

The *Certified Management Consultant* (CMC®) is a competence based professional qualification for individual consultants.

The Institute of Management Consultancy believes in a sector-wide definition of management consulting:

“Management consulting is the provision to management of objective advice and assistance relating to the strategy, structure, management and operations of an organization in pursuit of its long-term purposes and objectives. Such assistance may include the identification of options with recommendations; the provision of an additional resource and/or the implementation of solutions.”

The definition of management consultancy is a key driver for the development of our competence framework.

The Competency Framework

The framework defines the competences required to be a management consultant. The competences are the behaviors, skills and knowledge that a management consultant is expected to understand, apply and demonstrate. IMC USA's Competency Framework is built upon The Common Body of Knowledge and the 29 core competencies, both of which are aligned with ICMCI's requirements for reciprocity of the CMC with other affiliated IMC country organizations.

An effective Management Consultant requires a balance of behaviors, skills and knowledge

- Market Capability & Knowledge

This is the application of fact-based knowledge. It brings together the combination of technical skills, business understanding, sector insight and external awareness.

- Consulting Competence

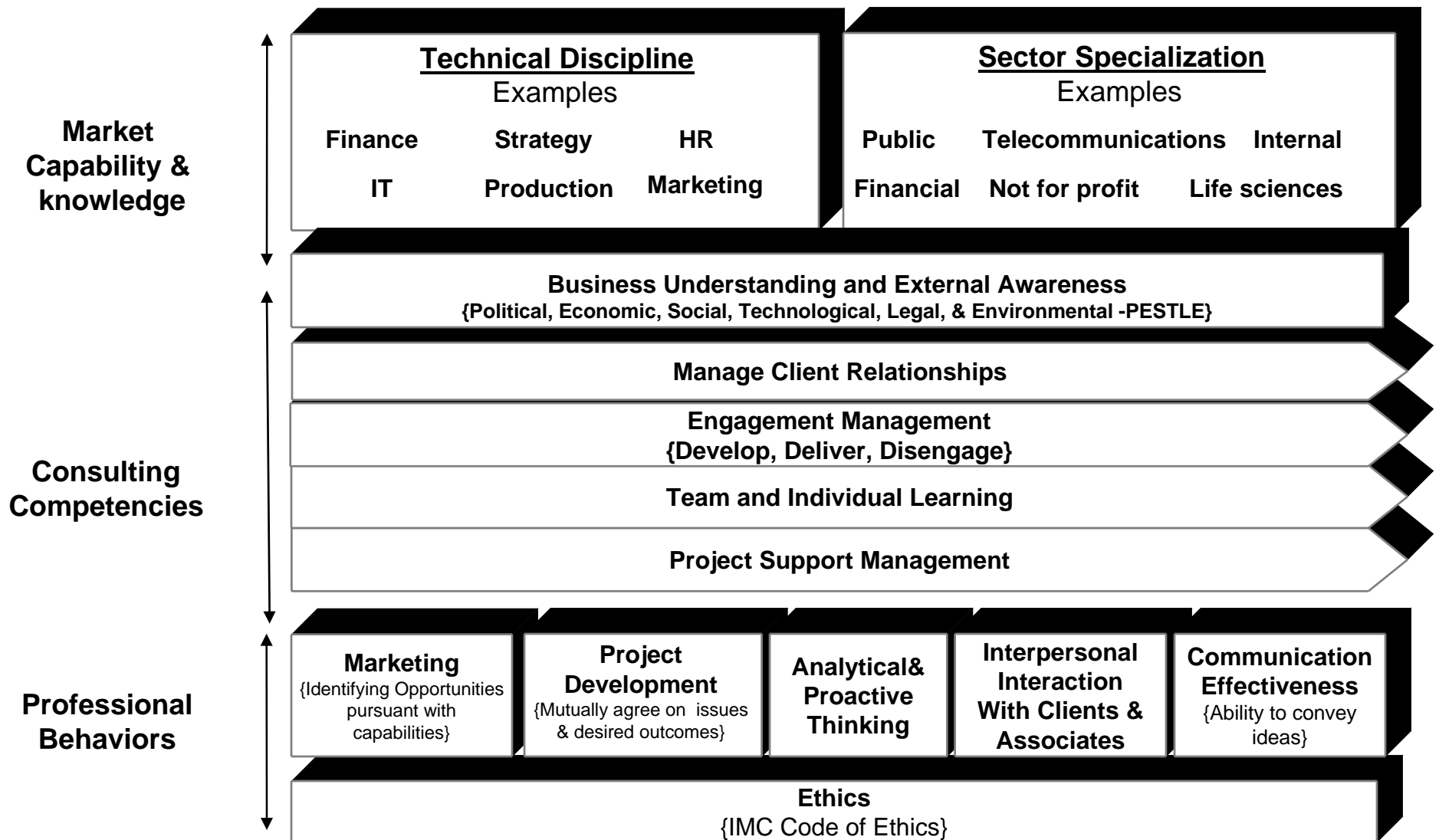
These are the core consultancy skills, tools, and techniques which are essential in delivering consulting services.

