



Rutgers Consulting Group

Getting and Crushing the Consulting Interview

November 30, 2023



Meet the Team



David Rubin
President
Major: Economics
Minor: Chemistry

Incoming Consultant at Oliver Wyman
Summer Associate Consultant at Putnam
Experience in MedTech & Research

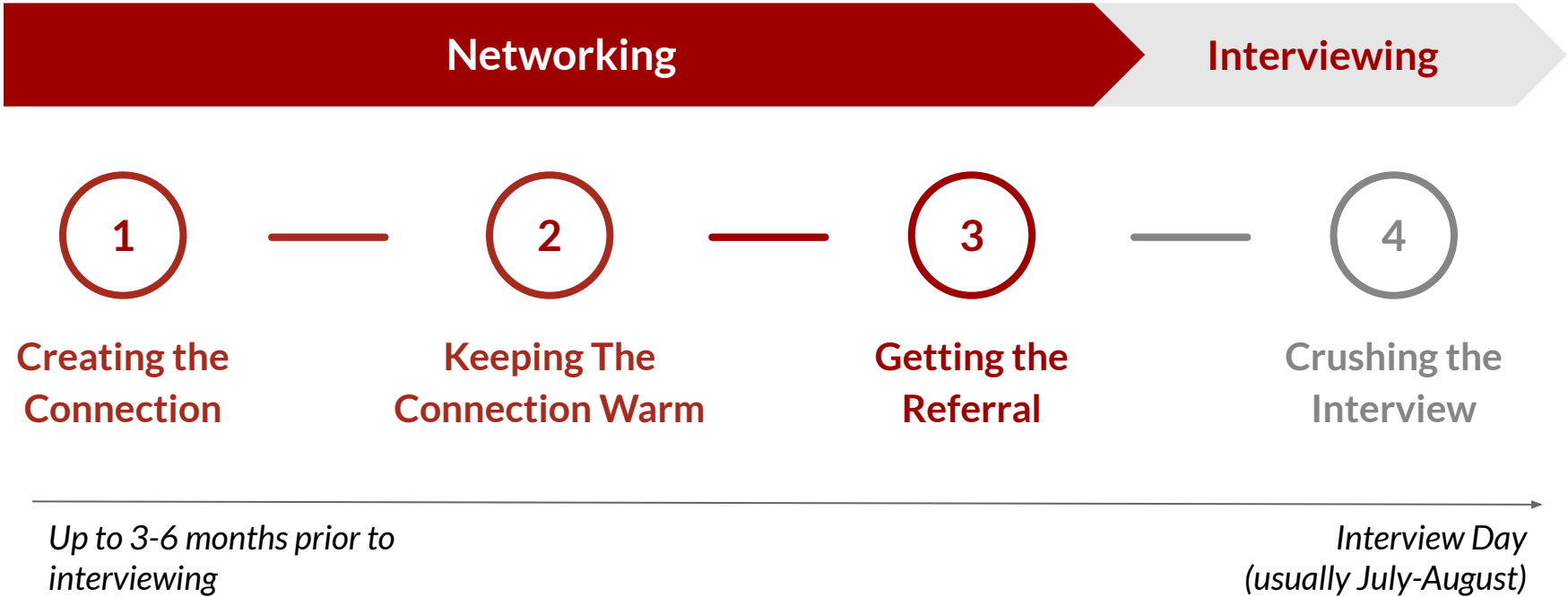


Sukhmeet Bedi
Director of External Ops
Majors: Finance, BAIT
Minor: Entrepreneurship

