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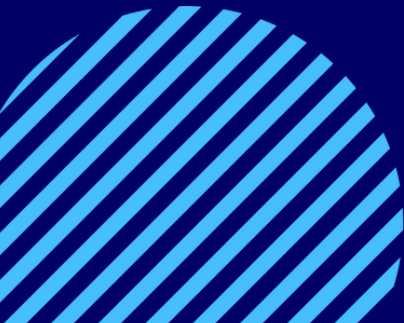
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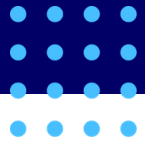
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The discussion highlights three structural shifts reshaping the consulting industry:

1. The market is moving toward **specialization and ecosystem-based competition**, where firms **differentiate by sector focus, capabilities, and geographic hubs**.
2. The traditional consulting model is evolving:
 - a. Clients demand **measurable impact and execution**, not just strategy.
 - b. Technology is **fully embedded** in delivery.
 - c. Teams are leaner, and hiring focuses on **hybrid, execution-oriented profiles**.
3. **Consulting hubs are becoming critical entry points**, with firms concentrating hiring and growth in specific geographies aligned with:
 - a. industry demand
 - b. client proximity
 - c. cost and talent dynamics

Overall, success in consulting is increasingly defined by the ability to **align geography (hub) + sector + service offering**.

MARKET & SECTOR OVERVIEW

Market Dynamics

The sector continues to grow, supported by:

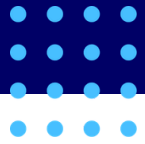
- Digital transformation across industries
- Organizational complexity (post-M&A, scaling, restructuring)
- Cost optimization pressures
- AI and automation as strategic drivers

Firm Categories

- Top-tier / Strategy firms
- Mid-tier / Specialist firms
- Boutiques / Niche players
- Technology & Digital consulting firms

Business Model Evolution

Key shifts:



- Outcome-based delivery models
- Technology embedded across services
- Increasing specialization by:
 - sector
 - capability
- Leaner, more senior teams

Consulting is evolving toward **execution + measurable value creation**.

HIRING & OPPORTUNITIES UPDATE

Talent Demand

Firms are prioritizing:

- Hybrid profiles (strategy + analytics + tech)
- Early client exposure
- Execution capability

Key Hiring Trends

- More selective hiring
- Preference for **execution-ready candidates**
- Higher expectations in structured thinking and problem solving

Talent Gaps

- Limited business + tech integration
- Lack of execution mindset
- Weak client-facing readiness

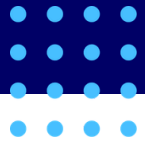
REGIONAL INSIGHTS & CONSULTING HUBS

Consulting Hubs (Critical Insight)

Consulting hiring and growth are increasingly **hub-driven**, not globally uniform.

Key hubs discussed:

- **Middle East (Dubai, Riyadh)**
 - Rapid growth driven by national transformation programs
 - High demand across sectors (public, infrastructure, energy)
 - More openness to international talent
- **London**
 - Highly competitive, saturated



- Strong in financial services and global strategy roles
- **Southern Europe (Madrid, Lisbon)**
 - Growing delivery hubs
 - Increasing presence of tech and operations consulting
- **Asia-Pacific hubs (Singapore, etc.)**
 - Strong in digital, financial services, and innovation

Strategic Implication of Hubs

Consulting is structurally **local + hub-based**:

- Firms hire where:
 - clients are located
 - growth is concentrated
 - talent pipelines are efficient

This makes geographic strategy a key career decision variable, not a secondary one.

Market Accessibility

Entry feasibility depends on combining:

- Language
- Visa requirements
- Prior experience
- Hub demand

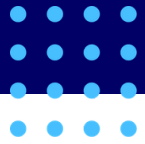
Critical insight: Choosing the right hub + sector + service combination significantly increases success probability.

DIRECT EMPLOYER FEEDBACK

Common Weaknesses

- Poor structuring
- Weak prioritization
- Lack of actionable thinking
- Reactive preparation

What Firms Value



- Structured thinking
- Clear motivation
- Practical problem solving
- Consistency
- Ability to operate in ambiguity

KEY INSIGHTS

Strategy = Hub + Sector + Service

One of the most important insights:

- Success in consulting recruiting is not generic – it requires a **targeted strategy across three dimensions**:
 - **Geography (Hub)** → Where hiring demand exists
 - **Sector → Industry focus** (e.g., healthcare, FS, energy)
 - **Service** → Type of consulting (strategy, ops, digital, etc.)

Misalignment across these dimensions significantly reduces chances.

Talent Positioning Gap

Profiles are:

- Strong academically
- Weak in execution and application

Need to position as **impact-driven and practical**

Market Perception Gap

Students still focus on:

- MBB / top-tier firms

While growth is happening in:

- boutiques
- mid-sized firms
- tech-enabled consulting

Specialization as a Competitive Advantage



Increasing importance of:

- industry expertise
- capability depth (AI, digital, operations)

Generalists are becoming less competitive

Client Expectations Shift

Clients expect:

- speed
- measurable impact
- implementation

Reduced tolerance for theoretical work.

IE COMPANY DEVELOPMENTS / MARKET SIGNALS

Key signals:

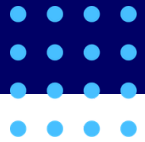
- Growth in:
 - transformation consulting
 - digital / AI
 - operational advisory
- Increased hiring in:
 - Middle East hubs
 - specialized boutiques
- Demand for:
 - internationally mobile talent
 - hybrid skillsets

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FOR TALENT & CAREERS

Build a Clear Consulting Strategy

Candidates must define:

- **Target hubs** (where they are competitive)
- **Target sectors** (aligned with background or interest)
- **Target services** (strategy, ops, digital, etc.)



