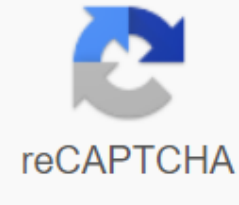




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Mckinsey pst guide

At IGotAnOffer, we help thousands of candidates prepare for the McKinsey PST Problem Solving Test. Students who go through our full training program are a happy group: more than 80% of them are successful and end up getting an interview with McKinsey. Preparing for the PST test may seem daunting, but it doesn't have to be. In recent years, we have developed a simple step-by-step system to take you from What is McKinsey PST? for I'm confident I can take the test. We've summed up some of the key things we learned in this free guide. The first step to succeeding in troubleshooting testing is to understand why McKinsey uses PST in the first place. And to get a look at the test features you'll need to master.

1.1 Why does McKinsey use PST? In your day-to-day as a consultant you will use your mathematical and logical skills more intensely than in most other jobs. McKinsey therefore wants to make sure you have these skills before inviting him to his first round of interviews. More specifically, junior consultants spend a lot of time on the following three tasks: Extracting data from charts, tables, and texts. This data is usually in customer documents (for example, PDFs, Excel spreadsheets, etc.). Transforming data through mathematical calculations and interpretations. This part of the work usually happens in Excel. Summarizing your findings. This usually happens in Power Point and more rarely Word. Not surprisingly, McKinsey PST tests these three skills. First, you'll receive charts, tables, and text documents, and you'll need to quickly find the data in them. Second, you will need to interpret this data or do calculations to select the right answer in the test. And third, sometimes you will also have to select the answer that best summarizes the situation. If you do well on the test, it is therefore an indication that you will do well at work. All mckinsey PST cases are inspired by previous mckinsey designs. The company's intention is to reproduce the conditions of a project as much as possible. Finally, the problem-solving test is also interesting for McKinsey because it is an OBJECTIVE measure of his skills. Everyone gets the same test. Therefore, it really allows the company to compare candidate apples with apples. This contrasts with case interviews in which the interviewers' ratings are by nature more subjective. Now that you know why McKinsey uses PST, let's turn our attention to the basic test features you need to know.

