

# Some ideas on:

- Management Consulting required skills
- Recommendations for improvement at work

- This document tries to generate some ideas to answer two main questions:
  - What are the required skills for a (good) management consultant?
  - What are recommendations to keep in mind for improving the quality of consulting work (on a personal level)?
- The materials in the current presentation does not contain or represent Accenture specific approaches or methodologies and simply is a free reflection based on previous experience and interactions of the author with consulting industry.
- The basic knowledge included is primarily based on the general requirements and standards of four management consulting firms:
  - Accenture
  - Arthur D. Little
  - McKinsey and Co.
  - Mercer Oliver Wyman

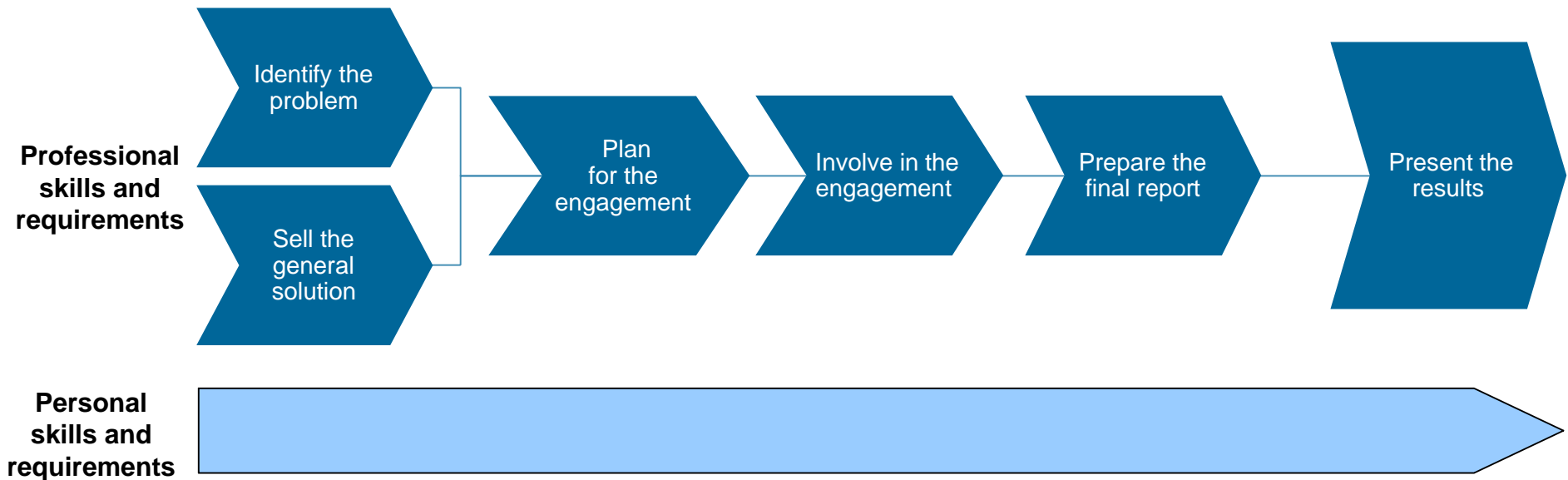
The results, though, can be used as a general guideline for personal improvement for individuals working in management consulting area in other companies.

\* The idea has been to provide complementary (rather than same) information to the knowledge currently available on <http://chaay.ghoddu.com>

# Requirements and skills in management consulting

You may need two sets of skills and requirements for being a (good) consultant:

- Personal requirements: General issues which you should possess independent of being in an engagement or not.
- Professional requirements: The skills or requirements during each phase of a typical consulting work.

