



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2016 Newsletter

### How to Hire and Work With a Management/Business Consultant

If you are thinking about hiring a consultant for the first time, the following information may be useful to ensure that you get the right consultant and to get the most benefit from working with that consultant. First, the following gives tips for hiring the right consultant:

- Hire a consultant that has demonstrated experience in working with other construction companies. You want your consultant to hit the ground running and not have to spend time educating him/her about the construction industry.
- Hire a consultant that specializes in dealing with the same issues that you want resolved. I don't recommend hiring a "jack-of-all-trades", or an advisor that does business consulting on the side to fill in the slow periods.
- Even though you may be hiring a consulting firm, you are really hiring the individual or team that will work directly with you. Most consultants work autonomously even if they are with a firm. Make sure your consultant is the right one for you.
- Successful consultants understand the consulting steps necessary to achieve superior results. Resist the temptation to skip important consulting steps to try to save on the fee. Your fee may be lower, but so may be your results.

Once you find the right consultant for you, there is a "best way" to work with that consultant. The following are some tips in working with your consultant:

- Talk with your consultant frequently and tell him/her what is on your mind, especially if you are not totally happy with the way the consulting work is unfolding. It is relatively easy to adjust the consulting process midstream, but difficult to go back and fix a project that is completed.
- Make it easy for the consultant to work with your company. Ask your key people to be accessible to the consultant and return phone calls and emails in a reasonable time frame. If the consultant needs information, get that information to them quickly.
- Appoint a key employee in your organization to be the champion of the consulting work and make that employee the primary contact for the consultant. It is best if this champion is the CEO, but it can be another senior manager.
- If you express even the slightest dissatisfaction with the consulting work in front of your employees, they will assume the worst. Staying positive will most likely result in positive results.
- Don't introduce new key employees late into the consulting process. I once had a company hire a new HR Manager almost at the end of a consulting project, and the new HR Manager rightly wanted to have significant input. It is best to hold off on performing the consulting work for a while if you are in the market to hire a new senior manager.

### Article Spotlight



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### A Word from Rick Sharpnack



Companies that utilize consultants on a regular basis know these tips well and probably have their own list of tips. Companies that have not used consultants in the past should keep these tips readily available. The best consultant for your particular situation may not be someone that you currently know or currently use for other services. Certain situations require specialized skills and expertise that can only be obtained by performing a specific type of consulting. As I always say, it takes two things to achieve superior results from a consulting project, a good consultant and a good client.