Making the Most of Summer 2020 | Consulting

As you look to prepare for job and internship recruiting and a career in consulting, remember that an 8-10 week internship is just one way to build experience and demonstrate aptitude for a particular career path.

Instead of thinking of your resume as discrete 8-10 week experiences, look at it as your personal portfolio of small and larger experiences demonstrating your knowledge and skills relevant to this industry. Below are ideas to help you structure an engaging and productive summer and beyond, to continue building on your current skills and preparing for competitive candidacy in upcoming internship and full-time recruiting cycles.

> ➤ *Pro-tip: If you do "create your own summer experience/internship", keep notes on what you have learned and write a paper. As you interview in the 2020-2021 academic year, you can strategically provide this paper to employers as evidence of what you accomplished this summer.*

Deepen Your Knowledge of Consulting Industry (10-15 hrs/week)

Firms always value applicants who have taken the time to really learn about their chosen career field, and to think critically about their fit for the profession.

- Conduct **informational interviews** and **build your network** by reaching out to alumni and industry practitioners using **LinkedIn, Wisr**, and the **Alumni Directory**. It will be interesting to talk with them about their experiences and get their perspectives on the industry.
- Read **books** that provide insights about consulting, or industries that these firms serve. Here is a list of recommended books:
    - Vault Career Guide to Consulting
    - The McKinsey Way
    - HBR's 10 Must Reads: The Essentials
    - The Lords of Strategy
    - The Trusted Advisor
    - The Back of The Napkin
    - The Boston Consulting Group on Strategy
    - Valuation: Measuring and Managing the Value of Companies
    - Blue Ocean Strategy
    - Competitive Strategy
    - Kotler on Marketing
    - Good to Great
    - Built to Last
    - How to Win Friends and Influence People
- Read **magazines and blog posts** that will help you build your business acumen and stay up to date on the latest developments.
    - Harvard Business Review
    - McKinsey Quarterly
    - The Economist
    - Fortune
    - Strategy + Business
    - Consulting Magazine
    - ManagementConsulted.com
- **Podcasts and documentaries** are another great way to learn and engage
    - Strategy Skills Podcast
    - HBR IdeaCast

- o Snacks Daily
- o How McKinsey Became One of the Most Powerful Companies in the World
- o Careers in Consulting: Beyond the Buzz Words

Research Consulting Firms (3-5 hours/week)

You will give yourself the best odds during recruiting by applying to a carefully cultivated range of firms for which you demonstrate a good "fit." The more you know about a firm, the better you will be able to create such a list.

- Visit websites of consulting firms to learn more about their industry niche, culture, and opportunities for young professionals
- Best Large Consulting Firms to Work For: **2020 Vault Consulting Top 50 Firms**
- Best Small, Mid-sized and Specialist Consulting Firms to Work For: **2020 Best Boutique Consulting Firms**
- Review other rankings in different consulting practice areas in **Vault's Rankings of Consulting Firms.**
- Learn more about companies from their employee reviews at **Glassdoor**
- Check out **Regenstein Library Online Services** for additional company research

Hone Your Skills and Knowledge Relevant to the Role of an Intern or Entry-Level Professional in Consulting (8-10 hours/week)

- Build and hone your technical, software, and other "hard-skills" such as case analysis, business writing, Excel, data visualization, and PowerPoint. Consultants must be skilled at conducting research, analyzing it, problem solving, and presenting the recommendations.
- Read consulting book **The Pyramid Principle** – logic in writing and thinking.
- Practice your case analysis using any of the following resources:
    - o Case books
        - ▪ Case in Point
        - ▪ Case Interview Secrets
        - ▪ Crack the Case System
    - o Online resources
        - ▪ Bain Interview Preparation and Practice Cases
        - ▪ BCG Interview Preparation and Practice Cases
        - ▪ McKinsey Interview Preparation and Practice Cases
        - ▪ Case Interview: Complete Prep Guide
        - ▪ Math Drills
        - ▪ Vault Guide to The Case Interview
- Take free online courses at LinkedIn Learning and Coursera
    - o Master Microsoft Excel
    - o Master Microsoft PowerPoint
    - o Introduction to Financial Accounting
    - o Use Excel and PowerPoint Like a Consultant
- Create your own personal blog to demonstrate your industry interest and knowledge.
- Complete one or more micro-internships https://careeradvancement.uchicago.edu/student-opportunities/micro-metcalf-program
- Do an independent, self-directed project in your area of interest. Research and write an analysis of a particular industry served by the firms you are interested in, or a company you would like to work for (healthcare, technology, energy, real estate, consumer packaged goods)

Build Skills by Serving Others (5-10 hours/week)

- Look for opportunities to use skills relevant to consulting in a volunteer capacity. Desirable skills for consultants are problem solving, analytical, research, teamwork, and communication skills. Giving back to your community will make you feel good about the way you spent your summer and will also look great on your resume.
  - o Utilize Excel to organize and analyze data for a local business or community organization
  - o Utilize PowerPoint to create a presentation for use in a meeting or to summarize data
  - o Research data to assist the organization with marketing, business development, or other need
  - o Manage a project for the organization
- Check with organizations where you have volunteered in the past to see if you can step back into previous roles.
- Use **idealist.org**, **volunteermatch.org**, or **Omprakash.org** to seek other local options.