

Roland Berger

"Europe's leading independent strategy firm"

FOUNDED 1967, Munich	EMPLOYEES ~3,000 globally	HEADQUARTERS Munich, Germany	KNOWN FOR European industrial, automotive, strategy
ROUNDS 2–3 rounds	CASE STYLE Industrial, automotive, European market focus	FIT WEIGHT High — geographic and sector motivation probed	GROUP EXERCISE Some European offices include this

WHO THEY ARE

Roland Berger was founded in Munich in 1967 and is Europe's largest strategy consulting firm, with 3,000 consultants across 50 offices in 35+ countries. The firm is fully employee-owned (all partners hold equity), making it independent from Big 4 and PE and creating a more entrepreneurial, less hierarchical culture than peers. It dominates MBB-tier strategy work in Europe, especially automotive, industrial, financial services, and public sector. Its German and European client base gives it deeper expertise in manufacturing and engineering sectors than most global competitors. The firm has material presence in Asia (particularly China) and is building North America capabilities.

WHY PEOPLE WANT TO WORK HERE

Roland Berger offers MBB-caliber strategy work with European or Asian geographic focus, without the prestige hierarchy constraint. For candidates targeting automotive, manufacturing, infrastructure, or industrial sectors, Roland Berger's client relationships and domain depth exceed other firms. The partner-ownership structure rewards long-term relationship building and intellectual craftsmanship over internal politics. Junior consultants get early client exposure and visibility to senior leadership from the start. Unlike MBB, Roland Berger's European markets and clients are central, not secondary. The firm's German roots create particular strength in industrial and automotive sectors driving energy transition and digital transformation conversations.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

Interviews run two to three rounds, each mixing fit conversation with case work. Cases are rigorous, especially in European offices competing directly with MBB, and focus on strategic and industrial topics: market entry in European industrial sectors, automotive OEM competitive response, or manufacturing restructuring. The fit conversation goes deeper than at comparable firms, exploring geographic ambitions, sector interests, and specific motivation for joining a European-headquartered firm. Candidates articulating concrete reasons beyond "I want consulting in Europe" stand out. German and central European offices often include a written case or group exercise assessing collaboration and communication alongside analytical skill.

WHAT THEY'RE REALLY EVALUATING

Roland Berger prioritizes strategic thinking quality, sector interest, and international orientation. The analytical bar is high, requiring structured logic and business judgment, but cultural fit and clear interest in European or Asian context matter equally. Candidates treating Roland Berger as an MBB backup will be flagged. Intellectual independence and comfort challenging assumptions are valued. The firm encourages consultants to form independent views and defend unconventional positions. Language skills beyond English (German, French, Mandarin) are meaningful differentiators for specific offices and practice areas. Lead with language capabilities if you have them.

STANDOUT QUESTIONS

1. Walk me through how you would develop a market entry strategy for a European industrial company entering the U.S. market.
2. Tell me about a time you developed a strategic recommendation for a client or organization. What was your approach and what did you learn?
3. Why Roland Berger, and what specifically about European or industrial consulting draws you here?
4. Describe a situation where you had to form a view on a complex topic with limited information and defend it under scrutiny.
5. Tell me about a time you worked on a cross-cultural or international team. What challenges came up and how did you handle them?
6. What sector or industry challenge do you think is most important in Europe or Asia right now, and why?

INSIDER TIPS

- Have a specific answer for why Roland Berger. Interviewers will probe this directly. Generic consulting motivation won't work: articulate something specific about European or Asian markets, industrial sectors, the partner-ownership model, or a specific practice area the firm is known for.
- Know the automotive and industrial sectors, even loosely. Roland Berger's core European client base is heavily concentrated in manufacturing, automotive, and industrial companies. Being able to discuss the energy transition, supply chain shifts, or digital transformation in these sectors will land well.
- Demonstrate international orientation. Roland Berger is a truly European firm trying to grow globally. If you have international experience, language skills, or clear interest in working outside the U.S., make that clear and specific. It's a differentiator here.
- Don't treat it as a backup to MBB. Roland Berger interviewers are experienced and will read ambivalence immediately. The candidates who get offers are those who want to be there, who see the European headquarter and industrial focus as features, not consolation prizes.