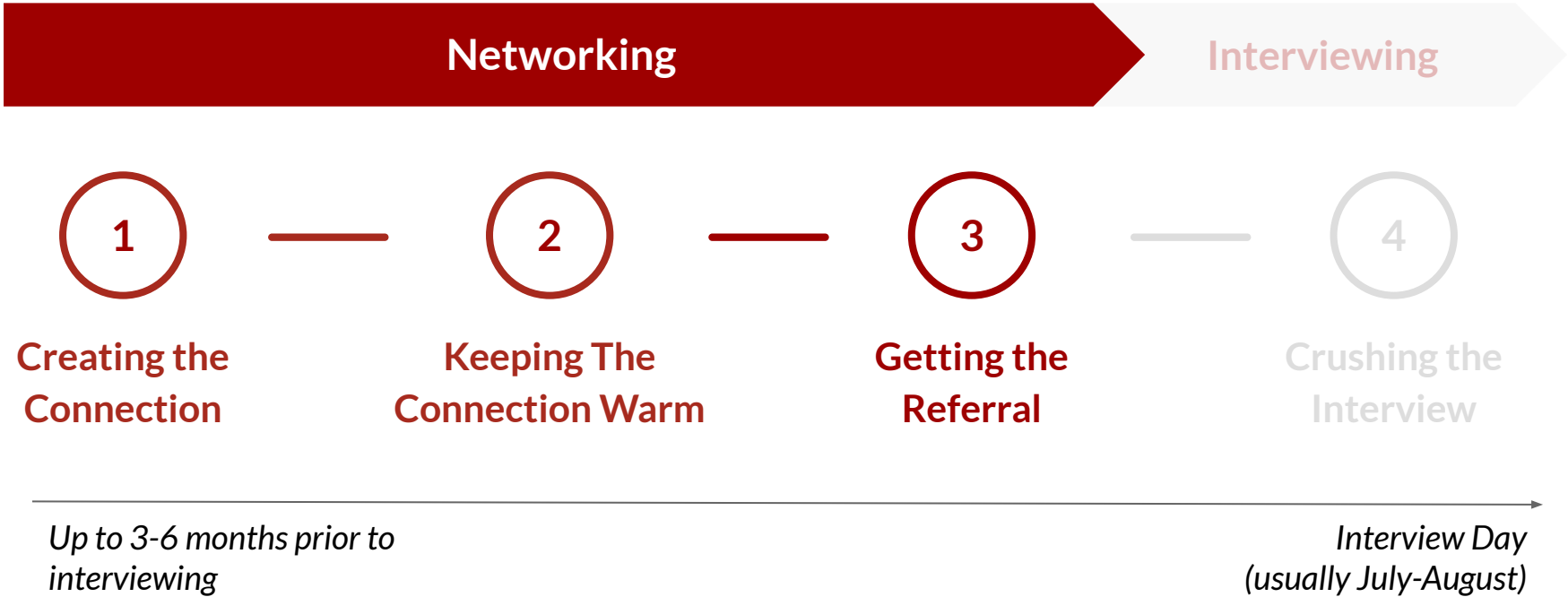
Incoming Business Analyst at Capital One
Previously Business Transformation Consulting
Intern at CrossCountry Consulting



Getting an offer takes a lot more than just crushing the interview



Networking is the first and most important step of the process to getting an offer





What is networking and why do people do it?

What is Networking?

Networking is the process of creating meaningful relationships with professionals in order to learn more about them, their firm, and find sponsors for yourself through your recruiting process

Why do People Network?

Learn more about the industry and job you are hoping to get

Build connections that can help you land your dream role



Networking is compiled of 3 separate parts

Creating the Connection

- **Cold connections** - reaching out over email or LinkedIn to someone you have never talked to before
- **Warm Connections** - reaching out to someone you have met before or have mutual connections
- **Attending Networking Events** - in and out of Rutgers events
- **Networking chats** - calls to ask questions you might have

Keeping the Connection Warm

- **Connecting Periodically** - staying connected with someone requires constant effort
- **Update emails** - update them on new things going on in your life (internships, trips, and other things you talked about)
 - **Holiday emails**
- **Further Calls** - if you have more questions in the future