Random applications significantly reduce success probability.

Positioning: From Academic to Execution

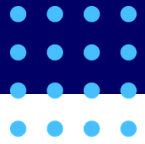
Talent should be positioned as:

- execution-ready
- client-capable
- impact-oriented

Smarter Employer Targeting

Instead of focusing only on top-tier firms:

- expand toward:
 - boutiques
 - mid-sized firms
 - high-growth hubs



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The session provided an overview of the consulting industry, explained how firms and career paths are structured, highlighted current market and hiring trends, and outlined practical advice for students preparing for consulting recruiting. A strong emphasis was placed on early preparation, strategic networking, specialization by industry or capability, and the importance of understanding how the market is changing under the impact of AI, execution-oriented work, boutique growth, and regional differences.

SESSION SCOPE & OBJECTIVES

The session was designed as a broad yet practical introduction to the consulting sector for students exploring careers in the field. It combined an industry overview with recruiting advice and concluded with a question-and-answer segment that addressed sector choices, events, interviews, certifications, and how to approach firms more strategically.

- Explain the consulting landscape at a high level, including firm types, capabilities, and industries.
- Share recent sector updates and explain how AI, hiring shifts, and regional dynamics are reshaping consulting.
- Highlight current opportunities, upcoming employer events, and examples of firms actively recruiting.
- Provide students with practical recruiting advice on preparation, networking, and differentiation.
- Leave time for questions so students could connect the general insights to their own goals and profiles.

CONSULTING INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

A central message from the session was that consulting is a large, resilient, and growing global industry. The presenters described it as an ecosystem rather than a single homogeneous market. Although growth is expected to be moderate rather than explosive, the industry continues to attract talent because it offers intellectual variety, exposure to senior decision-makers, and many career paths across industries and geographies.

Students were reminded that consulting growth is not evenly distributed across the world. Some markets are more mature and stable, while others are expanding more



quickly because of digital transformation, public investment, or structural economic shifts. This matters because a consultant's day-to-day work and long-term career trajectory can be shaped not only by the firm they join, but also by the region in which they work.

Key framing idea: Consulting should be understood across three dimensions at the same time: type of firm, type of problem solved, and sector or geography served.

TYPES OF CONSULTING FIRMS

The session distinguished between several categories of consulting firms, each with a different positioning, delivery model, and recruiting logic. This distinction is important because students often treat all consulting employers as if they were interchangeable, when in reality they offer very different experiences.

Strategy firms (MBB and similar players)

These firms are positioned at the high end of strategic advisory. Their work is often associated with growth strategy, market entry, transformation agendas, M&A-related strategic questions, and senior management problem-solving. They are also often the most structured and competitive in recruitment.

Big Four firms

These firms combine consulting with audit, tax, and other professional services. Their consulting practices are usually broader and often stronger in implementation, transformation, and large-scale delivery than pure strategy boutiques.

Technology and digital consulting firms

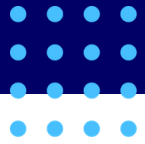
Companies such as Accenture and Capgemini were presented as major players in implementation-heavy work, especially around IT transformation, digital strategy, data, AI, and technology-enabled change.

Boutique and specialist consultancies

These firms tend to be smaller and more focused. They may specialize by capability, such as pricing or analytics, or by industry, such as healthcare or energy. The presenters noted that boutiques are increasingly gaining traction in the market.

Public sector and social impact firms

A further category includes firms focused on government, development, public policy, or



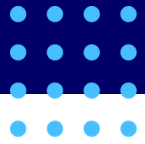
mission-oriented work. This broadens the consulting landscape for students who are not primarily targeting corporate strategy roles.

WHAT CONSULTANTS ACTUALLY WORK ON

The presenters explained consulting as being structured around types of business problems, commonly referred to as capabilities or practices. This framing helps students understand that consulting is not only about firms or industries, but also about the nature of the work performed.

Capability	Typical focus areas mentioned in the session
Strategy	Growth strategy, market entry, portfolio choices, and M&A-related strategic questions.
Management & Transformation	Improving performance, redesigning operating models, and supporting organizational change.
Operations	Process efficiency, supply chain improvement, and cost optimization.
Technology	Digital transformation, AI, cybersecurity, and technology-enabled execution.
Human Capital	People, leadership, organization design, and talent-related transformation
Risk & Sustainability	Compliance, ESG, regulation, risk management, and resilience-related projects.

One of the most important comments was that technology is no longer peripheral to consulting. AI, digital transformation, cybersecurity, and related tools are becoming central to an increasing share of projects, even in firms or practices that are not purely technical.



INDUSTRY SPECIALIZATION

The session clarified that consultants tend to specialize in two ways: by capability and by industry. On the industry side, students were introduced to several broad groups of sectors in which consulting firms operate. The presenters emphasized that many capabilities can be applied across industries, but the context, regulation, and client needs differ significantly from one sector to another.

Core industries

Energy, telecom, healthcare, and financial services.

Consumer and services sectors

Retail, consumer goods, and travel-related businesses.

Industrial and infrastructure sectors

Manufacturing, automotive, and real estate.

Public and investor-oriented segments

Public sector, governments, and private equity or investor-related work.

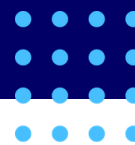
An important teaching point was that consultants often work at the intersection of these two dimensions. For example, a consultant may work on AI projects in healthcare, digital transformation in energy, or sustainability projects in industrial companies. This intersectional logic is essential for understanding both project staffing and career development.

