

Alekhya Nemani, Associate at Deloitte, Discusses Her Consulting Career

Deloitte.

MEMP Alumna
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With an undergraduate degree in Electronics and Communication Engineering from India, Alekhya Nemani has always been inclined towards business and entrepreneurship. This was evident as she used her passion to co-found Niskriti, a non-profit that worked towards women empowerment. With this passion in mind she chose to pursue the Master of Engineering Management degree at Duke after her undergraduate graduation. She graduated from Duke in 2013 and is currently working with Deloitte as an Associate.

“Hello, Alekhya. How have you been? Thank you so much for offering to talk to me about how MEMP has helped shaped your career.”

“Hi, Vaishnavi, I’m good. It’s my pleasure to be talking to you today about this. Having worked for CDAR in the past, it is great to see such initiatives and it gives me immense pleasure to be a part of it. How are you liking it at Duke so far?”

“The experience at Duke has been fabulous so far. It has taught me a lot over the past couple of months. How did Duke help you shape your career?”

“Duke was a great experience for me and it is one of the best things that has happened to me. The multi-cultural experience enhanced my outlook. The courses not only helped me develop my technical expertise to work in the real world but also helped me gain the much required soft skills.”

“It’s great to hear that Duke has added such great value. It would be of immense value if you could share details pertaining to your role at Deloitte.”

“I joined Deloitte as an associate immediately after graduating from Duke. While consulting involves a large amount of travel, my role is associated with 30-40% of travel. I’m at the base office and interact with my clients from here. My role is highly client-intensive and this requires me to travel to the client site occasionally. I work on several projects and I enjoy it thoroughly to say the least.”

“Having described your role, could you briefly tell me about a typical day at work?”

“I work closely with the testing team. My role requires me to work on reporting and analytics and monitor the tools used. This further requires me to troubleshoot if something is not working in the system. I spend a lot of time working on my deliverables and projects assigned to me. I have various meetings lined up in the day with the testing managers, leads, and client site testing managers. My work involves a lot of number crunching, reporting, presentations and working on Excel and reports.”

“What in your view are the most important skill sets required for a student to be successful in this career?”

“As we speak about this from the perspective of an MEMP graduate, it is important to have excellent problem solving skills. It is key to have very good communication skills as this gets most of the work done. Being able to work on Excel and data modeling will be a huge benefit for someone in this role. I believe that a package of patience, hard work and focus is essential for an individual to be successful in this stream.”

“Having spoken about the skill set required, what do you see are the challenges that a student desiring to enter this field might face?”

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“The challenges one would face are mainly related to the way one would approach any problem: being open-minded. Consulting as a field is highly project intensive and requires a high level of responsibility. It also involves a lot of travel in general, and the work pressure is considerably high. The challenge would be to get used to this new environment and adapt to it.”

“What were some of the courses you took which helped you in your role?”

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“Courses with a quantitative aspect are highly recommended to help with quantitative analysis and problem solving abilities. Marketing and Finance were in particular very helpful. Competitive Strategies helped me relate to technology. This was crucial since a person in this role will be expected to understand technology in depth and not just at the periphery. Data Mining and Project Management have helped me largely with usage of MS Excel, MS Project, and handling huge data sets.”

“I’m sure students reading the interview would benefit a great deal. Could you tell me about the work culture at Deloitte?”

“In my opinion, Deloitte is the best place to work as a fresher. We are given a lot of freedom and we are not spoon-fed or micromanaged. This gives a huge scope for self-development and helps build a sense of responsibility. Every new hire has a mentor in the organization that helps them settle into the organization and guides them when required. The teams are very helpful, approachable, and excellent to work with. The organization is flat and there is no hierarchy, which makes things transparent and employees approachable and amicable.”

“Alekhya, thanks a lot for sharing a lot about your career in detail. Where do you see yourself professionally in the next five years, as this would prove to be a source of inspiration for the current students?”

“I like my job and I see myself pursuing a career in consulting for the next two years. I would want to explore consulting in a product-based company to understand their business functionality. I would like to have a startup of my own in a couple of years.”

“Thanks a lot for your time, Alekhya, it was great talking to you. Hope you have a great week ahead.”

“It was my pleasure talking to you. I wish all the students the best in their future endeavors.” ■