



HIRING A CONSULTANT

The questions to ask and the answers to examine





SO, YOU'RE HIRING A CONSULTANT

You recognize that you need an external voice filled with industry knowledge and perspective to guide you through some aspect of your organization's growth. Choosing someone who will be able to guide you is challenging. What range of skills should you be looking for?



1 CHOOSE A FACILITATOR, NOT A SPEAKER

If you are going to ask for an offsite meeting check in on their ability to facilitate versus speak. Offsites are significant investments for your organization, so choose someone who can offer experience while facilitating conversation.

The adage ‘Culture eats strategy for lunch’ means that your culture is going to impact any decisions or direction you choose to go. Having a consultant who focuses on implementation through your culture is your best partner for long term success. **Be clear that you understand the process your consultant will use to create steps for lasting implementation.**

2 CHOOSE A PARTNER

Consider that you are choosing a partner to guide you through a process to a desired outcome. **Look for someone who follows their clients through implementation, builds their contracts to include progress checks and optional additional components as they see beyond the scope you are suggesting.**

3 CHOOSE SUCCESS

Be clear as to how they measure success, ask for examples of projects like yours, as well as organizations that are similar in culture, size, or history. Check in on where those previous clients are now with initiatives that are similar to yours. A good consultant has good relationships with past clients and can easily speak to the status and progress of past efforts.



4 CHOOSE RESPONSIVENESS

One component of great client service is responsiveness. **Engage your consultant to understand their commitment to returning emails, phone calls, or providing updates and reports.** Does it align with the commitment you make to your clients? Does it align with your desire for this project?

5 CHOOSE AGILITY

Another important component is agility. **Sometimes in the process of developing an initiative it is discovered that a different path is needed.** What examples of recognizing a different need and making the shift can be provided to you?

Success today requires the agility and drive to constantly rethink, reinvigorate, react, and reinvent.

—Bill Gates

6 CHOOSE FOCUS

What is the range of clients this consultant is willing to work with? In other words, do they have a specialty that is their only focus, or do they work within one industry exclusively? **Ideally, you'll choose a partner who offers you the appropriate focus**—whether you require someone with depth in your industry or specialization in your initiative is up to you—so be clear when you start your search to achieve the best outcome.



7 CHOOSE A MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL MATCH

What criteria exist for the consultant to fire a client? Have they terminated a client relationship in the past? **A good interview process is a matchmaking opportunity for both you and the consultant.** Mistakes happen, and bad matches exist, so what can you learn from understanding when a client relationship didn't work for this consultant?

CONCLUSION

A partner in your progress means a relationship that is built through good communication, shared values, and commitment to the outcome. As you interview consultants listen for their values, and their ability to understand yours.

Our relationships, whether business or personal are nourished and shaped by the commitment we express through our actions.

—Dr. Steve Maraboli

CONSULTANT QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe your facilitation skills? Your consulting style?

2. What are your top skills that will help our organization?

3. How do you measure success? Provide an example.

4. What level of responsiveness should we expect from you? And, in what modality?

5. Where does accountability fit into this assignment?

6. What is an ideal project/client for you?

7. How do you handle a change in scope or a needed change that your client doesn't recognize?

8. What criteria do you have for firing a client? Provide an example, if you have one.



MEET JUDY

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Judy earned her Bachelor's Degree in Accounting from Huntingdon College, and her Master's Degree in Sports Management from the University of Richmond. In addition to her Professional Coaching Certification, she is a licensed provider for the suite of emotional intelligence tools provided by Personal Strengths Publishing, and also for the Living Your Vision process. She is a Certified Legal Manager. She resides in San Diego, CA.

HEALTH Judy Hissong was a professional athlete and has been an ACE Certified Personal Trainer since 1993. She has designed personal training programs for professional athletes and for business professionals. She writes articles on the importance of health and exercise to maintain productive workload and provide work/life balance. She has been a presenter at many international conferences on the topic of work/life balance and stress management in the workplace. She is an Accredited Life Coach working with individuals who know they can achieve more (personally, professionally, or both) and want to overcome their obstacles to success. She works with teams (athletic and corporate) who want to break through their current performance ceiling to achieve the next level.

BUSINESS With over 15 years in leadership roles inside professional service organizations, Judy provides a wealth of knowledge and expertise in leadership, emotional intelligence, and successful business planning. She is a sought after speaker and facilitator on topics of emotional intelligence, strategic and long range planning, leadership development and accountability, and job coaching. She writes articles on the importance of leadership and strategic planning in the success of business, and has been an instructor for the University of California San Diego in their Certificated Program for Paralegals.

LIFE This unique combination of business and wellness led Judy to create Nesso Strategies. Her energy is contagious, and her message is powerful and simple. She partners with organizations to develop profit-oriented strategies based on her business acumen and her team-oriented approach. She is here to guide individuals toward balance in their workdays, and their personal lives. Now that makes sense and cents.

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader. —John Quincy Adams

Bachelors Degree in Accounting | Masters Degree in Sports Management | Certified Professional Coach | Former Professional Athlete | Licensed Provider of Emotional Intelligence Tools | Certified Living Your Vision Coach | Certified Legal Manager | ACE Certified Personal Trainer | ICF Professional Certified Coach

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