1.2 Important PST Test Features The mckinsey Troubleshooting Test is among the toughest standardized tests you'll likely do in your life. So it's worth it some time understanding the basics of the test in order to maximize your chances of success. Here are the 5 most important things you need to know about the test. 26 questions, 60 minutes The McKinsey PST includes 26 questions distributed in three different business cases. Each business case refers to a company or organization that is facing a challenge and has hired it to help them find a solution. Challenges can go from profitability issues to decisions about whether or not to enter a new market. Everyone would probably succeed on McKinsey PST if they were given unlimited time to answer each question. What makes the Troubleshooting Test such a difficult challenge is that you only have 60 minutes to answer 26 questions. That's about 2 minutes per question and managing your time efficiently is therefore the key to success. In certain offices, non-native English speakers receive an extra 10 to 15 minutes to take the test. You should contact your McKinsey HR representative if you are in this situation and do not know if you are allowed this extra time or not. No business knowledge required The PST test is designed to assess your numerical computing and logic skills. It is NOT designed to test your memory skills or business knowledge, as described in the McKinsey coaching guide. McKinsey doesn't test your business knowledge with the troubleshooting test. However, being familiar with some basic business terms will help you feel more confident and allow you to understand certain issues faster than other candidates. We've put together the video below to help you master these essential business terms. This video assumes that you start from 0 business knowledge and covers the basic snaging revenues, costs, profits and some proportions such as profit margin, growth rates, etc. If you are already comfortable with these concepts (e.g. business studied at university) you should feel free to skip this video. 33% of successful applicants Every year, 200,000 people apply for McKinsey, but only 2,200 of them receive a job offer according to the company's managing director. That's a success rate of ~1%. Based on this information, and the different stages of McKinsey's recruitment process, we estimate that about 65,000 applicants are invited to take the PST test and that 33% of them succeed in the test each year. If you want to know more about this, you can read this article where we look at the different stages of McKinsey's recruitment process. Cutoff score of 70% McKinsey does not communicate the exact cutoff score for the troubleshooting test. At IGotAnOffer, our best estimate is that the cut is about 70%. This is based on our experience of successfully passing the test, as well as on conversations with hundreds of candidates in recent years. In both cases, people who passed the test consistently scored above 70% during the last stages of their preparation and performed well on the day. This means that in a matter of 26 26 You need to hit at least 19 questions to succeed. There are a few things worth knowing about this cut score. First, whether or not you succeed in the test only depends on your score. IT DOESN'T depend on how well other people did on the test. If all candidates in your PST session score above the cutoff score, you'll all advance to the next round of interviews. The test result therefore depends entirely on you, which is a great incentive to do your absolute best in the test. Secondly, scoring VERY high on pst can really be a great strategy to be hired by McKinsey. Many candidates think that scoring about 70% will be enough to get them to the next round of case interviews. However, your PST score will be used in later rounds of the recruitment process to decide whether you will be made an offer or not. If in the final round you did as well as another candidate, but only one position is available, McKinsey will probably choose you over the other candidate if you scored much more on the PST. Marking 90% + can be a great way to differentiate yourself, and our experience shows that it is feasible with sufficient preparation. Finally, we are often asked how much time to devote to preparing for the test. In our experience, most successful candidates spend about 30 hours or more of training. In fact, there are fewer candidates able to pass the test without seriously training than most people realize. The vast majority of candidates who end up working at McKinsey are brilliant but also very determined and motivated people who have invested time and effort to get into the company. Without calculator, no scrap paper As a consultant, you will have to regularly make estimates of mental mathematics in client meetings and discussions. This is the main reason why you will not be able to use a calculator during testing. You may have thought that nowadays consultants would use their phones to make estimates in meetings, but they don't tend to. In our experience this is to avoid interrupting the flow of the meeting and also a little to try to impress the customer! In addition, scrap paper will also not be allowed during testing. Therefore, you will have to perform all the calculations on the white spaces in your PST booklet. McKinsey probably bans scrap paper for very practical reasons. It allows them to make sure no one gets a chance to write PST questions about scrap paper to bring them back home and distribute them to future candidates. That's why we encourage you to take PST tests in real-world conditions: no calculator, no scrap paper, and in 60 minutes. In our experience, training in these conditions will ensure that you have your best on the day of the actual test. Bonus: McKinsey PST vs. GMAT One of the big questions we hear about the McKinsey PST is whether it's similar to GMAT. If you've ever taken it GMAT, or if you have GMAT preparation materials, you may be wondering if this is enough for your McKinsey PST preparation. Here's the short answer: asking GMAT questions won't hurt, but it won't be enough to do well on the PST. Some of the quantitative questions about the PST have a similar feel to gmatt issues. However, the overall format is very different. In particular, time management and the way you approach each issue is very specific to the PST. To maximize your chances of success, it is important that you practice with PST sample testing. This is the best way to develop your ability to consistently run on the types of questions you'll find on McKinsey PST. If you want to know more about the differences between these two tests, check out our McKinsey PST vs. GMAT vs. SHL comparison post. Part 2: McKinsey PST types of questions Now that you know all about the basics of the test, let's turn our attention to the kind of questions you'll encounter in the McKinsey troubleshooting test. They can be grouped into three categories. Math word problems: ~40% of questions Logic - Data interpretation: ~30% of questions Logic - Reading comprehension: ~30% of questions Let's analyze each type of question one by one.

