FASSET
MANAGEMENT CONSULTING
LEARNERSHIP PROJECT
NOVEMBER 2002

Gap Analysis Report

FASSET

November 2002

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1 Acronyms and glossary of terms

A list of acronyms used within this report is contained in Table 1-1.

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
DoL	Department of Labour
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance Body
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
HET	Higher Education and Training
LMSDP	Labour Market Skills Development Programme
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSA	National Skills Authority
NSB	National Standards Body
NSDP	National Skills Development Plan
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NSF	National Skills Fund
OBET	Outcomes Based Education and Training
PDI	Previously Disadvantaged Individuals
PSP	Provincial Skills Plan
ROI	Return on Investment
SAQA	SA Qualifications Authority
SARS	SA Revenue Services
SDF	Skills Development Facilitator
SDPU	Skills Development Planning Unit
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SGB	Standards Generating Body
SIC	Standard Industrial Classifications
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
SOC	Standard Occupational Classifications
SSP	Sector Skills Plan
WSP	Workplace Skills Plan

Table 1-1: Acronyms used within this report

A glossary of terms used within this report is contained in Table 1-2 next page.

Accreditation	The periodical certification of a person, a body or an institution as having the capacity to fulfil a particular function in the quality assurance system set up by the SAQA in terms of the SAQA Act (No 58 of 1995) and in terms of the Education and Training Quality Assurance body (ETQA) Regulations *(ETQA Regulations, No. R.1127 of 1998).*
Assessment	The process of measuring the achievement of the learner against specified National Qualification Framework standards or qualifications.
Assessor	A person who is registered by the relevant ETQA in accordance with criteria established for this purpose by a SGB to measure the achievement of specified NQF standards or qualifications (ETQA Regulations, No. R.1127 of 1998).
Band	Broad grouping of levels of education and training, which may include more than one qualification.
Credit	The values that SAQA gives to unit standards and qualifications. Credits are measured in 10-hour units, which are based on the time an average learner would take to achieve the standard or qualification.
Education and Training Qualifications Authorities (ETQA)	Education and Training Qualifications Authorities are bodies that are accredited by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). The main work of an ETQA is to monitor the quality of training given by providers, according to the standards and qualifications and qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework.
National Qualifications Framework (NQF)	The National Qualifications Framework was established by Regulation No. 452 of 28 March 1998 to provide for the registration of national standards and qualifications.
National Standards Bodies (NSB)	National Standards Bodies are registered in terms of section 5 (1)(a)(ii) of the Act, are responsible for establishing education and training standards or qualifications, and have been assigned specific functions relating to the registration of national standards and qualifications in terms of 5(1)(b)(i) of the Act.
Qualifications	Formal recognition of the achievement of a range of credits embodied in a coherent number of unit standards supported by evidence of achievement, outcomes and a range of credits and other requirements, as may be determined, at a specific level of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).
Record of Learning	Outlines and lists all unit standards and qualifications, which are achieved on NQF Levels. As a learner gains unit standards and qualifications by means of any delivery system, this information will be registered and added to the learner's record of learning. As the learner earns additional credits, the record of learning will be updated.
Registered	Means registered in terms of the National Qualifications Framework.
South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)	South African Qualifications Authority established by the South African Qualifications Authority Act No 58 (4 October 1995).
Standards Generating Bodies (SGB)	The National Standards Bodies invite members of interest groups and specialists to serve on Standards Generating Bodies (SGBs) to generate standards and qualifications and to update and review those standards. SGBs are regulated by Regulation No. 452 of 28 March 1998.
Skills	Skills are the development of the necessary competencies, which can be expertly applied, in a particular context for a defined purpose. Skills development should result in skilled performance such as is traditionally associated with the work of "skilled craft workers", "skilled managers" and "skilled professionals". (Green Paper, Skills Development Strategy for Economic and Employment Growth in South Africa, 1997).
Unit standard	The details of what a learner must know, understand and be able to do to obtain a particular credit under SAQA.

Table 1-2: Glossary of terms

2 Executive Summary

In February 2001, the Minister of Labour publicised the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS). This strategy seeks to encourage employers to see people as the key to growth and is underpinned by six guiding principles:

- Lifelong learning;
- The promotion of equity;
- Demand-led;
- Flexibility and decentralisation;
- Partnership and cooperation; and
- Efficiency and effectiveness.

The Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998), the Skills Development Levies Act (No. 9 of 1999) and the South African Qualifications Authorities Act, (No. 58 of 1995) have put in place a range of structures and processes through which skills development in South Africa will be transformed. Learnerships are a central mechanism for achieving this transformation.

A Learnership is defined as a work-based route for learning and gaining qualifications. Learnerships consist of structured work experience (provided in the workplace) and structured institutional learning (usually provided by training departments within organisations, technical colleges, industry training colleges, regional training centres, private training providers or other provider organisations). In other words, a learnership is a combination of theoretical and practical experience.

It is within this context that Fasset is seeking to design, develop and pilot the implementation of two NQF level 7 management consulting learnerships – a Certificate in Management Consulting and a Masters Degree in Management Consulting. The Management Consulting Learnership project comprises four main areas, namely:

- Gap analysis;
- Learnerships' design;
- Learnerships' development; and
- Piloting the implementation of the pilot Learnerships.

Fasset has adopted a six-stage approach to the design, registration and implementation of learnerships and the key elements of this process have been incorporated into our approach and methodology. These six stages are:

1. Initiating the Learnership;
2. Designing the Learnership;
3. Registering the Learnership;
4. Developing the Learnership;
5. Preparing for and implementing the Learnership; and
6. Monitoring and evaluating.

In order to ensure alignment with these six stages, the project team adopted the traditional best practice "ADDIE" approach (**A**nalysis; **D**esign; **D**evelopment; **I**mplementation; **E**valuation) to training and development - this methodology was used to guide the gap analysis phase and the interpretation of the findings of this research. For continuity purposes, it is intended that the ADDIE principles will be used to guide any subsequent project phases. ADDIE has, in itself, a continuous improvement process, which will ensure intrinsic quality throughout the entire project.

The gap analysis phase required an analysis of the current management consulting profession (As-Is Analysis) both locally and globally. In addition, the literature review revealed best practices associated with management consulting and, more specifically, pertaining to skills development within the management consulting sector (i.e. To-Be Analysis). These observations, as well as the gaps between the current practices and the best practices, are discussed throughout this report. The report is divided into the following sections:

- Profile of the profession;
- Findings from field research;
- Consulting competence;
- Training and development;
- Assessment; and
- Governance within the management consulting industry.

These sections have been summarised within this executive summary in order to provide an overview of the salient points.

2.1 Profile of the profession

Management consulting is, essentially, the "sale of advisory services". People who have a broad set of skills apply their knowledge to projects in order to solve problems within organisations. These problems can range from corporate strategy to personnel to information technology. management consulting is the process of analysing problems and developing solutions that will benefit the organisation. Consultants are usually business generalists, however, they can specialise by industry or function. Knowledge of a specific industry or function is often based on work experience.

In South Africa, the management consulting profession, estimated at more than 30 000 personnel, has earned its place with the best of the world. Quality standards and measures are maintained through the immensely competitive nature of the profession and the access to global practices and standards.

Most consulting firms tend to hire people with advanced degrees (typically law, finance, business, IT and other specialty areas) or with some specialised experience. Academic excellence, leadership and team skills gained from extracurricular activities and private sector experience are important in the consideration process.

The following qualities are deemed to be essential for consultants:

- Excellent oral and written communication skills;
- Strong analytical abilities (including quantitative methods);
- Attention to detail and deadlines; and
- Proven leadership capabilities.

Successful management consultants typically possess the following skills:

- Analytical skills and numerical aptitude;
- Communication skills;
- The ability to work well in teams;
- Problem solving skills and creativity; and
- Computer literacy.

In addition, management consultants are expected to be able to:

- Focus on details;
- Recognise problems for improvement;
- Develop solutions;
- Conceptualise and implement organisational change;
- Lead groups;
- Organise and present material in a convincing manner;
- Maintain discipline and focus; and
- Build and maintain lasting relationships.

2.2   Findings from field research

The field research was conducted over a period of six weeks. Interviews were conducted with a number of organisations (please refer to Annexure B for the list of the participating organisations) that can be classified according to the following categories:

- Large consulting firms;
- Medium consulting firms;
- Small consulting firms;
- Clients of consulting firms;
- Professional bodies within the sector; and
- Tertiary institutions offering qualifications in management consulting.

The findings of this field research revealed that:

- There do not appear to be significant gaps between current South African practices and the international best practices arising from the literature research;
- There are notable differences between large, medium and small firms, however, these differences are structural differences and as a result of the size, profile and strategies of the firm. For example it would, under the current circumstances, not be possible for a small firm to hire a trainee consultant and send him/her on four months training in the first year without some form of external support. This is an indication of the possible value that a learnership could provide;
- Human Resource Development is a strategic focus within all firms, however, whilst large firms are the model of best practice, small firms place a lot of emphasis on the employee taking ownership for his/her own development;
- Skills retention is not as large a problem as one may have expected. It is only the large firms that have the high turnover (25 – 30%). These firms especially, make use of knowledge management and skills retention strategies so that while staff turnover is high, knowledge lost to the firm is significantly less. In many instances, these knowledge management systems are in line with best practice;
- In large firms there are highly structured career paths and learning pathways whilst this tends not to be the case in the smaller firms. Skills needs are linked to business needs in that employees are trained in specialist areas that the firm offers as client offerings;
- The firms interviewed considered the training vehicles to be sufficient. In fact, they consider there to be an abundance of training providers and vehicles for their needs. These providers range widely from the very good to the very poor. Set standards and criteria for providers resulting from this learnership will be a large benefit in this regard;
- Only the international firms make use of international training resources. They are, however, starting to make less and less use of international training due to the cost thereof. Smaller firms state that local training is as good as international training and that the internet gives a huge amount of access to knowledge bases and international best practice;
- On average it appears that four to five days training is offered at all levels per person per year. The large firms offer more training to the new recruits initially. There are no formal methods of assessment for measuring individual competence and return on investment is not measured in any direct way;

- There are a wide range of views around the skills requirements for management consultants. These requirements range from project management to analytical skills to ethics. The common view is that there are significant skills requirements, however, these are not consistent across all firms;
- Generally, it appears that only the large firms (who experience high turnover) will be recruiting within the next twelve months. Other firms will recruit either on small scale or not at all (based on their specific needs);
- Generally, consulting firms do not experience great difficulty in finding appropriately skilled personnel. It would appear that, only when a firm is specifically looking for PDI recruits, that there is an extreme shortage; and
- With regards to training costs, most firms predict that costs will escalate, that they will be looking for less expensive ways of training and that there is huge pressure on training budgets within firms to reduce or at least maintain training costs.

The learnerships present appropriate mechanisms to addressing these findings. Recommendations in this regard are included in section 11 Table 11.1.

Having noted the above it must also be stated that South African management consulting firms compare favourably with their international counterparts. The large international firms apply international standards, methodologies and best practices in their client engagements. This has also permeated through to the medium and small firms through staff turnover and various skills development initiatives i.e. knowledge sharing and the use of the internet for research.

2.3   Consulting competence

The competencies typically required of a management consultant can be grouped into four broad categories. These categories are:

- Managerial Competence;
- Professional Competence;
- Entrepreneurial Competence; and
- Behavioural Competence.

An overview of these four competencies is depicted below in Figure 2-1.

Managerial Competence
- Planning
- Organising
- Leading
- Controlling
- Directing
- Quality Orientation
- Persuasiveness

Professional Competence
- Specialist Knowledge
- Problem Solving & Analysis
- Oral Communication
- Written Communication

Entrepreneurial Competence
- Commercial Awareness
- Action Orientation
- Strategic

Behavioural Competence
- Interpersonal Sensitivity
- Resilience
- Personal Motivation

Figure 2-1: Management consultant competencies

Competence in all four of these areas is required in order to be effective as a management consultant. It would appear that, the competence requirements as documented in this report are reflected in the proposed unit standards and qualifications for management consulting in the following ways:

- Flexibility in the choice of standards;
- Fundamental components covered to reinforce behavioural components;
- Strong focus on managerial and entrepreneurial competence; and
- Choice of professional or functional speciality.

The fundamental and core unit standards contained in the draft qualifications clearly support the development of attributes considered to be essential for a successful management consultant, i.e.:

- Analytical skills and numerical aptitude;
- Communication skills;
- The ability to work in teams; and
- Problem solving skills and creativity.

In addition, the elective unit standards cater for the three major streams of management consulting, i.e. Strategy, Operations/Process and Information Technology, as well as recognise that a management consultant could be a generalist or a specialist within a functional or industry sector.

It can, therefore, be concluded that the competences required for a successful management consultant are reflected in the proposed management consulting unit standards and qualifications.

2.4 Training and development

Part of the gap analysis process entailed identifying the most appropriate training delivery media and techniques for the management consulting sector. This was done through a combination of research into the best practices in skills development and the current practices of firms in South Africa.

The case interview, competency based training and continuous professional development emerged as best practices in training and development within the management consulting sector.

2.5 Assessment

Formal assessment is generally not done within the firms at present. Employees studying at tertiary institutions are assessed through examinations and through assignments. Otherwise, assessment is conducted on-the-job through the performance evaluation process. Assessment through examination introduces a lot of external factors (such as the stress and pressure of examination) and is not, therefore, in itself, a satisfactory assessment measure when used alone.

Assessment within the context of the NQF is the best practice method of assessment and, in many cases, will be used in conjunction with examinations. Assessment activities within the management consulting sector need to shift from the traditional norm-referenced assessment techniques to criterion-referenced assessment (or competency based assessment) techniques. This is elaborated upon in section 9 of this report

The introduction of learnerships within the management consulting sector will allow learners to be assessed in both a formative and summative manner. Through this the learner will have several opportunities to prove competence and gain feedback, thus enabling them to improve performance and gain necessary skills (as opposed to the once-off opportunity typically afforded through assessments based on examinations).

Assessment activities and methods are designed to gather evidence as to whether or not the learner is competent or not yet competent and, therefore, the most appropriate methods of assessment relative to the outcomes being assessed will be used. The learner is aware of the outcomes to be assessed and, therefore, has the opportunity to check his/her understanding and monitor their progress against the assessment criteria (i.e. conduct a self-assessment). The use of multiple assessment methods also reduces the learner's anxiety and, generally, gives them more control over the assessment process.

However, it must also be recognised that the costs of assessment are relatively high when one takes into account the costs associated with assessors and other human resource costs and, therefore, assessment criteria and activities must also be designed in order that they are conducted in a cost-effective way. Smaller firms are less likely to have the resources to employ full-time in-house assessors and, therefore, assessment criteria must cater for these firms who will need to outsource the assessment activities and ensure that the process, at all times, remains viable.

2.6   Governance within the management consulting sector

The interviews conducted generally revealed that:

- Very few firms are aware of any professional bodies representing management consultants;
- The firms believe that a professional body could be beneficial to the sector;
- The role of such a body could include ethical standards, a voice for the sector, quality assurance, codes of conduct and a vehicle for sharing information and networking; and
- Respondents believe that, without legislation to enable such professional bodies, it would be extremely difficult to initiate.

The development of learnerships, which place Fasset in the role of the quality assurance, will go a long way towards addressing these needs. In fact, a code of conduct could also be included in the curriculum of the learnerships as a value, which will provide the benefits that emerge from interacting with a professional body

3 Skills Development in South Africa

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act was passed in 1995, whilst the Skills Development Act (SDA) and the Skills Development Levies Act (SDLA) were passed in 1998 and 1999 respectively. The legislation charged the Minister of Labour to prepare a national skills development strategy, taking into consideration the advice of the National Skills Authority.

The National Skills Authority (NSA) was established in April 1999 and comprises representatives from organised business, labour, government and organisations that reflect community and provider interests. Its functions include:

- Advising the Minister of Labour on a national skills development strategy;
- Liasing with Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) on this strategy, and
- Reporting to the Minister of Labour on the implementation of the strategy.

In February 2001, the Minister of Labour publicised the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS). This strategy seeks to encourage employers to see people as the key to growth and is underpinned by six guiding principles:

- Lifelong learning;
- The promotion of equity;
- Demand-led;
- Flexibility and decentralisation;
- Partnership and cooperation; and
- Efficiency and effectiveness.

Five objectives were identified to drive the NSDS:

- Develop a culture of high quality lifelong learning;
- Foster skills development in the formal economy for productivity and employability;
- Stimulate and support skills development in small businesses;
- Promote skills development for employability and sustainable livelihoods through social development initiatives; and
- Assist new entrants into employment.

The Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998), the Skills Development Levies Act (No. 9 of 1999) and the South African Qualifications Authorities Act, (No. 58 of 1995) have put in place a range of structures and processes through which skills development in South Africa will be transformed. Learnerships are a central mechanism for achieving this transformation.

There are a number of incentives in place to ease the access to learnerships and to encourage the participation of employers in developing skills through learnerships. These include:
- A reduction in the SDL as learners' salaries are excluded from the levied payroll;
- Discretionary grants from SETAs;
- A tax incentive from SARS; and
- Employers are not required to contribute towards UIF in respect of learners.

The nature and structure of learnerships essentially seeks to integrate theory and practice, to transform workplaces into sites of learning and to improve labour market access for learners.

A short overview of the regulatory environment influencing skills development, and the establishment of learnerships, is contained in the remainder if this chapter. Some of the key definitions and acronyms are contained in section 1 of this report.

3.1 The SAQA Act

The SAQA Act stipulates that:

- All skills must be written as learning outcomes which say what a learner will know and can do when they are competent. These outcomes will be recognised through national standards and qualifications;
- A qualification is made up of standards, each of which carries a number of smaller parts called credits - each credit is equal to an average of about ten hours of learning; and
- Individuals can earn credits without attending a course if they can show that they already have the skills and knowledge required in the standards and qualifications. This recognition of prior learning (RPL) means that people's skills must be recognised even if they have learnt it simply through doing, rather than through a formal course.

By bringing together all forms of education and training, wherever and however they happen, the SAQA Act provides the basis for lifelong learning. Lifelong learning means that people must have the opportunity to continue learning throughout their lives whether through schools, colleges, technikons, universities, at work or elsewhere.

The SAQA Act further stipulates that unit standards must be agreed upon in a democratic way so that everyone will recognise them – and so that they will be portable (transferable) from one workplace to another, and from one provider to another. It is also important that standards are the same across the country so that everyone knows what a particular standard means. So every unit standard must be registered on the National Qualifications Framework and is thus available to everyone.

3.2 The National Qualifications Framework

The SAQA Act sets up the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The primary purpose and intention of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is to provide coherence between the theoretical/academic environment and the practical/applied environment and ensure access to nationally recognised qualifications for learners. Key principles of the National Qualifications Framework are to:

- Create an integrated national framework for learning achievements;
- Facilitate access to, mobility and progression within education, and training and career paths;
- Enhance the quality of education and training;
- Accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities; and thereby
- Contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large.

The framework is made up of eight levels of learning and pathways for learning specialisations such as communications or engineering. Different qualifications fit into the framework according to their focus and level of complexity. The level of a qualification is based on the exit level – on what a person will know and can do when they complete their qualification. This "outcomes based" view of recognising learners' achievements applies to all qualifications, giving education and training the same status. It measures what a person knows and can do, rather than where and how the person learnt.

The National Qualifications Framework allows comparison between different courses as well as between education and training received in different ways and in different institutions. This is so that a person can use the credits from one situation to qualify at another institution for a different but related course. The levels also allow comparison between South African and international education and training. All qualifications must be registered on one of the levels according to guidelines published by SAQA. It is, therefore, necessary for qualifications to conform to these guidelines in order to be registered.

The NQF levels are broadly divided into the following three bands:

- **General Education and Training**: Level 1 of the NQF comes at the end of ordinary, compulsory schooling up to grade 9 (standard 7). It can also be reached through adult basic education and training for adults who did not complete their schooling. Level 1 is the end of the first band of the NQF.
- **Further Education and Training**: Levels 2, 3 and 4 of the NQF make up the second band. They incorporate schooling and technical certificates up to the equivalent of grade 12 (matric).
- **Higher Education and Training**: Levels 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the NQF make up the third band. They incorporate national certificates and diplomas, undergraduate and post graduate degrees, as well as masters and post-doctoral research degrees. The Management Consulting Qualifications fall within this band of the NQF.