Getting the Referral

- **Reaching out prior to applying** - connecting again and touching base on intent on applying
- **Making the Request** - either on a call or over email asking if they can refer
- **Applying** - Applying either through personalized link, regular portal, or resume drop



Find the right connections through the right platforms

LinkedIn *(Best)*

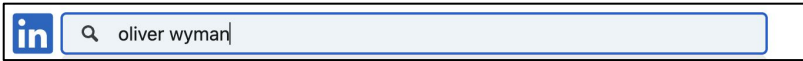
- Find desired company, click on people, and search “Rutgers”
- Filter by location, major, business function
- Find the email of the target by using online email finders or searching for the company email template

Warm Events

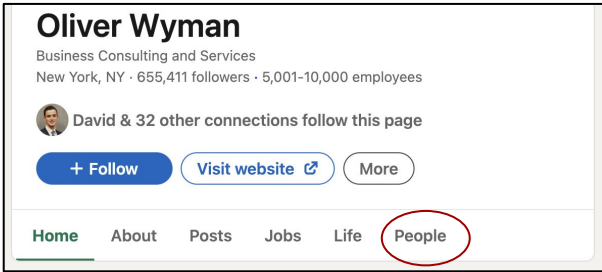
- Obtain recruiter, alumni, or employee emails at recruiting events such as career fairs, club events, case competitions, etc.

How to Find People to Network With on LinkedIn

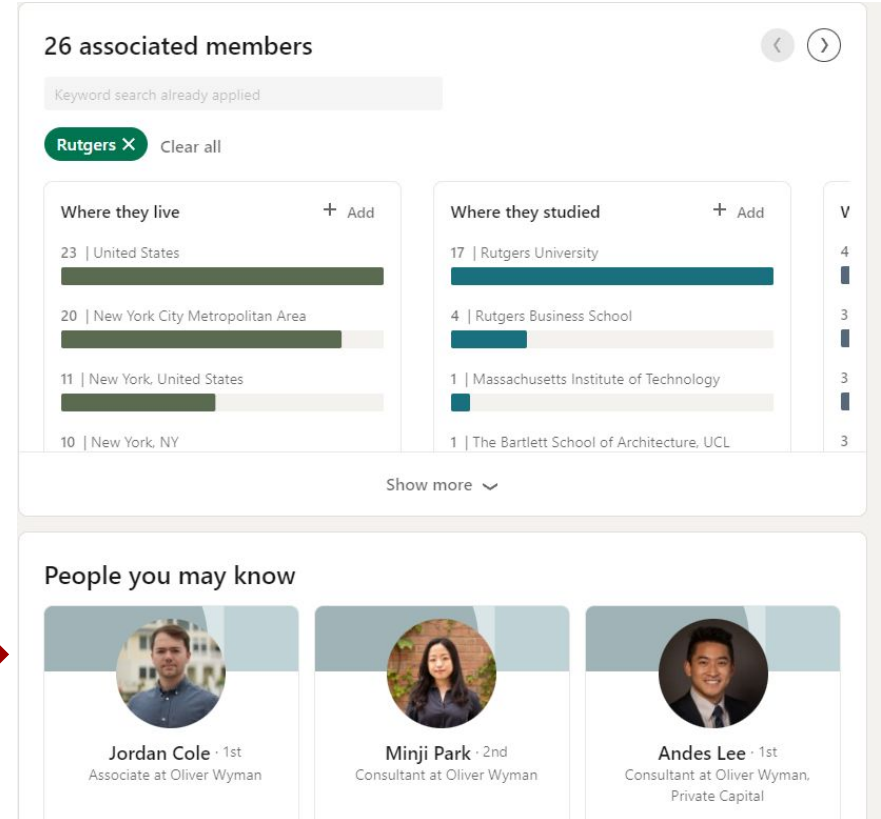
1. Search up desired company



2. Go to the people tab on the company page



3. Search any variation of “Rutgers,” “Rutgers University,” and/or “Rutgers Business School” to identify alumni. Filter by any other keywords



You need to be tactical about who you network with

Get on calls with....