2.1 Math word problems: ~40% of questions In mathematical word problems, you will be presented with information in the form of charts, tables and text. To answer the question, you will need to develop a mathematical formula and perform calculations based on that formula. Here's a typical math word problem from McKinsey PST A, question 7: For the tenth closest to one percentage point, what is the difference between the average annual growth of the german and spanish business sector due to productivity over the past 12 years? A. 0.1 percentage points B. 0.5 percentage points C. 0.9 percentage points D. 1.3 percentage points To answer this question, first you need to develop the formula to calculate the annual growth of the business sector due to productivity in the last 12 years. And then you need to calculate these rates for Germany and Spain and compare the two. In most cases, the mathematics involved in these types of questions are not extremely complicated. They are mainly additions, subtractions, divisions, multiplications and growth rate calculations. The challenge is to do these calculations quickly and accurately. Remember, you only have about 2 minutes per question, so it's not uncommon to run and make a miscalculation. Another common mistake is to misunderstand the question or misinterpret the data provided. In this example, for example, we are interested in the rate of growth due to productivity. This is critical because there are different factors behind the Global. Losing that part of the question would lead to an incorrect answer. In the tips and preparation plan sections of this guide we will discuss what you can do to overcome overcome Challenges. If you want to try your hand at math word problems you can try to answer this McKinsey PST question in less than 30 seconds. Describe your approach in the comments section and take a look at how other candidates answered the question.

2.2 Logic - Data interpretation: ~30% of questions The McKinsey PST also includes questions where you are asked to evaluate different statements using data provided in documents. These questions are close to data interpretation issues in tests such as GRE or GMAT. Here is an example of McKinsey PST A, Question 12: Which of the following CANNOT be completed from the information presented in Exhibit 3 on the sample of clients analyzed? A. Customer purchase in its first 90 days is an indicator of its value for mark in its first year B. Quintile 1 are customers with the lowest profit margin for Marcadia C. The average customer makes between 2 and 3 transactions in the first 90 days since signing up D. The average customer value of one year is \$7.90 You will still need to use math to answer these questions , but they are typically much less compute-intensive than mathematical word problems. Instead, they require you to use logical and critical thinking skills, which is why we call them logical questions. A common challenge for these questions is to quickly find information on slightly different topics. For example, some of the above statements are about quintile 1, while others are about the average customer. This means that you will have to look at the data in different ways to evaluate each of the different statements. Between the different statements, it will often be easy to eliminate one or two that will obviously be wrong. But the statements you'll get with often all seem like they could be right. The challenge will be to find the only statement proven by the DATA. This is a mistake that some of us made on IGotAnOffer the first time we caught the PST. Sometimes we selected statements that seemed or felt right, although there was no data in the document to support them. It was a big mistake. In PST, an answer is only correct if it is PROVEN by the available data. If a claim is not proven by the data, then it cannot be correct.

