

OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

Consulting Skills Test Resources

Many of the top consulting companies test potential employees' knowledge in logic, math, and analytical skills in addition to their business sense. This comes in the form of case interviews, but also in the form of tests such as McKinsey's Problem Solving Test (PST), Boston Consulting Group's BCG Potential Test and others like them.

The PST is a paper-based test all potential McKinsey employees must take during the interview process. It tests applicants on logic and math and is comprised of twenty six questions. Applicants have sixty minutes to complete the test and are not permitted to use calculators or scrap paper during the test.

The BCG Potential Test targets similar skillsets and is conducted online, but the format of the test does not appear to be standardized. Previous test takers have reported 50 questions in 50 minutes; 23 questions in 45 minutes; 53 questions in 50 minutes etc. There are less resources available for the BCG Potential Test than the McKinsey PST, but the knowledge and skills required to succeed at one will likely lead to success with the other. Likewise, other top consulting firms such as Bain utilize similar tests to aid in the hiring process in addition to case interviews. *Do not ignore the importance of these tests*, as they can significantly help or hinder you depending on how you perform.

We've tried to assist your preparation by finding some resources that may potentially help you. Some of the following resources are free; others offer a free sample, but require payment for the full program. Additionally, there are free videos at the bottom of this document. OCS isn't endorsing any of the following programs, merely providing potential resources in order to get you on the right track to successfully take the PST, or tests like it. Lastly, previous test takers have also recommended GMAT Critical Reasoning and GMAT math in order to help practice as well as sharpen those math skills without a calculator. For Bain's test the GMAT analytical exercises and the GMAT Integrating Reasoning may help in preparation.

Free Resources

Practice tests and a coaching guide from McKinsey can be found at the following link once you scroll to the bottom of the page. www.mckinsey.com/careers/interviewing

Tips and assistance with question types designed to increase successful test taking prepared by mconsultingprep.com. mconsultingprep.com/problem-solving-test/how-to-prepare

Mconsultingprep.com has plain number math drills to help speed up your math calculations through practice. mconsultingprep.com/plain-number-math-drills

Additionally, mconsultingprep.com provides a chart-based math skills test to help your practice. mconsultingprep.com/chart-based-math-drills

Classmill.com has a module that gives examples of the various types of math you'll need to work on in order to prepare for a test like the PST. classmill.com/brendalouis/management-consulting-test-and-interview-prep/m/O5kv

Academia.edu also provides a short-question test on math pertaining to consulting that will help you practice. [www.academia.edu/15646015/Consulting Math Drills Short Questions Practice Package Overviwand Ins tructions](https://www.academia.edu/15646015/Consulting_Math_Drills_Short_Questions_Practice_Package_Overviwand_Ins_tructions)

Consultingguru.com offers a free sample test with question types you may encounter, in order to help prepare and practice. consultingguru.com/our-services/pst-example/

The following is a list of articles from Igotanoffer.com provides a variety of techniques to improve taking the PST. igotanoffer.com/blogs/mckinseypst

Additionally, igotanoffer.com possesses multiple test preparation programs to help test takers improve their abilities for case interviews and the PST.

Free McKinsey Case Interview Prep: igotanoffer.com/collections/mckinsey-case-interview/products/free-mckinsey-case-interview-prep

Free McKinsey PST: igotanoffer.com/products/free-mckinsey-pst

Igotanoffer.com also provides this article which has methods one can use to help speed up mental math calculations for problems geared toward the PST. igotanoffer.com/blogs/mckinseypst/13218041-be-lazy-and-increase-your-speed-at-the-mckinsey-pst

Consultingcase101.com offers a small paragraph with information on the PST and also provides a number of older sample tests that can be downloaded and taken for free. www.consultingcase101.com/mckinsey-problem-solving-test

Consultingcase101.com also provides five different case interviews to help improve your calculation speed with fast math drills. www.consultingcase101.com/?s=fast+math+drills

Caseinterview.com has a math problem practice program that allows you to choose between precise math or estimation math, in addition to problem types that range from addition and subtraction to multiplication and percentages. You can also select the difficulty level. In order to utilize the test you'll need to make an account. www.caseinterview.com/math/home.php

Caseinterview.com also has a guide for the PST. www.caseinterview.com/mckinsey-problem-solving-test

In addition to their PST guides, igotanoffer.com also provides a short guide for the BCG Potential Test. igotanoffer.com/blogs/bcg-potential-test/16842880-bcg-potential-test-how-to-prepare

Likewise mconsultingprep.com has a sample BCG Potential Test. mconsultingprep.com/bcg-potential-test/

Caseinterview.com provides a small guide on the BCG Potential Test. www.caseinterview.com/bcg-potential-test

Lastly, there are two books in the Columbia University library system that may assist you with the skills needed to successfully take the PST or similar tests. The book *Financial Intelligence: A Manager's Guide to Knowing What the Numbers Really Mean*, by Karen Berman and Joe Knight can be purchased on Amazon, or checked out from the Business and Economics Library. *Guesstimation: Solving the World's Problems on the Back of a Cocktail Napkin*, by Lawrence Weinstein and John A. Adam can be obtained from Milstein (Butler) for a hard copy version, or if using a search on CLIO you may find an electronic version.

Paid Resources

MyConsultingCoach.com offers a free sample PST, but also provides multiple PST preparation programs at varied costs. www.myconsultingcoach.com/problem-solving-test

McKinsey Case Interview Training Programme: igotanooffer.com/collections/products-landing-page/products/mckinsey-case-interview-training-programme

McKinsey PST Training Programme: igotanooffer.com/products/mckinsey-pst-training-programme

MConsultingprep.com also has a paid PST training program. mconsultingprep.com/problem-solving-test-product

Videos

McKinsey PST Prep: Reading Facts Questions Guide from Mconsultingprep.com.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=9LLULjITeKQ

McKinsey PST Prep: Fact-Based Conclusion Questions Guide from MConsultingprep.com.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=JR46Q_gk9oE

McKinsey PST Prep: Root-Cause Questions Guide from MConsultinggroup.com.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=3udUGaVw3vg

McKinsey PST Essential Business Knowledge from igotanooffer.com.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkEVfsg9NVk

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