The Right People

- **Focus on Rutgers Alumni first** as they will be most receptive
- Start with Associates/Lower-Level to **learn** about the job
- Aim for Managers and above for **referrals** (*preferably Partners*)

at....

The Right Time

- Start earlier if you're looking to learn about the role
- Build connections 3-6 months in advance of applications
- Seek follow-up calls and referrals ~1 month in advance of applying

in....

The Right Place

- Network with people in your offices of interest
- Do not network with someone in California if you want NYC



A 2:2:2 strategy is helpful for building confidence and avoiding being transactional

The 2 Rule for Firms

- Identify 2 small firms/boutiques, 2 Big 4 firms, and 2 top firms that you want to work at – you can do more if you want
- **Build confidence by networking at lower-tier firms** and then build up to MBB, etc. – *don't blow connections at top firms because of a bad call*

The 2 Rule for People

- **Don't message more than 2 people at the same level in the same office in 2 weeks**
- These are real people and they talk – you'll look desperate

The 2 Rule for Email Follow-up (if no response)

- Follow up weekly if your first email doesn't receive a response
- **Don't follow up more than twice in 2 weeks and stop after the 2nd follow-up email**



Approach connection-building diligently and in an organized fashion

Organize first...

- Create a spreadsheet to track the names, roles, companies, contact dates, notable talking points, and referral status of all your contacts

... then stay diligent

- **Email 20-30 consultants a week**
- Target multiple firms at once (from different firm tiers)
- Focus on finding emails over sending LinkedIn messages

Initiate a connection using a targeted message

Email Best Practices

- Introduce yourself **briefly**
- **Personalize the message to their profile**
- Add a specific connection point
 - Can be school, major, hobby, industry interest – you can get creative
- **Offer a time/date and be prepared to send a calendar invite**
- Only message on LinkedIn if you can't find their email – 200 character limit

Example

I hope this email finds you well! **My name is __**, and I am a rising junior at Rutgers University, majoring in Finance with strong interests in strategy consulting.

I came across your profile on LinkedIn and noticed that you were a Rutgers alumni and a Partner at XYZ Consulting Firm. I'd love to connect to learn more about your experiences in consulting after Rutgers and **[insert personalized connection point here]**. If so, **would you be available for a quick 15-30 minute** phone or zoom call at [time/date]? If that's not convenient, please let me know some times/dates in the coming weeks that work best for you.

Additionally, **in case you'd like to learn more about me**, I've attached my resume below. Thank you for your time and consideration!"



Once you're on the call, you need to ask questions strategically

Firm and Industry knowledge

Background

How was your time at Rutgers?

What led you to a career in consulting?

How did your academics and extracurricular activities help you in your professional development?

Experience

What types of projects have you been involved with?

What does your day-to-day look like?

How do you think the firm pushes you to become a better professional everyday?

Building Rapport

Advice

What has made you so successful in your career?

What technical skills does a successful analyst have?

If you could give yourself one piece of advice when you were 20, what would it be?

Any advice from a Rutgers alum to a current Rutgers student?

Closing

Can I reach out in the future if I have any questions?

Do you know what the steps in the recruiting process look like?

Is there anyone else that you can connect me with to speak to about the firm?



Immediately follow up a networking call with a Thank You Email

Email Best Practices

- Send the email the next morning (24 hours max)
- Thank them for their time/advice
- Mention something specific that you gained or learned from the conversation
 - 2-3 lines max
- Let them know you would like to keep in touch or follow up on anyone else they connect you with
- **Keep it concise and don't overdo it**

Example

I hope you're doing well. **I wanted to reach out and thank you for your time and advice yesterday!**

From our conversation, I really enjoyed learning about the distinction between the type of work that a firm like Putnam or Huron does at the brand level versus the way OW works at that higher organizational level. I additionally really enjoyed connecting over the struggles/isolation of lab research. It felt as though we both had really similar drivers towards consulting.