The presenters also used the energy sector as a concrete illustration, showing a mix of generalist firms, specialist firms, implementation-oriented players, and in-house consulting teams. Similar logic was said to apply in other sectors such as telecom, healthcare, and financial services.

Additional emerging area: Beyond traditional industry practices, the session highlighted growing demand in leadership, organization, and human capital consulting. Smaller specialist firms are active in this space, and students interested in people and transformation topics should consider them alongside more traditional sector practices.

CAREER PROGRESSION IN CONSULTING

The presenters then moved from the market structure to the consulting career path. In firms such as McKinsey, Bain, and BCG, career progression was described as relatively



structured, with titles varying slightly by firm but following a similar pattern from analyst or associate roles up to partner-level positions.

- **Entry-level roles** focus on research, analysis, problem-solving support, and producing workstreams under supervision.
- **Mid-level roles** begin to own parts of the project, supervise junior team members, and contribute more directly to structuring the solution.
- **Manager-level roles** lead projects, coordinate teams, and manage the client relationship in a more visible way.
- **Senior leadership roles** increasingly revolve around client development, oversight of multiple engagements, and business generation.

The session distilled this evolution into a simple idea: the role changes over time from doing the work to leading the work. This is a useful way for students to understand not only progression but also what firms are evaluating at each stage: analytical strength at the beginning, then ownership, then leadership and commercial judgment.

STUDENT OUTCOMES AND EMPLOYER PATTERNS

To make the discussion more concrete, the session included information about where IE students typically land within consulting. According to the presenters, around two-thirds of students entering consulting join strategy or management consulting firms. A significant share also joins boutique or specialized firms, while a smaller portion enters technology consulting or social-impact-oriented roles.

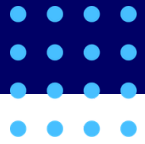
This point was used to challenge the common assumption that consulting careers are limited to a small number of large firms. Students were encouraged to think in terms of multiple entry points into the industry: large firms, strategy firms, tech-oriented firms, specialist boutiques, and even in-house or adjacent roles.

CURRENT MARKET AND SECTOR UPDATES

A major part of the session focused on what is changing in consulting right now. The overall narrative was balanced: the market remains attractive and is benefiting from AI-related demand, but it is also becoming more fragmented, more execution-oriented, and more demanding for candidates.

AI as a transformative force

AI is not just a trend in consulting marketing. The presenters gave examples such as OpenAI partnerships with major consulting firms and firms tracking their own internal



AI usage. The implication is that AI is changing delivery models, workflows, and client expectations.

Fragmentation of the competitive landscape

Boutiques and AI-focused start-ups are gaining ground alongside established global firms. This means students should think beyond the traditional employer hierarchy and consider whether a specialist environment may actually offer better fit or faster exposure.

Pressure on pricing and budgets

The market is growing, but not without tension. References to government spending cuts and competition between boutiques and larger firms illustrated that clients are more cost-conscious and firms face pressure to prove value.

Geographic divergence

Growth patterns differ substantially across markets. Saudi Arabia and DACH were mentioned as examples of how market momentum depends on regional investment cycles, buyer demand, and local conditions.

Risk side of AI

The presenters also raised concerns around AI-related uncertainty, including issues such as data security and reputational risks. This reinforced the idea that AI creates both opportunity and exposure.

GLOBAL HIRING TRENDS IN CONSULTING

The hiring section of the session was particularly practical. The presenters argued that consulting recruitment is changing in ways that students need to anticipate well before application season. The message was clear: stronger preparation is required, and traditional assumptions about hiring volumes and timelines are no longer sufficient.

Firms are introducing digital assessments, AI-enabled case simulations, and more technology-based evaluation tools. Candidates may be expected not only to understand AI conceptually, but to use it effectively.

Consulting work is shifting from pure strategy toward execution and measurable impact. As a result, firms increasingly want candidates who can operate in implementation-heavy, hands-on environments.

Lean teams are becoming more common, supported by AI and automation. This can reduce overall hiring volumes and raise the quality threshold for entry-level candidates. Recruitment cycles are becoming less predictable and more closely tied to project



pipelines. Students therefore need to monitor opportunities continuously rather than waiting for a single standardized season.

Specialized and mid-sized consultancies are expanding quickly. This broadens the hiring landscape but also rewards applicants who can show a clear angle or niche fit. In-house strategy, data, and transformation roles are becoming more attractive alternatives, partly because they can offer stronger work-life balance and deeper sector exposure.

Practical implication for students: Students who prepare late, apply generically, or rely only on a small set of famous firms are likely to be disadvantaged. Preparation must begin earlier and be more targeted than in the past.

REGIONAL INSIGHTS

The session dedicated a full section to regional differences, underlining that consulting behaves differently depending on market maturity, regulation, client profile, and public investment. This helps students understand why the same firm can offer very different experiences across offices.

North America

Presented as the most mature and most competitive market. Firms are moving from strategy into AI-driven execution, often alongside technology partners. Pricing is becoming more outcome-based and competition is intensifying, especially as boutiques gain share in specialized work.

Europe

Described as stable but more complex. Regulation around AI, data, ESG, and energy transition is a defining feature. Local expertise and the ability to navigate compliance-heavy environments are increasingly important differentiators.

APAC

Positioned as the fastest-growing region and a structural growth engine for consulting. India was highlighted as both a local market and a global delivery and AI hub, while governments in the region are pushing digital and regulatory agendas

Middle East

Framed as a high-growth region driven by public investment and large-scale



transformation programs, sometimes described as a mega-project economy. Sovereign AI, data infrastructure, and localization requirements are increasingly relevant.

Latin America

resented as a market with real opportunities but also significant volatility. Demand is more sensitive to macroeconomic conditions, making project flow more selective and less predictable.