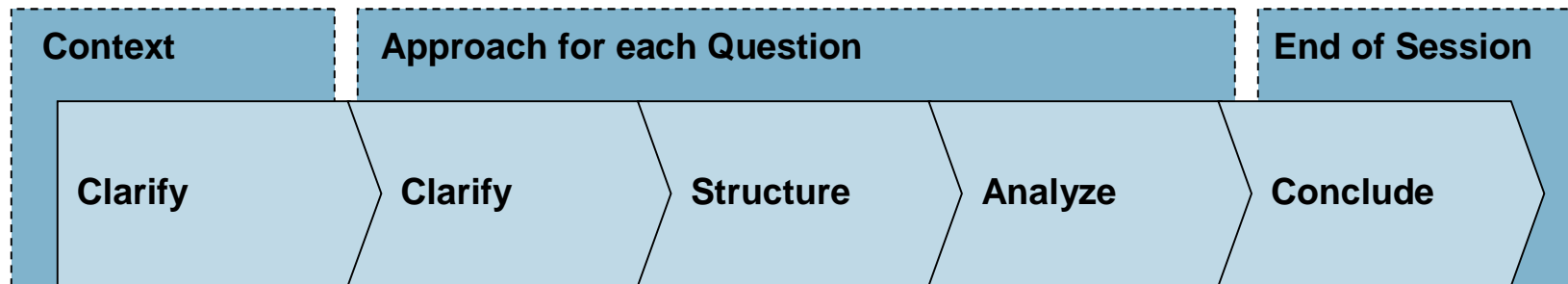
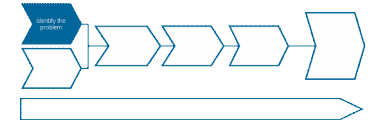


## Personal skills and requirements for a consultant: Practical comments



- Be on time for all sessions
- shows an interest in other people (generally and also when they are talking)
- Always wear clean clothes and in a professional fashion (Formal suit). Business casual is not recommended.
- Good networking capabilities is a good thing to have.
- Knowledge of three (or four) languages if you want to work in Europe and you are in the first 7 years of your career is important.
- Try to **have a personal brand** (e.g. Ehsan is **THE** guy to talk to if you want to know about SC software, buy SC software or invest in SC software start-up).
- Try to develop good presentation and writing skills
- Ability to work over time (From 9 am to 9 pm on a normal day and up to 2 am in the case of having a time sensitive engagement) is needed.
- It's crucial to have the ability to read, write, and make the documents rapidly. **Speed is really important in this sector.**
- **Open and tolerant mind (Don't become angry soon).**
- **Just Say: I don't know if you don't know something.** It is really important in this business to make a perception that when we talk, we deliver value. Such behavior destroys that perception

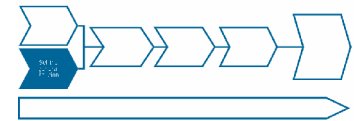
# 1. Define the problem



Source: McKinsey & Co.

- Listen closely to the problem which is stated by the client (we have a problem in packaging)
- Ask questions to clarify the scope more (only your packaging facilities or 3<sup>rd</sup> party as well?)
- Make a decision what structure you are going to choose (e.g. process issue diagnosis Tool)
- Ask complementary questions to gather other required data by the Tool
- Conclude the session

## 2. Sell the general solution



- On the way back to the office, you can shape a hypothesis (Why “problem”? And then create some scenarios)
- Make a presentation with your proposed tool and solution for the next session
  
- **Don't make fancy slides.**
- **Don't Reuse previous slides and documents. Create new material based on the basic knowledge of previous docs.**
- Don't make too many slides (Max 20 for engagements)
- Don't put animations in the slides and moving things
  
- Show in financial terms how the proposed package creates value for the client.
- In particular try to include:
  - What is the problem? (e.g. Inventory turn 3, compared to 7 in average industry)
  - What is the effect of problem? (50% more working capital is used)
  - How can we solve it? (Increase visibility of the demand)
  - What is the tool to solve it? (A system to provide POS data)
  - How much does it cost? (1 million dollars)
  - Why should you do what I say? (Because you will save 2.5 million only one year after the 8 month implementation period. Even if you get the money from that bank with 10 percent discount rate and with a 60% success probability, you will still benefit).
  - What is organization for the project (steering committee of the client managers and project lead).
- Mention credentials from previous work and show the value in those cases (again) with financial language.

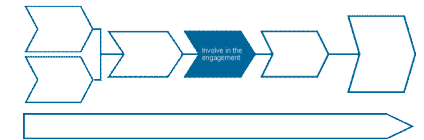
### 3. Plan for the engagement



- Make realistic assumptions for planning: Don't think that you can compress a 4 month engagement into 1.5 month (as client wants) by putting more money or people into work. You can decrease it maybe by 20% but not more.
- You have a series of hypothesis from earlier time (remember? When you were going back to the office..?); try to see what tools or processes you need to test those hypothesis, what is the source of data, who you should put as responsible person and so on. **For example:**

<u>Issue/Hypothesis</u>	<u>Analyses</u>	<u>Data Sources</u>	<u>End Product</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Due dates</u>
The process requires new facilities	Technical data	Articles, interviews	Chart	Hamed	3-Jun
	List of facilities that meet new criteria	Facilities management, interviews	List	Ehsan	5-Jun

## 4. Involve in the engagement



- You have to create (financial) value both for your client and your company. That means you have to increase resource efficiency in your company while trying to solve client's issue.