2.3 Logic - Reading comprehension: ~30% of questions Finally, McKinsey PST also includes reading comprehension questions that will test your ability to draw a conclusion based on a text extract. Again, these questions are somewhat similar to reading comprehension issues in GRE. Here's an example from McKinsey PST A, Question 20: Given the wfgla president's goal, what would be the least relevant question for the team to answer? A. How WFGLA can improve in the of the people who are likely to give? B. How can WFGLA engage with people in ways more likely to result in donations? C. How you can contact WFGLA WFGLA communicate with your donors in a lower cost way? D. How can WFGLA improve campaign execution by the campaign office? This type of question is similar to data interpretation questions. But they don't involve any math. They only test their ability to understand a situation based on a text document and interpret which statement provided is most likely to be correct. Again here, some statement will seem true, but it will not be supported by text. And it is a common mistake to select these statements. Instead, you should focus on selecting the statement that is 100% logically supported by the text. Now that you know what kind of questions you'll encounter, let's start turning our attention to how you should approach answering them. Part 3: Tips for passing We have listed our top tips below to help you become a PST professional. Most of these tips come from our own successful PST experience. We're also listing some of McKinsey's PST coaching guide that we think you'll find helpful. Tip #1: Answer ALL questions You must answer ALL questions in the PST test because there are no penalties for wrong answers. In fact, each right answer gives you +1 point and each wrong answer 0 points. As a consequence, if you hesitate between two responses or are running out of time during the test, you should randomly select an answer. With a little luck, this will help increase your score. Tip #2: Fill in the answer sheet as you progress (!) We also recommend that throughout the test you regularly write down your answers on the answer sheet that you will be provided. This may seem obvious, but some previous candidates who trained with us forgot to do so while taking the official test because of stress! They had to fill out the answer sheet in a hurry during the last one or two minutes of the hour and came close to failing the test as a result. We encourage you to save yourself this moment of last-minute panic and fill in the answer sheet as you progress ;) Tip #3: Take the questions if necessary You will have 2 minutes on average to answer each question. At IGotAnOffer, the first time we did the test one of the mistakes some of us made was refusing to skip questions. It was a big mistake. It is very tempting to keep wanting to answer a question since you have already invested 2 minutes in trying to find the answer. But in our experience, skipping questions after 3 minutes if you're not making enough progress is really the right strategy because it maximizes your overall score. When you do this, you obviously shouldn't leave the question unanswered. You should choose one of the two or three options you are hesitating I hope it's not a completely random guess, as you will probably have deleted some of the answers after 2 or 3 minutes. Tip #4: Improve your accounts We help thousands of candidate candidates in the test. And if they had one thing in common it's probably this: they all invested some time at the beginning of their preparation to improve their maths. Math calculations in pst are not complicated; you just need to make basic additions, subtractions, divisions, and multiplications. The real CHALLENGE is that you have to do many calculations very quickly and you won't have time to check them again. This requires practice. Tip #5: Time when you improve your math skills, you should be sure to practice estimated results instead of doing accurate math. In many cases, the answers will be far enough away for you to approximate results. You should definitely try this as it is one of the simplest things that can make it MUCH FASTER in answering questions in the PST test. Tip #6: Plan TO RESOLVE A common mistake is to start doing calculations as soon as you're done reading the question. This is very tempting because you want to answer the question as soon as possible. However, doing this can actually be counterproductive if you don't know EXACTLY what you're calculating. So our advice is to plan first what you will calculate and then do the calculations you need to do. This is the fastest approach in our experience. Tip #7: It seems correct ≠ evidenced by the data When you answer a PST question, it's usually fairly easy to eliminate one or two of the possible answers. The hard part is choosing the right one between the remaining two or three. This is difficult because some of the answers you will get will look correct. But there won't be enough evidence in the documents proving that they're correct. The rule in pst is that if a response is not proven by the DATA, then it is not correct. Tip #8: Start with the question A question that candidates often ask us when they start preparing is Should I read the documents first and then the questions? Or should I read the questions and then the documents? Everyone has their own personal preference. However, the vast majority of people we work with found it more effective to read the question first. Then you can search the documents only the information you need to answer the question. Tip #9: Read the speed of documents Time is very precious when answering PST questions. After reading the question and knowing what information you are looking for, you should SPEED UP READING the text. In other words, you should be scanthe text for the information you are interested in, rather than reading line by line. Once you have found what you needed, you can answer the question and move on to the next one. Tip #10: Charts and tables are often the key Finally, we encourage you to always start with charts and tables when you are looking for to answer a PST question. Charts and tables are almost always useful for Questions. But large sections of text in documents are sometimes irrelevant. Now that you're up to date with these McKinsey PST tips, let's turn our attention to how you should structure your practice time. Part 4: Practice McKinsey PST how do you get to practice for McKinsey PST? And how do you make sure you succeed? It is not enough to place the hours, it is important to prepare strategically. In our experience, the 4-step approach is the best way to structure your practice before taking the PST. This is the approach we

taught in our McKinsey PST Training Program, and more than 80% of candidates who have used it so far have ended up being successful in the test. This is compared to the estimated average success rate of 33% for other candidates. But even if you don't end up using the program, we'll still encourage you to use this four-step approach. Trust us, it really works!