3.2.1 Quality assurance in education and training

Quality assurance is one of the most important principles of the NQF. Every standard and qualification registered on the NQF, and all the learning and assessment that takes place, is subject to a quality assurance process. The quality assurance process begins with setting standards and helps providers develop and maintain training programmes that meet the standards.

SAQA and their appointed (gazetted) Education and Training Quality Assurance Bodies (ETQAs) provide the enabling and regulatory framework for implementing the quality assurance systems and processes required by the NQF. To meet the requirements of SAQA, training providers will have to document their quality management systems. To ensure that these training providers are maintaining the quality of registered standards and qualifications, SAQA accredits ETQAs to monitor and audit the processes through which learners are to receive formal recognition for achieving NQF qualifications and standards. The quality assurance process includes ensuring that there are assessors, who are registered by the ETQAs, to ensure that learners are assessed according to the same standards.

3.3   Qualifications and unit standards

3.3.1 Qualifications

The SAQA act defines qualifications as "*the achievement of a certain number of credits embodied in a coherent number of unit standards*". That is, unit standards are the building blocks of qualifications.

Whilst qualifications vary in range, size and levels, the general requirements for qualifications on the NQF require that the qualifications:

- Represent a planned combination of learning outcomes;
- Add value to the qualifying learner through the provision of status, recognition, and enhancement of marketability and employability;
- Provide benefits to society and the economy through increasing social and economic productivity;
- Comply with the objectives of the NQF;
- Incorporate integrated assessment to ensure that the purpose of the qualification is achieved; and
- Ensure that the award of the qualification may be achieved, in whole or in part, through the recognition of prior learning.

3.3.2 Unit standards

A unit standard is a document that describes a coherent and meaningful outcome of learning (i.e. what a learner should know and be able to do) and the associated performance evidence and standard requirements of proof that the outcomes have been met.

Unit standards are essentially the foundation of the NQF and may be combined into different pathways and qualifications to meet the needs of different learners. Unit standards are a collection of knowledge, skills and attributes in which a learner must prove competence in a structured assessment to gain credit on the NQF.

Unit standards describe the result of learning as well as what should be assessed but do not dictate the process of learning, i.e. they do not describe how learning should be enabled (e.g. a particular training medium) or **how** the outcomes should be assessed (e.g. interview, case study).

A unit standard is formulated for three principle role-players, i.e. the learner, the trainer and the assessor. Unit standards consist of the following main components:

- Title;
- Purpose;
- Specific Outcomes;
- Assessment Criteria; and
- Range.

Unit standards are developed by functional analysis. The key functions in an occupational area are disaggregated to produce units of competence. The units are, in turn, analysed to generate elements of competence. Elements, together with performance criteria and range indicators, define the outcomes expected of a competent performer in the role.

3.3.3 Registering standards and qualifications

SAQA is responsible for registering qualifications and standards on the NQF. SAQA will further ensure that the education and training that is delivered helps learners to reach these qualifications and standards.

3.3.4 Accrediting providers

ETQAs accredit institutions as providers who train towards these standards and qualifications. The major role players involved in accrediting standards and qualifications are depicted in Figure 3-1.
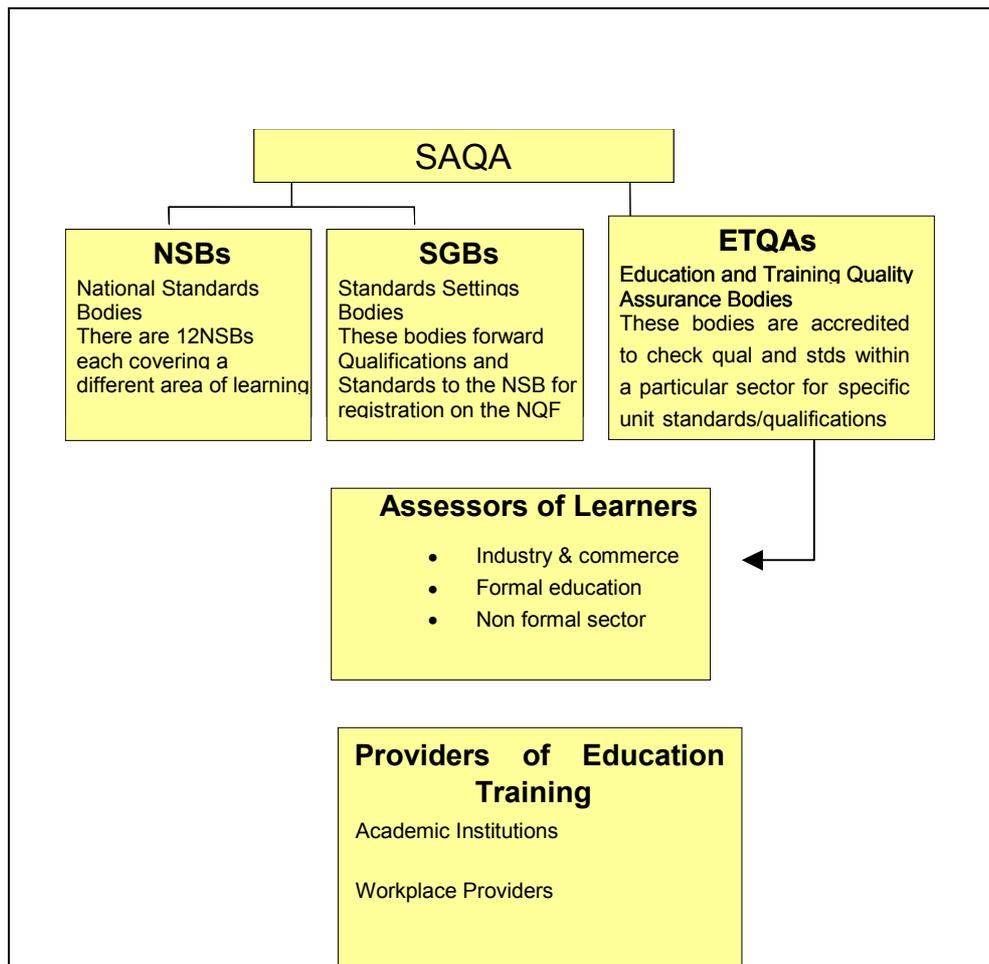
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  │      NSBs        │  │      SGBs        │  │       ETQAs          │
  │ National Standards│  │ Standards Settings│  │ Education and Training│
  │ Bodies           │  │ Bodies           │  │ Quality              │
  │ There are 12NSBs │  │ These bodies forward│ │ Assurance Bodies     │
  │ each covering a  │  │ Qualifications and│  │ These bodies are     │
  │ different area of│  │ Standards to the NSB for│ accredited          │
  │ learning         │  │ registration on the NQF│ to check qual and stds│
  └──────────────────┘  └──────────────────┘  │ within               │
                                              │ a particular sector for│
                                              │ specific             │
                                              │ unit standards/qualifications│
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              │    Assessors of Learners     │
              │   • Industry & commerce      │
              │   • Formal education         │
              │   • Non formal sector        │
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              │  Providers of Education      │
              │          Training            │
              │  Academic Institutions       │
              │                              │
              │  Workplace Providers         │
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Figure 3-1: Major role players involved in the NQF process

3.3.5 Assessing unit standards

Assessment is based upon the concept of competence and, within the context of the NQF, seeks to shift the focus from comparisons between learners based on individual characteristics to outcomes produced by the learner against an objective standard.

SAQA defines assessment as "*…a structured process for gathering evidence and making judgements about an individual's performance in relation to registered national standards.*"

Assessment in the context of the NQF focuses on ensuring that learners prove that they have met all the requirements of a unit standard **before** they receive credit for that standard. That is, learners will have to provide sufficient evidence of their competence (in terms of the specified outcomes and assessment criteria) to receive credit for the unit standard.

Assessment criteria detail the critical evidence that is required to be presented in order to achieve credit (i.e. describe the quality of achievement). Assessment criteria should contain an observable critical outcome and an evaluative statement and should guide the assessor as to what evidence to look for. Assessment criteria should not specify procedures or processes of performing or learning, nor should they dictate the assessment methods or activities.

Assessment activities are designed to gather evidence as to whether or not the learner is competent or not yet competent and may include methods such as interviews, written tests and case studies. Decisions are made regarding the most appropriate methods of assessment relative to the outcomes being assessed. It is, therefore, possible that several assessment

activities might be required to gather sufficient evidence related to a unit standard. On the other hand, one assessment activity might enable the assessor to gather evidence relative to the outcomes of several unit standards, or even parts of unit standards (i.e. specific outcomes).

3.4   Learnerships

A Learnership is defined as a work-based route for learning and gaining qualifications. Learnerships consist of structured work experience (provided in the workplace) and structured institutional learning (usually provided by training departments within organisations, technical colleges, industry training colleges, regional training centres, private training providers or other provider organisations). In other words, a learnership is a combination of theoretical and practical experience. The purpose of having learnerships is for individuals to gain a qualification on the NQF (as discussed above in section 3.2).

The criteria for learnerships, as set out in the Skills Development Act, indicate that the learnership must:

- Consist of a structured learning component;
- Include practical work experience;
- Lead to a qualification; and
- Relate to an occupation.

Learnerships offer the following benefits to employers:[1]

- Well and appropriately skilled employment pool (existing employers and new entrants);
- Turnover increase because of productive learners at lower than normal costs;
- Productivity increase because of higher skilled workers;
- Ensure recruitment success, as the employer will be able to retain performing new entrants;
- Creative and innovative workforce, because of the attainment of the compulsory critical skills and attitudes required by every qualification;
- An increase in market share because of a skilled and competitive workforce;
- A satisfied workforce and subsequent labour peace; and
- A highly motivated workforce, because of higher levels of participation in the success of the company.

Learnerships are linked to specific unit standards registered on the NQF and must lead to a qualification. These standards clearly indicate the actual learning outcomes that the learner is expected to achieve.

The learnerships are formally registered by SETA's and contractual obligations become incumbent on the learner, employer and training provider in the form of a learnership agreement that is signed by all three parties prior to the implementation of the learnership.

Learnerships are based on several key elements including the learnership agreement, relevant skills programmes, entry requirements, a contract of employment, and policies, procedures and registration regulations.

Quality management and assurance are integral to the learnership system. Quality of training is thus achieved through the following mechanisms:

- Learnerships are registered with the DoL and undergo an evaluation based on set criteria.
- The accreditation of employers as workplace providers and assessors by the SETA ensures that the workplace becomes a centre of quality for the provision of education and training.

Learnerships should be offered in areas where there is a clear demand for skills. The initiator (e.g. an employer or SETA) must provide a detailed analysis of why the learnership is needed. Learnerships are demand-led and need to be developed in response to a demonstrable social or economic need. Learnerships need to be focussed on labour market priorities and, therefore, require an understanding of both the current and future knowledge and competence requirements for a sector.

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[1] Department of Labour Learnership Implementation Guideline

4 Project Approach

The process of designing, registering and implementing a learnership requires a careful analysis of the need for, and support for, the learnership within the sector. Fasset has adopted a six-stage approach to the design, registration and implementation of a learnership, i.e.:

1. Initiating the Learnership;
   - Identifying the Need
   - Preparing for development
2. Designing the Learnership;
   - Unit Standard & Qualification development
   - Curriculum Framework
   - System development for implementation
3. Registering the Learnership;
4. Developing the Learnership;
5. Preparing for and implementing the Learnership; and
6. Monitoring and evaluating.

Fasset is investigating the need within the management consulting sector for two NQF level 7 management consulting learnerships – a Diploma in Management Consulting and a Masters Degree in Management Consulting. The intention is to conduct a gap analysis exercise to determine the gap between unit standards and what training material/courses are available both locally and internationally in order to determine the best practices applicable to management consulting training.

The primary purpose of this gap analysis is to identify whether or not the need exists to provide high-level skills and knowledge to aspiring individuals in the profession and, ultimately, provide a means to obtain a recognised qualification in management consulting. Should the need exist, then the intention is to:

- Design the Learnerships;
- Develop the required training plan, including course material if deemed appropriate;
- Pilot the implementation of the Learnerships with the aim of providing the concepts and design; and
- Register the Learnerships.

Throughout the project, it is Fasset's intention to ensure that:

- The broadest range of input to the gap analysis, design and development be obtained;
- The learnerships provide a balanced programme of practical and academic study; and
- The learnerships will not be seen by the consulting profession to be biased towards a particular service provider.

Therefore, a broad range of stakeholders was included in the Gap Analysis phase, which entailed a comprehensive interview process (this constituted the field research component of the project), supported by extensive desktop research.

The process and methodology adopted to conduct this research are outlined in section 4.2 and 4.3 below.

4.1 Scope

The current project phase required that a detailed gap analysis be conducted in order to establish whether or not the need exists within the management consulting sector for the two proposed learnerships. The purpose of this report is to summarise the findings of this first project phase, namely the gap analysis and provide the framework for the continuation of the project.

The primary aims of the Gap Analysis phase are to:

- Identify the need for learnerships within the field of management consulting;
- Compare the current provision with the requirements of a learnership;
- Identify the gaps in provision against the proposed qualifications;
- Compare what currently exists in SA versus best practices;
- Map the career path of learners for the Level 7 Qualification;
- Conduct international and local research;
- Investigate current qualifications; and
- Identify and quantify the gaps in terms of the requirements and current provision against the new qualification and proposed learnerships.
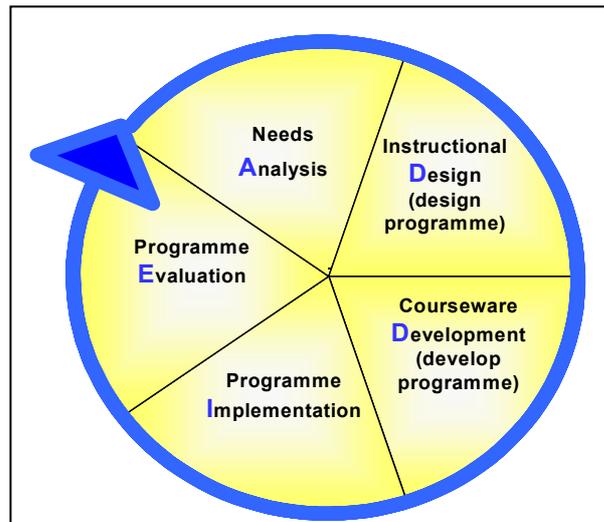
4.2 Project Methodology

Developing and training employees refers to the process of providing employees with formal and informal learning opportunities. The term "employee development" generally encompasses the range of learning opportunities a company provides its employees, while "training" refers only to those formal processes designed to help employees acquire specific skills or knowledge.

When considering the development of skills development/training programmes, it is important to recognise the value of the learning process. The learning process is important because of two fundamental realities, i.e.:

- Training does not necessarily result in learning - in other words, often the cycle is discontinuous and the learning process does not match the learning content; and
- People do not have to be trained in order to learn - in other words, the learning process can be effective in the absence of detailed training programmes and manuals.

In order to ensure training return on investment, a training and development process needs to be comprehensive and consider multiple factors, including the purpose or objectives of the training, the audience, and the manner in which the training will be evaluated. The five essential factors for training and development initiatives (or "ADDIE" activities) should, therefore, to be considered throughout the learnership development process. For this reason, we have adopted ADDIE as the methodology to guide the gap analysis phase and the interpretation of the findings of this research. Should the project continue beyond this phase, we intend to adopt this methodology in all of the remaining project phases. ADDIE has, in itself, a continuous improvement process, which will ensure intrinsic quality throughout the entire project.

This generic training and development process is depicted in Figure 4-0.

Figure 4-1: The Training Process

Each of the five ADDIE elements is discussed below in more detail.

Needs Analysis	This stage entails conducting a comprehensive needs analysis in order to determine skills gaps and requirements.
Instructional Design	This stage entails designing interventions appropriate to these needs and requirements in terms of the expected outcomes and designing the course materials, taking into account the subject matter, audience, training objectives and expected outcomes.
Courseware Development	This stage involves developing an outline that covers all training points in a logical sequence, as well determining the audience participation methods to be used. During this stage, it is important to consider the entire learning cycle. The learning cycle includes participating in learning activities, and participants responding, and applying and evaluating what was learned. Learning activities should involve participants by using one of many audience participation methods (e.g. brainstorming, case studies or games).
Programme Implementation	The fourth step in the training process is concerned with delivery of training (implementation) and ensuring that the course content is delivered in the most effective and appropriate manner. It is now widely accepted that the most effective training delivery model involves a blended delivery approach: i.e. a combination of face-to-face (contact) and distance learning modes (e.g. e-learning) with support being provided through face-to-face mentoring or e-mentoring (e.g. creating learning communities through e-mail based collaborative groups).
Programme Evaluation	Finally, measuring the effectiveness of the training concludes the training process. As the model suggests, this training process should be seen as continuous – i.e. the training process should be reactive in order to adapt to ever-changing training and skills development needs.

There are several external factors that impact on the training and development process. Some of these factors are generic across all training processes (e.g. training best practices), whilst others are unique to the external environment in which the process operates (e.g. legislation). Thus, any training needs analysis entails a consideration of the local training environment and legislative requirements as well as training best practices (both locally and globally).

4.3   Project Approach

The needs analysis completed for Phase 1 entailed establishing the current skills development practices within the management consulting sector in South Africa and conducting research in order to identify best practice for education and training.

The process adopted to achieve this included sourcing various materials, standards and information including:

- Fasset's learnership information pack;
- Qualification format and unit standards;
- Outline of current training material;
- Information from the Accounting and Auditing Standards Generating Body (ACFIST);
- The Institute of Management Consulting's (IMC) Body of Knowledge;
- Fasset and SAQA's moderation and RPL policy;
- Fasset's process for the registration of assessors; and
- SAQA's criteria for the registration of assessors.

Furthermore, a comparison of what currently exists in SA versus what is best practice was undertaken. This was conducted through international and local research and benchmarking. Specifically, the following process was adopted:

- Desktop research into the theory, practices, trends and implications for future development in the sector was conducted; and
- Interviews with management consultants, clients of management consultants' providers of training to management consultants and professional bodies to which management consultants affiliate were conducted.

The results of the research process are summarised throughout this report. The gaps between the existing training delivery and best practice are identified and quantified and the design elements for the two learnerships together with the career path of learners are mapped.

This process is set out in this report by firstly, identifying the profile of the profession. In doing this we consider the origins of management consulting, a description of the field, qualifications necessary to enter the field, the attributes of successful management consultants and staffing structures within firms.

This is expanded upon in that the specific findings relating to the field research that is unique to the South African industry are identified. A description of the consulting competencies, best practice and existing training and development vehicles and assessment practices are discussed.

All of this contributes to the understanding of the profile of the profession to assist to understand emerging education and training requirements as well as most appropriate methodology to address these needs. It is within this context that the project aims to explore the need for the management consulting learnerships and in the conclusion; recommendations for next steps are made.

5 Profile of the Profession

In order to form a clear understanding of the education and training practices and requirements within the management consulting sector, it is necessary to contextualise and create an overview of the management consulting professions. As such, this section aims to provide an overview of the following elements:

- Definition of management consulting;
- Description of the profession;
- Identification of the entry level requirements;
- Identification of the attributes predominant in the profession;
- Overview of "typical" career pathways, and
- Overview of staff composition.

Consulting is an exciting but risky profession.

The work is stimulating and important, but not everyone lasts in this business.

Consulting is about Business.

Consulting is the business of providing advice to firms in trouble; firms on the move and firms, which are trying to do what they do better, faster, and more cheaply. Consulting is about business. People who love business like consulting.

If you type the word "Consultant" into any web-based search browser, you'll quickly come up with hundreds if not thousands of consultants. These may include management consultants, marketing consultants, wedding consultants, fly-fishing consultants, contractors, freelancers or any other kind of consultant you want to find. What you probably won't find are any consultants that remotely resemble what you are specifically looking for because it seems that nowadays everyone is calling himself or herself a consultant.

But what is management consulting? Essentially, management consulting falls within the family of the professional services industry, along with accounting firms and law firms, serving large corporations. This sounds very vague and, as such, it is often very difficult for a consultant to explain what he or she does to his or her grandmother in simple terms. But, suffice it to say, that management consultants of all kinds provide advice and support to their clients in a variety of disciplines in order to improve business practice.