OPPORTUNITIES, EMPLOYER EVENTS, AND ACTIVE HIRING SIGNALS

Students were repeatedly encouraged to use the IE careers platform and related resources proactively, especially ahead of the career forum. The presenters stressed that opportunities already existed across regions and seniority levels, but that students needed to research employers in advance and prioritize where to invest their time.

Consulting Thursdays and case-cracking sessions were positioned as key recurring touchpoints with employers.

The career forum was highlighted as a major near-term opportunity, with some firms offering coffee chats and others using on-campus interviews as the first step in a formal process.

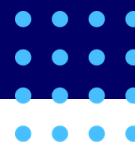
Students were encouraged to check company websites and open roles before attending events, rather than asking basic questions that could easily be answered through prior research.

Several employer examples were mentioned, including Interpath, Accenture, Deloitte, Gartner, Roland Berger, FTI, and others, often with comments about geography, profile fit, or current hiring momentum.

A notable point was the positioning of Interpath as a deals and restructuring advisory firm spun out of KPMG, with strong private equity and value creation exposure, a more entrepreneurial culture, and active hiring. This type of employer was presented as attractive for students interested in alternatives to traditional large-firm consulting.

RECRUITING ADVICE: WHAT ACTUALLY MOVES THE NEEDLE

The most actionable part of the session centered on how students should prepare for consulting recruitment. The presenters explicitly distinguished between general interest



in consulting and serious preparation. The latter requires planning, discipline, and strategic positioning.

Start early

Top candidates begin preparing six to eight months before applications open. Waiting until deadlines are near reduces the chance of building strong cases, polished stories, and meaningful connections.

Network strategically

Networking is not about volume. It is about asking good questions, researching the firm beforehand, and showing enough understanding to have a serious conversation with recruiters, alumni, or consultants.

Build sector fluency

When two candidates are equally prepared, the one who can speak the language of a given industry or practice often has an advantage. Students should read firm reports, understand the kinds of projects a target team does, and connect their own background to that work.

Use structured case preparation resources

Case-preparation tools, consulting workshops, interview preparation, and mock interviews were all recommended. The team made it clear that IE offers support, but students still need to do the work themselves.

Define a personal consulting story

Candidates should be able to explain why consulting, why a particular firm, and what angle they bring. For those without direct consulting experience, transferable skills and differentiated background become especially important.

Strengthen communication and analytical skills

Problem solving alone is not enough. Students must communicate clearly, present their reasoning in a structured way, and perform effectively in client-facing contexts.

Develop adjacent skills

Digital, transformation, AI, sustainability, data, cloud, and other technical or regulatory skills can add value even for non-technical consulting roles.

MAIN THEMES FROM THE Q&A

The final part of the session surfaced several recurring student concerns, and these help identify the areas where students most need guidance.



Event access and eligibility

Students asked about how to register for specific sessions and whether some events were limited to certain programmes, such as the MBA. This showed the need for clearer segmentation of opportunities by target audience.

Healthcare and pharmatech consulting

One student asked about the future of healthcare consulting. The response emphasized that healthcare is a growing sector and suggested that students interested in it should look both at broad consulting firms and at healthcare-specialist boutiques.

Career forum interviews

Students asked how coffee chats and interviews were allocated. The explanation clarified that, for some employers, students needed to apply through the careers portal first, after which firms would select whom they wanted to meet on campus.

Certifications for consulting

A question was raised about whether consulting has an equivalent to finance certifications such as the CFA. The response indicated that there is no universal consulting certification, although AI, sustainability, and technical tools can be useful add-ons depending on the firm and role.

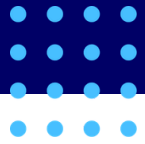
Online events and continued engagement

Students unable to attend in person asked about virtual events. The presenters explained that future events may be promoted through the newsletter, IE Connects, and the employer-event tracker.

OVERALL TAKEAWAYS

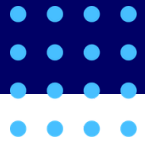
Taken together, the session delivered a clear strategic message: consulting remains Students can no longer rely on a generic “I want consulting” narrative. Instead, they need to understand the landscape, choose their targets deliberately, prepare earlier, and show evidence of both analytical strength and informed motivation.

The presenters encouraged students to move from passive interest to active preparation. That means identifying target firms and sectors early, building familiarity with how the industry works, taking advantage of events and preparation resources, and approaching recruiters with better questions and stronger positioning. The ultimate message was practical and empowering: success in consulting recruiting is not only about profile quality, but also about preparation quality.



 **SUGGESTED ACTION
CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS**

1. Review the IE careers portal regularly
2. Identify three to five target firms before each major event
3. Prepare a tailored question for each employer
4. Begin case and interview preparation well in advance
5. Strengthen one or two differentiating skills such as AI, data, sustainability, or sector expertise
6. Convert general interest in consulting into a credible, specific personal story.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The session confirmed three structural shifts in the consulting industry:

1. The global consulting market continues to grow (3–5% annually), with **Asia-Pacific as the fastest-growing region**.
2. The traditional consulting model is evolving:
 - a. Clients now pay for **impact and measurable outcomes**, not hours.
 - b. AI is no longer optional – it is core to delivery.
 - c. Teams are smaller, hiring is more selective, and profiles are more technical.
3. Boutiques and mid-sized firms are growing faster than large players in several verticals (especially AI, digital, supply chain, cybersecurity).

Additionally, students expressed clear concerns around:

- Sector filtering (e.g., healthcare, financial services).
- English-only markets.
- Visa sponsorship.
- Differences between MBB vs Big4 vs boutiques.
- Clarity on MBB recruiting processes.

