

Consultancy skills

MIBU-7FCONS-21



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Name of course:	Consultancy Skills
Code:	MIBU-7FCONS-21
Course of study:	IIBS
Year of study:	4 th year
Number of blocks:	Block 1, 2
ECTS credits:	10
Coordinator:	dr. Edwin Weesie (edwin.weesie@hu.nl)

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Consultants are problem-solvers and trusted advisors. Focused on finding solutions for a wide range of issues related to business operations and strategy, they advise organizations by using broad and deep expertise in the fields of innovation, strategy, operations and change management. The aim of this course is to create a better understanding of some of the practical and theoretical approaches used in the consulting process. This includes both some of the tools and techniques that can be used to help organizations improve performance and to become more effective as well as knowledge of the soft skills that a successful consultant should deploy in consulting assignments. Through a series of mini-lectures, readings, written assignments, case discussions, exercises, and role plays, students will learn the fundamentals of consulting practice such as: client acquisition and retention, investigative and problem-solving methodologies, diagnostic and communication tools and techniques, as well as planning and executing assignments. During interactive class discussions, case work and mini-lectures, students will gain a knowledge of consulting best practice, common mistakes, and ethical issues.

2. Course goals and learning objectives

After attending the Consultancy Skills course, students will be able to:

- Comprehend the theoretical and practical underpinnings of consulting;
- Understand and practice certain soft skills as enablers of consulting success;
- Figure out how to obtain a consultancy project from direct and indirect sources;
- Know the common phases and stages that most consultancy assignments pass through;
- Understand through role play and self-reflection what kind of consultant they are;
- Systematically analyze and map a problem;
- Use diagnostic and problem-solving methodologies;
- Apply a range of visual and verbal techniques commonly used by consultants;
- Generate relevant ideas, identify solutions and assess risks;
- Take into account change management methods and theory;
- Learn how to write client-directed consultant reports and deliver advice in a presentation.

3. Place in the Curriculum and related courses

This course is closely related to the Consulting Project. Consultancy Skills is the first module where students can develop their abilities and thinking in a more structured and supported setting, while real-life application is done in the consulting project section of the 4th year program. In addition, Digital & Research skills course offers a range of complementary practical tools that can be use in the consulting skills and consulting project modules. During the lectures, students are introduced to aspects of innovation, strategy, business operations and change management. The course is provided in collaboration with representatives from the field.

4. Study Burden

Total Workload: 10 EC 280 Hours

Break down:

Class contact lecture & tutorials	30	hrs
Individual team coaching	17	hrs
Reading	65	hrs
Homework assignments	85	hrs
Portfolio development	28	hrs
Self-reflection report	18	hrs
360 degree team report	25	hrs
Weekly tool sharing	10	hrs
Testing	2	hrs

5. Pre-requisites

A basic understanding of business and business models is required together with a genuine interest in how business is adapting to a fast-changing and unpredictable world. The application of the skills and knowledge acquired in years 1 through 3 are essential and a student should have demonstrated through study progress and pass grades a basic proficiency in marketing, finance, supply chain logistics, and organization change and development. An understanding of ITC, digital marketing and/or ecommerce acquired either through taught modules or self-study would be useful for students.

6. Exemption Possibilities

There are no exemption possibilities without permission of the Exam Board.

7. Competencies & Module learning outcomes

This course contributes to the development of the following Program Learning Outcomes and Module Learning Outcomes.