The term management consultant is just as general as the occupation of a doctor. We know that, in general, doctors provide advice to their patients having to do with the maintenance of good health. Similarly, management consultants provide advice to businesses with the goal of maintaining the business health and growth of their corporate clients. But, management consulting is a diverse and multi-faceted industry that provides a variety of different services, just as some doctors specialise in more specific health issues pertaining to the heart or the eyes.

In order to clearly define the scope of this project it is necessary to define management consulting and a management consultant. A detailed review of the literature revealed the following definitions:

"*Management consulting is the provision of independent advice and assistance to clients with management responsibilities. This advice can take several shapes, as consultants can be external, internal and may take on one or more of a whole array of roles, including being an outsourced function for the client organisation.*[2]"

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[2] The Amsterdam Model for International CMC standards

Consultants Listen …

"*A management consultant is an individual who provides independent advice and assistance about the process of management to clients with management responsibilities. The individual can be a generalist or a specialist and may approach an assignment with, for example, a purely financial point of view, as required by the client.*"[3]

Consulting requires the ability to listen to your customer; it also requires the ability to explain to your customer. Consulting is about communication. Good communicators do well in consulting.

"*Management consultants are professionals who are trained to solve problems, devise strategies, and improve the general health of its clients no matter what the industry. management consultants help clients solve specific problems (usually focused on the short-term), while a strategy Consultant researches and develops strategies for improving the long-term goals of the company. Companies hire consultants not only for their problem solving abilities, but also for their objectivity.*"[4]

"*Management consulting is an advisory service that helps clients identify and analyse management problems or opportunities. Management consultants recommend solutions or suggest actions with respect to client issues and help when requested in their implementation.*"[5]

Consulting is a Profession that is Growing

"*Management consulting is the sale of advisory services. People who have a broad set of skills apply their knowledge to projects in order to solve problems within organisations. These problems can range from corporate strategy to personnel to information technology. management consulting is the process of analysing problems and developing solutions that will benefit the organisation. Consultants are usually business generalists, however, they can specialise by industry or function. Knowledge of a specific industry or function is often based on work experience.*"[6]

The business of consulting has been growing by leaps and bounds in the last decade. There is a lot of hiring going on and there is likely to be strong demand in the future.

Typically, management consultants perform three roles. These are:

- **Professional advisor and counsellor:** The Consultant has mastered an established body of knowledge, has completed educational requirements, and in some cases is governed by a code of conduct.
- **Qualified resource:** management consultants are a resource upon which managers and administrators of organisations can draw as needed qualified resource.
- **Change Agent:** management consultants are a catalyst for change. By solving client problems the Consultant must consider how solutions can be implemented. These solutions often require changes in organisational structure, procedures, or job responsibilities. The management consultant's recommendations have value only if these changes are understood and accepted by employees and managers.

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[3] The Amsterdam Model for International CMC standards

[4,5,6] Gabriela Montell: Another Career Choice For Phd's

Not Everyone Starts on Top

You would usually start in an analyst position. To succeed in these positions you need to be extremely dedicated and be willing to travel. Many, but not all, positions are gruelling because they require long hours and heavy travel.

Network, Network...

It's important to have a good network of business contacts in consulting as you progress. New business development becomes part of your job. As your classmates rise in their respective business areas it is important to stay in touch with them, as they may become your future customers.

5.1   Origins of management consulting

Some aficionados of consulting history delight in tracing its origin to Aaron, the brother of and adviser to Moses, which emphasises the ambiguity of the need for wisdom, counsel and guidance being available to those in responsible leadership positions.

In practical present day terms, it is necessary for practitioners to be aware of the roots of contemporary business improvement initiatives in the 'scientific management' inquiries of the early Industrial Revolution, when pioneers such as Frederick Winslow Taylor at the Bethlehem Steel Works sought productivity enhancements through measurement and management of the sub-elements of the workers' tasks. This tradition can be traced through the work of the Gilbreths and the wartime munitions performance management lessons, and the post-war productivity improvements of Deming, Juran and the latter day Quality Movement. The influence of military developments on subsequent civilian endeavours cannot be overestimated.

This is also true of the second wave of management thinking and consulting developments: the Human Relations tradition, which dates back to Elton Mayo and the Bank Wiring Observation Room and Relay Assembly Test Room Experiments at the Hawthorne Electric Plant of the General Electric Company. Mary Parker Follett is often seen as the Mother of this school of thought, which has always been in a state of dynamic tension with the scientific management tradition.

These two traditions, respectively, build upon the focus on the task and the human process in industry business endeavours to achieve commercial results. The job of the management consultant is to advise management on drawing together structure, task and people/process in a balanced way to achieve an effective business result. This is essentially the core purpose of the Consultant today, as it has been through the history of the profession.

In South Africa, the management consulting profession, estimated at more than 30 000 personnel strong, has earned its place with the best of the world. Quality standards and measures are maintained through the immensely competitive nature of the profession and the access to global practices and standards.

Unfortunately, in South Africa, the profession has suffered from the ravages of discrimination in both the education system and the workplace. The interviews and workplace skills plans of employers in the sector revealed that Blacks, Coloureds and Indians constitute a disproportionately small proportion of the profession, while women are somewhat more. It is in this area especially where we believe that the development of learnerships will benefit the profession.

Teamwork, Teamwork...

A key to success in consulting is teamwork. Being able to pull together persons with large egos to get a presentation together for a client is a challenge and is likely to be rewarded highly. You will almost always work as part of a team.

5.2   Description of the Field

Typically, consultants conduct research, analyse data, prepare reports and present findings; and a management consultant may become involved in the actual implementation of the plan. Profits are derived from fees to clients, which consequently breaks down to "billable hours." In general, the work environment is fast-paced and stimulating and involves long hours. Work weeks of between fifty to seventy-five hours are not unusual.

Management consultants, in larger organisations, tend to work in teams of 3 to 4 individuals with one person assuming the leadership role. Travel is another important aspect of a management consultant's professional life. Spending time with their client on the premises is an essential part of the consultant's responsibilities. If you are working a management case you may spend three to four days at the client site. It is not unusual for a Consultant to fly out Sunday night and fly home Friday night until the project is finished.

Management consultants are professionals who are employed to identify, to analyse, and to propose and implement solutions to management problems. Management consultants can be hired or contracted to address an immediate need such as a company merger or, alternatively, to assist with long-term strategic planning. Typically, this group includes those who provide services to management in such areas as: operational analysis, organisational change, project management, privatisation, re-engineering and process re-design in fields including human resources, marketing, production, finances, management information, technology and systems, operations management and strategic planning. Basically, management consultants are engaged to improve efficiency and provide solutions.

Brainwork, Brainwork...

At its essence, consulting is about "stretching" and using your brain. A consultant sells ideas, smarts, brilliance (and, of course, talks a lot about transforming ideas into action). People with serious smarts and analytical firepower are in constant demand from the very best consulting firms.

Consultants may be employed directly by management consulting firms and organisations throughout the public and private sectors, or they may be self-employed and offer their services to the same types of firms on a contract basis. Increasingly, management consultants provide international skills and work on projects with international agencies.

While different firms have different titles for the same positions, career progression traditionally occurs across the following levels:

- Analysts/Research Associates;
- Consultants;
- Senior/Experienced consultants;
- Manager/Associates;
- Senior Manager/Director; to
- Director/Principal/Partner.

The type and amount of work performed depends on the kind of project the consultants are working on. It is possible for a management consultant to have an entire career with one company. It also happens that individuals enter the profession at different points. The career path is not always linear. Some management consultants will focus on one industry and others will work with a wide array of clients from various sectors.

More typically, after a few years, a consultant might choose to leave the firm and work independently. Numerous opportunities for advancement exist once a Consultant proves him or herself in the industry. Those with solid contacts and sector experience have extremely marketable talents, and hence, have the opportunity to pick and choose the assignments they wish to work on. Of course increasing competition and consolidation in the field is forcing some rethinking of the level of consultants and the area of expertise that organisations can afford to employ.

Are You a Little Kooky?

Candidates with original perspective wanted. Consultants listen, analyse and solve. To put it all together you have to be able to look at things differently than the average manager out there. If you've lived in a different country, or have a strong background in a non-business area like literature, music or biology, you may have just the type of thought-process a consulting firm is looking for.

In general, management consulting can be broken down into three major streams:

- **Strategy**: Primarily has to do with issues external to a company (e.g. How can we grow? What company should be buy? What markets should we be in?);
- **Operations/Process**: Addresses the internal issues and problems (e.g. How should our company be organised? Where should we build our next manufacturing plant? Is our manufacturing process efficient?) This often requires considerable technical expertise and deep subject matter knowledge; and
- **Information Technology**: As the name implies, information technology encompasses everything from strategy and planning to execution and implementation of IT systems, in line with the company's global goals and objectives (e.g. Which IT system best meets our operational and strategic needs? How should we implement our new IT system? Is our accounting software optimally meeting our accounting needs?).

There was a time when consulting firms generally focused on one of these three major service offerings (i.e. niche or "boutique" consulting firms). However, as of late, strategy specialists have become increasingly involved in IT issues and operations-oriented firms are doing strategy. An industry that used to be segmented across services has now begun to shift to a "one-stop-shop" approach, with the larger organisations. The general consensus seems to be that the consulting firm that meets all of the client's needs will be the one that thrives in this extremely competitive industry.

Industry knowledge counts.

If you have serious experience working in a specific industry, be it utilities, paper, airlines, retail or financial services, there probably is a consulting firm looking for you. Firms want specialists with deep knowledge in specific industries that can understand the present and envision the future.

5.3 Qualifications Necessary to Enter the Field

Most consulting firms tend to hire people with advanced or tertiary degrees, typically law, finance, business, IT, Human Resources and other specialty areas or with some specialised experience. Academic excellence, leadership and team skills gained from extracurricular activities and private sector experience are important in the consideration process.

The following qualities are essential for consultants, some of which are developed over time and experience in the profession:

- Excellent oral and written communication skills;
- Strong analytical abilities (including quantitative methods);
- Attention to detail and deadlines; and
- Proven leadership capabilities.

Most international contracting and consulting firms hire individuals with strong analytical, communications, and technical skills along with language and area skills and extensive international work experience. Given the nature of consulting work, consultants are hired as 'problem-solvers'. They must quickly analyse situations, devise plans of action, and often implement projects.

5.4 Attributes of successful management consultants

Convergence is Coming

Informational technology convergence means tremendous demand for skilled consultants who can work to link cable companies, web providers, online services, broadcast networks, wireless services, telephone companies and publishers. If you understand this technology and have a vision for its future, you could have a bright future in consulting.

One of the most important assets of a successful consultant is the ability to learn very quickly. Consultants are continually being thrown into completely disparate and unfamiliar situations and are expected to familiarise themselves very quickly to the client, the client's industry and the problem at hand. Strong management consultants have the following skills:

- **Analytical skills and numerical aptitude** are essential due to the analytically rigorous nature of the job;
- **Communication skills** enable consultants to keep everyone 'on the same page' and convey complex ideas to the client in simple, easily understood messages;
- The **ability to work well in teams** is essential because all consulting work is done in a team environment, often made up of both clients and consultants; and
- **Problem solving skills and creativity** are also important in a profession where one is often hired to solve the problems of huge complex organisations.

Presentation skills matter.

If you can understand a clients needs, help them formulate a solution and then present your findings effectively, whether it be one-on-one or in front of a crowd with the latest multimedia technology, you will be in demand. Ability to present well is something that takes hard work for almost everyone. Try to convey your commitment and ability in this area.

In addition, it is generally accepted that a management consultants will be able to:

- Focus on details;
- Recognise problems for improvement;
- Develop solutions;
- Conceptualise and implement organisational change;
- Lead groups;
- Organise and present material in a convincing manner;
- Maintain discipline and focus; and
- Build and maintain lasting relationships.

The project-oriented, team-based work style of management consulting is an excellent background for advancement in today's more flexible work environments.

5.5 Staffing structures of management consulting firms

Many consulting firms, especially the smaller firms, keep a small core staff employed full time to respond to external requests. As contracts are won, they hire two types of additional personnel for implementing contracts, i.e. associates and consultants.

Associates normally work closely with the core staff on several projects, and are given contract work as individuals or subcontractors. Consultants are less closely linked to the firm. They have specific skills not found with the core staff or associates, and they tend to freelance with several firms.

It's Not Always Fun...

There are plenty of times when the work is less than glamorous. Taking an idea you already understand and applying it to a new client. Or doing laborious industry research. Or using simple common sense on clients that don't need a Ph.D., just a kick in the pants. Be sure that you have realistic expectations about what the work is like day to day.

Therefore, many positions in these firms are short-term positions tied to specific contracts, ranging from one month to one or more years. The majority of entry-level positions are found in contract-specific positions as associates or consultants. Many of the consultants employed by firms specialise in a particular function or area, and work primarily with one or two firms.

The larger employers tend to cluster the management consultants into expertise streams e.g. strategy, IT, Human Resources etc or into business sector units with multi-disciplinary teams.

There are generally four principal career directions consultants can take as management consultants:

- Generalist Consulting;
- Specialist Consulting;
- Internal Consulting; and
- Independent Consulting.

Benefits provided by management consultants

Independent viewpoint: Because management consultants are not members of the organisation they bring objectivity and detachment to problems faced by the company. They introduce new ideas and unbiased suggestions into the team.
Special qualifications: management consultants possess special knowledge, skills, and a variety of personal attributes.
Temporary professional service: Management consultants fill-in as temporary professional help. They are less expensive in the long run than hiring new managers or employees.

5.5.1 Generalist consulting

Generalist consultants work for a wide range of companies. Many include consulting as their only line of business, while others also offer additional services like financial auditing, systems planning, or tax consulting. All of these firms hire graduates with strong intellectual, analytical, and interpersonal skills. Consultants intending to pursue careers in these firms must not only have strong scholastic records, but should also bring to the table solid work experience in an industry.

5.5.2 Specialist consulting

Consultants can also orient themselves towards consulting in more specialised niches within the consulting industry. Specialist firms provide more focused services in many areas, for instance in systems integration, information management, operations management, human resources, international marketing, or facilities planning. Pursuing a specialist track requires significant prior work experience as a functional specialist.

5.5.3 Internal consulting

Another career option is internal consulting. Good management consulting skills can be a route to executive management positions because you gain a breadth of experiences that are difficult to find in traditional line or staff positions. As companies consider outsourcing more high level functions, key staff may be placed in the role of internal consultants who must demonstrate their value to line managers. Many graduates now seek employment with management consulting firms directly or take positions as "internal consultants" within business organisations.

Internal consultants work within a firm as advisors to management. Many of the larger companies maintain internal consultants on staff. Often these consultants act as crisis managers and change agents. Often they also act as coordinators for the services provided by external consulting firms.

Some companies maintain internal consulting staff as a way to reduce the expense of hiring outside consultants. Other companies systematically rotate individuals through an internal consulting function in order to give them the broadest possible exposure before moving them into line positions of their own choosing.

5.5.4 Independent consulting

Another career option consultants can pursue is as independent consultants. To succeed in their entrepreneurial ventures, however, consultants must have extensive prior industry experience and have an established network of business contacts to draw on. Most individuals selling their services as independent consultants are generally recognised specialists in a particular industry, function, or technology. Sometimes they gain their specialised experience by working for a time with large consultancies and firms. Often they work in peripheral specialty areas that companies have outsourced.

5.6   Summary

Interviews conducted during this gap analysis revealed that the majority of consultants (>80%) possess a tertiary qualification. In addition, it appears that currently, an extremely small percentage of management consultants (< 5%) are Previously Disadvantaged Individuals. Generally, consultants in South Africa compare favourably with consultants internationally in that many of the South African firms researched apply best practice methodologies and this is not dependant on the size of the firm.

The research revealed that, generally, management consulting can be classified according to three major streams, i.e.:

- Strategy;
- Process/Operations; and
- Information Technology.

In addition, there are four principal career directions that management consultants can take, including:

- Generalist Consulting;
- Specialist Consulting;
- Internal Consulting; and
- Independent Consulting.

The structure of the proposed learnerships (in terms of the core, fundamental and elective unit standards) specifically takes into account the career paths for consultants as described above and is discussed in more detail in section 7 of this report.

These two factors (i.e. consulting stream and career direction), combined with the typical career progression profile, provide a matrix that exhibits the many options available to management consultants; such a matrix might, typically, resemble that depicted in Table 5-1.

	Generalist			Specialist (Functional or Sector)		
	Management Consulting firm	**Internal Consultant**	**Independent Consultant**	**Management Consulting firm**	**Internal Consultant**	**Independent Consultant**
Analyst						
Consultant						
Senior / Experienced Consultant						
Manager						
Senior Manager/Director						
Partner/ Director						

Table 5-1: Career options for management consultants

A management consultant may find themselves in any of these segments (e.g. fulfilling the role of manager within a management consulting firm, and specialising in information technology). Vast opportunities exist for consultants to move between these segments and to enter and exit at various points. Thus, any education and training interventions needs to provide flexibility and a large degree of individual choice within the profession. The models of the large consulting firms do not necessarily apply to all sectors of management consulting, as the sector is being re-structured and re-focused with increased pressures of competition and international standards. Any education and training model has to recognise these shifts and provide ample opportunity for choice and speedy and effective transfer of skill and knowledge. The lead times for consultants to acquire additional competence is being shortened, and the system of learning is being pressured to deliver capable, confident and competent individuals.

Management consulting firms can be further differentiated by the size of employer- large, medium or small. There are distinctive differences between Large, Medium and Small firms, including amongst others, their entry-level requirements, and some of the major differences are summarised below:

Large firms	• Typically employ new graduates; • Provide large amounts of training; • Experience high staff turnover (25% to 30% per annum); and • Offer a wide range of consulting services.
Medium firms	• Typically employ experienced and qualified professionals; • Rely on existing knowledge and continuous professional development (CPD); • Experience low staff turnover 5% to 10%; and • Operate in a niche market.
Small firms	• Typically employ experienced professionals – consist of 1 to 5 professionals from a consulting or commerce background; • Employ freelance consultants to respond to client assignments (flexible workforce size); • Staff typically have specialised knowledge and take responsibility for own training; • Experience negligible turnover of permanent staff – less than 5%; and • Specialists in only one or two areas.

Because there are multiple entry points, it is important to distinguish between the needs of the large, medium and small management consulting organisations.

5.6.1 Implications for education & training

What is apparent is that the profession caters for sector and functional specialisation as well as more generalist knowledge and skills. The profession also includes people that work across various organisational structures. Hence, any education and training interventions (including learnerships) must cater for the various pathways and routes that ultimately lead to expert management consulting services. In addition they must be responsive to the rapidly changing management consulting environment in order to ensure that the competencies that need to be applied in varying contexts and with varying clients are continuously developed.

The sector also serves as a training ground for commerce and industry. Many consultants, after a number of years consulting will enter positions outside of the sector. A positive aspect of the SAQA model is that it enables the transferability of skills both within and outside of the sector. The learnerships will, therefore, provide learners with a nationally recognised qualification that is recognised outside of the firm that provided the training. This is further emphasized in table 11.1.

This profile of the profession was informed by both the literature and field studies, and it is important to note that many similarities exist between the local and international research findings, which further confirms the competitiveness of management consulting in South Africa.

The next section summarises the data collected during the field research and presents an overview of the current human resource practices, as well as the emerging needs of the sector.