- Professional Behaviors

These define the entry level professional behaviors and attitudes which act as 'enablers' in achieving market capability, knowledge and Consulting Competence.

IMC USA Competency Framework (2004)

{An effective Management Consultant requires a balance of behaviors, skills and knowledge.}



CMC® requires demonstration of market capability, knowledge and consulting competence underpinned by professional behaviors.

The 29 Core Competencies for Management Consultants

Question 1: Professional engagement of services.

Competency Reference Number	Typical Question asked during the certification process	Comment
C1	How do you market and sell your consultancy services?	The ability to generate new business, through individual initiative, by establishing a broad network of contacts and knowing when and how to sell ideas and services to others.
C2	How do you assure the client of your integrity and competence as a consultant and define your specialty?	The ability to establish the trust of the client in you. In doing this, you will show your respect for the culture and values of the client and their organization. You must also ensure that client confidentiality is maintained. A belief in one's own capability to accomplish objectives and select an effective approach to complete tasks or problems. This includes confidently expressing decisions and opinions in challenging circumstances.

It should be noted that the Institute may include an extra competency question under this section to find the extent of cross-cultural awareness of the candidates. This will cover different business cultures, different ethnic cultures and different nationality cultures.

Question 2: How do you successfully manage your relationship with a client?

We all know that a consultant can perform a superb engagement but the client be dissatisfied. These questions cover relationships with the client throughout the lifecycle of the individual intervention and over the course of the business relationship.

Reference Number	Typical Question asked during the certification process	Comment
C3	How do you approach new clients and develop mutual understanding with a potential client about the possibilities for an appropriate intervention?	The ability to develop a rapport with client whilst keeping the discussions focused on the client's needs and requirements. You must be able to provide the client with a realistic assessment of what you and your organization can do. A desire to serve clients by focusing one's efforts on discovering and meeting the client's real needs.
C4	How do you ensure that the client shares your perception of their situation?	The ability to take a "whole organization" view of both the presenting situation/problem and the options to deal with it.
C5	How do you present your proposals to a client?	The ability to present the proposal to the right people using the appropriate media. You need to be able to explain the proposal clearly, in particular being able to explain technical aspects clearly to non-experts. When discussing the proposal with technical experts, you need to be able to display the appropriate level of expertise and knowledge. You also need to respond to client comments or questions on the proposals. You should be able to persuade, convince or influence others in order to gain agreement, win support or transfer ownership of ideas or concepts.

Reference Number	Typical Question asked during the certification process	Comment
C6	How do you conclude the negotiation with the client and how are the details of the agreement recorded?	The ability to ensure that you are the right person from your organization to conduct the negotiation, and you need to know in advance what aspects of the proposal are susceptible to modification yet still meet the requirements of both organizations. The ability to bring two or more parties to an acceptable agreement.
C7	How are the contractual arrangement and fee basis agreed with the client?	The ability to reach agreement and ensure that all relevant aspects of the discussion and agreed terms and conditions are clearly recorded.
C8	How do you build on the initial rapport created with the client to produce a professional working relationship throughout the term of the assignment (and on-going if appropriate)?	The ability to remain in control of the interaction and consciously and deliberately move between roles to meet the accurately hear and understand the unspoken or partly expressed thoughts, feelings and concerns of others. The ability to focus on customer needs to ensure the highest level of service is provided.
C9	How do you introduce, plan and control change management with a client?	The ability to clarify why an intervention is planned, and how it aims to affect the performance of the client organization. You need to identify technical aspects of what is proposed and work out which people and departments from the client organization will need to be involved with which aspects of the activity. It is the ability to get behind formal organization charts to understand the key working relationships and to identify key influences and decision-makers as a basis for planning the most effective influence strategies.
C10	The process by which you enable your client to take ownership of the developments which you have introduced in the intervention.	The ability to be able to work with the client to help them see that they can implement and cope with change. You must be able to encourage the client to find new ways of perceiving the meaning of data information, and help them develop objective appraisal of their aims and objectives.
C11	How do you manage withdrawal from the client?	The ability to be able to work with the client to help them see that they can implement and cope with change. You must be able to encourage the client to find new ways of perceiving the meaning of data information, and help them develop objective appraisal of their aims and objectives.

Question 3: How do you successfully undertake an intervention?

The key aspect is: Do you follow due process in your approach to each and every assignment?