MARKET & SECTOR OVERVIEW

Market Growth

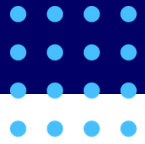
- Expected global growth: 3–5% annually.
- Asia-Pacific remains the fastest-growing region.

Firm Categories

- **MBB** (McKinsey, Bain, BCG)
- **Big4 + Strategy arms** (Strategy&, EY-Parthenon, Monitor Deloitte)
- **Technology & Digital Consulting** (Accenture, NTT Data, etc.)
- **Boutiques & Specialists** (Simon-Kucher, Alvarez & Marsal, AlphaSights, etc.)
- **Social Impact & Public Sector**

Business Model Evolution

- Key industry shifts:
 - Outcome-based pricing.
 - AI embedded in delivery.



- Increased sector specialization.
- Generalists becoming more technical.
- Leaner teams and more selective hiring.
- Consulting is shifting from “strategy advice” to “implementation + measurable value creation.”

HIRING & OPPORTUNITIES UPDATE

MBA Structured Recruiting (MBB)

- Active structured processes:
 - Bain: Recruiter hour (networking opportunity).
 - McKinsey: Online assessment + structured timeline.
 - BCG: Upcoming structured email communication.
- Key reminders:
 - 3-day deadline to complete online assessments once received.
 - Application deadlines in March.
 - Preparation must be proactive, not reactive.

Junior-Level Hiring (Mentioned Firms)

- Step Change
- Artifact
- Alvarez & Marsal
- AlphaSights
- Accuracy
- Management Solutions
- Accenture

Senior-Level Hiring

- FTI
- Orphoz
- Cornerstone (India)
- Accenture (LATAM)
- Capgemini (Madrid)
- Mastercard
- Grant Thornton

REGIONAL INSIGHTS

North America

ROI-driven, outcome-based pricing



Europe	ESG & regulatory-driven demand
Asia-Pacific	Digitalization, smart cities, financial modernization
Middle East	National transformation programs, infrastructure, energy
Latin America	Volatile growth, digital banking, infrastructure

English-Friendly Markets (Student Concern)

- Markets generally more open to English-only profiles:
 - Middle East
 - UK
 - Luxembourg (case-dependent)
 - Netherlands (team-dependent)
- However:
 - Sponsorship + no local language + no prior experience = triple barrier.
 - Home country applications often remain the most viable entry strategy.
- This reflects structural industry reality: consulting firms serve local clients → language matters.

DIRECT EMPLOYER FEEDBACK

Common weaknesses observed in candidates:

- Difficulty structuring ideas.
- Weak prioritization.
- Unstructured calculations.
- Reactive preparation (starting only once interview is scheduled).

What firms value:

- Authenticity.
- Clear motivation (Why consulting? Why this firm? Why you?).
- Industry knowledge.
- Consistent case practice.
- Strong personal experience interview performance.

STUDENT CONCERNS & KEY INSIGHTS

Top Employers Clarification

The “Top Employers” slide represented firms hiring the most IE students — not acceptance rates.



Important clarification for future sessions.

MBB Recruiting Process

- Students requested deeper clarity on:
 - Exact interview flow.
 - Coffee chat vs case-first process.
 - Screening mechanics.
- Opportunity identified:
 - Dedicated MBB recruiting deep dive session needed

Sector Filtering (High Demand)

Students want:

- A structured list of consulting firms by sector:
 - Healthcare
 - Financial Services
 - Private Equity
 - Energy
 - Technology
 - etc.
- This represents a clear CRM opportunity:
 - Sector tagging by industry vertical.

Visa Sponsorship & Geography Strategy

Strong student concern about:

- Rejections due to language.
- Sponsorship limitations.
- UK market saturation.

Opportunity:

→ “English-Friendly Markets & Sponsorship Reality” briefing session.

Healthcare Consulting Interest

Specific interest from healthcare background student (Pharmacy).

Need identified:

- Mapping firms with strong healthcare practices.
- Distinguishing generalist firms vs healthcare-focused boutiques



IE COMPANY DEVELOPMENTS

Highlighted companies:

- Orphoz (2–7 years experience hiring)
- APCO (Dubai expansion + Asia discussions)
- NTT Data (Spain & LATAM – AI & data focus)
- Simon-Kucher (CV book shared)
- EY Germany (German speakers)
- BTS (Leadership & strategy execution)
- AlphaSights (Visa sponsorship – London & Dubai)
- Step Change (Global expansion)
- BCG – Local hiring in Saudi Arabia
- Saudi public sector digital transformation roles

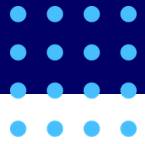
FINAL CONCLUSION

Consulting remains strong, but it is:

- More technical.
- More specialized.
- More impact-driven.
- More selective.

Success now requires:

- Proactive preparation.
- Sector awareness.
- Technical capabilities.
- Strategic geographic planning



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RECENT GLOBAL NEWS & MARKET TRENDS

- **AI is reshaping the consulting industry**, forcing firms to rethink pricing models, talent needs, and pyramid structures.
- **Entry-level salaries have been frozen** at many major firms, partly due to AI-driven efficiency and decreased need for large junior teams.
- Firms are reconsidering **value propositions and monetization models** as automation becomes common.
- **Boutique consulting firms are gaining relevance** because they are more specialized, agile, and often more open to hiring international profiles.
- Growth in **freelance/project-based roles** as companies shift to flexible resourcing models.



REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Middle East (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar)

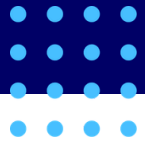
- High demand in **consulting, AI/data/digital, and cybersecurity**.
- Governments are the main clients; **recent 2025 budget cuts** temporarily slowed hiring.
- Hiring priority:
 - Saudi nationals (~45% quota)
 - Arabic speakers
 - International profiles (mainly for mid–senior roles)
- Junior roles often favor locals; mid/senior positions more open internationally.
- Growth in **leadership & organizational consulting** and **digital transformation boutiques**.
- Dubai/UAE acts as a **regional hub** and is more open to non-nationals

Southeast Asia (Singapore)

- Strong market for **digital transformation and strategy**.
- Highly competitive but dynamic.

Australia / New Zealand

- Mature markets with focus on **sustainability, energy transition, and digital infrastructure**.
- Opportunities in digital consulting and ESG.



Benelux / Netherlands / Luxembourg

- Attractive for international profiles (English-friendly).
- High demand in **digital, sustainability, pricing, and finance**.
- Good opportunities in Big Four and regional boutiques.

India

- Rapid expansion in **strategy, digital transformation, and sustainability**.
- Indian giants (Tata, Infosys) provide consulting experience with global exposure.

Latin America (Mexico, Brazil, Chile, etc.)

- Opportunities concentrated in **Mexico City, São Paulo, Santiago**.
- Big Four skewed toward audit; strategy roles limited.
- **Boutiques growing**, especially in Mexico.

United Kingdom

- Competitive environment.
- Advantage for graduates due to **post-study visa** (no need for sponsorship).
- Industry demand in **digital, AI, ESG**, though slowed by macroeconomic uncertainty.



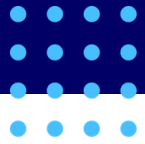
IE RESOURCES TO SUPPORT CONSULTING ASPIRANTS

- **Career Advisor** (main point of contact):
 - CV and cover letter review
 - Mock interviews
 - Individual strategy planning
- **Workshops & group dynamics**
 - Behavioral interview practice
 - Case studies and simulations
- **Case Coach** for case interview practice (market sizing, M&A, healthcare, luxury, etc.).
- **Career Portal** with updated job postings.
- **Excel and internal tools** for tracking opportunities.
- Networking opportunities with employers and alumni.



APPLICATION STRATEGY & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Start exploring opportunities **8 months to 1 year before graduation**.
- Adapt your CV to job descriptions using **strategic keywords**.
- Include **work permit status and languages** at the top of the CV.
- If direct consulting isn't feasible initially, alternative entry paths include:
 - Business Development



- Corporate Strategy
- Supply Chain
- Project Management
- Transformation / implementation-focused firms

MOST IN-DEMAND SKILLS IN CONSULTING

Soft Skills

- Problem solving
- Communication & storytelling
- Leadership and teamwork
- Client management
- Adaptability and quick learning
- Presentation skills (especially for C-level audiences)

Hard / Technical Skills

- Data & analytics
- Digital tools
- Project management
- Sustainability knowledge
- Relevant certifications

These are especially helpful for candidates without consulting experience.

LANGUAGES AND EMPLOYABILITY

- **Spain:** entering consulting without Spanish is *very difficult*.
- Same for most countries:
 - **Germany** → German required
 - **Latin America** → Spanish required
- English-only friendly markets:
 - **Netherlands**
 - **Luxembourg**
 - Some **Middle East** roles
- **Important note:** You cannot realistically change *country + industry + language + work permit* all at once.

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

- Intensive preparation with **Case Coach**.



- Behavioral mock interviews with the advisor.
- Stay updated with industry and client news.
- Prepare strong examples to demonstrate achievements and transferable skills.

ENTREPRENEURS ENTERING THE CORPORATE WORLD

- A background as an entrepreneur is **valuable**, offering:
 - Ownership and autonomy
 - Problem-solving experience
 - Cross-functional exposure (finance, sales, operations, clients)
- Recommended targets:
 - Innovation
 - New business development
 - Strategy roles
 - Transformation projects
- The key is to articulate clearly **which entrepreneurial skills transfer to consulting**.

CHANGES IN THE MARKET & ROLE OF TALENT & CAREERS

- The consulting market is more competitive and volatile.
- Talent & Careers supports students with:
 - Networking
 - Market insights
 - Skills development
 - Employer connections
- They are expanding events, tools, and partnerships to match market needs.

FINAL NOTES

- IE will continue offering resources, classes, and tools to support students aiming at consulting.
- Students can contact Mariana or the team through email or LinkedIn.
- **Case Coach licenses can be extended** if they expire.



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OBJECTIVE OF THE SESSION

Provide MBA students with practical insights and tailored advice to navigate consulting career paths, prepare effectively for internships, and position themselves strategically for full-time consulting roles in regions such as the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Africa.

KEY THEMES

1. Understanding the Consulting Landscape

- The consulting sector remains highly competitive, especially in the GCC (Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Doha). Boutique and specialized firms (e.g., Dalberg, DT Global) currently show more hiring activity than MBB or Big Four firms.
- Candidates from diverse backgrounds can succeed by clearly demonstrating analytical skills, strategic thinking, and problem-solving capabilities.
- Returning to a familiar market (e.g., India) can be easier, but transitioning directly to the Middle East is possible with strong preparation and networking.

2. Pathways into Consulting

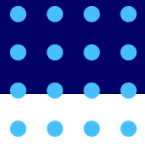
- Start with internships — a key gateway to full-time roles.
- Focus on developing case-solving skills using CaseCoach and peer practice.
- Highlight transferable experience in strategy, operations, and business development.
- Tailor CV and cover letter with keywords such as *analytical, strategy, consulting, impact*.