6 Findings from Field Research

The field research was conducted over a period of six weeks. Interviews were conducted with a number of organisations that fall within four broad categories. These categories are depicted below in Figure 6-1.
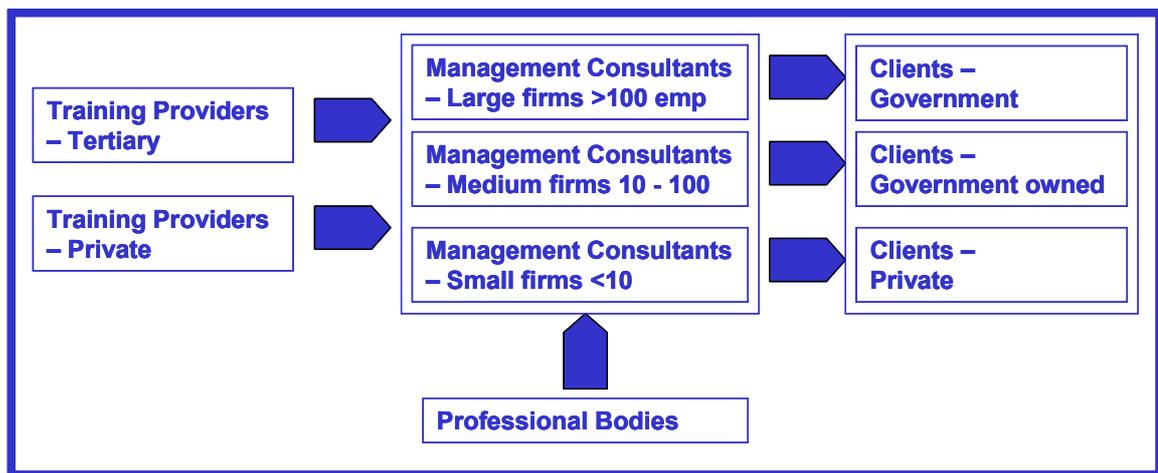
**Figure 6-1: Categories of organisations interviewed**

The interview process comprised a structured interview being administered by the same interviewer for each respondent. At the start of the interview the background was sketched, and where necessary, a description was given about skills development, Fasset and an overview of learnerships. The interviews took, on average, one hour and thirty minutes. All respondents were assured of the confidentiality with which the information they provided would be treated but that it would be used as reference material for this gap analysis report. For a detailed list of the organisations and representatives interviewed please refer to Annexure B. Questionnaires were adapted to suit all of the different stakeholders being interviewed. Copies of the questionnaires used during the interview process are contained in Annexure C to F.

6.1 Quantitative information gathered

The following graphs summarise much of the quantitative information (i.e. data collected that can be represented graphically). A narrative pertaining to each graph is contained on the right hand side.

What percentage of your annual recruits, are graduates? Do you predict a shift in this trend?

By far, the majority of people recruited into the sector are graduates. In some cases consultants possess two or even three degrees

BUT

All Firms

82%
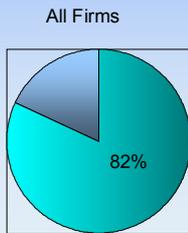
Where consultants are not graduates they have a speciality skill that is either obtained through a diploma or through experience

The sector has relied on a model of bringing in foundational skills and attributes but of developing the functional speciality skills through experience and structured learning interventions. The larger firms have often drawn on international training programmes to provide a particular approach and skill.

To what extent is Human Resource Development a strategic focus within the organisation?

HRD is much more of a strategic focus in large firms than in the medium and small firms. This is mostly due to the profile of employees, where large firms employ less experienced people.

BUT

Large Firms

No

Yes

Medium & Small Firms

Yes

No
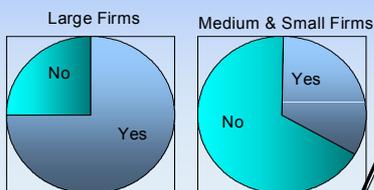
Medium and small firms tend to employ more senior and experienced people who take greater responsibility for their own development

Self-paced learning is critical to allow for a fast transfer of knowledge.

To what extent do employees take ownership for their own development?

While there does not appear to be a difference between large, medium and small firms, the large firms all have structures within which employees plan their own needs

BUT

Large Firms

No

Yes

Medium & Small Firms

No

Yes
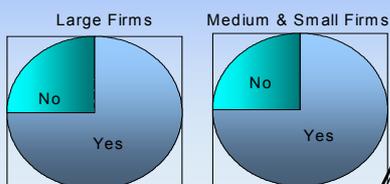
Medium and small firms tend to make more use of knowledge sharing and of self study experiences

Flexibility in delivery mechanisms is critical It frequently occurs that for specific client assignments consultants need to skill up quickly to respond to the client's needs. Furthermore, it is widely acknowledged by management consultants, that in the rapidly changing sector one needs to take responsibility for one's own continuing professional education through various vehicles such as research and knowledge sharing.

To what extent does your organisation retain skills?

Large firms have a much higher staff turnover rate than medium and small firms. This is primarily due to the profile of recruitment, mainly new graduates within large firms.

Large Firms

Small & Medium Firms

Retention

Attrition

Attrition

Retention

BUT

These graduates often move on to smaller firms, go into practice on their own or enter commerce when leaving the firm.

The size and type of organisation from which management consultants operate, whether independently or employed, necessitates a variety in the level of management and entrepreneurial skills required. A "one-size fits all" approach is certainly not suitable here.

Are there clear career paths and learning pathways within your organisation?

Large Firms

No

Yes

Medium & Small Firms

No

Yes

BUT

Medium and small firms have an extremely flat structure and employ people for their specialisation. Therefore career paths are less relevant.

Career movement may occur horizontally as consultants cross into different functional speciality streams, or apply the same expertise but in different industries. The level of seniority in larger firms requires greater sales capability, strategic and managerial capability. Within smaller organisations all consultants may be required to already possess these skills.

Do you consider the current training and development vehicles to be sufficient ?

Most respondents believe that there are sufficient vehicles for the development of skills of management consultants

Large Firms

No

Yes

Medium & Small Firms

No

Yes

BUT

The quality, standard and content of offering varies greatly so you tend to stick with those you know or have been referred to you

The field research has indicated that a wide variety of delivery mechanisms ought to be made available partly to provide the wide range of competency required, but also to service the different needs of individuals and organisations. Furthermore, quality assurance mechanisms need to be put in place, both for external providers and to recognise internal training provided by firms themselves.

Do you utilise a competence based system for HRD?

Large firms have formal competency systems in place where smaller firms, where they use competencies, tend to do so informally.

BUT

Large Firms   Medium & Small Firms

Yes   Yes   No
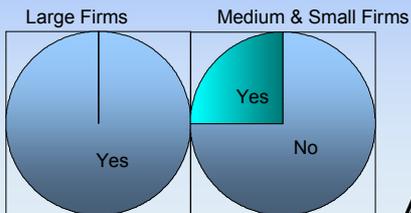
In both cases there is strong awareness of the competencies of consultants within the profession

The predominant approach within the profession is competence based. In other words human resource systems have relied on clearly defined competence in order to recruit, place and develop people. Structured career paths have also indicated skills needs, and strong performance management systems have been able to track individual's progress. However with an increase in competitiveness, these systems have sometimes found to be lacking.

Despite the systems, some individuals have advanced through the hierarchy, not so much through competence, but through a time based system and duration of employment. This has sometimes resulted in inefficient and costly structures within the larger employers. The competency systems have thus been lacking in the rigour in assessment of competence for development and advancement purposes. Competence type assessment would introduce greater accuracy as to the actual capability of an individual, and thus lead to more accurate decisions around placement and development.

To what extent is the market supplying you with the appropriate capacity/skilled personnel ?

Most firms stated that they were able to attract suitable personnel.

BUT

All Firms

No   Yes
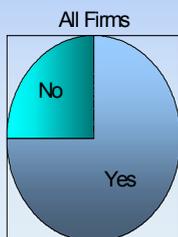
When looking for consultants from a PDI background, all firms cited difficulties

The profession is not representative of the demographics of South Africa. This is partly due to the lack of labour market supply but also due to the inability often of firms to retain the individuals. Learnerships are a vehicle through which new entrants can be brought into an organisation for a defined period, but which offers a structured learning process, which is more likely to lead to talent retention. This sector is also a provider of skills into other sectors as is widely acknowledged that management consulting skills are an excellent grounding for middle to upper management positions in commerce and industry.

To what extent do you develop skills from within ?

Large firms tend to spend a large amount of time and resources on the development of skills

Large Firms

No

Yes

Medium & Small Firms

No

Yes

BUT

Small firms who do not have the internal capacity to develop skills from within tend to hire in skills as needed

Small firms have not necessarily had the incentive to provide exposure of individuals to a wide range of skills. They have indicated that they would welcome the following:

- If the education and training intervention could provide exposure to the skills required, while still having the person working, the potential for development to occur is greater;
- If the intervention also provide financial incentives for development, the chances for the small firm to support skills development is even greater; and
- If the intervention can be shown to lead to increased competence and productivity.

Learnerships offer an opportunity to provide flexible learning, with financial incentives, and with the workplace assessment, a transfer in learning can be measured and quantified.

To what extent should affiliation to professional bodies be a requirement within the management consulting industry?

Most respondents felt that affiliation to a professional body would increase the credibility of management consultants

All Firms

No

Yes

BUT

It would be difficult to enforce adherence to the code of conduct and standards without supporting legislation

No recognised South African professional standards exist, and the credibility of the profession could be questioned in some instances. Small firms feel frustrated, as they are often unable to convince clients of their credibility and to have the same recognition as that provided to large firms.

To what extent is ROI on training monitored in the organisation?

ROI on training is not measured within most firms on a formal basis.

Large Firms

Medium & Small

Yes

No

No

BUT

The firms do have a 'feel' for what is good and not good when it comes to training providers

The lack of competency assessment has meant that the transfer of knowledge and application of skills is not tracked. The effectiveness of many learning interventions and of workplace experience has not been measured. This is a critical component of learnerships as competence is measured in the workplace, enabling organisations to track Return on Investment (ROI) and to better inform the choices made around development interventions.

6.2   Qualitative information gathered

Further qualitative information gathered during the interview process that cannot be represented graphically is summarised below in the following paragraphs.

6.2.1 Time

In management consulting, time is money. Research indicates that, on average, consulting firms set aside five days per year for the formal training of consultants. Some firms set aside more time for new entrants, however, this typically only occurs within the large firms. It is widely acknowledged that five days is not sufficient to provide a consultant with the skills he/she requires to perform competently. It is for this reason that a learnership will need to be flexible and to provide a blended model of workplace learning that combines significant components of on-the-job training, self-paced training and formal training.

6.2.2 Learning style

Consultants typically prefer an adult learning style. This will facilitate the achievement of the blended learning approach mentioned above.

6.2.3 Accessibility of learning

A strong emphasis on problem-based, client-centred learning, supporting participants' own experience, expertise and knowledge is required for the training of management consultants. Wherever possible learning should be undertaken through virtual seminars, research, seminars, discussion groups and action learning projects and the analysis of theoretical concepts as they apply to the business environment. Learning should take place at the consultant's own pace and in the consultant's own time.

Efforts to:

- Cut costs;
- Focus on core competencies (and outsource the non- core competencies); and
- Use learning as a strategic source of competitive advantage,

All point to the need for ongoing, accurate evaluation. In a survey of more than 1,000 training professionals at the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD's) 1996 International Conference, 93 percent said they are under increased pressure to demonstrate return-on-investment. In the July 1997 National Human Resources Development (HRD) Executive Survey, the need to measure performance outcomes was rated high on senior practitioners' list of current and future HRD trends.

6.2.4 Tracking Performance

Outcomes-based training encourages development and not merely hours spent in training sessions. The key is to determine what learning has taken place and what improvements were made on the job. It has never been easy to credibly isolate training's effect from other performance improvement interventions. The reliance on electronic learning technologies will almost certainly complicate this already difficult task. Yet, in an era when learning is central to competitive advantage and all corporate functions are held to new levels of accountability and governance, the challenge must be met head-on.

An important point often missed is the debate regarding the value of measuring training's effect, including return on investment (ROI). One perspective is that what gets measured gets managed. Therefore, performance management is being used increasingly, not only in the corporate environment but also within consulting firms. Instruments such as the balanced scorecard of Kaplan and Norton provide organisations with the instrumentation that they need to navigate future successes.

If workplace-learning initiatives aren't measured sufficiently, it is highly unlikely that they will be well managed. That will be particularly true as more electronic learning technologies become available and choosing among them becomes more complex. It has too-often been ignored that measurement is a component of good management and essential to continuous improvement.

Generally in most organisations, the effects of expenditure on training and development are not well documented. At one level, the benefits of training for a particular operation can be forecast and checked by evaluation. At the other extreme of more general and academic development, it is very difficult to measure inputs, let alone identify the causal links to specific outputs.

6.3   Current practices within the sector

The results of the field research provide further insights into the current practices within the management consulting sector, and these are summarised below.

6.3.1 Delivery Mechanisms

The current profile of the profession requires great flexibility in delivery mechanisms, and a wide choice is available to suit the needs of the small and large organisations. Consultants enter and exit at various points with career movement between sectoral and functional specialisations and managerial contexts. Flexibility is key in both delivery and the choice of competency systems

6.3.2 Competency based systems

Competency based systems are predominant, yet the assessment of competence has been sorely lacking. The effectiveness of skills development initiatives is extremely difficult to measure. The industry is fast changing, and needs to shorten the time period for the transfer of learning to occur. This can occur through workplace assessment. With the assessment results accurate and informed decisions can be made around the placement of an individual and the development interventions to be adopted. Costly mistakes could be made around placement, promotion and development of individuals without an accurate sense of skills and competence levels.

6.3.3 Workplace experience

Much of the competence required is gained through on-the-job experience. In many instances large employers have taken the view that 'time served' indicates the readiness for promotion and assumptions are often made as to the actual experience gained over a defined period. In other words, an unstructured approach has been adopted as to the workplace experience component of an individuals working life.

6.3.4 National Standards for the sector

The low membership and low awareness of professional bodies, has meant that there is no one set of nationally recognised performance measures for the management consulting profession. An opportunity exists to register national standards and qualifications for the profession that will allow for some mobility and recognition within the industry.

6.3.5 Small employer constraints

Small organisations require some incentives to enable them to release employees to learn. They require the assurance that individuals can still work while participating in training and thus flexible delivery mechanisms must be available. They would also like for individuals to acquire skills and experience, which they might not be able to provide directly. In addition small organisations often need to be convinced of the effectiveness of training. Assessment would be critical to do this. Coupled with financial incentives, the small organisation might just be convinced to participate in skills development programmes.

6.4   Summary

In summary:
- The research indicated that there do not appear to be significant gaps between the South African management consulting practices and the international best practices. All of the international firms have a presence in South Africa and the smaller local firms compare favourably with these international counterparts;
- There are notable differences between large, medium and small firms. These differences are structural differences and as a result of the size, profile and strategies of the firm. For example, it would, under the current circumstances, not be possible for a small firm to hire a trainee consultant and send him/her on four months training in the first year without some form of external support. This is an indication of the possible value that a learnership could add;
- Human Resource Development is a strategic focus within most firms. However, whilst large firms are the model of best practice, small firms place a lot of emphasis on the employee taking ownership for his/her own development;
- Skills retention is not as large a problem as one may have expected. It is only the large firms that have the high turnover (25 – 30%). These firms especially, make use of knowledge management and skills

retention strategies so that while staff turnover is high, knowledge lost to the firm is significantly less. In many instances, the knowledge management systems are best practice;

- In large firms there are highly structured career paths and learning pathways. In the smaller firms there are not. Skills needs are linked to business needs in that employees are trained in specialist areas that the firm offers as client offerings;
- The firms interviewed considered the training vehicles to be sufficient. In fact, they consider there to be an abundance of training providers and vehicles for their needs. These providers range widely from the very good to the very poor. The providers registered, resulting from these learnerships will be a large benefit in this regard, as they will be of a consistent standard;
- Only the international firms make use of international training resources. They are, however, starting to make less and less use of international training due to the cost thereof. Smaller firms state that local training is as good as international training and that the internet gives a huge amount of access to knowledge and international best practice;
- On average it appears that four to five days training is offered at all levels per person per year. The large firms offer more to the new recruits initially. There are no formal methods of assessment or for deeming competence and return on investment is not measured in any direct way. The learnership will assist through not only formalising on-the-job training into a structured workplace component of the learning but also put in place formal nationally recognised assessment procedures and practices;
- There is a wide range of views around the skills requirements for management consultants. These requirements range from project management to analytical skills to ethics. The common view is that there are significant skills requirements. However, these are not consistent across all firms.
- It is only the large firms, which experience the large turnover, which will be doing any hiring on any scale in the next twelve months. Most other firms will do small scale hiring or not at all;
- Not a lot of difficulty is experienced finding appropriately skilled personnel. It is only when a firm is specifically looking for recruits from previously disadvantaged backgrounds that there is an extreme shortage; and
- With regards to training costs, most firms say that the costs will escalate, that they will be looking for less expensive ways of training and that there is huge pressure on training budgets within firms to reduce or at least maintain training costs.

6.4.1 Implications for training and development

Currently some excellent experiences exist of competency based skills development initiatives. There are some gaps identified and areas for improvement, particularly given the changing nature of the profession. It is at this point that one considers the model of learnerships and the contribution that they could make to learning and development within the management consulting sector. Many of the benefits of learnerships have been discussed in Section 3.4 of this report but, with specific reference to this project, some of the benefits of adopting the learnership model would include:

- Structured workplace components to ensure specific experiences and competencies are gained;
- Recognition of prior learning through workplace assessment;
- Flexibility in the choice of delivery mechanisms;
- Flexibility in the choice of standards in the culmination of a nationally recognised qualification;
- Financial incentives through Fasset and SARS;
- Opportunities to retain talent including PDIs through structured skills interventions; and
- Opportunities to take on new entrants on a learnership agreement with no obligation to employ the person at the completion of the learnership.

Having addressed the current trends and practices within management consulting sector, we will explore some of the best practices with regards to competence and, more specifically, align competencies to the management consulting profession.

7 Consulting Competence

A competency has been defined as *"an underlying characteristic of a person which results in effective and/or superior performance in a job"* (Boyatzis, 1982). A competency model is, therefore, a collection of those characteristics required of superior performers.

Competence is taken to mean the ability to produce the desired outcomes and implies the knowledge and experience required to do so. The framework of management consulting competencies will typically be composed of the following four elements:
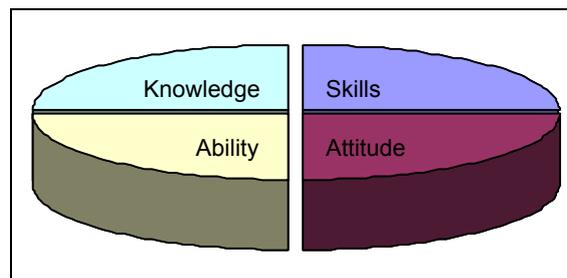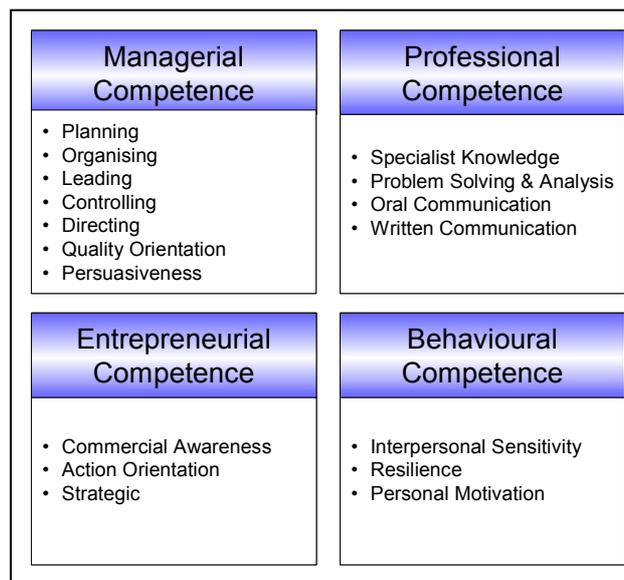

- **Knowledge:** Knowledge does not necessarily imply the ability or the skill to perform a task. However, it does imply a theoretical understanding of the task to be performed.
- **Skills**: The skills required in order to perform a task need to be considered in respect of a theoretical and an experiential component. Therefore, when someone has the skills to perform a task it may be argued that they have the experience to support the knowledge.
- **Ability:** Ability is seen, not just at a cognitive level but at a physical level as well. An example would be that while people may know how to run, it would require certain physical attributes in order to have the ability to be an athlete.
- **Attitude:** The final component that makes up performance is attitude. This has been specifically included, as we will indicate later in this section that leadership and management have a large impact on an individual's attitude towards the organisation and towards the task.