PLO Code	PLO Description	Level	Group/ Individual	MLO Description
WT2	Create innovative ideas in a changing business environment in a systematic fashion.	3	Individual	(1) Has a deep understanding of the area of innovation. (2) Able to independently develop innovative ideas in context of uncertainty. (3) Work standard is routinely good following disciplined process. (4) Is able to adapt the process to fit the situation, dealing with uncertainty holistically.
LW12	Display willingness to work with people from other cultures and to work in countries with different cultural backgrounds.	3	Individual	(1) Has a deep working knowledge of intercultural differences. (2) Is confident in applying cultural synergy in a real world environment. (3) Celebrates diversity and knows how to get the most out of a multicultural team.
WW7	Produce management information from various data sources in an international business environment.	2	Individual	(1) Has a good knowledge of key aspects of management information. (2) Is able to produce integrated information from diverse sources of external data, in a constructed or simple-real environment, using own judgement under supervision.
TWM24	Analyze a complex business problem in an international business setting with use of adequate research design, resulting in an evidence based feasible solution.	2	Individual	(1) Has a good working knowledge of research design. (2) Capable of using own judgement under supervision to select an adequate research design from some predefined options and perform analysis of a simple business problem in an international setting in a constructed or simple-real environment with the goal to achieve an evidence based feasible solution.
LW12	Display willingness to work with people from other cultures and to work in countries with different cultural backgrounds.	3	Individual	(1) Has a deep working knowledge of intercultural differences. (2) Is confident in applying cultural synergy in a real world environment. (3) Celebrates diversity and knows how to get the most out of a multicultural team.

8. Didactic Forms

This course utilizes mini-lectures, tutorials, class discussions, class presentations, role-play, reflective writing and calculation tutorials.

1. Assessment

Individual assignments (cumulative grade 100%):

1. What kind of consultant are you? Peer and self-reflection of group and individual performance. All papers will be put through plagiarism and spelling check programs. If papers have been plagiarized or if students are caught cheating students this will be reported to the Exam Board and students will fail the course.
2. Tools and techniques for consultants portfolio Every week you will search and find at least tools that are useful for consultants. You will make an info sheet (1a4 per tool), per week containing elements such as functionality, pricing, usage, targetgroup etc. At the end of the block you will have an overview of all relevant tools that you have reviewed.

Due at the end of block B

10. Course Material and Literature

Online resources	
	Will be shared in class and on canvas and ms teams on a weekly basis

11. Evaluation

Evaluation by students of this course will be done at the end of the block via evalytics or alternative tools.

12. Weekly activities

BLOCK A

Week 36 - session 1 - The Journey & Core Skills

Class preparation:

- o Reading (selected literature + video):

Class activity:

- o Mini lecture (the consultant & client journey + core skills)
- o Introduction and personal experiences
- o Core competences and common techniques
- o Prepare for getting out there in the world.....join an online event in the next few weeks....

Case homework:

- o Complement the list of established techniques with contemporary ones.
- o Identify and explain 2 techniques per team in 5 min. (week theme: **Process tools**)
- o How and what to write an offer for a consultant case
- o Find and join a conference/ tradeshow – online version -

Week 36 - session 2 - The 5 Stages of Trust: making a good offer and budget

Class preparation:

- Reading (selected literature + video):

Class activity:

- Mini lecture (how to gain and keep trust)
- Interactive discussion on found tools and techniques for consultants
- Lift out: 1 tool.....workshop wire diagrams for choice of dataiku/ powerapps/ bi/ Betty Blocks/ collibra/ mendix or equivalent.
- Share experiences with group on Process tools

Case homework:

- Identify and explain 2 techniques per team in 5 min. (week theme: **HR tools**)

Week 37 - session 1 - Managed Creativity & Diagnostic Tools

Class preparation:

- Elaborate in 2 min presentation (format is free) to class what type of consultant you are/ want to be
- What do you need to learn? What do you want to develop in the next month's + 3 years

Class activity:

- Mini lecture (the consultant & client journey + core skills)
- Share experiences with group on HR tools
- Ask questions about the use of diagnostic tools

Case homework:

- Identify and explain 2 techniques per team in 5 min. (week theme: **Finance tools**)

Week 37 - session 2 - Relationship Building & Lobby activities

Class preparation:

- Reading (selected literature + video):

Class activity:

- Share experiences with group on Finance tools
- Mini lecture: What are the tools for the near future? IT/IS/AI focused
- Q&A + Feedback

Case homework:

- Mini-Essay: Peer & Self-Reflection of BP Q&A + Feedback
- Identify and explain 2 techniques per team in 5 min. (week theme: **Presentation tools**)

Week 38 - session 1 - Optimizing Communication and presentation

Class preparation:

- Reading (selected chapters + video)

Class activity:

- Mini lecture Tools & techniques: written & oral communication + Lobby activities
- Presentation of contemporary presentation and diagnostic tools
- Identify and explain 2 techniques per team in 5 min. (week theme: **other tools**)

Case homework:

- Prepare the getting out in the world session: tradeshow time
- Decided on a free topic for week 8 – what do we need to address?

Week 38 – session 2 - Getting out in the “digital” world – trade show time

Class preparation:

- Reading (selected chapters + video)

Class activity:

- Go to a conference/ tradeshow
- Suggestions:
 - webwinkel vakdagen
 - Facilitair & Gebouwenbeheer,
 - Building industrialization & digital transformation,
 - <https://10times.com/netherlands?month=january>
- What were the salient details of the events that you visited?
- What did you learn?
- What was most appealing?, What were the no go points?
- How would you do it differently?
- Final questions and feedback for portfolio
- Identify and explain 2 techniques per team in 5 min. (week theme: **other tools**)

Case homework:

- Find out what kind of consultant you are.
- Test yourself and write 1A4 on your profile. Ask feedback/ confirmation from your team members.
- Mini-essay: Self-reflection on what kind of consultant assignment draft

Week 39 - session 1 - Sources for qualitative data and Data Analysis with Atlas.ti

Class preparation:

- Explore Atlas.ti

Class activity:

- Open podium – qualitative analysis on the spot

Case homework:

- Explore Atlas.ti + 1 alternative such as Nvivo
- Studying Atlas.ti 8 Quick Tour p.6 – p.40
- Case

Week 39 - session 2 - Qualitative Data Analysis

Class preparation:

- Explore Atlas.ti

Class activity:

- Making word cloud and coding of the articles in Atlas.ti. discussing the used labels.

Week 40 - session 1- Descriptive statistics in SPSS: there are lies, grave lies and statistics

Class preparation:

- Find examples of bad statistics examples from real life
- IBM_SPSS_Statistics_Brief_Guide Chapter 4 – 6

Class activity:

- Making tables and charts and calculating characteristics

Case homework:

- Making tables and charts and calculating characteristics of the Coberen case

Week 40 - session 2- Chi-square test & correlation analysis

Class preparation:

- IBM_SPSS_Statistics_Brief_Guide Chapter 8 – 9
- IBM_SPSS_Statistics_Base p.10 – p.13

- IBM_SPSS_Statistics_Base p.40 – p.42

Class activity:

- Performing the chi-square test and correlation analysis and drawing conclusions

Case homework:

- Performing the chi-square test and drawing conclusions of the Coberen case
- Performing a tree analysis for segmenting a market of the Coberen case

Week 41 - session 1 - Tests for ratio variables

Class preparation:

- IBM_SPSS_Statistics_Base p.22 – p.29

Class activity:

- Performing the t-test

Case homework:

- Performing the t-test for ratio variables of the Coberen case and drawing conclusions

Week 41 – session 2 - Tests for ratio variables

Class preparation:

- IBM_SPSS_Statistics_Base p.22 – p.29

Class activity:

- Performing ANOVA

Case homework:

- Performing the ANOVA for ratio variables of the Coberen case and drawing conclusions

Week 42 – session 1 - Statistics on request

Class preparation:

- Alternative models such as reliability measurements, factor analysis, regression analysis

Class activity:

- Open podium

Case homework:

- Alternative models such as reliability measurements, factor analysis, regression analysis

Week 42 - session 2 - Statistics on request

Class preparation:

- Alternative models such as reliability measurements, factor analysis, regression analysis

Class activity:

- Open podium

Case homework:

- Alternative models such as reliability measurements, factor analysis, regression analysis