



Certificate in Management Consulting Essentials



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Overview

This qualification provides an introduction to Management Consultancy. It is intended for people who are considering a move into management consultancy from a functional discipline, or for those who wish to obtain an introduction to the skills and knowledge needed in the field of management consultancy.

Aims

To help you learn, as an aspiring management consultant, about:

- The Consultancy Role
- The Consultancy Cycle
- The Client Relationship
- Communication for Consultants
- Effective Project Delivery
- Structured Knowledge, Research and Analysis

Prior Learning

There are no specific entry requirements for this qualification, but it is expected that learners are intending to enter into a management consultancy role and will therefore be educated to degree level or hold a minimum of two years business experience.

Assessment

You will be assessed on your achievement of the learning outcomes. The assessment programme is designed to test your knowledge and understanding of the whole syllabus. To achieve this introductory qualification, learners must meet all of the learning outcomes.

Any material you generate as part of this qualification may be counted as evidence towards the Diploma in Management Consultancy offered by the Institute of Consulting in conjunction with the Chartered Management Institute.

Guided Learning Hours

These are used as a notional measure of the substance of a qualification, and help Centres determine what teaching and learning resources are going to be needed to support learners. They are based on an estimate of the time that might actually be spent by the learner being taught or instructed, as well as the time learners spend on structured learning such as directed assignments, assessments on the job or supported individual study or practice. They do not include learner initiated private study.

There are 45 Guided Learning Hours for the Certificate in Management Consulting Essentials.

Awarding Body

This qualification is offered by the Institute of Consulting which is a wholly owned division of the Chartered Management Institute which is the awarding body. Further details about the qualification can be obtained by contacting either organisation.

Support and help

As a student member of CMI, suggested reading lists can be found on the Institute of Consulting website, <http://www.iconulting.org.uk> or you can access a wide variety of help, information, reading lists and management texts, via www.managers.org.uk/students.

Programme

The purpose of this programme is to explore the role of the management consultant. It considers the skills, knowledge and professional behaviours required by an effective consultant. It looks at ethical standards and codes of conduct and will give you a framework to evaluate your current knowledge, skills and behaviours to plan your future development.

It includes an overview of the development of the consultancy market, reviews the phases of the consultancy process and typical consultancy interventions introducing a range of tools, skills and techniques to support effective interaction with clients. The role of effective communication is considered as well as core communication techniques. An overview of project delivery including risk, quality assurance and effective personal contribution is followed by investigating core consultancy skills in knowledge sourcing, research and analysis.

Content

The Consultancy Role:

Understanding:

What management consultancy is

- How the management consultancy role can be defined, and which typical responsibilities and activities are included
- What the challenges, risks and pitfalls of the management consultancy role are

The knowledge, skills and behaviours required

- The range of essential professional behaviours needed by the individual – such as analytical and proactive thinking, the ability to deal with complexity and take responsibility, interpersonal capabilities, effective delivery and the ability to undertake personal growth
- The principal consulting skills and technical knowledge required for effective performance
- The purpose, role and impact of professionalism, integrity and working within codes of conduct and ethical guidelines in the best interests of the client

The consultancy market

- The structure and historical development of the management consultancy market
- The current market for management consultancy, including issues such as competition, types of consultancy interventions, and relevant legislative, economic, social and political factors, different types of consultancy (e.g. internal, external, public sector), and how their products, service and markets may differ

Personal professional development

- The importance of personal growth and continuing professional development

How to:

- Undertake a self-assessment to determine your current abilities and development needs
- Develop and implement a personal action plan for learning and self-development
- Review and reflect on your learning and development using tools such as the Institute's Management Consultancy Competence Framework (Appendix 1)
- Request and review feedback to improve your performance and development activities

The Consultancy Cycle:

Understanding:

- The diversity of consultancy interventions and approaches
- The consultancy cycle and typical inputs and deliverables for each stage of the cycle
- The principles and stages of a model for managing the consultancy cycles
- The types of problems, risks and issues which may arise during each phase of the consultancy cycle
- The importance of scoping interventions effectively and agreeing clear contracts with clients
- The need for interventions to have a clear, planned structure

How to:

- Select an appropriate style of consultancy intervention
- Manage client expectation of the intervention

The Client Relationship:

Understanding:

- The principles of consultation and negotiation in managing clients
- Methods of engaging your client
- What quantitative and qualitative information is essential to your role and responsibilities in working with clients
- The importance of professionalism, ethics and confidentiality in building and maintaining client relationships

How to:

- Establish credibility with your client
- Research your clients' needs effectively

Communication for Consultants:

Understanding:

- The importance of effective communication
- The principles and processes of effective communication and their impact on productive working relationships with clients, team members, colleagues and managers

How to:

- Apply listening and questioning techniques to understand issues and problems
- Recognise different forms of verbal and non-verbal behaviour and their appropriate uses
- Plan and manage meetings effectively

Effective Project Delivery:

Understanding:

- The importance of planning and managing a project and the impact of poor project planning and management on consultancy projects
- The components of a project plan
- The need for effective budgeting of time and resources
- The role and importance of quality assurance
- The management consultant's personal role in effective project delivery including upward management and client management techniques

How to:

- Apply personal time management techniques within the project context
- Establish an effective infrastructure to ensure project delivery
- Identify potential and actual risks to effective project completion

Structured Knowledge, Research and Analysis:

Understanding:

- The importance of identifying the client issue, applying a structured approach and selecting appropriate analytical tools and techniques to meet this need
- The methods of identifying, validating, filtering and sourcing the knowledge and information needed to take decisions in different contexts
- The importance of confidentiality when dealing with sensitive information
- The resources you have available to you and the role of effective networks in research

How to:

- Identify the client need effectively
- Apply a range of simple, recognised data gathering, problem solving and analytical tools and techniques (such as SWOT, PESTLE, etc) to achieve agreed outcomes
- Draw conclusions on the basis of analysing information both quantitatively and qualitatively

Learning outcomes

You will be assessed to ensure that you have met all the learning outcomes by demonstrating your knowledge and understanding of how to:

1. Produce a personal development plan, based on your self-assessment against the skills, knowledge and behaviours required by management consultants, which you can use to manage your development.
2. Describe the stages in the consultancy cycle and outline the risks associated with each stage.
3. Define why it is important to build effective relationships with clients and outline the techniques you would use to establish credibility with a client.
4. Review the range of communication methods available to the management consultant and plan and manage a client meeting.
5. Describe the key components of a project to enable effective delivery of a consultancy intervention.
6. Describe how you would manage diagnosis and analysis effectively in a given client context.
7. Describe how you would present your findings, conclusions and recommendations to the client following research, analysis and diagnosis.

Appendix 1

Management Consultancy Competence Framework Overview Diagram