Arising from the research, a number of competencies required to be a successful management consultant can be identified. These competencies can be tracked against the framework of the client-consultant relationship framework, which is a useful guideline as to the generic path that assignments follow. This framework is depicted in Figure 7-1.
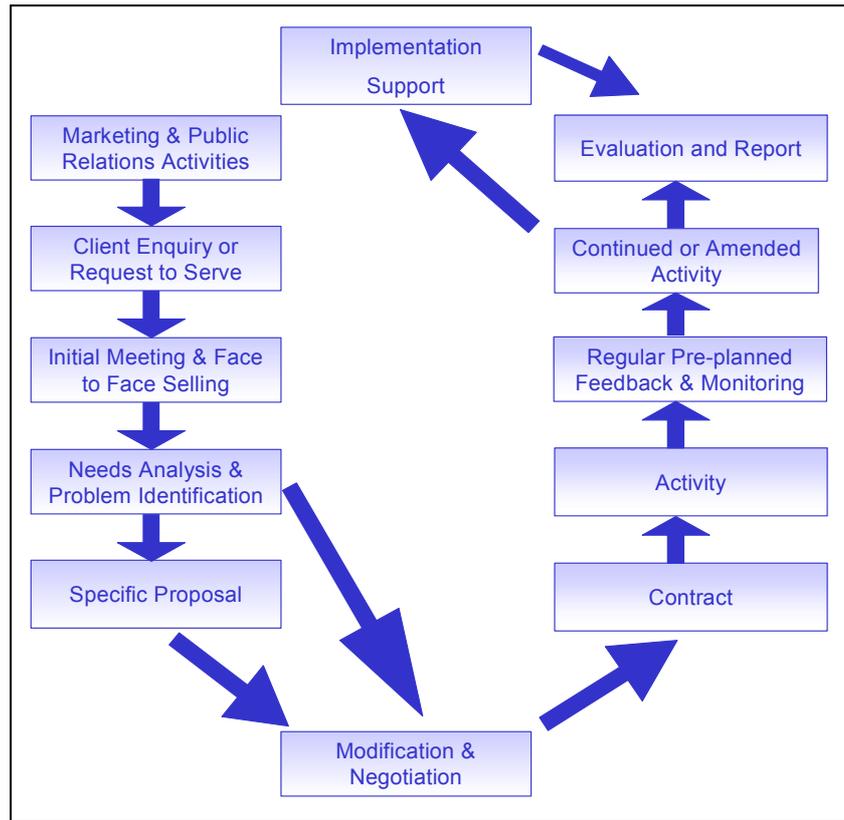
Figure 7-1: Client-consultant relationship framework

As highlighted in the previous sections, a management consultant could be a generalist or a specialist within a functional or industry sector, and could be working in a range of organisational structures be they small or large. Whatever the context, best practice research reveals that there are four underpinning competences that are critical to the effective performance of management consultants. These competencies are depicted below in Figure 7-2.

Managerial Competence
• Planning
• Organising
• Leading
• Controlling
• Directing
• Quality Orientation
• Persuasiveness

Professional Competence
• Specialist Knowledge
• Problem Solving & Analysis
• Oral Communication
• Written Communication

Entrepreneurial Competence
• Commercial Awareness
• Action Orientation
• Strategic

Behavioural Competence
• Interpersonal Sensitivity
• Resilience
• Personal Motivation

Figure 7-2: Management consultant competency framework

These competences are listed in Table 7-1 below where they are linked to the different stages of the Client-consultant relationship framework:

Managerial Competence	• Modification & Negotiation • Contract • Regular Pre-planned Feedback & Monitoring • Evaluation and Report
Professional Competence	• Needs Analysis & Problem Identification • Activity • Regular Pre-planned Feedback & Monitoring • Continued or Amended Activity • Evaluation and Report • Implementation and Support
Entrepreneurial Competence	• Marketing & Public Relations Activities • Client Enquiry or Request to Serve • Initial Meeting & Face to Face Selling • Needs Analysis & Problem Identification • Specific Proposal • Modification & Negotiation • Contract
Behavioural Competence	• These competences pervade all stages within the framework

Table 7-1: Competences linked to client-consulting framework

These competencies can be seen to closely match those of the draft management consulting unit standards that have been written as well as the supplementary unit standards that have been sourced for the two management consulting learnerships. The draft management consulting unit standards are listed below in Table 7-2. A comprehensive titles matrix indicating the proposed unit standards (those developed and to be sourced) for the two qualifications is contained in Annexure G of this report.

Unit Standard Number	NSB No.	NQF level	US Title	Credits	Status
Usm 01	NSB03	7	Manage change in a project	16	Submitted
Usm 02	NSB03	7	Promote management consultancy services	14	Submitted
Usm 03	NSB03	7	Monitor and manage recovery and utilisation	16	Submitted
Usm 04	NSB03	7	Conduct consulting market analyses and establish company brand	18	Submitted
Usm 05	NSB03	7	Conduct analysis for proposal development	12	Submitted
Usm 06	NSB03	7	Produce consulting proposals	14	Submitted
Usm 07	NSB03	6	Build relationships and maintain key accounts in a professional management consulting environment	10	Submitted
Usm 08	NSB03	7	Analyse and design business processes	14	Submitted
Usm 09	NSB03	7	Facilitate change management processes	15	Submitted
Usm 10	NSB03	7	Develop management consulting methodologies	10	Submitted
Usm 11	NSB03	7	Manage and develop people in a professional services practice	16	Submitted

Table 7-2: Draft management consulting unit standards

The unit standards for the proposed learnerships must be divided into three categories:

Fundamental Unit Standards are generic and include unit standards relating to communications, management, etc. - the type that you will appear on most titles matrices.
Core Unit Standards are specific to the job, and might include specific product knowledge, or job specific processes or procedures.
Elective Unit Standards would distinguish the job incumbent by giving them extra skills and knowledge that would enhance their capability to perform their job.

The core, fundamental and elective components of the proposed learnerships are discussed in more detail in Annexure G of this report.

It is imperative that the unit standards allow for the choice of competence applicable to the contextual requirements and should incorporate the essential processes within the client-consulting framework. For purposes of the gap analysis, the draft management consulting unit standards have been mapped to the major phases of consulting (as detailed in diagram Figure 7-1 of this report) to ensure that all of the relevant consulting processes are considered during the design phase. This linkage is depicted below in Figure 7-3.
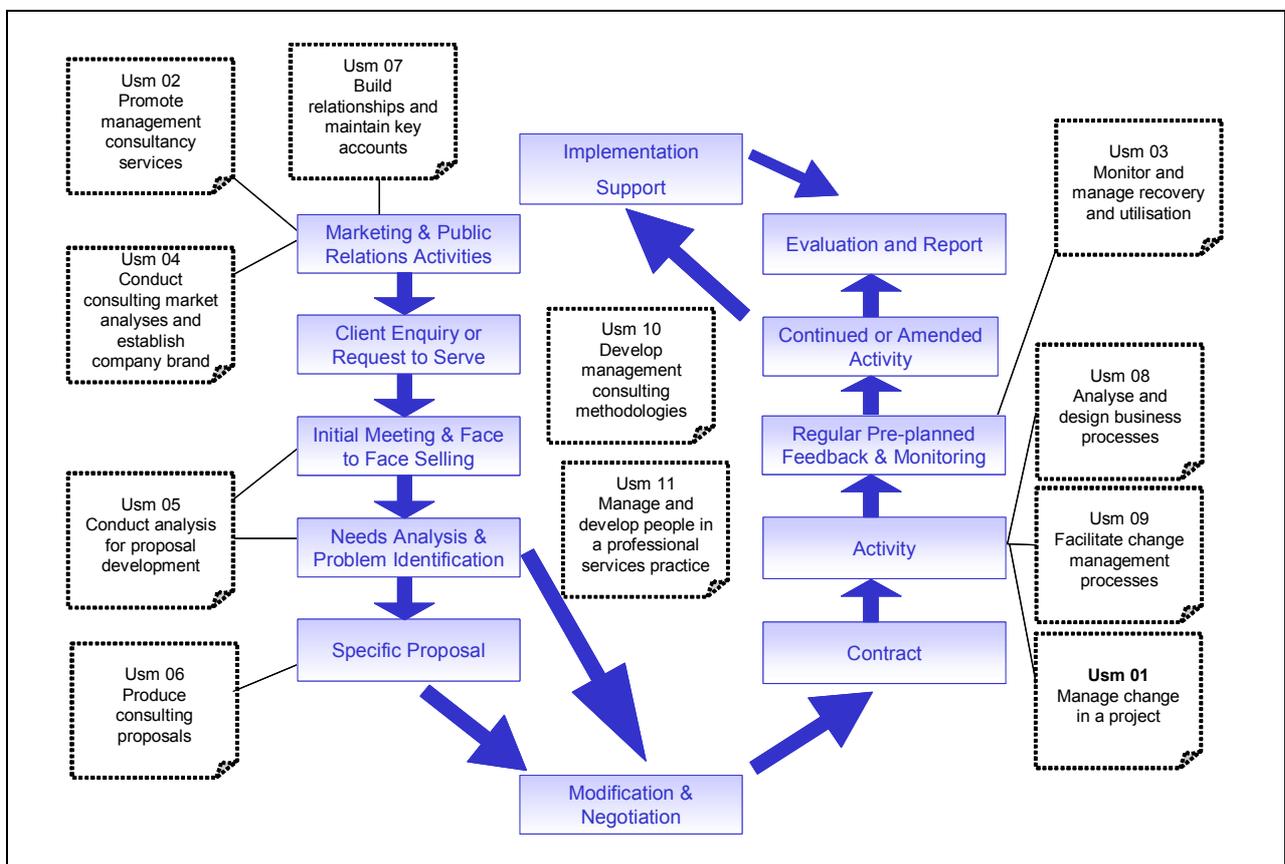
Figure 7-3: Links between draft unit standards & the major phases of consulting

Each of these unit standards have, in turn, been linked to the four categories of competence that are discussed in more detail in section 7. This should help to provide an holistic picture of the training and development requirements for management consultants.

It may be seen from the figure above that there could be certain of the consulting phases that are not adequately covered by unit standards as set forth in annexure G. For this reason, the learnership will cover those elements that are not linked to standards at this stage. The standards generating process is an ongoing process and may in time be modified to match all the elements of the learnerships. Furthermore, the elements not covered by the standards specifically may, in fact, be fundamental skills.

7.1   The management consultant framework

The International Council of Management Consulting Institutes (ICMCI) has conducted a considerable amount of work globally, in order to develop a body of knowledge for management consultants. We have, where possible, attempted to align to this body of knowledge as well as the standards set out in the qualification so as to offer something that has both a South African and a global relevance.

The management consultant framework is discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Managerial Competence	Professional Competence
• Planning • Organising • Leading • Controlling • Directing	• Specialist Knowledge • Problem Solving & Analysis • Oral Communication • Written Communication
Entrepreneurial Competence	Behavioural Competence
• Commercial Awareness • Action Orientation • Strategic	• Interpersonal Sensitivity • Resilience • Personal Motivation

7.1.1 Managerial competence

The following section lists the core managerial competencies that management consultants should possess. They are equally important for understanding clients' activities as they are for consultants to manage their own teams. Clearly, in the latter case, some of what is outlined below may not apply unless as a team leader or more senior member of the team.

Planning	Planning is the initial stage in the process that maps out what is required in order to achieve the stated objective. It is the stage at which assessments of needs and demands must be made. In relation to these factors the consultant must begin to foresee the future and thus visualise the structure of the team and the project. This will all be set out in a plan that will also define how all the components will be organised, led, controlled and directed in order to achieve maximum benefits. Communication is therefore an imperative, regardless of whether the planning is strategic, tactical, or operational in nature.
Organising	Organising follows the planning phase and involves systematically allocating resources to tasks or activities. These will be in accordance with set objectives and targets and will, therefore, rely on crucial time management. Organising requires clear delegation and, at times, influencing, in order to ensure pursuit of a common goal.
Leading	Leadership is necessary for the successful accomplishment of any group-driven task. This ability is important at all these stages as it provides the impetus for the rest to strive for the common goal. It requires a great deal of self-awareness and certainty to enable the leader to motivate, persuade, communicate and direct according to his/her convictions. There are different styles that range from the participative to the more directive approach, and it is important to know when to employ which style.
Controlling	Controlling is the continual monitoring of progress in order to ensure that the direction is appropriate. If this were not the case, corrections would have to be made, but never without further evaluation. The use of Management Information Systems (MIS) is particularly effective for this, as statistics are a powerful tool for the measurement of performance.
Directing	Directing involves the adoption of a strategic point of view. The corporate vision is the imperative as are the steps that should be taken in order to achieve it.

In addition, management consultants should have knowledge of the following managerial processes to varying degrees of depth and breadth depending on the specialist area of the consultant and the nature of the project. Projects may be highly specific, requiring a specialist's perspective, but they may also be highly strategic in nature, in which case broader knowledge of these items would be beneficial. Some may even apply to the (project) management of consulting work specifically.

Organisation Analysis	Organisation analysis is the process of management that aims at understanding what the organisation's structure is, as well as the measurement of its performance. Results would be compared to the mission statement of the organisation and rated according to appropriateness.
Organisational Development	Organisation development follows on from analysis in that it takes the evaluation and either carries forward the current strategy or implements a more appropriate one according to need. This is an ongoing process that occurs due to the dynamic nature of markets, technologies and, therefore, challenges to achieving success as an organisation.
Project/Process Management	There should always be a strong client focus when engaging a project. Mile-stoning and time management techniques will be of utmost importance, therefore, use of technology such as project management software and similar applications are recommended, especially in complex assignment. Teams can also be complex and it is necessary for the individual members to have reached a uniform understanding of purpose and objective. MIS will benefit any project because it can aid in the meaningful selection and representation of data: financial, performance, or otherwise. Other important aspects to consider will be timing and format of reporting procedures and the management of the project's closure.
Change Management	All consulting assignments to some degree involve the management of change. The nature of change lies in nature itself: it is the most basic function of any kind of development. What has augmented the rate of and complicated change is basically attributable to technology. Organisational change occurs because it either is reactive or proactive to the surrounding forces that can be summed up by the umbrella term 'environment'. The management of change requires accurate appraisal of what change is required, who and what will be involved, and the presence of effective leaders who can innovate and experiment with full use of communication skills and open approaches. People must identify with and internalise the meaning of a change if it is to succeed in the long run.
Strategy	Strategy as a process of management is the continuous eye on the future opportunities and threats to an organisation. Strategy is about innovating, directing and leading an organisation forward. Consultants aid with strategic focus because they are lateral thinkers and are often more capable of interpreting the future by careful observation of the client, competitors and markets at present.

Some of the draft management consulting unit standards that pertain to managerial competence are:

- Monitor and manage recovery and utilization;
- Conduct consulting market analyses and establish company brand;
- Build relationships and maintain key accounts in a professional management consulting environment;
- Facilitate change management processes; and
- Manage and develop people in a professional services practice.

Managerial Competence	Professional Competence
• Planning • Organising • Leading • Controlling • Directing	• Specialist Knowledge • Problem Solving & Analysis • Oral Communication • Written Communication
Entrepreneurial Competence	Behavioural Competence
• Commercial Awareness • Action Orientation • Strategic	• Interpersonal Sensitivity • Resilience • Personal Motivation

7.1.2 Professional competence

Professional competencies are technical competencies that form the foundation for any consultant. Professional competencies are a consultant's entry point upon which they can build professional depth (deeper specialised knowledge). This specialisation can be broadly categorised as either functional or Industry-specific (sectoral). Management consultants might specialise in both an industry and a functional area. A typical professional competence matrix and is represented below in Table 7-3.

Functional areas of management consulting	Industries						
	Financial	Government	Manufacturing	Healthcare	Products	Mining	Agriculture
Finance							
Business Process							
IT							
HR							
Strategic planning							
Production							
Marketing							

Table 7-3: Professional competence matrix

The structure of the proposed management consultant learnerships provides the learner with much choice regarding their area of specialisation and could include the following elective unit standards: (Refer to Annexure G for more details)

- Change management;
- Business process design;
- Strategy;
- Training of professionals;
- Use of technology;
- Human Resources;
- Assessing consultant's performance;
- Counselling;
- Coaching and mentoring;
- Train the trainer; and
- Identify team roles.

Note that these unit standards are not necessarily "specific" to management consulting and, therefore, have been sourced from other SGBs.

Managerial Competence	Professional Competence
• Planning • Organising • Leading • Controlling • Directing	• Specialist Knowledge • Problem Solving & Analysis • Oral Communication • Written Communication
Entrepreneurial Competence	Behavioural Competence
• Commercial Awareness • Action Orientation • Strategic	• Interpersonal Sensitivity • Resilience • Personal Motivation

7.1.3 Entrepreneurial competence

Knowledge of the political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental situation is imperative for a successful consulting intervention. These are macro-forces that act upon an organisation and shape its strategic and operational approaches in order to be successful. This implies that these forces will also shape how the consultant will have to intervene to help the client-organisation achieve its success. Each of these factors is discussed in more detail below.

Political	When considering political structures and forces, the consultant must be aware of national and organisational politics, to mirror the growth in international consulting. Nations have different forms of politics, different agendas, much in the same way as individuals struggle for control, power, promotion, etc within an organisation.
Economic	This includes macro factors that affect inflation, unemployment, exchange rates, trade balances, etc. and micro factors affect supply and demand, competition, the labour market and wages, amongst many others. Market wealth is an important consideration, as it will determine the possibility for growth.
Social	It is under this heading that national as well as organisational culture fits. Failing to recognise that culture is a core definition of which people are will lead to inaccurate understanding of the problem, its scope and the best consulting approach. High levels of interpersonal as well as intrapersonal skills are called upon to understand and best handle social differences. Culture encompasses all that is intangible in the form of people's values, beliefs, tradition, language and taboos, as well as organisational ethics. It is important for a consultant to gain exposure to different cultures and thus become conscious at one level and tolerant at another.
Technology	This is undoubtedly one of the greatest drivers of the century, as it has enabled cultures to merge, business and communications to become more powerful, efficient and global. For the organisation, this has meant being able to locate anywhere in the world; transfer funds from any one place to another in real-time; restructuring to focus on core tasks and thus outsourcing the rest: Telecommunications are now real-time in that people in different continents can video-conference instead of having to travel to meet: The internet allows instant access to a low-cost wealth of information; emailing is commonplace and much quicker than standard mail. These are just a few of the social and economic benefits that have affected nations and organisations through technology. The trend is set to continue as organisations will wish to handle even more complexity and volume. The effect this has had on consulting has been the expansion of information technology (IT) consultancies into the sector, and a general increase in IT assignments for consultants.

Legal	Laws are formal rules and procedures that define the appropriate behaviour of a particular society or organisation. There are many laws at national level that play an important part for businesses such as anti-trust legislation and corporate taxation, incentive grants and allowances. Similarly there are very specific rules that are applied to certain types of organisations. For example, charities, or non-profit making institutions, function within very specific and very different legal parameters. It is important for the consultant to be aware of legal discrepancies between nations and sectors in industry when engaging a particular assignment to ensure sound advice is given.
Environmental	There are environmental considerations for the consultant to bear in mind when engaging in an assignment. There are strict rules that organisations need to abide by in order to protect the environment from certain damage and this may prevent the implementation of a potential solution. Organisations and consultants have a responsibility for the environment, which falls within social and business ethics.

7.1.4 Behavioural competence

Acting, communicating and thinking are inherent personal abilities, or competencies, that we have at our disposal, but that a consultant must strive to refine through experience. Each of these personal abilities is discussed in more detail in the following section.

Acting	There are a multitude of ways in which a consultant may act, including objective observer, fact finder, coach, and technical expert. There should all be according to professional and ethical norms of attitude and behaviour. It is important for a consultant not to over-stretch and try to be all things to all people.

There are certain criteria to consider when selecting which guise to adopt, including the client culture, the consultant's knowledge, experience and personality, the nature of the problem that the consultant has been called in to deal with.

It is important to consider that although different forms of acting are at a person's disposal, quite naturally, the consultant should aim at refining them through experience and conscious efforts. The management of conflict is a good example of when different approaches may be validated in different circumstances by either stimulating or resolving the conflict to achieve a desired result. |

Communicating	There are two main ways of communicating: oral and written. It should be noted, however, that listening is another form of communication, as is body language. Each of these is an important element to the overall impression that a consultant will give. The tie with culture is inextricable as in some countries even a hand-gesture could be misinterpreted. Many clients may prefer regular oral communications rather than written reports or, conversely, might prefer to receive updates by email. These aspects of the relationship should be defined from the outset to minimise inconveniences. Nonetheless, consultants will need to know appropriate proposal and report-writing techniques and demonstrate good oral presentation techniques. Each should be properly adapted to the respective audience.
Thinking	It may seem obvious, but thinking is the single most important and fundamental competence that a consultant must possess. The consultant's mind should be capable of nurturing thoughts and ideas on several different planes simultaneously to enable flexible and contingent thinking. Lateral thinking and the ability to look into the future, 'to view the end from the beginning.

