your chance to show them your aptitude for cracking tough problems, developing strong relationships and being a part of high performing teams. Make sure you have a few success stories to hand – across your academics, extra-curricular and work experience. You need to be able to talk about situations where you have faced a challenge and how you have diagnosed and then solved the problem, in a methodical and measured way.

**Commercial Awareness**

Typically, Consultants spend their careers working in a variety of different sectors and industries. As such, your ability to quickly understand the fundamentals of an industry and how it works is key. You can practice this by making sure you have a good understanding of hot topics across a variety of industries – not just those you are interested in. Your interviewer may reveal that they are a big fan of green energy, providing you with a fantastic opportunity to reference the latest news in that industry - even with the caveat that you’re not an expert, as it will show you are interested and up to date on major topics.

**A Natural Communicator**

Communication is central to a Consultant’s day job and all Consulting Firms will be looking for evidence of both your written and verbal communication skills. This means being clear and concise on your application, as well as nailing your interview. As well as communicating well in the interview itself, try to refer to instances where you have used your communication skills to good effect – to diffuse a heated situation, or communicate a challenging idea, or to enthuse your sports team.

**Self-awareness**

Self-awareness is important to Consulting Firms because it shows an ability to self-reflect and to develop in order to address areas of weakness. You are likely to be asked about your weaknesses so have some good, appropriate examples to hand. Remember – these shouldn’t be deal-breakingly bad but ‘I’m a perfectionist is unlikely to fly either. You can also demonstrate self-awareness by reflecting on what you learned in some of the anecdotes you share. If you are talking about your experience in leading a team, end your description with a view of what you would do differently next time, or what you learned from the experience.

**Team Work**

Consulting is a team-based career, and so your ability to work well in teams is of real importance to your recruiters. They are looking for someone who can both work autonomously, under their own guidance, as well as someone who thrives on the rewards that come from being part of a high performance team. Make sure you have a few examples of team experiences to hand - be it a sports team, a society or a project team on your course. Be clear on the role you played and how you contributed. It can also be useful to have a couple of model teams in mind, so that you can refer to a team that you think works well and why. Is it Ferguson's United where no player is bigger than the team? Or perhaps it's the 2012 Olympics Squad where each individual is responsible for both their own success as well as the collective success of the team.

**10. Personality**

Consultants typically work 60 hour weeks and, sadly, spend more time with their colleagues than their friends and family. Therefore, Consulting Firms are looking for candidates who can get on with the rest of the team, who have the ability to build relationships across all levels of an organisation and who are fundamentally good at meeting new people. Having a few interests is a great way to get conversations started, so Consulting Firms will be looking for evidence of interests outside of your work – this is the chance you have to show you are a fun, interesting individual and not just a set of academic and work experience records. Remember though, don’t overstate yourself – if you say you love golf, chances are you’ll be invited to play at some point, so keep it honest.

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