At the end of our conversation, you had mentioned that you would be willing to provide a referral when I apply to OW during full-time recruiting this summer. If not too much trouble and you're still willing to do so, would it be okay if I reach back out over the summer when it gets closer to the application timeline?



Keep the connection warm long-term by reaching out every 1-2 months

Best Practices

- Reconnect every **1-2 months**
- **Update them** on what you've been up to or follow up on something they mentioned in your last call
- Show enthusiasm
- Some ideas for follow-up calls include:
 - Catching up about their projects
 - Mock interviews
 - Advice before applying

Example

I hope you've been doing well since we last spoke in May! I've been in my internship at Putnam now for a few weeks and it has been an awesome experience. Between the fast pace of the projects and being double staffed, I'm learning more than I could've expected and I knew from conversations like ours that I'd be "drinking from the fire hose" regardless.

I'm still very excited to apply to OW and was planning to submit my application by the end of this week as the deadline is next Friday June 30th. If you're willing, I'd love to schedule another call to chat before I apply.



Getting the Referral

Find The Ideal Target

- **High Level** – Manager or above
- **Warm connection** – already had 1-2 calls
- **Good relationship** – they should like you and want to “champion” you
- **Correct Office** – works in the office you want to work or intern in

Ask at the Right Time

- **Reach out for a final call 4-6 weeks before applying**
- **Ask for the referral on the call** – avoid asking only on email

Avoid asking for a referral on the 1st call, but you can if you're in a pinch

Use The Right Line

At the end of your final call, say something like:

*“I’m really excited about X role at Y firm. I know that it’s very competitive. I plan to apply next month. **Is there any way you can help get my application seen?**”*

Do not say directly:
“Can you refer me?”