These behavioural competences are incorporated within the proposed learnerships, which stipulate that learners would need to complete the following fundamental unit standards: including language and communication, mathematical sciences, numeracy and presentation skills

In addition, all qualifications and unit standards include the critical cross-field outcomes that support these behavioural competences. Critical cross-field outcomes are general skills such as being able to solve problems and to work with other people.

Furthermore, in the design of the proposed learnership we will ensure that the competency model described above will link to the unit standards for each of the two learnerships. It may occur that there are competencies where there are not standards in place. We believe that the learnership curriculum should be designed around these competencies in any event, as the standards generating process is an ongoing one and the learnership curriculum will inform standards to be developed in the future.

7.2   Summary

The results of the research provide an insight into the current consulting competencies and the major points are summarised below.

- Competence is the knowledge, skills, ability and attitude to perform a job;
- Consulting competencies can be grouped into four areas, namely;
  - Entrepreneurial;
  - Professional;
  - Managerial; and
  - Behavioural.
- Competence in all four of these areas is required to be effective as a management consultant; and
- The competence requirements as documented in this report are reflected in the proposed unit standards and qualifications for management consulting in the following ways:
  - Flexibility in the choice of standards;
  - Fundamental components covered to reinforce behavioural components;
  - Strong focus on managerial and entrepreneurial competence; and
  - Choice of professional or functional speciality.

The fundamental and core unit standards contained in the draft qualification clearly support the development of attributes considered to be essential for a successful management consultant, i.e.:

- Analytical skills and numerical aptitude
- Communication skills
- The ability to work in teams
- Problem solving skills and creativity

In addition, the elective unit standards cater for the three major streams of management consulting, i.e. Strategy, Operations/Process and Information Technology, as well as recognise that a management consultant could be a generalist or a specialist within a functional area or industry sector.

It can, therefore, be concluded that the competences required for a successful management consultant are reflected in the proposed management consulting unit standards and qualifications. What remains to be seen is what best practice tells us of the most appropriate delivery channels and whether or not learnerships present a value added option.

Having addressed the "what" the next appropriate step for this report is to address the "how". We will, therefore, in the next section review training and development practices, delivery channels and media, and continuous professional development.

8   Training and Development

Part of the gap analysis process entailed identifying the training delivery media currently deployed within the management consulting sector – this was achieved largely through the interviewing process.   In addition, the project team conducted research pertaining to training and development best practices. It is noteworthy that skills development within management consultancies in South Africa closely resembles many of the best practices that are summarised in the following sections.

8.1   Training best practices

Any skills development initiative should incorporate best practices in the area of training and development.   Organisations or industries that seek to maximise learning with the goal of improving performance should take a proactive approach to developing and training employees.

8.1.1 Continuous monitoring and improvement

An essential element of any skills development initiative should be a focus on continuous monitoring and improvement.   When monitoring the progress of skills development in the industry one needs to consider quality management systems in general as well as performance assessment and measurement.

8.1.2 Continuous learning

The concept of continuous learning is critical to a skills development initiative since it places priority on noticing, adapting and learning from change (this is discussed in more detail in Section 8.6 of this report).

8.1.3 Adult learning principles

Since training within an organisation is directed towards adults, the principles of adult learning are key to any skills development initiative. These principles include:

- Adults are self-directing;
- Adults prior life experiences play a key role in their learning activities;
- Adults display distinctive learning styles; and
- Adults pass through different developmental stages.

Flexibility in the delivery media and opportunity for self-directed learning should be considered in the design of any skills development initiative. Acknowledging that adults learn better from prior experience and shared learning, learning interventions should incorporate experiential activities.

8.2   Training delivery channels

Essentially, training can be delivered through a variety of channels. The choice of training channel depends largely on the subject content as well as availability of resources (e.g. training facilities; training facilitators; etc.). Generally, training is delivered via 4 channels, i.e.:

Tertiary institutions	Tertiary institutions (e.g. universities and technikons) have typically provided the foundation qualification for management consultants, i.e. a degree or diploma was considered to be the entry-level requirement within the management consulting sector. Qualifications tend to be generic (i.e. they are not specific to the management consulting sector nor are they specific to an organisation) and more long-term.
Employer based (workplace) training	Employer based training is customised to meet employer needs. This type of learning directly supports the employer's institutional culture and strategic goals. Its aim is to link the job requirements directly with the skills needed and an evaluation of performance on the job. Examples could include consulting methodologies and project management. Training initiatives tend to be short in duration.
External Training Provider	External training providers would generally be utilised for training in areas where the content is generic (i.e. not specific to the employer). Examples could include information technology, management and leadership. Training initiatives tend to be short in duration.
Professional Body	Professional bodies could be utilised for developing skills specific to a sector or profession. Examples could include legislation and professional ethics or codes of conduct. Training initiatives tend to be short in duration.

8.3 Training delivery media

Selecting a delivery medium without regard to subject matter and objectives can undermine the effectiveness of a training programme. Most training facilitators agree that some topics are more suitable for a particular delivery medium than others. For example, computer-based training is a good delivery medium for procedural topics (e.g. how to process an expense report) but is not appropriate for teaching emotional subjects or for any process that involves motion or hand-eye coordination. Instructor-led classroom training provides an opportunity for learners to ask questions or make comments and, therefore, is a good medium for teaching sensitive or emotional topics, topics that are deeply conceptual, or learning materials that require people to work together to accomplish a goal. Generally, a blended learning approach (combining several delivery media) is considered best practice.

An overview of the different delivery media and tools available is contained below. Please note that, whilst this list is comprehensive, it is by no means exhaustive.

8.3.1 Multimedia and on-line training

Multimedia and on-line training can generally be classified into two main groups, i.e. E-learning and Streaming Media.

- **E-learning**
  E-learning can be defined as learning or training that is prepared, delivered, or managed using a variety of learning technologies and that can be deployed either locally or globally. E learning otherwise referred to as computer-based training (CBT) refers to the use of electronic technologies to deliver information and facilitate the development of skills and knowledge. E learning makes training possible via diskette, CD-ROM, corporate intranet, or the internet (typically referred to as web-based training). E-learning can be synchronous or asynchronous and generally allows learners to complete learning materials at their own pace.

- **Streaming Media**

  The use of telephone or videoconferencing facilities to deliver content to an audience is becoming increasingly widespread. These sessions, sometimes referred to as "webinars" are a relatively inexpensive way to deliver training and increase accessibility to international resources without adding to the costs.

  The MASIE Center has been tracking the use of streaming media (audio and video) within corporate settings. They have watched a steady growth in the use of streaming briefings for information transfer, product demonstration and corporate events. While there are still pockets of bandwidth restriction, firewall blockages and lack of speakers on PC's, user acceptance of streaming is clearly gaining.

8.3.2 Face-to Face

- **Workshops**

  While e-learning facilitates development of a variety of management theory and principles, learning is best facilitated through practicing these principles. This hands-on experience can ideally be gained through workshops and simulation exercises. For purposes of training and development, a workshop is generally conducted to facilitate learning through a participative approach and shared learning.

- **Instructor-led classroom training**

  Instructor-led classroom training refers to any training environment that includes trainees and an instructor, facilitator, or leader. The notion of a classroom full of trainees taking notes while an instructor lectures has been replaced, for the most part, by more active interplay between the instructor and the trainees. Interactive techniques such as seminars, group discussions, workshops, role-playing, and case studies are now the norm. The benefits of instructor-led classroom training stem from the personal interaction, which gives trainees the opportunity to ask questions, challenge each other, and engage in joint decision-making.

- **Conferences and seminars**

  Another best practice in developing skills such as creativity, innovation, socialisation etc. is to conduct active workshops that aim at addressing principals and simultaneously practicing the skills practically through exercises and simulations. Conferences and seminars can also be more cost-effective as it provides the opportunity to address a larger audience.

8.3.3 Self-paced instruction/distance learning

In this delivery medium, materials such as videotapes, audiotapes, and workbooks are given to a trainee who is then responsible for learning their content. Self-paced instruction is relatively inexpensive and can be done at the trainee's pace. Since there is no instructor, however, there is no opportunity for the trainee to ask questions.

8.3.4 Informal learning/on-the-job training

Informal workplace learning occurs in everyday work activities, such as meetings, customer interactions, supervision, mentoring, peer-to-peer communication, cross training, exploration, on-the-job training, and site visits. The "content" of informal learning includes information that is task-specific, or pragmatic, as well as broad; "*intrapersonal*" (for example, critical thinking and integrating feedback); interpersonal (for example, providing constructive feedback, working as a member of a team); and cultural (for example, understanding important business goals, understanding the "big picture"). Formal and informal training can prepare employees in the pragmatics of the job; however, broader information is predominantly learned informally.

8.4   Training delivery tools and techniques

8.4.1 Business-simulation tools

Business-simulation tools, such as board games and computer-based programmes, can be used to train employees in business and people-management. This type of training has been used for a number of years with significant results. Advances in computer technology have opened new doors for training simulations and employees are now able to participate in general management e-learning initiatives.

8.4.2 Resource centre

A resource centre has as its main objective to accommodate, as it states, resources. The emphasis, obviously being on training and development resources, could be anything facilitating the transfer of knowledge and skills. This could include training material like books, web/computer based training material, games, training videos etc.

8.4.3 Executive coaching

The current trend is for experienced professionals, who are specialists in leadership principals and who understand business and industries, to act as executive coaches to senior management. These individuals are contracted in to spend time with the leader and observe him/her in certain settings and provide on-the-job as well as personal coaching to improve leadership skills.

8.4.4 Pair learning

Pair working is one of the most basic of the "natural human learning processes". Using pair working in the formal learning situation involves learners, mostly working in pairs, developing their ideas and understanding (using worksheets where applicable), and then sharing this understanding with the group. This type of learning is generally less threatening to the individual, and the learners realise the benefits of shared learning.

8.4.5 Action learning and problem solving

This type of training technique requires an application of the systems approach for dealing with complex management situations to problems identification and problem solving. Generally, this technique allows individuals or small teams of learners to gain "hands on" experience within a host organisation to explore a "real" problematic situation or issue of a strategic nature. A systems and action learning approach underpins the situational analysis and the process of developing improvement strategies with members of the organisation.

Action learning emphasises individual and group learning and development, through the questioning of assumptions and values, and reflection on activities, outcomes, processes and behaviour, resulting in consideration of alternative and more creative responses in future situations.

8.4.6 Case Interview

The case interview/interactive case is designed to illustrate the way one thinks through a client' strategic challenges. Although it is not based on a real client assignment, the case gives the learner hands on experience practicing the skills required for consulting. As in a case interview, the learner will develop a recommendation for the client by working through the kind of analysis and summary that may apply to any case, regardless of topic, business problem, or working style of the learner, but without the time pressure of the interview situation.

The object of the case interview is for learner to think through the client's problem, select the data necessary to develop an argument, and draw specific conclusions about how the problem might be solved. There isn't a "right answer", but there are a limited number of sound, defensible answers. At the end of the case, the learner receives feedback.

8.5   Competency based training

In a traditional educational system, the unit of progression is time and it is teacher-centered. In a competency based training system, the unit of progression is mastery of specific knowledge and skills and is learner or participant-centered. Two key terms used in competency-based training are:

- **Skill** - A task or group of tasks performed to a specific level of competency or proficiency, which often use motor functions and typically require the manipulation of instruments and equipment. Some skills, however, such as counselling, are knowledge and attitude based.
- **Competency** - A skill performed to a specific standard under specific conditions.

There appears to be substantial support for competency-based training. Norton (1987) believes that competency-based training should be used as opposed to the "medieval concept of time-based learning." Foyster (1990) argues that using the traditional "school" model for training is inefficient. After in-depth examinations of three competency-based programmes, Anthony Watson (1990) concluded that competency-based instruction has tremendous potential for training in industry. Moreover, in a 1990 study of basic skills education programmes in business and industry, Paul Delker found that successful training programmes were competency-based.

Norton (1987) describes five essential elements of a competency based training system:

- Competencies to be achieved are carefully identified, verified and made public in advance.
- Criteria to be used in assessing achievement and the conditions under which achievement will be assessed are explicitly stated and made public in advance.
- The instructional programme provides for the individual development and evaluation of each of the competencies specified.
- Assessment of competency takes the participant's knowledge and attitudes into account but requires actual performance of the competency as the primary source of evidence.
- Participants progress through the instructional programme at their own rate by demonstrating the attainment of the specified competencies.

8.5.1 Characteristics of competency based training

How does one identify a competency-based training programme? In addition to a set of competencies, what other characteristics are associated with competency-based training? According to Foyster (1990), Delker (1990) and Norton (1987) there are a number of characteristics of competency-based programmes. Key characteristics are summarised in Table 8-1 below.

- Competencies are carefully selected.
- Supporting theory is integrated with skill practice. Essential knowledge is learned to support the performance of skills.
- Detailed training materials are linked to the competencies to be achieved and are designed to support the acquisition of knowledge and skills.
- Methods of instruction involve mastery learning, the premise that all participants can master the required knowledge or skill, provided sufficient time and appropriate training methods are used.
- Participants' knowledge and skills are assessed as they enter the programme and those with satisfactory knowledge and skills may bypass training or competencies already attained.
- Learning should be self-paced.
- Flexible training approaches including large group methods, small group activities and individual study are essential components.
- A variety of support materials, including print, audiovisual and simulations (models) keyed to the skills being mastered is used.
- Satisfactory completion of training is based on achievement of all specified competencies.

Table 8-1: Characteristics of competency-based programmes

8.5.2 Benefits of competency based training

Benefits of competency based training, identified by Norton (1987), include:

- Participants will achieve competencies required in the performance of their jobs.
- Participants build confidence as they succeed in mastering specific competencies.
- Participants receive a transcript or list of the competencies they have achieved.
- Training time is used more efficiently and effectively as the trainer is a facilitator of learning as opposed to a provider of information.
- More training time is devoted to working with participants individually or in small groups as opposed to presenting lectures.
- More training time is devoted to evaluating each participant's ability to perform essential job skills.
- While there are a number of advantages of competency-based training, there also are some potential limitations. Prior to implementing competency based training, it is important to consider these limitations.
- Unless initial training and follow-up assistance is provided for the trainers, there is a tendency to "teach as we were taught" and competency based training trainers quickly slip back into the role of the traditional teacher.

A competency based training course is only as effective as the process used to identify the competencies. When little or no attention is given to identification of the essential job skills, then the resulting training course is likely to be ineffective.

A course may be classified as competency-based, but unless specific competency based training materials and training approaches (e.g., learning guides, checklists and coaching) are designed to be used as part of a competency based training approach, it is unlikely that the resulting course will be truly competency-based.

8.5.3 Models and simulations in competency based training

Models and simulations are used extensively in competency-based training courses. Airplane pilots first learn to fly in a simulator. Supervisors first learn to provide feedback to employees using role-plays during training.

Norton (1987) believes that participants in a competency-based training course should learn in an environment that duplicates or simulates the work place. Richards (1985) in writing about performance testing indicates that assessment of skills requires tests using simulations (e.g., models and role plays) or work samples (i.e., performing actual tasks under controlled conditions in either a laboratory or a job setting). Finally, Delker (1990) in a study of business and industry found that the best approach for training involved learner-centered instruction using print, instructional technology and simulations.

8.5.4 Evaluation and assessment in competency based training

Evaluation in traditional courses typically involves administering knowledge-based tests. While knowledge-based assessments can certainly be used in competency based training to measure mastery of information, the primary focus is on measuring mastery of skills. In keeping with this, Thomson (1991) reports that the decision to recognise a performance as satisfactory and to determine competence should be the basis for success of a competency-based programme. Moreover, Foyster (1990) argues that assessment in competency-based programmes must be criterion-referenced with the criterion being the competencies upon which the programme is based. Finally, Richards (1985) indicates that simulation and work sample performance tests should include a checklist or some type of rating scale.

8.6   Continuous professional development

The numerous factors that lead to potential effectiveness in consulting can be enhanced as much as they can be left to decay. It is usually assumed that a good education will be the basic building block of much that the consultant will be capable of. Continuous professional development (CPD) undertaken by the individual will also be of great importance. Many of the large firms generally have their own training programmes that serve this purpose. Many consultants also move between consulting and industry and, thus, continue to learn.

Simply put, continuous learning is the ability to "learn to learn". Learning need not be a linear event where a learner goes to a formal learning programme, gains areas of knowledge and skills about a process, and then the learning ceases. If the learner can view life (including work) as a "learning programme", then the learner can continue to learn from almost everything in life. As a result, the learner continues to expand his/her capacity for living, including working.

Continuing education has never been as important as it is today. The ongoing revolution in information technology demands changes, not only in what is learned, but also in how individuals learn in the classroom and beyond. In order to succeed in this new environment, it is important to learn how to access information, and analyse and use it efficiently and effectively. In order to keep up with the explosion in information and technology challenges in the work force, individuals must continually renew their skills and expand their knowledge.

8.6.1 Requirements for continuous learning

Peter Senge noted that continual learning and personal mastery are very similar. In continuous learning, the learner continues to:

- Recognise priorities or overall values about themselves and how they want to live and work i.e. they have a personal vision;
- Take an active role in the world and work;
- Reflect upon their experiences in the world and work;
- Seek ongoing feedback about the world (including work) and their activities within it;
- Remain as open as possible to feedback (which requires a fair degree of personal maturity); and
- Make ongoing adjustments, based on ongoing feedback, to the way they live and conduct their work in order to more closely meet their priorities and values.

An individual knows better than anyone whether or not he/she has achieved continuous learning (i.e. it is not possible for someone to tell an individual if and when they have achieved continuous learning).

However, organisations can establish structures and processes that cultivate continuous learning. For example, management could support a climate where feedback is freely exchanged and where employees have a clear, shared vision of the organisation's goals and values. Organisation members get time to inquire and reflect about what they are doing and why.

Planning is a form of learning. Goals are established and strategies, or approaches to reaching goals, are implemented. Action plans identify who will be doing what and when. During implementation, the plan is monitored and modified as needed. Of course, plans can become ends in themselves, ultimately constricting progress of the organisations. However, when plans are seen as guides that can be changed, a great deal of learning can occur.

Learning should not just be seen as only occurring in special classes and workshops. By adopting this perspective, learning then shifts from mastery of discrete topics to learning about self, others, the organisation, and how to learn. Learning that is ongoing does not depend upon a qualified teacher or expert because learning occurs in groups of peers as they construct and reconstruct existing knowledge. Real organisational genius occurs when workers solve difficult problems that the formal system does not address.

8.7   Summary

As Figure 8-1 below suggests, any skills development initiatives within the management consulting sector should incorporate several broad principles. These are;

- A competency based approach, which allows for a suitable degree of on the job assessment, should be adopted; and
- Appropriate training delivery media need to be selected to facilitate learning in the areas of knowledge, skills and attitude, thereby contributing to the overall achievement of the desired outcomes and standards.
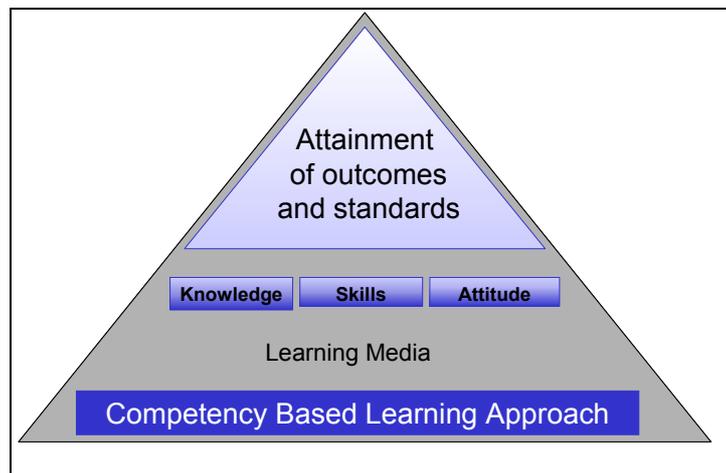
Figure 8-1: Training & Development Principles

Training delivery channels include:

- Tertiary institutions;
- Employer based (workplace) training;
- External Training Provider; and
- Professional Body.

Management consulting is largely an academically oriented profession and, as indicated in the "Profile of the Profession" (section 5 of this report) the earliest management consultants were academics. The role of tertiary institutions within the management consulting sector is fundamental to the profession in that, as it has been shown, a vast majority of management consultants possess tertiary qualifications whilst others have deep specialist skills such as the skills that would be obtained through technikons.

