IT Consulting Questions:
Major Themes and Drivers

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Outline

- Project Overview & Methodology
- Sample Interview Questions
- Trends in Questions
  - Why is my IT broken?
  - How can I get the most out of my current IT?
  - How do I get competitive advantage from IT?
  - How does my IT compare?
- Findings
  - Role of the sponsor
  - Position of IT in the firm
  - Bring questions to a higher level
  - Impact of IT maturity
- Conclusion
Objective: research the IT issues firms are facing through the lens of consultants

- What are the underlying issues?
- Are firms addressing the real problems?

Interviewed representatives from 4 firms including: IBM, TCS, BCG and Gartner

Varying specialization of firms (implementation, management consulting, research, etc.)
Interview Questions

- Who in the firm typically engages your services?
- What are the most common questions they are asking?
- What is your process for identifying the problem?
- Do organizations recognize the root cause of the problem?
- Do the problems vary by industry?
# The Four Buckets

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<td>Where is the value IT is supposed to provide?</td>
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Why is my IT broken?

The CEO would like to have a full view of the firm’s customers but IT is unable to bring together information from various systems. (TCS)

Contributing Factors:

- Lack of IT governance
- Business/IT communication problems
- Lack of process standardization
- Lack of IT expertise and understanding
How can I get the most out of my current IT?

- My company is merging. Which systems should we standardize on?

- Contributing Factors:
  - Outsource non-core competencies
  - M&A IT governance issues
  - Overly complicated business processes
How do I get competitive advantage from IT?

I’ve cut the excess cost out of my IT budget. Now how do I get more business value from IT?

Contributing Factors:

- Existing high level of IT maturity
- Growing role of the CIO
- Increased value creation role
- Business strategy alignment
- Goal identification
How does my IT compare?

How do I measure the success of my IT?

Contributing Factors:

- Benchmarking applies at all stages
- Low maturity firms use it to measure improvement
- Help to determine where to cut costs
- Maintain high level of IT success
- IT performance metrics/peer comparison
Finding #1 – Role of the sponsor

CIO

Measuring success of projects
Staying ahead of the curve
Business/IT communication

Other
Execs/
BU leaders

IT spending and costs
Fixing broken IT
Finding #2 – Position of IT in the firm

- **IT is the business (Google)**
  - Less likely to request outside expertise
  - Have already addressed issues or have in-house savvy

- **IT is very important (banking)**
  - Most often addressing the question of how to get the most out of IT

- **IT is not critical to survival (mfg)**
  - Trying to correct basic issues or optimize existing technology
Finding #3 – Bring questions to a higher level

- Businesses are often excellent at diagnosing specific problems, but miss underlying problems.

- Categorizing questions brings the problems to a higher level. This helps uncover root causes.

- Developing long terms solutions requires addressing both surface and underlying issues.
Finding #4 – Impact of IT Maturity

How do I gain a competitive advantage from IT?

How do I get the most out of my IT?

Why is my IT broken?
Conclusion

- Despite differing focuses, consulting firms are addressing similar issues.
- The project sponsor influences the questions that are asked and the consulting firm selected.
- A good consultant should be asking questions to address all aspects of the problem.
- Line between IT and business is blurring.
Questions?
Appendix
Example: Bringing questions to a higher level

- **Problem:** A large company was frustrated that the IT department appeared to be perpetually behind schedule and over budget.

- **Initial Question:** Find a way to structure a more responsive IT department.

- **Consultant Analysis:** The company’s underlying frustration with IT was the basic problem but it was expressed in terms of a symptom: the organizational structure.

- **Root Problem:** Lack of good governance and IT/business communication