



Consultant Role

Orientation

"More" Details

Overview

Understanding your role as a consultant is foundational for you gaining awareness about what kinds of client relationships you tend to form, what alternatives exist, and the advantages and disadvantages of each role.

We invite you to reflect on your actual client relationships--not how you would like them to be, or how they should be, but on what they are now.

The 3 Basic Role Orientations



Expert



Pair of Hands



Collaborative

Flawless Consulting

Exploring your *Consultant Role Orientation* is a part of a larger, immersive learning experience available to you at a Flawless Consulting Workshop. We invite you to learn more about how you can grow your business partnering skills. You too can learn this proven system that over 1 millions professionals have learned over the last 40-years to increase your influence at work and get your expertise used.

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Expert

Scenario

The Client, Chris, encounters a problem in the roll-out of a new Human Capital Management (HCM) system and wants it resolved quickly. Unsure of the technical aspects of software systems, Chris calls in the "Expert" and says: "I don't have the time nor the inclination to deal with this right now. You're the expert; find out what's wrong, and fix it."

Role Description

In this role, the "Expert" is given control to use their experience and expertise to perform a particular task. The "Expert" diagnoses the problem, defines the problem, designs solution, and decides how to fix the problem without Chris' involvement.

Two-way communication here is limited. The consultant initiates and the client responds. The consultant expects and is expected to initiate communication in a question-and-answer mode.

Peter Block

Role Evaluation

Advantages

- It saves time and makes disagreements unlikely
- You control the technical aspects of the project
- Decisions are made quickly

Disadvantages

- The Consultant's technical expertise may not be enough to solve problems
- Managers/Others may not take the recommended actions
- Client is mostly inactive



Pair of Hands

Scenario

The Client, Chris, encounters a problem in the roll-out of a new Human Capital Management (HCM) system and wants it resolved quickly. Certain about what needs to happen to fix the issue, Chris calls in the "Pair of Hands" and says: *"I don't have the time nor the inclination to deal with this issue. I have examined the deficiencies and have prepared a list of things that need to be done. I want you to get these things done immediately."*

Role Description

In this role, the manager retains full control while the consultant is instructed and expected to apply their expertise to implement the manager's action plan. The "Pair of Hands" takes a passive role, responding to the manager's requests without question, as the manager makes ongoing decisions, specifies changes, and judges performance from a distance.

Role Evaluation

Advantages

- It makes the consulting simple and straightforward
- Use specialized expertise to get things done
- No responsibility over the goals, action plans or results

Disadvantages

- In the extreme, this position invites poor treatment from others
- Dependent on the manager's ability to accurately identify the problem and create an effective action plan



Collaborative

Scenario

The Client, Chris, encounters a problem in the roll-out of a new Human Capital Management (HCM) system and wants it resolved quickly. Chris recognizes that the problem involves technical issues and human interaction issues. Chris says: *"I want you to help me solve this problem. I'm going to be actively involved in data gathering and analysis, setting goals and developing action plans. You and I will share responsibility for success or failure."*

Role Description

In this role, the "collaborative" consultant enters a partnering relationship by merging specialized knowledge with the client's organizational knowledge to effectively solve the problem. The consultant shares responsibility with the manager for diagnosing the issues, designing solutions, and delivering results.

Role Evaluation

Advantages

- Consultant helps broaden the manager's competence to implement future action plans
- Decision-making is based on mutual respect and agreement
- Communication is bi-lateral and promotes problem-solving

Disadvantages

- More disagreements emerge
- Questions and dialogue delay decision-making

A Source of Confusion

You may not like the results of the CRO quiz. The quiz may have identified a role that you don't agree with, and this might cause some confusion.

You might even blame your organization for forcing you into a particular role. You may think: *"I only act this way because they expect me to."*

But, although organizational culture is factor in establishing behavioral roles, we submit that the role you play is *your own choice* as well.

You play a part in choosing your role based on your habits, beliefs, your sense of caution, and/or your desire for approval.

"As you consult in a varitety of situations, it helps to become aware of the role you typically assume, and to be able to identify situations where this will help or hinder your performance."

Peter Block

Choose the Collaborative Role

Collaboration with the client doesn't mean denying your expertise. That specialized knowledge is the reason for you being there. Instead we submit that collaboration merges both *technical expertise* and *human-relational expertise* for a successful consulting engagement.

Technical

- Software Development
- Organizational Design
- Training Design
- Project Management

Relational

- Planning how to inform the organization
- Deciding who is involved in data collection
- Interpreting the results of the diagnosis
- Deciding how to make a change



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WAIT!

There's More...

The Consultant Roles are one small portion of our *Flawless Consulting Workshops* where you can learn a proven system for navigating even the toughest challenges of getting your expertise used at work.

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CONSULTING