Generally, a blended learning approach (combining several delivery media) is considered best practice. Training delivery media include:

- Multimedia and on-line training;
- Face-to-Face (instructor-led) training;
- Self-paced instruction/Distance learning; and
- Informal learning/On-the-job training.

Training delivery tools and techniques that currently exist include:

- Business-simulation tools;
- Resource centres;
- Executive coaching;
- Pair learning;
- Action learning and problem solving, and
- Case Interview

Generally, it would appear that the case interview, competency based training and continuous professional development are considered to represent best practices in training and development within the management consulting sector.

Given all of the above, it would appear that learnerships are a viable way to implement best practice and, indeed, reinforce those best practices that are currently in place. Learnerships offer competency-based training and flexibility in the choice of delivery tools and mechanisms. The difference with learnerships from current South African practice is that learnerships strengthen the assessment component and provide recognition against national standards and qualifications. More importantly, learnerships structure the workplace and learning experiences to ensure that the full range of competencies is achieved within a defined period. This facilitates the speed of the transfer of learning and, therefore, increases productivity in the workplace.

At this point, it is important to once again highlight some of the benefits that would be achieved through the implementation of learnerships within the management consulting sector:

- Structured workplace components to ensure specific experiences and competence are gained;
- Assessment of competence of learning and workplace experience to ensure accurate decisions around placement and development of individuals;
- Recognition of prior learning through workplace assessment;
- The effectiveness of learning interventions can be tracked and hence costs are targeted only at these interventions;
- Flexibility in the choice of delivery mechanisms;
- Flexibility in the choice of standards in the culmination of a nationally recognised qualification;
- Financial incentives through Fasset and SARS;

- The opportunity for a number of employers to provide a learner with the full exposure and competence they require to be effective in the profession. A lead employer would oversee the process, as an individual would spend time in different areas with the different organisations. This model would work particularly well in the case of a number of non-competitive speciality management consulting firms collaborating and providing exposure for the learner to the various disciplines;
- The opportunity for a number of providers to provide the scope of learning opportunities for the broad role of a management consultant. A lead provider would oversee this arrangement in the learnership agreement;
- National standards and qualifications for competence in the profession;
- Structured workplace and learning interventions towards a nationally recognised outcome;
- Flexibility for firms to select their own delivery mechanisms and to manage the workplace component;
- Participating Education and Training providers must be accredited through the quality assurance bodies and hence a national standard for quality assurance is applied;
- Opportunities to retain talent including PDIs through structured skills interventions; and
- Opportunities to take on new entrants on a learnership agreement and no obligation to employ the person at the completion of the learnership.

The development of the learnerships would obviously require a combination of the training channels, delivery media, and tools/techniques discussed above in order to ensure the most effective learning experience. Each of these elements will need to be analysed in more detail during the Design phase in order to ensure the most appropriate and cost-effective skills development initiative.

In summary, and given the nature of the management consulting sector, a short course is not likely to be deemed sufficient to provide the essential competencies, knowledge and skills required of a management consultant. Whilst the norm is currently for firms to provide a minimum of 5 classroom-training days per annum, it is recommended that this formal training time be increased and these learning interventions be supplemented with extensive on-the-job training – this will be achieved through the introduction of learnerships.

One of the findings from the field research is that there is not a great deal of emphasis placed on assessment in the workplace. Through this learnership model, we believe that assessment in the workplace will be improved, especially with a formal assessment of on-the-job training. The learnership model places emphasis on the accreditation of workplace providers and a link to on-the-job training.

> Having addressed the training channels and delivery mechanisms, it is important to consider the assessment criteria that will be used to deem learners as "Competent" or "Not Yet Competent". Therefore, the next section contains an overview of some of the assessment tools and techniques that are available.

9 Assessment

As documented earlier, SAQA defines assessment as *"…a structured process for gathering evidence and making judgements about an individual's performance in relation to registered national standards."*

Assessment in the context of the NQF focuses on ensuring that learners prove that they have met all the requirements of a unit standard **before** they receive credit for that standard. That is, learners will have to provide sufficient evidence of their competence (in terms of the specified outcomes and assessment criteria) to receive credit for the unit standard.

Learnerships are linked to specific unit standards to be registered on the NQF and lead to a qualification. These standards clearly indicate the actual learning outcomes that the learner is expected to achieve. Therefore, assessment is a critical component to any learnership implementation that will entail the development of assessment processes and systems. These assessment processes and systems will need to be aligned with SAQA policies in order to ensure that all quality standards are met.

In addition, since assessment is based upon the concept of competence (which seeks to shift the focus from comparisons between learners based on individual characteristics to outcomes produced by the learner against an objective standard), assessment criteria and outcomes will need to be closely aligned with the management consulting competencies discussed in the previous section.

An assessor in terms of the skills development legislation is a person registered by the relevant education and training body, in accordance with the criteria established for this purpose by a Standard Generating Body to measure the achievement of specified National Qualifications Framework standards and/or qualifications.

The following section discusses workplace assessment in more detail and looks at the assessment methods that have traditionally been employed within the management consulting sector.

9.1 Workplace assessment

The primary goal of the workplace assessment process is to provide competent employees through a continuous process of assessment and development, by ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and achievement of strategic objectives. This does not refer to the assessment that is done during recruitment (the goal of which is also to provide competent employees) but, rather, assessment in relation to industry standards captured in the form of registered unit standards, which measure the competence achieved by a learner as a result of his/her learning endeavours. Workplace assessment, therefore, is different from other assessment processes as it considers the learner in the workplace, and in particular his/her learning in the workplace. From a purist's point of view, workplace assessment does not really provide competent employees. Sound human resources management practice, including training and development, does that. However, workplace assessment gives learners, through the qualifications available to them, a stake in their own learning, and in that sense encourages them to pursue competence, because recognition of competence is available.

Workplace assessment, therefore, is a category of assessment relating to education and training, and relating specifically to the outcomes achieved by education and training. In that sense, workplace assessment is intrinsically tied to the philosophy of outcomes-based education. In general, assessment in education and training is about collecting evidence of learners' work so that judgements about learners' achievements or non-achievements can be made and decisions arrived at.

Workplace assessment in outcomes-based education and training emphasises the assessment of outputs and end products, in this case, competence. The workplace assessment of the achievement or

non-achievement of outcomes and competence is done against assessment criteria. The sum of outcomes, competence and workplace assessment criteria together are a statement of the standard that the learners are expected to achieve and, therefore, learners are assessed against these standards in the process of workplace assessment.

In the language of the South African Qualifications Authority, competence is really applied competence, which, in turn, is the union of practical competence, foundational competence and reflexive competence.

- **Practical competence** is the demonstrated ability, in an authentic context to consider a range of possibilities for action, make considered decisions about which to follow and to perform the chosen action.
- **Foundational competence** is the demonstrated understanding of what the learner is doing and why. This underpins practical competence, and, therefore, the action taken.
- **Reflexive competence** is the demonstrated ability to integrate performance and decision-making with understanding and an ability to adapt to change in unforeseen circumstances, appropriately and responsibly, and to explain the reason behind these adaptations.

Outcomes are statements regarding elements of competence. They are the demonstrable and assessable end products of a learning process. They go beyond the specification of subject content and can include reference to:

- The actions, roles, knowledge, understanding, skills, values, and attitudes that a learner has to perform to demonstrate competence;
- The criteria against which these will be assessed; and
- The particular context for performance of these and the workplace assessment of the performance of these elements.

Assessment criteria are statements that describe the standard to which learners must perform the actions, roles, knowledge, understanding, skills, values, and attitudes stated in the outcomes. They are a clear and transparent articulation of criteria against which successful (or unsuccessful) performance of these is assessed.

The assessment criteria should specify the:

- Knowledge, understanding, action(s), roles, skills, values and attitude that a learner needs to show in order to provide evidence that outcomes and competence have been achieved;
- Level of complexity and quality of these; and
- Context of and conditions under which demonstrations should occur.

Assessment criteria are statements by which a workplace assessor can judge whether the evidence provided by a learner is sufficient to demonstrate competent performance.

The standards are statements of expectation and/or aspiration. They provide a basis for the judgements or workplace assessments that are made regarding achievement or attainment. The standard in outcomes-based education and training usually resides in the:

- Statement of competence,
- Statement of outcomes, and
- Assessment criteria.

By specifying outcomes and assessment criteria, assessors and learners obtain clarity on the knowledge, understanding, behaviours, roles etc. which learners are expected to demonstrate and the tasks and activities which they will perform to demonstrate these. Specifying performance criteria assists learners and workplace assessors to know the level of complexity, quality, kinds and range of knowledge, understanding, performance, behaviours, roles etc. expected in demonstrating the achievements of outcomes and competence. They also indicate the range and kind of evidence, which must be collected or submitted for assessment in the context of conditions under which assessment will occur. The explicit and transparent specification of competence, outcomes and assessment criteria is intended to ensure

fairness. All learners must know what they are expected to demonstrate in order to be assessed as having achieved or not achieved the requisite standard.

9.1.1 Assessment by examination

Assessment by examination can be a rigorous, arms length process, which includes the use of workshop manuals, case studies, and a test (usually marked by an independent body or person)

This process is seen by some as being intimidating and too broad to properly cover the various management consulting disciplines. This concern also relates to those individuals who do not undertake regular professional development and view such a process as threatening.

The strengths of the written examination is that the criteria for assessment are clearly spelt out and can be independently measured. Weaknesses are that the process does not do justice to specialist skills. There may be a technical vulnerability and it may be too generic to focus on overarching experiences.

An examination can only test certain aspects of knowledge and will not produce acceptable results in the area of personal attributes.

Assessment by examination alone, thus, is insufficient since it provides proof of knowledge and **not** competence.

- **Examinations for entry level consultants**

An examination could be a useful tool to circumvent or replace experience in certain areas and can be effectively used at an entry level, especially if the individual has no other academic qualifications.

There should be a distinction between inexperienced individuals (new to business) and individuals with a wealth of business experience (new to the profession). Proof of competence in business, management, industry etc from accredited sources should be acceptable, and there should not be an attempt to re-invent the wheel.

A formal qualification/examination in management consulting could address the market for inexperienced individuals and provide proof of knowledge.

Once again it should be noted that an examination is certainly not enough on its own and would need to be supplemented with other forms of assessment.

9.2   Assessment within the management consulting sector

The following two points sum up current assessment practices within the management consulting sector.

- Formal assessment is generally not done within the management consulting firms at present. Employees studying at tertiary institutions are assessed through examinations and through assignments. Otherwise assessment is done on the job through the performance evaluation process.
- Assessment through examination introduces a lot of external factors (such as the stress and pressure of examination) and is therefore, in itself, not a satisfactory assessment measure when used alone.

9.3   Summary

Assessment within the context of the NQF is the best practice method of assessment and, in many cases, will be used in conjunction with examinations. It would appear, then, that assessment activities within the management consulting sector need to shift from the traditional norm-referenced assessment techniques to criterion-referenced assessment (or competency based assessment) techniques. Criterion-referenced assessment generally implies that:

- Judgements are made about learners by measuring their work against set criteria/competences;
- Individuals are assessed (as oppose to groups);
- Assessment criteria are pre-determined and part of the standard (and, therefore, known to the learner); and
- The assessment criteria are objective, clear and unambiguous.

The introduction of learnerships within the management consulting sector will also allow learners to be assessed in both a formative and summative manner, i.e.:

- **Formative assessment**: Refers to assessment that takes place during the process of learning and teaching; and
- **Summative assessment**: Refers to assessment for making a judgement about achievement and is carried out when the learner is ready to be assessed at the end of a programme of learning.

Thus, the learner now has several opportunities to prove competence and gain feedback, thus enabling them to improve performance and gain necessary skills (as opposed to the once-off opportunity typically afforded through assessments based on examinations). In addition, learners will benefit from the use of multiple assessment activities, which could include:

- Observation;
- Interviews (demonstrating and questioning);
- Case studies;
- Role-playing;
- Simulations;
- Oral tests;
- Projects; and
- Portfolios of evidence.

In conclusion, competence-based assessment activities and methods are designed to gather evidence as to whether or not the learner is "Competent" or "Not Yet Competent" and, therefore, the most appropriate methods of assessment relative to the outcomes being assessed will be used. The learner is aware of the outcomes to be assessed and, therefore, has the opportunity to check their understanding and monitor their progress against the assessment criteria (i.e. conduct a self-assessment). The use of multiple assessment methods also reduces the learner's anxiety and, generally, gives them more control over the assessment process.

However, it must also be recognised that the costs of assessment are relatively high when one takes into account the costs associated with assessors and other human resource costs and, therefore, assessment criteria and activities must also be designed in order that they are conducted a cost-effective way. Smaller firms are less likely to have the resources to employ fulltime in-house assessors and, therefore, assessment criteria must cater for these firms who will need to outsource the assessment activities and ensure that the process, at all times, remains viable.

The next section considers the issues of governance within the management consulting sector and summarises the current structures versus the ideal (or desired) structures.

10 Governance within the management consulting industry

As part of the research, particular attention was paid to the role of professional bodies within the sector and, whether or not affiliation to a body should be required within the sector.

Most respondents were not aware of any professional bodies specifically looking after the interests of the management consulting sector. Where consultants are registered with other professional bodies (e.g. in the accounting, HR, legal or other fields) they believed that these bodies contributed to the perception of the professionalism of that sub-sector, and valued being affiliated to that body.

The respondents viewed the role of professional bodies as being one of providing guidance in respect of:

- Ethical standards;
- Representing consultants as a common voice;
- Quality Assurance; and
- Presenting a code of conduct for members (An example of a code of professional conduct is included in Annexure H).

It was recognised that, in order to be able to censure members, legislation would need to be put in place to enable the practice within professional bodies and that, as such, it would not be reasonable to expect the government to legislate the profession.

10.1   Existing professional bodies

The Institute of Management Consultants (IMC) in South Africa is a voluntary organisation representing individual members.   Through consultation the IMC has indicated its support of the learnership development process in aligning the qualification with the Certified Management Consultant (CMC) qualification of the IMC.

As part of the 1992 strategic plan, (IMC) set about establishing an international management consulting standard. The key strategic initiatives, which will result at an international and a national level, were thought to be:

- The introduction of a Certified Management Consultant (CMC) competency model, which it is believed, provides a more relevant pathway for most management consultants;
- The development of an "inclusive" approach to the management consulting community, rather than the previous approach which was perceived as "exclusive"; and
- The development of the "Certified Practice" concept for firms.

The long-term objective of this strategy is to provide an unbiased and truly international standard that consultants wish to attain and which is recognised by all influential agencies. In the short term they wish to develop a policy and implementation strategy for the CMC Standards programme, and establish a competency-based model for the examination process for member institutes.

10.2   Implications for the learnership

The core components of the learnership will include standards which are based on the unit standards developed by the Accountancy and Financial Management Standards Generating Body (ACFIST) and, where possible, will be aligned with the work of the IMC in the development of standards for management consulting, incorporating the IMC's Body of Knowledge.

In addition, one of the core benefits of the management consulting learnership project is the provision of an independent quality assurance function for all providers, programmes and learners through the Fasset Education and Training Quality Assurance function (Fassetqa). As an ETQA, Fassetqa will ensure the quality and consistency of standards of all skills development programmes, thereby benefiting all of the stakeholders in the management consulting sector.

10.3   Summary

- Very few firms are aware of any professional bodies representing management consultants;
- The firms believe that a professional body could be beneficial to the sector;
- The role of such a body could include ethical standards, a voice for the sector, quality assurance, codes of conduct and a vehicle for sharing information and networking; and
- Respondents believe that, without legislation to enable such professional bodies, it would be extremely difficult to initiate.

11 Conclusion

In conclusion one must look at the implications contained in this research for skills development within the management consulting sector. Whilst the management consulting sector in South Africa compares favourably with any of its international counterparts, skills development remains a priority within the sector.

Furthermore, although there is ample supply of training provision in all of the requisite areas this training is of questionable standards. There are many training providers across tertiary, private and in-house institutions. Currently, there is no one universal qualification for management consultants and, therefore consultants select a variety of programmes to address their skills development needs. These programmes are not all registered with SAQA or aligned with standards.

The learnership guidelines prepared by Fasset indicate that:

- Learnerships should be offered in areas where there is a clear demand for skills;
- The initiator (e.g. an employer or SETA) must provide a detailed analysis of why the learnership is needed;
- Learnerships are demand-led and need to be developed in response to a demonstrable social or economic need; and
- Learnerships need to be focussed on labour market priorities and, therefore, require an understanding of both the current and future knowledge and competence requirements for a sector.

Each of these points is discussed in light of the research conducted during the gap analysis and is summarised in the following table.

Learnerships should be offered in areas where there is a clear demand for skills.	The management consulting sector is an extremely large sector of the South African economy. It is not known what the contribution of this sector is to the Gross Domestic Profit (GDP) of the country but the government sector alone spends R1.4 billion annually on consultants[7].
The initiator must provide a detailed analysis of why the learnership is needed.	This report, after a detailed analysis, highlights amongst others the following key learnership needs: • Learnerships offer competency based training; • Learnerships offer flexibility in the choice of delivery tools and mechanisms; • Learnerships strengthen the assessment component and provide recognition against national standards and qualifications; • Learnerships structure the workplace and learning experiences to ensure that the full range of competence is achieved within a defined period. This facilitates the speed of the transfer of learning and increase in productivity in the workplace; and • Learnerships provide an independent quality assurance function for all providers, programmes and learners through the Fasset Education and Training Quality Assurance function (Fassetqa).
Learnerships are demand-led and need to be developed in response to a demonstrable social or economic need.	The need for these learnerships has been clearly established through the completion of the gap analysis and is presented in various sections of this report. The greatest needs, it would appear, lie in the need for: • More flexible training delivery media; • Consistent and fair assessment techniques;

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[7] The Star Business report 16/10/2002

	• A standardised qualification for all management consultants; • Flexibility in terms of areas of specialisation; and • Accessibility for all consultants (regardless of the size of consulting firm).
Learnerships need to be focussed on labour market priorities and, therefore, require an understanding of both the current and future knowledge and competence requirements for a sector.	• There is overwhelming agreement around the need to introduce consultants from PDI backgrounds into the profession. The firms on their own will have various difficulties in doing this, including finding suitable candidates, the costs associated with the training required in the first one or two years, the quality assurance for the programmes to ensure that the candidates progress effectively and the ability to accommodate the additional headcount where staff turnover is low or minimal; • Although most consultants possess a tertiary qualification, which has its own quality assurance measures, built into the programme, the other training available, while extensive varies broadly in terms of quality. The quality measures built into the learnerships through accreditation of providers and registration of assessors with Fasset will contribute greatly to the quality standards within the profession; • A learnership would be able to tie together the standards in institutions such as the tertiary institutions, the professional bodies, and the firms themselves which will provide qualified learners with a qualification that is more broadly recognised, transferable and will be recognised towards other qualifications that the learner may wish to progress to.

Table No. 11.1 The benefits of the learnerships

There is a large amount of support for the establishment of the two management consulting learnerships for the reasons listed in the table. It is, therefore, the recommendation of this report that Fasset continues with the design, development and pilot implementation of the two management consulting learnerships.

In conclusion, the benefits of learnerships to the management consulting sector would include the following:

• Management consulting firms would be able to access the funding made available for learnerships through Fasset and the South African Revenue Service (SARS). To some extent this would relieve the huge financial burden associated with the amount and type of training that management consultants require;
• Many of the smaller consulting firms are disadvantaged when compared with the larger firms in that they are perceived to not have the same standards of quality as the larger firms. The learnerships will go towards closing this perceived gap in that all consultants will hold the same nationally recognised qualification; and
• The external ETQA function to be provided by Fasset will further contribute to closing the perceived quality gap.

