The Fit Interview

July 17, 2012
Who am I?

• Oren Shur
• Columbia Chemical Engineering PhD
• Former member of CGCC
• Starting at BCG NYC on August 1

How much should you trust my advice?
• I’ve been on a few interviews
• That’s for you to decide
Typical Interview Process

- Usually two rounds (plus PST at McKinsey)
- First round with junior people
- Second round with senior people
- Each round usually consists of two or three interviews
- Usually 20-30 minutes of case and 20-30 minutes of fit in each interview
Purpose of Fit Interview

- Assess your “fit” within the company
- Past work experiences
- Past team/leadership activities
- Impactful things you have done
- Evaluate understanding of consulting and company in specific
Focus Areas of Questions

• Leadership
• Teamwork
• Impact
• Achievement
Common Questions

• Why consulting/company X?
• Tell me about a time that you demonstrated leadership
• Describe a time you made a substantial impact on the outcome of a team project you were on
• Talk about a time you dealt with a difficult person
• Tell me about a time you were on a team and had to persuade them of your point of view
More Common Questions

• What personal accomplishment are you most proud of?
• What sort of leader are you? How do you like to manage your teams?
• Tell me about your biggest strength/weakness
• Tell me about a time you had to lead a team through a difficult situation
• Describe a time that you set a significant goal for yourself and achieved. How did you do it?
Random Questions

• You’ll probably get at least one random question that you’ll have to improvise

Two examples:
• Tell me about a time you were recognized by your peers for an accomplishment
• What do you think is the most interesting business problem that companies face today?
Overall Strategy

• Working in the lab/doing research are not really enough
• Participate in leadership activities
• Try to have a significant impact in whatever you are working on
• Since you are going to have 2 or 3 interviews per round, you’ll need at least that many unique stories to tell
The Oren Fit Matrix…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resume item</th>
<th>Teamwork</th>
<th>Persuasion</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Difficult person</th>
<th>Challenging situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lab work</td>
<td></td>
<td>Convince advisor to go along with project x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting club</td>
<td></td>
<td>Case comp</td>
<td>Executive board member</td>
<td></td>
<td>No one, of course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping people club</td>
<td></td>
<td>Convincing school to give us funding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generic amazing thing</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Telling the Story - S T A R

• STAR is a commonly suggested approach for telling interview stories

• SITUATION/TASK

• ACTION YOU TOOK

• RESULTS

• Everything should be very structured and organized (similar to how you would address a case)

• Everything should be very specific – you will be pressed on this point
Additional Prep Tips

• For every situation in your matrix, try and STAR it as best you can
• Find a partner and practice fit just like you practice cases
• Everyone says not to practice because you will sound too rehearsed
  – I tend to disagree, but obviously don’t have your stories memorized word for word
Common Mistakes to Avoid

• Stories that lack actual impact
• Not clearly describing the specific steps you took
• Not being succinct and to the point
• Not focusing on what you did specifically (should be say “I” more than “we”)
• Stories that don’t actually paint you in a positive light
Questions and Group Practice

• Everyone take 5 minutes and think of 2 or three stories that illustrate your leadership skills
• Try and STAR each of them
• Pair up and tell each other your stories