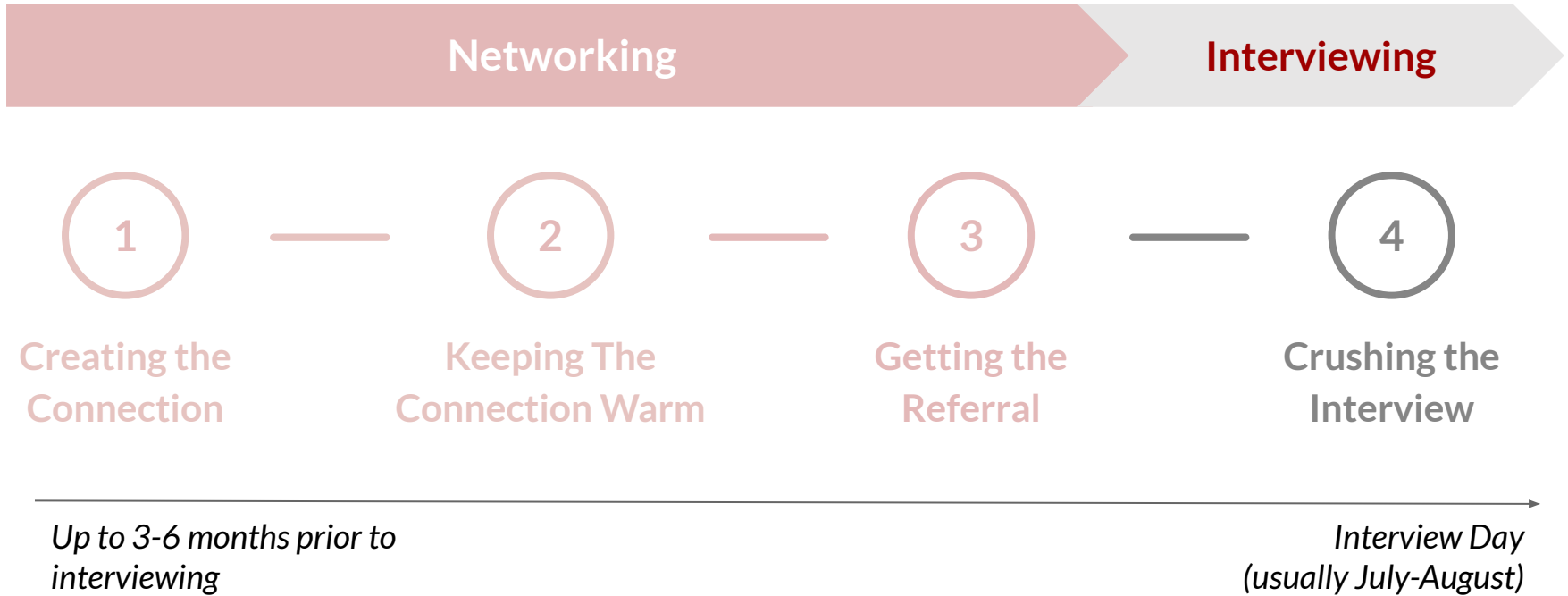
Follow Up Offline

- **Thank them** for their time and willingness to refer you
- **Attach your resume**
- If there is a significant amount of time before you apply, **email again to confirm they referred you**

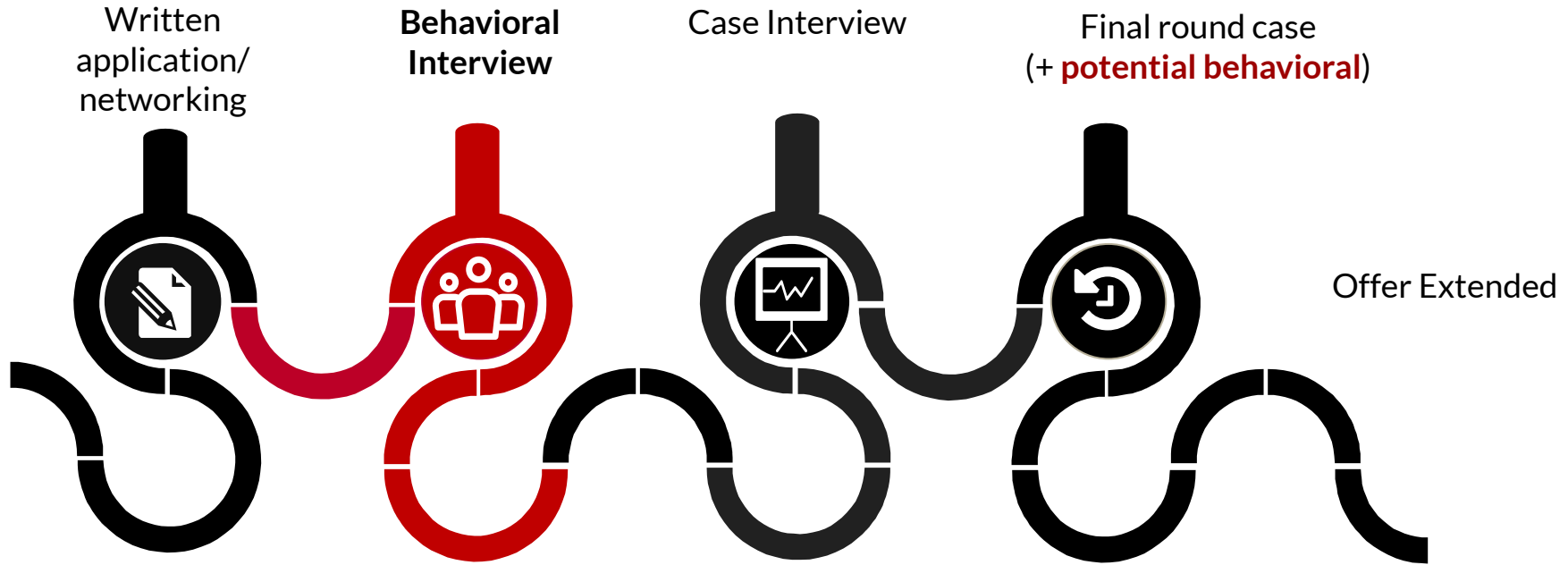
You typically want the referral submitted before you apply



