

Career Opportunities in International Consulting

This is one of those niche fields in which a Maxwell graduate, particularly with a dual degree in ECN/IR and MPA/IR, would have a relative advantage. Although many management positions actively recruit students with an MBA, positions equally favor candidates with advanced degrees in economics, law, mathematics, and engineering, among others. In a large and broad-based field such as consulting, there is a niche for a wide array of skill sets.

Introduction

Management consulting (also called **strategy consulting**) refers to the practice of helping companies improve performance through analysis of existing business problems and development of future plans. Management consulting usually involves the identification of [best practices](#), analytical techniques, [change management](#) and [coaching](#) skills, technology implementation, strategy development or even simply providing the advantage of an outsider's perspective. Management consultants generally bring formal frameworks or [methodologies](#) to identify problems or suggest more effective or [efficient](#) ways of performing existing [business](#) tasks.

Management Consulting is becoming more prevalent in non-business related fields as well. As the need for professional and specialized advice grows, other industries such as government, quasi-government and not-for-profit agencies are turning to the same managerial principles that have helped the private sector for years. International NGO's, multilateral organizations, global financial services, and governments are now employing consultants at a rapid pace. **A combination of skills such as an economics degree or a public administration degree with international relations is increasingly a desired skill set sought by employers in this field.**

History

Management consulting grew with the rise of [management](#) as a unique field of study. The first management consulting firm was [Arthur D. Little](#), founded in the late 1890s by the MIT professor of the same name. Though Arthur D. Little later became a general management consultancy, it originally specialized in technical research. [Booz Allen Hamilton](#) was founded by [Edwin G. Booz](#), a graduate of the [Kellogg School of Management](#) at [Northwestern University](#), in 1914 as a management consultancy and the first to serve both industry and government clients. The first pure management and strategy consulting company was [McKinsey & Company](#), considered the current leader in the field. McKinsey was founded in [Chicago](#) during [1926](#) by [James O. McKinsey](#), but the modern McKinsey was shaped by [Marvin Bower](#), who believed that management consultancies should adhere to the same high professional standards as [lawyers](#) and [doctors](#).

After World War II, a number of new management consulting firms formed, most notably [Boston Consulting Group](#), founded in 1963, which brought a vigorous analytical approach to the study of management and strategy. Work done at Booz Allen, McKinsey, BCG, and [Harvard Business School](#) during the 1960s and 70s developed the tools and approaches that would define the new field of [strategic management](#), setting the groundwork for many consulting firms to follow. Another major player of more recent fame is [Bain & Company](#), whose innovative focus on shareholder wealth (including its successful private equity business) set it apart from its older brethren. Also significant was the development of consulting arms by both accounting firms (such as [Arthur Andersen](#)) and global IT services

companies (such as [IBM](#)). Though not as focused on strategy or the executive agenda, these consulting businesses were well-funded and often arrived on client sites in force.

Current state of the industry

Management consulting has grown rapidly, with growth rates of the industry exceeding 20% in the 1980s and 1990s. As a business service, consulting remains highly cyclical and linked to overall economic conditions. The consulting industry shrank during the 2001-2003 period, but had been experiencing slowly increasing growth since. In 2004, revenues were up 3% over the previous year, yielding a market size of nearly \$125 billion.

Currently, there are three main types of consulting firms. First, there are large, diversified organizations, such as [IBM's](#) Global Services that offer a range of services, including Information technology consulting, in addition to a management consulting practice. Second are the large management and strategic consulting specialists, that offer purely management consulting, but are not specialized in any specific industry, like the [McKinsey & Company](#). Finally, there are boutique firms, usually small, that have focused areas of consulting expertise in specific industries or technologies. These are usually more technical in nature.

Internal Corporate Consulting

Added to these approaches are corporations that set up their own internal consulting groups, hiring *internal management consultants* either from within the corporation, or from external firms whose employees have tired of constant travelling. Corporations such as SunLife, IBM, Fidelity, Chevron Texaco, Metlife and Bristol Myer Squibb have found these groups to be particularly helpful. Many of these corporations have internal groups of as many as 25 to 30 full-time consultants.

