

MR. JONATHAN FAHEY

**PRINCIPAL
BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP (BCG), UK**

www.bcg.com



Education and Training

- B. Eng. (Hons) Aeronautical Eng, University of Limerick, Ireland, 1998
- Grad. Dip. (High Distinction) Business and IT, Smurfit School of Business, Ireland, 1999
- MBA (Distinction), Harvard Business School, USA, 2004

Current Position

Title	Dates	Employer
Principal	2008 - 2010	Boston Consulting Group (BCG), UK

Previous Positions

Title	Dates	Employer
Project Manager	2006 - 2008	BCG, London, UK
Consultant	2004 - 2008	BCG, London, UK
Strategy Analyst	2001 - 2002	Vodafone, Newbury, UK
Associate	1999 - 2001	BCG, London, UK

"Home" Town(s)/County(s)

Sligo, Ireland

Please describe your current job

I work as a Consultant to large UK and Global companies. I typically lead joint Consultant and Client teams to help them improve the performance of their business or answer big strategic questions.

Examples of the types of things I work on include "Which companies should I buy or sell?, What new countries should I enter?, How do I sell more product?, or How do I reduce my costs?". My work is very enjoyable as I get to work on many different types of projects in different industries and teams.

Each project lasts 3-6 months and I work closely with clients as a single team

and we use analysis, expertise and insight to ensure we make good decisions. I frequently get exposure to CEOs and their senior team in some of the largest and most successful businesses in the UK. I am based mainly in London, but I have helped clients in Germany, Switzerland and the US, among others. It is very satisfying, as working with the client we can have a huge impact on their profitability and growth performance.

Please describe your career path since graduating with your B.Eng. Aeronautical Eng.

While I found the Aero Eng course valuable and enjoyable, my work experience (Airbus and Alstom) convinced me that while the real world of engineering was enjoyable, it is difficult to have a big impact - for example, you will typically design a small part of a very big system. In addition, I found engineering companies to be less meritocratic than I hoped.

So, on graduation I started a one-year Grad Dip (in Business and IT) at the Smurfit School of Business. Engineering gives you great quantitative skills and a good business course will give you strong commercial skills. Both skills are useful in any job.

After Smurfit I joined the Boston Consulting Group. This firm is considered the founder of modern business strategy thinking. As an analyst there I used my quantitative skills to help understand and size different markets and business growth options. I then worked with Vodafone for a year to experience life in a big business and help them figure out what business practices they could take from their operations in one country to improve performance in another. I worked mainly in the UK, Ireland, Sweden and Italy.

I then decided to go to Harvard Business School to study for an MBA. This course is great for building business leadership skills, and BCG kindly offered to pay for my studies. I re-joined BCG afterwards and have subsequently worked with clients in a variety of businesses to improve performance. I enjoy the variety of my work, the insight I can bring to bear working with great clients, and the real measurable impact we have on business performance.

What made you decide to study Aeronautical Engineering at UL?

As a child I had a passion for mechanical things; I would disassemble the clock, lawnmower and many other things, reassembling them with parts left over. I was particularly interested in aircraft and racing cars, and by extension Aerodynamics. UL appealed to me because it was an opportunity to study

something I was passionate about and offered hands-on lab work and work experience. The campus facilities and lifestyle were the icing on the cake.

Are you glad you did?

I am very happy to have Aeronautical Engineering. Firstly, I enjoyed the course immensely and that makes it easy to learn. I learned a lot in the 4 years.

Secondly, the work placement gave me exposure to real-life engineering jobs and it made it easy for me to subsequently arrange a summer job in engineering.

Finally, while I do not work in the engineering sector, the course gave me a strong analytical grounding, a skill in problem-solving and complexity, and a confidence that I can crack any problem analytically; this is valuable in pretty much any job environment.

What did you most enjoy about studying at UL - academically, and also non-academically?

Three things;

- i. Interesting course content with practical lab and coursework and good teaching staff
- ii. My work placement; which helped me understand how to put what I learned to work in real-life, and
- iii. The campus environment; because everyone lives in close proximity to the college there is much more of a social buzz than in most other colleges in Ireland

Where did you do your COOP?

I did my COOP with Airbus Industrie in Toulouse. It was a fantastic experience. I was responsible for identifying what modifications were required to aircraft in response to customers' requests. For example, if a customer wanted the aircraft to fly with heavier loads, I would figure out what changes were needed to the landing gear, wheels, instrumentation etc, and how it would impact how far the plane could fly.

The experience was useful in my career because it gave me experience of working in a real professional environment, which meant I not only found it easier to get a job, but also hit the ground running much more quickly when I started that job. It also introduced me to work and travel in a foreign country which is very rewarding.

What advice would you give school-goers considering choosing Aeronautical Engineering?

If you are passionate about the engineering then you will enjoy this course. Don't get worked-up about job prospects; if you're passionate about your work you will do well. The course is very well regarded because it is seen as challenging, so if you do well on the course you will be well positioned for a job in not only the Aerospace sector, but in any sector.

What advice would you give future graduates of Aeronautical Engineering?

The jobs are out there, but you need to make yourself as sellable as possible on graduation, especially if you want to compete for the very best jobs. This is particularly true if you want to go overseas.

This goes beyond academics; get additional real work experience if you can (engineering companies, large businesses), and demonstrate achievements outside of academic life. Volunteer, undertake leadership roles (clubs, societies, teams), anything to demonstrate you go above and beyond; that you have drive and take responsibility, not just follow the academic programme. This is what employers look for.