The referral gets you even, but the interview gets you the offer



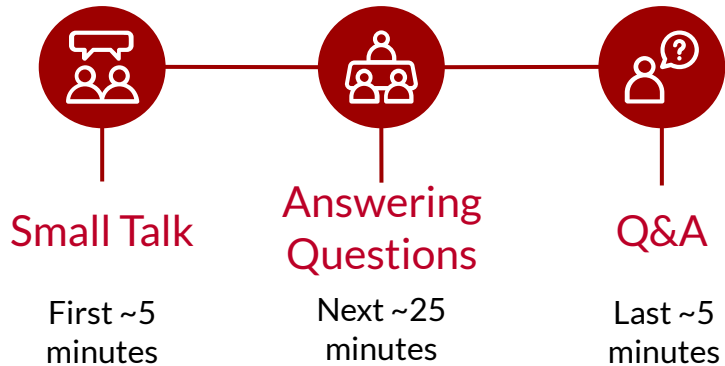
When is the Behavioral Interview?



Companies usually give case interviews after the behavioral interview to test problem solving skills, usually the third step in the process.

What is a behavioral interview?

Interview Structure



What are Interviewers looking for

- **“The Airport Test”** - Can I spend 10+ hours with this individual?
- **Client-Facing Skills** - Can we put this individual in front of a client tomorrow and have them manage expectations and communicate well
- **Skills-focus** - Does this person have the right skills that we need to fill this role
- **Cultural Fit** - Does this individual fit the firm culture
- **Future Performance** - How will this individual perform in the future

“Tell Me About Yourself” shapes your interviewer’s opinion in the first minutes

Best Practices

- **Start with an introduction** - full name, college, class year, major, honors (if applicable)
- **Add a spark or early experience** - *optional*
 - If something early catalyzed your interest in the field, show it
- **Tell a story of ~3 major experiences**
 - Usually internships, projects, or significant involvements in chronological order
- **For each experience, briefly describe:**
 - Your role
 - What you learned or the impact you created
 - What you liked, but also what you wanted to learn or do next – use this to tie each story together
- **Close by saying “And that’s why I’m here today”**
- **Aim for 90 seconds to 2 minutes**

Example (*abbreviated*)

“My name is David Rubin and I’m a current senior at the Rutgers Honors College majoring in Economics...”

After my sophomore year, I took an internship at Getinge, a global medical device company. In this internship, I had the exciting opportunity to not only develop external business strategies but also improve internal business processes.

After this internship, I realized that I wanted to do this type of business problem solving on an even greater level and this led me to pursue my next internship at a consulting firm...

[Most recent experience/career desire tying to the role].... And that’s why I’m here today.

“Why Consulting” informs your interviewer of your preparation very quickly

Best Practices

- **Start with an explicit overview of 2-3 reasons** - Exposure, soft and hard skill development, working with bright minds, etc.
- **Explain your interest in those particular reasons**
 - Why are you interested in those particular reasons
- **For each reason, explain**
 - Why it is important to you
 - Why do you have to start your career in consulting in order to get that
- **Close by wrapping up**
 - Mention all of your reasons again
- **Aim for 60 seconds to 90 seconds**

Example (*abbreviated*)

*“I am interested in consulting because of two reasons. **One**, it helps me develop my problem solving skills, and **two**, allows me to work with some of the brightest minds ...*

After working as a business analyst in a startup my freshman summer, I was exposed to complex problems across the business and I got to own the solutions I developed.

Working here, I realized that I really enjoyed getting to help businesses grow and solve their hardest problems and this led me to pursue my next internship at a consulting firm...