Consulting Firms with an International Focus

- [Active International](#) - Provides problem-solving programs to transform underperforming assets into profits.
- [Aldiron Hero Group](#) - Conglomeration of more than 50 companies based in Indonesia, with branches in Hong-kong, Japan, Singapore, and the US, offers a variety of trading information and partnership services.
- [Baltic Sea Business Initiative](#) - An international business and economic advisor and consulting group, specializing in Cross Atlantic transactions between the US and the Baltic Region.
- [Beck International Inc.](#) - Provides sourcing, design, inspection and technical assistance to importers or potential importers of gift items and printed products.
- [Cassel International](#) - Specializes in competitive and market research, cross-cultural communications training and business planning. Overview, principal profile and description of services.

- [DC Consulting](#)- Provides services to US environmental companies that are investigating or currently having projects in China. Has company portfolio, background and sitemap.
- [DEHeap Enterprises, Inc.](#) - Provides incubation services to American subsidiaries of international corporations.
- [Emergo Group Inc.](#) - Specializes in medical device regulatory affairs, product compliance, and quality system implementation. Offices in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia.
- [Europartnership](#) - European Central Bank official euro-partner offers consultancy on business strategies and other topics related to monetary union and currency transition.
- [Foreign Trade Zone](#) - Consulting firm that deals in specially designated US customs areas known as foreign trade zones. Includes biographies of principals and overview of services.
- [Gary Lim Consultancy](#) - Helping companies export their products to Asian markets.
- [Innova International Development](#) - Provides consulting to government and industry in developing nations, in association with agencies like the World Bank, and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).
- [Integration Consultants](#) - German based international consulting company which provides technical assistance and training; experienced with the European Commission and German agencies.
- [Joan Hansen & Company, Inc.](#) - International licensing consultants.
- [Kazakis International](#) - Export management and procedure audit consulting, seminars and training. Company and staff background, and overview of services offered.
- [4M Consulting Group](#) - Marketing and brand consultancy with a focus on market-entry-strategies in Europe.
- [Nightingale Associates](#) - International management training and consulting in strategic planning, operations improvement, leadership, teambuilding and cost reduction.
- [Peduzzi & Company](#) - Provides services for communications, energy and technology companies interested in expanding global alliances and partnerships.
- [Prairie Mountain Trading](#) - International house dealing with import, export, marketing, manufacturing and sourcing.

- [Rich-Link Business Consulting Ltd.](#) - Bilingual staff experienced in representing foreigners operating business in China, services include suggesting sites for investment, advising negotiations with the government.
- [Sequent Consulting LLC](#) - Connecticut based management consulting firm which specializes in advising US and European companies on how to grow their business in foreign markets. Philosophy, services and case studies.
- [Tatis Ltd](#) - Solutions for revenue compliance, trade facilitation and security, especially for developing and transition economies.
- [Thomas McKaig International](#) - Provides on-site trade management advisory and education services to small, medium and large enterprises.
- [UK Trade Advisory Services](#) - Provides consultancy and support services to companies entering the UK market from the USA and Europe.
- [VenTenn Business Management Services](#) - Offers support for USA-Venezuela trade. Describes capabilities.
- [Wonderful Rife Consulting Group](#) - Business, financial, and tax consulting for companies doing business in China and Hong Kong.
- [YÖSIDA Management Consultants](#) - Established to provide high quality management consulting services to Turkish and International companies.
- [Zisser Group](#) - International trade lawyers, consultants and on-site management. Describes services and company background.

Literature on the subject

- *Flawless Consulting*, Peter Block, [ISBN 0787948039](#)
- *Guerrilla Marketing for Consulting*, Jay Conrad Levinson and Michael W. McLaughlin, [ISBN 047161873X](#)
- *Managing at the Speed of Change*, Daryl Conner, [ISBN 0471974943](#)
- *Managing the Professional Services Firm*, David Maister, [ISBN 0743231562](#)
- *The Professional Services Firm Bible*, John Baschab, [ISBN 0471660485](#)
- *Managing Transitions*, William Bridges, [ISBN 1857883411](#)