4.1 Know the types of test and questions The first thing you should ask, if you haven't already done so, is to do some McKinsey PST tests to familiarize yourself with the test format and the types of questions. Here are some PST samples you can get started with: If you find other interesting features, please post them in the Q&A section below and we'll add them to this list.

4.2 Developing confident mathematical skills It is common to have rusty mathematical skills when you start preparing for the PST test. This was certainly the case among the IGotAnOffer team when we started preparing. And this is also the case for most of the candidates we work with today. However, in our experience, successful candidates tend to devote energy to sharpening their mental mathematics and learning shortcuts early in their preparation. This is essential because more than 50% of the questions in the test involve mathematics. This small initial investment seems to provide them with the confidence to perform calculations quickly and accurately on the day of the test. It is also very useful with McKinsey's interviews after the PST. As we mentioned earlier, the type of math you will have to do is not extremely complicated. They are mainly additions, subtractions, divisions, multiplications and growth rate calculations. But the challenge will be to make many calculations VERY FAST AND PRECISELY. You won't have time to double-check your calculations. So being confident that they are right the first time will be a huge advantage. The first part of the McKinsey PST Training Program contains math videos to help you review the basics of mental calculations, as well as learn some useful shortcuts. In addition, it also includes a calculation workbook that you can use to practice calculations.

4.3 Master a fast and consistent response method A of the candidates would be able to pass the test if there was no time limit. Once you reviewed revised and are confident in your quantitative skills again, you need to start thinking about how you can answer more questions in less time. In our experience, the key to achieving this is to always use the same step-by-step method to answer questions. When the IGotAnOffer team was getting ready for the PST, we were really struggling to answer all questions in less than 60 minutes initially. But at some point, we decided to always try to use the same approach, and it made a huge difference. There are two benefits to always addressing PST issues consistently. First, the use of a structured and consistent response method allowed us to develop HABITS. After a while, answering pst questions became second nature. It started to seem like a routine and therefore gradually we became more comfortable and much FASTER. The second benefit is psychological. Always using the same step-by-step approach means that when you enter the room on the day of your PST you already know what you're going to do. There's no improvisation. You just applied a system with what you have mastered and are comfortable with. That made a big difference to us. And the candidates we work with today also say that it really helps them to be confident on the day of the race. The second part of the McKinsey PST Training Program is where we teach the step-by-step system we call the IGotAnOffer method. We have refined this approach over the years. And some of the world's top universities, including Harvard, also recommend using it today.

4.4 Practice sample testing Finally, once you have developed a consistent way to answer PST questions, you should practice on PST sample tests. There are two important tips you should apply when practicing in sample tests. First, you must practice in real conditions. This means that you should print your PST tests, only allow yourself 60 minutes, and without calculator and scrap paper. This may sound like an obvious tip, but it's actually very difficult to really get to it in practice. The reason it's so important to do this is that you're going to make things feel more familiar on the day of your test. And second, you should study your mistakes in detail. In our experience practicing on 6 PST tests (e.g., 3 from McKinsey, 3 from IGotAnOffer) is more than enough to pass the test. It is better to practice in 6 tests and make the most of each of them by studying their mistakes in detail than to practice in 15 different tests, but not take too much from any of them. McKinsey's PST Training Program contains 3 tests consisting of 26 questions each. Previous candidates who have used these tests often report that they are the closest to the actual PST test that are available on the Internet (you take a look at the program review section for testimonials). We also enrich these tests with detailed answers and special tips to make it faster. Fast. Join our McKinsey PST Training Program resources and learn how to break the PST directly from former interviewers. More than 80% of applicants using the program are successful. As a result, we are now recommended by consulting clubs at universities including Harvard, Columbia and Berkeley. Learn more below. McKinsey PST Training Program Any questions about the McKinsey PST? If you have any questions about McKinsey PST, don't hesitate to ask below and we'll be more than happy to answer them. All questions are good questions, so go ahead! The IGotAnOffer team

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