[Build on the next reasons that you have].... As a whole, I am excited about consulting because ...

“Why This Firm” allows you to differentiate yourself through your research

Best Practices

- **Start with an overview of 2-3 reasons** - Professional and personal development, unique projects, firm culture, etc.
- **For each reason, briefly describe:**
 - Why that reason matters to you
 - Why that reason is unique to that firm
- **Close by wrapping up**
 - Mention all the reasons why that firm again
- **Aim for 60 seconds to 90 seconds**

Example (*abbreviated*)

*“I would love to work at XYZ because of the firm’s emphasis on **one**, professional development, and **two**, unique projects ...*

After conversations with multiple analysts they mentioned that each of them has a people manager whose goal is to ensure their success in their role...

As someone who is always looking to improve and learn, this is an amazing opportunity to have a mentor through my professional journey to help me grow in my time at the firm.

*[Build on the reasons you stated at the beginning]....
As a whole, I would love to work at XYZ because ...*

STAR Method

Situation

- Giving details about the situation will emphasize skills within **'storytelling'** and give context of situation you're giving
- **Don't** give too many details/ramble (the rest of the steps will flow the story)

Task

- The task (**problem/challenge**) is about what you took responsibility for
- Talk about the end goal expected and what your role was

Action

- Talk about the **steps** you took to overcome the task
- Highlight your individual efforts and the process of thinking you had to fulfill the tasks and **challenges** that came along the way

Result

- Describe the **outcome** of your actions and make sure to highlight achievements/improvements made
- Include **quantifiable results** to be specific and measurable



Example STAR Method

Question: Tell us about a time you had to deal with many competing priorities and how you handled it.

S: During my internship this summer in consulting at Putnam Associates, I had the opportunity to be a part of multiple case teams at once because the firm had fractional staffing. So, I spent my time split between two clients with two different teams.

T: At one point, I wanted to join a quantitative study, so I was added to a third project. I thought I had the time to do it, but all three projects became very demanding.

A: I dealt with these competing priorities in two ways. First, I identified which work streams were most important and urgent, and I prioritized those. I realized that the third project I had joined was of lower priority than the first two and I, ultimately, had to pull back on that one to focus on the first two projects. Second, I over-communicated with my team members on all three of the projects so that each team knew exactly what my bandwidth was like and could pick up slack accordingly.

R: By focusing on the right priorities and maintaining strong communication with my teams, I was able to not only balance the competing priorities, but also allow my teams to thrive as they knew what to expect from me. All three projects finished on time with praise from the client and I learned a lot along the way.

Once you get an interview, the way you prepare for each one matters

Find Your Interviewer

- Find out their background and any common interests
- Figure them out and mildly “tailor” yourself to appeal to their biases

Rehearse the Small Talk

- Every interview starts with 2-5 minutes of chit chat
- Figure out what you’re going to lead with so you don’t fumble

Plan Your Questions

- Prepare ~5 thoughtful questions about your interviewer and their experience to ask after the interview
- Don’t be generic, but also don’t ask over-the-top questions

Rehearse Your Stories

- Practice your answers but don’t sound scripted
- Avoid sounding scripted by only writing your answers in bullet form

Tailor Your Persona

- Tailor your stories to the firm if possible
- If you know that the firm you’re interviewing with values specific experience or qualities, make sure to make those pop in your stories



Key Tips for Behavioral Interviews

Tips

Example/Description

Have Enthusiasm

Sound excited and bring the energy

Trust Yourself

Be confident, not arrogant - people can tell when you are faking it

Test your Technology

Check your internet beforehand; Make sure you have battery

Clean Presentation

Always wear a full suit or equivalent; Look directly at camera

Be Genuine

Be genuine and polite; Be likable and never say anything controversial

Follow up After

Send a follow up email within 24 hours to your interviewer; Note memorable connection points from the interview.