

The Role of MC in 21st Century

Executive Summary

As the world evolves every day, the management consultant profession is not exempt from those changes. Since its origins in the early 20th century, the profession has evolved to keep up with the changing landscape it serves. The Canadian Association of Management Consultants (CMC-Canada), represented by its executive director Michael Brennan, is interested in identifying which skills will be needed by management consultants (MCs) 10 years from now to succeed.

From the literature, the skills needed for success revolved around communication, technical knowledge, critical thinking, and client satisfaction. Then through an online survey, answers were solicited from practicing MCs about their background, and their opinions regarding success today and in 10 years. The survey was broken down into two parts. The first was related to demographics, and the second was identifying the skills needed by MCs to succeed today and in the next decade. The survey also asked what skills will be obsolete in 10 years, and how will AI shape the profession, both positively and negatively.

From the survey it was found that the biggest opportunity for diversification is ethnicity. It is recommended that CMC-Canada establishes an internal committee to oversee a cultural diversity strategy made up of both higher and lower levels of management. The survey also showed that the majority of respondents had over 20 years of experience in the profession, followed by a cohort of respondents that have less than 5 years of experience. This clustering of MCs in to two extreme groups provides an opportunity for mentorship of fresh MCs by more seasoned fellow MCs.

The survey found that the skills needed for success in the next decade were similar to today's skills: high emotional intelligence and a strong technical background. For the future, it was identified that special attention should be paid to keep up with advances in technology. The skills that would become redundant were data collection and basic computer skills. As for AI, there was unanimous responses that it is "the" tool for the future, however it will not replace the role of the management consultant.

It should be noted that the answers received over the two week period are representative of a small sample size of 19 participants. As such the findings should be treated with caution. To address this, it is recommended that CMC-Canada extends this survey until a large portion of its membership respond. Overall, this report has provided a framework that CMC-Canada can use to survey its members, as well as identified 2 opportunities to better equip the organization for the next decade: cultural diversification and establishing a mentorship program.