12 Annexure A – References covered during literature review

Title	Author/Institute
A Growing Body of Knowledge	Edward Prewitt
Another Career Choice For Phd's	Gabriela Montell
Bachelor In Philosophy Psychological Address	Christina Godio
Consultants and Owners Controversy and Reality	Turnaround Management Association
Career Opportunities in Consulting	The Paul H Nitze School of Advanced Business Studies
Case Interview Study	Leonard Stern School of Business
CMC Certification	International Council of Management Consulting Institutes
Darwin Did It	Vipul Bhatti
Developing and Establishing a Professional Institution	International Council of Management Consulting Institutes
Development	NPSIA Works (Norman Paterson School of International Affairs)
Do You Need a Complacency Check	Hoppe Management Concepts Inc.
Early Warning Signs of a Troubled Business	Hoppe Management Concepts Inc.
Global Business Professional Designation Proposed	International Council of Management Consulting Institutes
The Human Capital Management Message	Jac Fitzenz, Ph.D.
How To Select a Consultant	Centre For Inventory Management
Human Resources, Training, and Labour Relations Managers and Specialists	Occupational Outlook Handbook
Institute of Management Consultants (Australia)	Institute of Management Consultants
Post Graduate Programs in Management Leadership	University of South Australia
Management Consulting Today	Kennedy Information Research Group
Management Consulting	Stern Management Consulting
Management Consulting For You	Consulting Information Services
Management Department Success Points For Finding The Right One	Boston Business Journal
Management, Business & Financial Occupations	Occupational Outlook Handbook
Management Consulting	NPSIA Works (Norman Paterson School of International Affairs)
Management Analysts	Occupational Outlook Handbook
Patrick Boylan – What is Management	Patrick Boylan
Realize the Potential of Shared Services	Bywater
Requirements for Council Membership	International Council of Management Consulting Institutes
Six Sigma Champion	Charles Waxer
Consulting: Facts and Trends	Mercer Management Consulting

Title	Author/Institute
IMC South Africa	Institute of Management Consultants - South Africa
The Amsterdam Model for International CMC Standards	Institute of Management Consultants – United Kingdom
The Graduate Certificate in Management Consulting	The University of South Australia
The MIS Case Study Page	C Kimble & K McLoughlin
The New Body of Knowledge	Institute of Management Consultants – United Kingdom
To be Exclusive Or Inclusive	Bruce Crowe
Management Leadership	University of South Australia
A Note to New Consultants	Written By Bruce Henderson
A letter from Bob Slane	Bob Slane
M U S I N G S	Geoffrey Bellman
Learnership Information Pack	Fasset
Unit Standards at qualification format	ACFIST
Assessment, Moderation and RPL policy	Fasset
Assessment, Moderation and RPL policy	SAQA
Registration of assessors	Fasset
Registration of assessors	SAQA

13 Annexure B – Interview List

Professional Bodies	
Company Name	**Contact Person**
CFA (Commercial and Financial Accountants)	Danie van Niekerk
CIMA (Chartered Institute of Management Accounting)	Samantha Louis
HPCSA (Health Professional Council of South Africa)	Adv B Mkhize
IMC (Institute of Management Consulting)	Ben Laauwen
IPFA (Institute for Public Finance and Auditing)	Zara Cassim
SAICA (South African Institute of Chartered Accountants)	Graham Terry

Government		
Company Name	**Contact Person**	**Province**
Auditor General of South Africa	Imani Alexander	Gauteng
South African Revenue Services	Nambita Mekane	Gauteng

Govt Owned Business Enterprises		
Company Name	**Contact Person**	**Province**
BANKSETA	Frank Groenewald	Gauteng
ESKOM	Timothy Maluleke	Gauteng

Private Sector Enterprises		
Company Name	**Contact Person**	**Province**
Glenrand MIB	Ian Graham	Gauteng
Standard Bank	Mike Lewis	Gauteng

Management Consulting Organisations Order			
Company Name	**Contact Person**	**Size of Organisation**	**Province**
Accenture (Services) (Pty) Ltd	Charlene Verzmoter / Sally Bean	1100	Gauteng
Altron Management Services	Dali Mpofu / Philip Crow	75	Gauteng
Deloitte Consulting (Pty) Ltd	Nishi Ayr	354	Gauteng
DS & T management consultants Fisher Hoffman	Theo Vermaak	220	KwaZulu Natal
Financial IQ (Pty) Ltd	Julie Machin	182	Gauteng
Genesis Analytics (Pty) Ltd	Samantha Randall	5	Gauteng
Heuff Productivity Assignments Trust	Sharon Bowden	7	KwaZulu Natal
Information Trust Corporation (ITC)	Deirdre Lawler	270	Gauteng
KPMG Consulting	Rod Soloman	350	Gauteng
Linda Human and Associates CC	Ilse Krieg	2	Western Cape
Manchu e-solutions	Joe Manchu	4	Gauteng
MBA Human Resources Management (Pty) Ltd	Charles Cockeram	4	Free State
Metra Holdings (Pty) Ltd Gemini	Debra Munro / Steven	70	Gauteng
Platinum Black Cons Services	Ian Reid	4	Western Cape
SAB&T	Fay Mukaddam	203	Gauteng
Solves management consulting Service (Pty) Ltd	Terry Robinson	13	Western Cape
Tillinghast-Towers Perrin CC	Ian Jones	10	Western Cape

Universities and Technikons		
Company Name	**Contact Person**	**Province**
Damelin Business Campus	Lizette Schoombie	Gauteng
Graduate Institute for Management Technology	Wikus van Vuuren	Gauteng
Gordon Institute of Business Studies	Nic Bindell	Gauteng
Potchefstroom University	T Eloff	Potchefstroom
Pretoria Technikon	RL Ngcobo	Gauteng
Pretoria University	CWI Pistorius	Gauteng
Rand Afrikaans University	T Botha	Gauteng
South Africa Technikon	N Mathabe	Gauteng
Technikon Witwatersrand	Krishna Govender	Gauteng
University of the Witwatersrand	Gail Mingard	Gauteng
UNISA – Centre for Business	Millie Geel	Gauteng

14 Annexure C – Consultant's questionnaire

ENABLERS OF TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- To what extent is Human Resource Development a strategic focus within your organization?
- How is this managed?
- To what extent do employees take ownership for their own development?
- How is this managed?
- To what extent does your organization retain skills?
- How does your organization plan for skills development on an annual basis?
- How are skills requirements linked to business needs?
- Are there structured career paths and learning pathways within your organization?
- What levels do you have in your organization?

TRAINING DELIVERY MECHANISMS

- What types of training interventions are utilised? Why?
- Do you consider the current training and development vehicles to be sufficient?
- What is the primary reason for utilizing international training resources?
- What are the reasons for utilizing external local training resources?
- What do you consider the major inefficiencies in training delivery within the management consulting sector to be?
- To what extent do your development initiatives rely on a combination of on and off the job training?
- How many days of training do you offer per year at each level?
- How are learners assessed or deemed competent?
- To what extent is ROI on training monitored? How?

SKILLS DEFICIENCIES IN MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

- If certain functions within your organization are outsourced, to what extent has this been due to a lack of skills internally?
- What are the greatest skills development needs in the management consulting sector?
- How could these needs best be addressed?
- What percentage of your recruits are graduates?
- Do you predict a shift in this trend?
- Will your organization recruit more staff this year? Internally/Externally
- In which areas?
- In which areas has your organization had difficulty finding appropriate skills?
- At which levels/positions are your greatest recruitment needs?
- To what extent does the market supply you with appropriately skilled personnel?
- To what extent do you develop skills from within?
- What is the percentage loss of skills annually due to staff turnover?
- Which areas specifically are impacted into skills retention and development?
- What trend do you see with regard to training costs?
- Do you have a curriculum-based approach to training? Please provide details of such curricula.

GOVERNANCE / AFFILIATION
- To what extent should affiliation to professional bodies be a requirement within the management consulting industry?
- What should the role of professional bodies be within the industry?
- What professional bodies are you aware of in the sector?

15 Annexure D – Clients of management consultants' questionnaire

TRAINING DELIVERY MECHANISMS

- Do you consider the current training and development vehicles to be sufficient?
- What do you consider the major inefficiencies in training delivery within the management consulting sector to be?

SKILLS DEFICIENCIES IN MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

- If certain functions within your organization are outsourced, to what extent has this been due to a lack of skills internally?
- What are the greatest skills developments needs in the management consulting sector?
- How could these needs best be addressed?
- In which areas has your organization had difficulty finding appropriate skills?

GOVERNANCE / AFFILIATION

- To what extent should affiliation to professional bodies be a requirement within the management consulting industry?
- What should the role of professional bodies be within the industry?
- What professional bodies are you aware of in the sector?

16 Annexure E – Professional bodies Questionnaire

ENABLERS OF TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- How does your body track training needs in order to plan for skills development initiatives?
- How are skills requirements linked to business needs?
- Does the training provided offer learners structured career paths and learning pathways?

TRAINING DELIVERY MECHANISMS

- What types of training interventions are utilised? Why?
- Do you consider the current training and development vehicles to be sufficient?
- What is the primary reason for utilizing international training resources?
- What do you consider the major inefficiencies in training delivery within the management consulting sector to be?
- To what extent do your development initiatives rely on a combination of on and off the job training?
- How are learners assessed or deemed competent?
- Do you have a curriculum based approach to training?
- What is the duration of your programme/s?
- Please provide details of such curricula.

SKILLS DEFICIENCIES IN MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

- What are the greatest skills developments needs in the management consulting sector?
- How could these needs best be addressed?
- What trend do you see with regard to training costs?

GOVERNANCE / AFFILIATION

- To what extent should affiliation to professional bodies be a requirement within the management consulting industry?
- What should the role of professional bodies be within the industry?

17 Annexure F – Information requested from training providers

ENABLERS OF TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- How does your organisation track training needs in order to plan for skills development initiatives on an annual basis?
- How are skills requirements linked to business needs?
- Does the training provided offer learners structured career paths and learning pathways?

TRAINING DELIVERY MECHANISMS

- What types of training interventions are utilised?
- Why?
- Do you consider the current training and development vehicles to be sufficient?
- What is the primary reason for utilizing international training resources?
- What do you consider the major inefficiencies in training delivery within the management consulting sector to be?
- To what extent do your development initiatives rely on a combination of on and off the job training?
- How are learners assessed or deemed competent?

SKILLS DEFICIENCIES IN MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

- What are the greatest skills development needs in the management consulting sector?
- How could these needs best be addressed?
- What trend do you see with regard to training costs?
- Do you have a curriculum based approach to training?
- What is the duration of your programme/s?
- Please provide details of such curricula.

GOVERNANCE / AFFILIATION

- To what extent should affiliation to professional bodies be a requirement within the management consulting industry?
- What should the role of professional bodies be within the industry?
- What professional bodies are you aware of in the sector?

18 Annexure G - Draft titles matrix - management consulting standards

The learnership will comprise three types of standards, namely, fundamental, core and elective standards

Fundamental standards

The learner will have to achieve at least all of the compulsory unit standards, totalling 20 (twenty) credits, from the field of Communication Studies and Language, and in at least all of the of the compulsory unit standards, totalling 16 (sixteen) credits, from the sub-field of Mathematics. The ACFIST SGB will insert enough communication and mathematics unit standards identified as compulsory into the fundamental category to meet the relevant credit and level requirements set by SAQA as soon as such unit standards become available.

Core standards

The core standards are the majority of the standards required for the qualification. They are divided between core generic standards and core management consulting standards. At diploma level learners are required to complete standards to the value of 240 credits. At masters degree level learners are required to complete standards to the value of 254 credits.

Elective standards

Learners may choose any unit standards at the level of the qualification that allows them to specialise within a certain industry and discipline. At diploma level learners are to select electives below to the value of 30 credits. At masters degree level learners are to select electives to the value of 70 credits.

The unit standards matrix that follows lists all standards that can be incorporated.

	UNIT STANDARD TITLES	US NUMBER (TATS)	NSB NUMBER	SGB/ SGA	US NQF LEVEL	US CREDITS	MC QUALIFICATIONS	Diploma Level 7	Master Degree Level 7
CORE MANAGEMENT CONSULTING									
1	Manage change within a management consulting project	MC001	3	MC	7	16		×	
2	Promote management consulting services	MC002	3	MC	7	14		×	
3	Monitor and manage recovery and utilisation	MC003	3	MC	7	16			×
4	Develop management consulting products and services to establish company brand	MC004	3	MC	7	18			×
5	Conduct analysis for management consulting project proposal development	MC005	3	MC	7	12			×
6	Produce management consulting project proposals	MC006	3	MC	7	14		×	
7	Build relationships and maintain key accounts in a professional management consulting environment	MC007	3	MC	6	10			×
8	Develop management consulting methodologies	MC010	3	MC	7	10			×
9	Manage and develop people in a professional services practice	MC011	3	MC	7	16			×
CORE GENERIC									
1	Identify and utilise marketing resources	MC4.3	3	M	4	4			×
9	Identify expertise and resources	MC4.16	3	M	4	3			×
10	Develop, implement and manage a project activity plan	MC5.3	3	M	5	5		×	
11	Identify product features, advantages and benefits to the customer	MC5.5	3	M	5	10		×	
12	Close a deal with a customer	MC5.7	3	M	5	5		×	
13	Integrate marketing plans with business process	MC5.10	3	M	5	6			×
14	Manage customer requirements and needs and implement action plans	MC5.13	3	M	5	8		×	
15	Establish customer needs and relationships	ME5.26	3	M	5	16		×	
16	Develop customer needs and relationships	ME5.27	3	M	5	16		×	
17	Develop and implement customer activity plans to reach agreement	ME5.28	3	M	5	16		×	
18	Present a range of products or services	MC6.5	3	M	6	15		×	
19	Identify innovation opportunities	MC6.6	3	M	6	15			×
20	Develop a vision for an organisation	MC7.1	3	M	7	20			×
22	Recruit and select candidates to fill selected positions	not available	3	HR	4	10			×
23	Manage individual and team performance	not available	3	HR	4	8			×
24	Contributing to project initiation, scope definition and scope change control	PM/C/S/4	3	PM	4	8		×	
25	Identifying, organising and co-ordinating project life cycle phases for control purposes	PM/C/PC/4	3	PM	4	5		×	
26	Scheduling project activities to facilitate effective project execution	PM/C/PT/4.1	3	PM	4	8		×	
27	Estimating and preparing costs budgets for an element of work and monitoring and controlling actual cost vs budget	PM/C/C/4	3	PM	4	6		×	

	UNIT STANDARD TITLES	US NUMBER (TATS)	NSB NUMBER	SGB/ SGA	US NQF LEVEL	US CREDITS	MC QUALIFICATIONS	Diploma Level 7	Master Degree Level 7
28	Working as a project team member	PM/C/TM/4	3	PM	4	8		X	
29	Planning, organising and supporting project meetings and workshops	PM/C/AD/4.1	3	PM	4	4		X	
30	Conducting project documentation management to support processes	PM/C/AD/4.2	3	PM	4	6		X	
31	Implementing project administration processes according to requirements	PM/C/AD/4.3	3	PM	4	5		X	
32	Applying a range of project management tools	PM/C/T/4	3	PM	4	8		X	
33	Contributing to the management of project risk within own technical expertise	PM/C/R/4	3	PM	4	5		X	
34	Monitoring, evaluating and communicating project schedules	PM/C/PT/4.2	3	PM	4	5		X	
35	Providing assistance in implementing and assuring project work is conducted in accordance with project quality plan	PM/C/Q/4.1	3	PM	4	6			X
36	Identifying, suggesting and implementing corrective activities to improve quality	PM/C/Q/4.2	3	PM	4	6			X
37	Evaluating and improving the project team's performance	PM/C/T/4	3	PM	4	5			X
38	Supervising a project team of a developmental project to deliver project objectives	PM/E/DP/4	3	PM	4	14			X
39	Supervising a project team of a technical project to deliver project objectives	PM/E/TP/4	3	PM	4	13			X
40	Supervising a project team of a business project to deliver project objectives	PM/BP/4	3	PM	4	13			X
41	Supporting the project environment and activities to deliver project objectives	PM/E/GP/4	3	PM	4	14			X
42	Practise effective self management skills	LO/06			1	2		X	
46	Demonstrate an understanding of managerial expertise and administrative capabilities	SAQA EMS 006	3		1	4			X
47	Demonstrate a critical understanding of diversity, change and development in societies	SAQA HSS 001	7		1	4.5			X
48	Discuss entrepreneurship and identify, assess and develop entrepreneurial qualities	SAQA SMME 001			1	2			X
49	Identify, analyse and select business opportunities	SAQA SMME 002			1	3		X	
51	Demonstrate the ability to start and run a business and adapt to a changing business environment	SAQA SMME 004			1				X
53	Managing self development	CFH 03			4	12		X	
54	Applying advanced business principles	DFL 01			5	20			X
55	Communicating at an advanced level and maintaining interpersonal relations	DFL 04			6	20		X	

	UNIT STANDARD TITLES	US NUMBER (TATS)	NSB NUMBER	SGB/ SGA	US NQF LEVEL	US CREDITS	MC QUALIFICATIONS	Diploma Level 7	Master Degree Level 7
56	Demonstrate an understanding of basic accounting practices	SAQA EMS 005			1	4			×
	FUNDAMENTAL								
	The learner will have to achieve at least all of the compulsory unit standards, totalling 20 (twenty) credits, from the field of Communication Studies and Language, and in at least all of the of the compulsory unit standards, totalling 16 (sixteen) credits, from the sub-field of Mathematics. The ACFIST SGB will insert enough communication and mathematics unit standards identified as compulsory into the fundamental category to meet the relevant credit and level requirements set by SAQA as soon as such unit standards become available.								
	Until such unit standards become available, the following Communication unit standards registered on the NQF may be used								
1	Show a critical awareness of language usage	SAQA Com 001			1	3		×	
2	Access, process, use and present information	SAQA Com/003			1	4		×	
3	Use appropriate communication skills, conventions and structures for specific purposes and situations	SAQA Com/004			1	4		×	
	In addition, the learner will have to achieve at least the End User Computer unit standard listed below:								
4	Demonstrate a knowledge of and produce word processing documents using base functions	EUC6-25/02/00			2	2		×	
	ELECTIVE								
1	Analyse and design business processes	MC008	3	MC	7	14			×
2	Facilitate change management projects and interventions	MC009	3	MC	7	15			×
	Note:								
	Learners may choose any unit standards at the level of the qualification that allows them to specialise within a certain industry and discipline. At diploma level learners are to select electives below to the value of 30 credits. At masters degree level learners are to select electives to the value of 70 credits.								
	Assessment of competence				6	12			×
	Counselling				6	10			×
	Coaching				6	10		×	
	Mentoring				6	10			×
	Training of professionals				7	15			×
	Use of technology				7	12			×
	Technology management				6	8		×	
	Identification of team roles				7	10			×
	Management of team roles				6	12		×	
	Human Resource management				7	16			×
	Strategic Human Resource management				6	10		×	
	Strategy development				7	15			×
	Strategy Management				6	10		×	
	Marketing management				7	15			×
	Strategic Marketing management				6	10		×	
	Information Technology Management				7	15			×

UNIT STANDARD TITLES	US NUMBER (TATS)	NSB NUMBER	SGB/ SGA	US NQF LEVEL	US CREDITS	MC QUALIFICATIONS	Diploma Level 7	Master Degree Level 7
Strategic Information Technology Management				6	10		×	
Customer Relationship Management				7	15			×
Strategic Customer Relationship Management				6	10		×	

TOTAL CREDITS	CORE	FUNDAMENTAL	ELECTIVE	TOTAL
NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN MANAGEMENT CONSULTING NQF LEVEL 7	240	36	30	**306**
NATIONAL MASTERS DEGREE IN MANAGEMENT CONSULTING NQF LEVEL 7	254	36	70	**666** (360 + 306)

19 Annexure H – Sample Code of Professional Conduct

Confidentiality	A member will treat client information as confidential and will neither take personal advantage of privileged information gathered during an assignment, nor enable others to do so.
Unrealistic Expectations	A member will refrain from encouraging unrealistic expectations or promising clients that benefits are certain from specific management consulting services.
Commissions / Financial Interests	A member will neither accept commissions, remuneration, nor other benefits from a third party in connection with recommendations to a client without the client's knowledge and consent, nor fail to disclose any financial interest in goods or services which form part of such recommendations.
Assignments	A member will accept only assignments for which the member has the skills and knowledge to perform.
Conflicting Assignments	A member will avoid acting simultaneously in potentially conflicting situations without informing all parties in advance that this is intended.
Conferring with Client	A member will ensure that before accepting any engagement, a mutual understanding of the objectives, scope, work plan, and fee arrangements has been established, and that any personal, financial, or other interest that might influence the conduct of the work has been disclosed.
Recruiting	A member will refrain from inviting an employee of a client to consider alternative employment without prior discussion with the client.
Approach	A member will maintain a fully professional approach in all dealings with clients, the general public, and fellow members.
Other management consultants	A member will ensure that other management consultants carrying out work on behalf of the member are conversant with and abide by this Code of Professional Conduct.