

Research Analyst Vekram Jenarthanan

F R O S T &
S U L L I V A N

MEMP Alumnus 2008

Talks About His Work for Frost & Sullivan

By Shreevaishnavi Venugopalan



Vekram, an Electrical and Electronics Engineer major from Guindy College of Engineering, India, decided to pursue MEM at Duke right after his undergraduate graduation. He worked as a Data Analyst with Mu Sigma after completing MEM for about two years. He switched to working for PCD Partners, a start up, as a project manager and then moved to India to join Frost & Sullivan as a market research analyst wherein he performs market analysis of the electronics and security markets in South Asia and the Middle East.

“Hello, Vekram. It’s great to connect with you. Hope I am not disturbing you too much on a Sunday evening for you.”

“Hi, Vaishnavi, not at all. It is great to be talking to you. How has Duke treated you? Do you like the program?”

“The experience at Duke has been fabulous so far. The program is definitely a treat. It has taught me a lot over the past couple of months. And the first experience at the Career Fair was both good and challenging.”

“Good to hear. How can I help?”

“It would be great if you could share more about your role.”

“Well, as a market research analyst, it’s important to be able to rank the market on parameters and create a model as robust as possible. The workload largely depends on the number and kind of projects. So while I was working on two consulting projects on customized market research, the work involved calls with clients in the morning half of the day. The second half would be predominantly research, which is silo-based. I make it a point to interact with my colleagues working on projects related to a different industry as this generates ideas, and also to understand a market that could potentially affect the industry I am working on. This enlarges the knowledge base and helps brainstorm solutions. I get to pace my work and meet deadlines as it is not extensively team dependent.”

“Thank you for the details! While performing a market research, what are the essential core skills and soft skills?”

“Great negotiation skills, being open minded, and being good with numbers are the key skills that are essential in this role. A go-getter attitude could prove beneficial at an entry level position.”

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

“The challenges one would face are mainly related to the way one would approach a problem, being open minded. It is not too different from a marketing case study. It is important to bring a different perspective to the table. Being open to a new experience helps in analyzing a problem statement better.”

“What could students currently doing their MEM do different to tackle these challenges? Also, what were some of the courses you took which helped you at your role?”

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“Being an avid reader is an essential attribute of a market research analyst. I urge students who are interested in making a career in market research to read a lot, and business reports in particular could be more useful. The practicum I did with Parsons on Market Research helped me gain a perspective and deepen my skills required for this field of work. Courses such as Marketing, Commercializing Technological Innovations, Product Management, and Supply Chain Management were helpful as they provided insight into product management, product life cycle, market dynamics and the value chain of an industry.”

“I’m sure students will find this as a useful tip. Could you tell me more about the work culture at Frost & Sullivan?”

“The work is not too intensive. The organization is flexible and this helps me pace my work. The work gets a little hectic only around deadlines. We also gain a lot of exposure due to a substantial face time with the directors. The organization is not driven by hierarchy and the office typically has people working in open cubicles.”

“Vekram, thanks a lot for the detailed description. Where do you see yourself professionally in the next 5 years, as this would prove to be a source of inspiration for the current students.”

“I like my job. It keeps me on my toes. I am looking at making a career in market research and exploring other industries in the same work space.”

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