3. Strategic Job Search & Networking

- Maintain a personal job tracker with company links, application dates, and contact notes.
- Follow recruiters and firms on LinkedIn; monitor their posts for openings.
- Reach out to alumni and professionals with short, personalized messages (ask for 15-minute conversations, not favors).
- Engage actively with the Consulting Club and participate in case competitions.

ACTION STEPS FOR STUDENTS

- Define your top 5–10 target firms across GCC, SEA, and Africa.
- Start case interview preparation immediately; schedule peer practice sessions.
- Update your CV with consulting-relevant achievements and key terms.
- Network weekly with IE alumni in consulting and regional recruiters (LinkedIn).



- Attend upcoming career events (Jan–Mar) and regional insight sessions.
- Consider internships at boutique firms or impact consultancies as an entry path.
- Track applications and maintain consistent follow-up after each conversation.

INTERVIEW PREPARATION TIPS

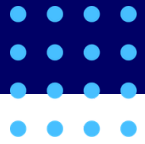
- Prepare 15–20 STAR stories (Situation, Task, Action, Result) showcasing leadership, analytical thinking, and teamwork.
- Focus on problem-solving logic – consulting interviews revolve around structured reasoning.
- Practice with CaseCoach and participate in mock sessions with peers.
- Refine body language and communication; recommended resource: TED Talk – “Your Body Language Shapes Who You Are” by Amy Cuddy.

REGIONAL INSIGHTS

- GCC: Riyadh and Doha present stronger entry opportunities compared to Dubai/Abu Dhabi.
- Southeast Asia: Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia are open to English-speaking candidates with minimal visa issues.
- Africa: Kenya and South Africa emerging as growing markets for impact consulting.
- Europe: The Netherlands and Luxembourg hire English speakers, though work permits may be required.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Preparation drives opportunity: strong research and focused networking make the difference.
- Internships are the fastest way to enter consulting and convert to full-time offers.
- Be concise and intentional in outreach – quality over quantity.
- Follow up consistently and stay visible on LinkedIn.
- Leverage IE’s alumni network and consulting clubs to build industry connections.



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OBJECTIVE OF THE SESSION

The purpose of the meeting was to update students on the current state of the consulting market (2025 outlook), clarify which firms IE Talent & Careers is currently engaging with, and explain how students can better position themselves for upcoming opportunities. It was also meant to translate what the team is seeing from companies (regions, profiles, formats) into something actionable for students.

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

The Talent & Careers – Consulting team explained that consulting firms are not in a phase of massive, open hiring like previous years. Instead, the market is more **selective and segmented**. Because of that, IE is working on:

1. Expanding relationships with **more offices and geographies** of the same firms.
2. Bringing **very concrete opportunities** to IE students (events, job postings, online sessions).
3. Helping students **read the market** so they don't only look at "MBB + Madrid/London," but at the real pockets of demand.

This session is part of a series the team wants to run every few weeks so students stay aligned with how the market is actually moving.

MARKET SITUATION IN CONSULTING

Hiring mood

- Firms are still hiring, but **not in a uniform or aggressive way**.
- They are prioritizing **very specific skill sets**: AI, data & analytics, digital transformation, and (to a lesser degree) sustainability/ESG.
- Many firms are investing in **AI upskilling for current employees**, so external candidates who can speak AI/digital have an advantage.

Acquisitions and smaller firms

- A trend was highlighted: large consulting brands are **acquiring small, highly specialized boutiques** (often <50 people) in AI, digital, CX or sustainability.
- Takeaway for students: don't only target the global brand — look at the **satellite firms** being acquired or collaborating with them, because they can be more flexible in hiring.



Functional profiles

- Generalist consulting roles still exist, but there's growing visibility for:
 - **Data / Analytics**
 - **Digital / Product / Transformation**
 - **Knowledge / research / expert network models** (AlphaSights-style)
- It was noted that some of these roles are not always captured in the typical “consulting job list,” so tracking them separately would help.

GEOGRAPHIES AND WHERE THE DEMAND IS

The team clarified that hiring is not concentrated only in Spain or the UK:

- **Middle East (especially KSA/Riyadh):** very active, many projects, even for people based in Dubai or London. A big share of current projects in the region ends up connected to Saudi.
- **Lisbon:** used as a hub for several firms to serve different regions.
- **Poland / Eastern Europe:** several service and consulting-delivery teams are hiring there.
- **Montreal / North America:** mentioned as active.
- Message to students: **don't limit applications to Madrid/London** — IE is speaking with other offices so students have more access points.

COMPANIES IE IS CURRENTLY ENGAGING WITH

1. **Big 4** – ongoing relationship, different formats (workshops, online sessions, postings).
2. **Top strategy firms** – presence mainly through on-campus formats like Consulting Thursdays.
3. **Regional / GCC firms** – e.g. **Strategic Gears** in Saudi, growing and open to IE talent.
4. **Knowledge / intelligence / expert network firms** – relevant for students who like consulting-style work but in a different structure.
5. **Boutiques in growing markets** – IE is trying to bring more of these, especially where hiring is still dynamic.

The approach is: if one office is slow, connect students with **another office of the same firm** (Germany, Portugal, Middle East, Netherlands, etc.).

17 UPCOMING AND RECENT ACTIVITIES

- **Deloitte online event** with universities on **19 November**.
- **PwC workshops** (Spanish office + online).



- **Consulting Thursdays at IE Tower** with firms like McKinsey/Bain.
- **Consolidation with Strategic Gears** (Saudi).
- Exploratory conversations with firms in the **consulting ecosystem** (market intelligence, due diligence support) to broaden the offer.

IE'S CURRENT FOCUS

The Consulting team is prioritizing:

1. **Keeping current company relationships active** so roles continue to be posted for IE.
2. **Opening other geographies** within the same firms to give students more options.
3. **Translating market movements** (AI acquisitions, GCC growth, hubs like Lisbon) into concrete guidance for students.
4. **Maintaining a regular insights cadence** so students stay informed.