**Resource Utilization (very important!): One important resource in consulting** is people and specifically the time of the people so:

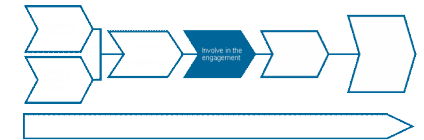
- **Don't collect or read information which might be useful. Collect information which are directly about the issue**, this way you increase time efficiency.

**Example:** If the customer wants you to design a system to share the product data in purchasing, don't collect info. On how this can be linked to a production planning system. That is not clients issue now! Later if you have ready information, you can provide the client with some “Next Steps”.

- **Listen to what your manager says.** Don't try to improve the manager's idea based on your skills. Do what he/she says because it is highly probable that your manager is aware of some requirements which you don't know or basically likes one style of work. In either way, you have to change and re-work in the case of putting your imagination in the work (and thus waste of non-value adding time).

**Example:** If your manager didn't mention to talk about enterprise software such as SAP PTP solution, don't put it in the scope. It turns out that the client is scared of big projects such as SAP initiatives so mentioning these terms distracts the client from continuation of the work in the future. Your manager knows this but you don't know, so later you have to change a major part which has take 20 hours from you.

## 4. Involve in the engagement...

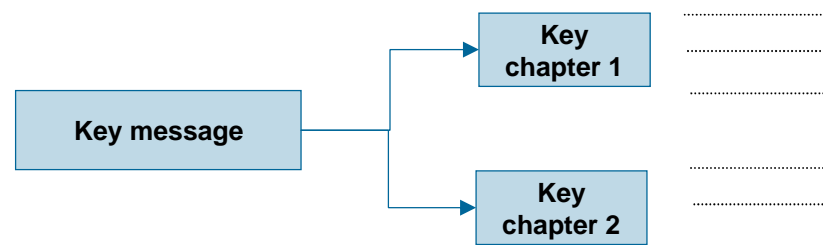


- **Write documents in an understanding way:** Maybe in 2 years you will leave the company. Write the docs in such a way that later people can understand and utilize them (in the case you are busy or you want to quit the company)
- **Start with structure, not data:** That is really important! Don't go out or to the client and gather as much information as you can! You don't need all of that. Fix a framework and then gather only major relevant info.
- **Avoid time-consuming analysis for more precision than necessary**
- Kind of similar to the one above: **Don't waste time for finding small detail info.** (like average sales of black lobster per year in Madrid). Make a logical assumption (We have two major types of lobsters, let's say 50% of sales are black) and move on! Later if this is a critical issue, since you have marked it, you will go and look for accurate info. But not now! In other terms **combine data with intuition.**

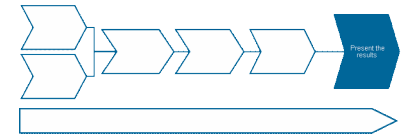
## 5. Prepare the final report



- Don't write too much, write as much as it is necessary (Reports which have been prepared with the focus on information systems can be long but even in those, **information are not repeated with different words** and also **all the content create value I respect to the objective of the document**)
- Write the whole report to convey two or three message. They can be summarized in 2 lines. Different parts of the reports should be key chapters which are all support those key messages. **Example:**
- **My message is that you should buy Company x**
- **Key lines are:**
  - **I did a industry analysis and noticed that the market is shifting to gear technology y.**
  - **I did look at the market to see what companies have the related patent because you don't have it.**
  - **The players which have gear technology y are direct competitors**
  - **The value for company x's patent is unique because it is better in terms of performance, the company is so small to be a direct competitor, and it can be bought for a low price as well (size).**



## 6. Present the results



- Again don't make fancy slides. Make a few number of slides which contain following elements:
  - Problem statement and background
  - The primary situation of the company
  - The approach chosen to attack
  - Current situation of the company
  - **Next steps (initiatives for further improvement)**
- Don't forget the “**Next step**” part because that's the future money flow to the company
- Thank people which collaborated with you during the project.
- Show the primary and current situation of the company by some logical indicators (It's recommended to represent it or link it to financial terms and show the effect on the bottom line)