Reference Number	Typical Question asked during the certification process	Comment
C12	How do you apply appropriate diagnostic tools to determine the current position of the client?	The ability to develop an objective view of the client's need, drawn from a structured and thorough review of available data. An ability to assess the client's real and presenting need, using relevant evaluation techniques.
C13	How do you scope the intervention?	The ability to display a command of technical specialty (s) and the ability to apply them to suit client situations, recognizing the constraints within which the client has to operate.
C14	How do you prepare a proposal for a client?	The ability to ensure that the understanding of the client's situation and opinions is accurate, and that the proposals developed meet the identified needs. An ability to ensure that each proposal explains the scope of the work to be carried out, and the methods to be used. Proposals should build on best practice and also allow for innovation and creativity. The aims, objectives and achievement criteria for the project should be clearly identified.
C15	How do you determine the potential of each option with the client, whilst ensuring that you (or your practice) are able to deliver everything suggested within each option?	An ability to identify what existing ways there are of achieving the aims and objectives and consider what innovations to them are needed. The development of new methods needs also to be considered. In defining the objectives, you need to be able to evaluate where the client is now and how they will move forward to meet the aims and objectives.
C116	How do you implement the agreed intervention and manage the client's expectations according to the agreed plan?	The ability to understand how the client expects you to work together with them, and find ways to build rapport and trust with clients. The ability to understand the effect that the client themselves will have on the interactions between you, and the ability to adopt the most appropriate role at different times during interactions.
C17	How do you identify suitable and accurate sources of information, and the methods of obtaining it?	The ability to make use of information. Driven by an underlying curiosity to understand the casual factors in any situation. This means digging beneath the surface and ensuring that hypotheses about situations are well founded on facts.

Reference Number	Typical Question asked during the certification process	Comment
C18	Your ability to make a clear and appropriate analysis of information which is used in the decision making process within a consultancy context.	The ability to understand complex problems and situations by analyzing a large volume of information in a systematic and logical way. the ability to understand information, distil out key points, draw logical conclusions and make appropriate decisions or recommendations.
C19	How do you plan the use of physical resources with the client to meet the objectives of your assignment?	The ability to coordinate the acquisitions and assembly of resources, having negotiated resource allocation and use with the right people. You need to be able to ensure that the resources are there when they are needed, and you need to be able to plan for shortfalls. An ongoing aspect is the evaluation of the use of and performance of resources.
C20	How you would ensure sufficient client staff resources with appropriate skills to meet the objectives of your assignment?	The ability to decide with your team how to distribute tasks and responsibilities. You need to make sure this allocation makes best use of team members' abilities, and provide opportunities for them to learn and develop in their roles.
C21	How do you explain, establish and monitor the systems, processes and methods necessary for completion of the intervention?	The ability to explain what is needed, and to negotiate with those affected to identify who will do what, when and why. You need to be able to continually help people to understand what is expected of them, and also to ensure that what is happening will meet the agreed objectives. This will entail you being able to agree quality and evaluation criteria.
C22	How do you ensure that all of the assignment's objectives have been met in full?	The ability to ensure that everything starts when it should and everybody knows what they are doing. You must be able to evaluate whether input and output are as intended, and to assess the overall progress against the original plan. You need to work out how to cope when things deviate from the plan, and to take the chance to improve things as they proceed.
C23	How do you assess your own performance during the assignment?	The ability to assess your current performance, identify, plan and take action to meet your development needs. The drive to achieve results by setting and exceeding challenging objectives and goals, to make continual improvements, a determination to overcome obstacles and setbacks, to evaluate courses of action terms of their potential return on resources invested.
C24	How do you manage your time within the assignment?	The ability to agree and prioritize your objectives, plan your time, delegate responsibilities to others, take decisions, and review and reschedule your activities appropriately. The ability to identify what needs to be done to achieve objectives, prioritize and establish plans to ensure an effective outcome.

Question 4: How do you make sure you can deliver an assignment?

Having the right ideas, working well with the client and being ethical are not sufficient for a successful engagement. You must also manage your resources so that the assignment is performed to time, cost quality.

Reference Number	Typical Question asked during the certification process	Comment
C25	Your ability to select and put into place suitable systems for recording, storage and retrieval of information within a consultancy context.	The ability to collect, store and manage information to monitor and improve business efficiency and effectiveness.
C26	How do you advise, educate and inform colleagues and clients on the basis of your analysis of information within a consultancy context?	The ability to establish productive working relationships and find ways of improving relationships with colleagues at all levels within your organization. You should keep appropriate people informed at the right level of detail about relevant issues, and provide people with accurate information. The ability to expand and use technical knowledge or to disseminate knowledge and technical expertise to others.
C27	The use of appropriate techniques to manage financial resources within a consultancy context.	The ability to allocate, manage and monitor financial resources.
C28	How sufficient and appropriate are the consultancy hours that can be made available to fulfill the requirements of the intervention?	The ability to agree and prioritize your objectives, plan your time, delegate responsibilities to others, take decisions, and review and reschedule your activities as appropriate.
C29	How do you resolve conflicts within the parameters of an assignment?	The ability to work within your organization's systems and procedures and deal with conflicts and complaints to rectify what has happened and maintain client goodwill.