STUDENT TAKEAWAYS

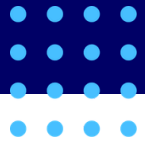
Students were encouraged to:

1. **Broaden geography** (apply to Lisbon, Poland, Middle East, Netherlands, etc.).
2. **Look at smaller / recently acquired firms** as an entry point.
3. **Show AI/digital literacy** on CV and in conversations.
4. **Attend IE events** because firms often share updates there first.
5. **Stay in touch with Talent & Careers** so they can be matched quickly when a company asks for a specific profile.

WHAT STUDENTS MENTIONED / REQUESTS FROM STUDENTS

During the session, several students shared needs and preferences that will help the team shape future activities:

- **More online activities:** students asked for more virtual sessions so those who are not in Madrid (or who are in internships) can still connect with firms.
- **More sessions with international offices:** they specifically mentioned interest in offices outside Spain, for example the Netherlands, and in general Northern Europe or other EU hubs that are hiring.
- **Visibility of non-Madrid roles:** students want to see more clearly which offices are open (e.g. Middle East, Netherlands, Portugal, Poland) so they can target applications better.



- **Better mapping of data/tech roles in consulting firms:** linked to Juan's point, students want those roles to appear in the consulting communications so they don't miss them.

So, part of the follow-up for the team will be to **increase the number of online/remote touchpoints** and to **invite more international offices** to join calls, not only Spanish ones.

POINT RAISED BY JUAN (DATA ROLES IN MBB)

Juan highlighted that firms like McKinsey and BCG are posting **more data-oriented and analytics roles**, and these are not always reflected in the usual trackers. The suggestion was to:

- Start **including these roles** in the consulting communication.
- Make it clearer to students that **consulting firms are hiring for hybrid profiles**, not only pure strategy.
- Align this with the student request above for more visibility of international and specialized roles.

CONCLUSION

The overall tone of the meeting was: the market is **not closed**, it's **more specific**. IE is responding by diversifying companies, formats and geographies. Students asked for more online and more international exposure (Netherlands was one example), and the team will take that into account for future programming. If students adapt their search to this reality — broader geography, AI/digital skills, and openness to smaller firms — their chances improve significantly.



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Presented by Natalia Galavís & Mariana Medina

Thank you for joining our **Talent & Careers Sector Insight Session** focused on **Consulting**. This session was designed to give you practical, strategic insights into how the consulting industry hires and how you can position yourself for success.

SECTOR OVERVIEW & KEY PLAYERS

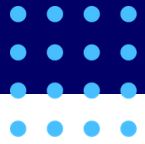
- Consulting remains one of the most attractive career paths for students at IE due to its **fast-paced learning curve, exposure to diverse industries, and structured career progression**.
- The market is led by **global strategy firms (MBB)**, large **multiservice firms (Big Four, Accenture, etc.)**, and an expanding number of **specialized boutiques** in areas such as digital transformation, healthcare, sustainability, and financial advisory.
- Boutique and mid-sized firms can offer **niche expertise and earlier client exposure**, while global firms provide **structured training, international opportunities, and prestige**.

MARKET & HIRING TRENDS

- Firms are **adapting to slower economic growth** by focusing on efficiency, cost transformation, and digital integration.
- Demand is increasing for **consultants with cross-disciplinary skills**: digital strategy, data analytics, AI, and ESG advisory are in high demand.
- **Recruitment cycles are shifting**: strategy firms often recruit early, while other consultancies have rolling or project-based hiring needs.

IN-DEMAND PROFILES & ROLES

- **Problem-solving, analytical thinking, and structured communication** are core skills across all firms.
- **Strong quantitative abilities** (Excel, modeling, data analysis) paired with **storytelling and client-facing skills** are especially valued.
- Profiles with **international exposure, adaptability, and language skills** have an edge in multicultural teams.
- Entry-level roles typically include **Business Analyst/Associate Consultant** (strategy firms) and **Consultant/Junior Consultant** (multiservice/boutiques).



RECRUITMENT PROCESS & PREPARATION

- **Case interviews** remain the gold standard in consulting hiring. Students should practice both **structured problem-solving** and **clear communication under pressure**.
- **Behavioral interviews** are equally important: firms look for teamwork, leadership, and evidence of resilience.
- Preparation tips:
 - Start case practice early (peer-to-peer, online platforms, mock interviews).
 - Use **IE resources** (clubs, coaching, alumni network) for live practice and feedback.
 - Tailor CVs to highlight **analytical achievements, leadership experiences, and international exposure**.

LIVE OPPORTUNITIES & HIDDEN JOB MARKET

- **IE Talent & Careers** is actively tracking consulting opportunities across regions — from structured graduate programs to boutique firm openings.
- Beyond published roles, **hidden opportunities** can be accessed by:
 - Leveraging the **IE Alumni network** in consulting.
 - Proactive networking with recruiters and consultants on LinkedIn.
 - Attending industry events, panels, and company presentations.

WHY CONSULTING? WHY NOW?

- Consulting offers an unparalleled platform to build **versatile skills**, gain **broad industry exposure**, and accelerate your career trajectory.
- Even in uncertain economic climates, firms continue to value **high-performing talent** who can help clients navigate complexity.

NEXT STEPS

1. Begin structured **case prep** — aim for consistency, not just volume.
2. Review **target firms' timelines** and align application strategy accordingly.
3. Engage with **Talent & Careers resources** (workshops, coaching, and job boards).
4. Network strategically — start reaching out to alumni and professionals now.