



Hein & Nielsen
Consultancy and Coaching

Internal Process Consulting

- making your expertise have impact

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How do we ensure that our expertise have impact?

This question has raised other questions to explore, like - what is it (really) that make any organizational project successful? Questions like these have been the orientation for my work of process consulting in more than 25 years, and interestingly enough, have not yet resulted in one clear answer?

One of the pioneers of applying internal consulting is Peter Block and the subtitle to his well-known book "Flawless Consulting" is "*getting your expertise used*". Not getting your expertise used is probably one of the main sources to frustration as it leads to loss of job engagement and motivation in general work satisfaction.

However, what I have identified is, that our expertise and your capabilities can be used constructively and have a positive impact in the development and implementation of organisational projects, when a few certain conditions are nurtured and sustained.

Condition 1 - **People want to be engaged in change.**

We see it so often. Every organizational project to be developed and implemented is initiated with the best intentions of helping and supporting our organisation and improving the quality and efficiency of our work.

However, some of these good intentions are stranded with staff hesitance and unwillingness to engage into the project. When we analyse the do's and don'ts of why organizational projects are struggling, we continuously identify the overall challenge is due to the fact the projects represent *a change in the organisation* - and often a change that relates to our daily work life of "how we are used to do things..."

The one key success factor in "organisational change" is, *the more I am part of the organizational change, the more I will accept, and ultimately support and be an ambassador of, the change in the organization*. Translated into organizational projects it means, the more we engage, involve and communicate with the internal stakeholder of any organisational projects the more likely it is that we will experience more success in project development and implementation.

Condition 2 - **Pro-ject is a result of a Pre-ject.**

Knowing that all projects are subject to the nature of change in the organization then the second condition of *every pro-ject is a result of a pre-ject* becomes important. If we understand that the preparation phase (pre-ject) - with an exploration of need, purpose and objectives - is crucial to the further development and implementation of the project, then we will often realize that we need to give more resources to the first divergent phase of all projects.

The birth of a project has all good intentions of the initiator of the project, and most often these intentions are projected onto the users and benefiteres of the projects assuming they have, and see, the same intentions of why this project need to be developed and implemented. A necessary step to enhance the success of the project will very often be to collaborate with the

impacted part of the organisations (end-users and benefiterers) in a project's life with a level of engagement that more reflect a role of co-creators of the project.

In short, the end-user and benefiterers of project need to be involved already in the divergent explorative pre-ject phase serving early-stage project development, and not only in the convergent project phase of roll-out and implementation.

Condition 3 – Projects need the role of a process consultant.

Understanding process consulting is also to understand the role as a process consultant. There are two broad roles an (internal) consultant can play, either as content expert or as a process facilitator. A consultant acts as a content expert when he/she is asked to deliver specific answers to highly complicated problems or questions. On the other hand, a process facilitator focuses on the processes necessary to identify problems and how problems can be solved. This process requires the active participation of the end-users/benefiterers in the problem-solving activities.

The model of process consulting focuses on the basic assumption that problems will be solved more effectively and be more sustainable if the organisation – staff and managers - learns to solve the problems itself and thereby integrate problem-identification (pre-ject phase) as part of the process

Process consulting is based on the foundation that consultation focuses on a supportive relationship between client and consultant. There is a mutual nature in which the consultant works *with* and not *for* the (internal) client and encourages the client and consultant to act in equal partnership.

So, to conclude – the approach of internal process consulting can be successful applied when certain conditions are nurtured and sustained. Both the approach as internal process consultant and the needed conditions can be translated into competences that all parts in organisational projects can learn and grow by knowledge, as skills and with a certain mindset.

To grow the process consulting competence, we will focus on the nature of organisational change, the building blocks of process design, and shifting our role from (only) delivering content expertise in concrete projects to (also) using our expertise to facilitate process of collaborative solutions.

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