



HYDER & ASSOCIATES MANAGEMENT REPORT

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CONSULTANTS: Well-Chosen They're a Boon to Organizations

Hiring a consultant doesn't have to be scary, expensive or lots of work. I know, because I have both hired consultants and work as one. If you want to learn how to find good consultants who will help you get the results you need, read on.

In my experience, there are 5 essential steps to take when choosing and using consultants.

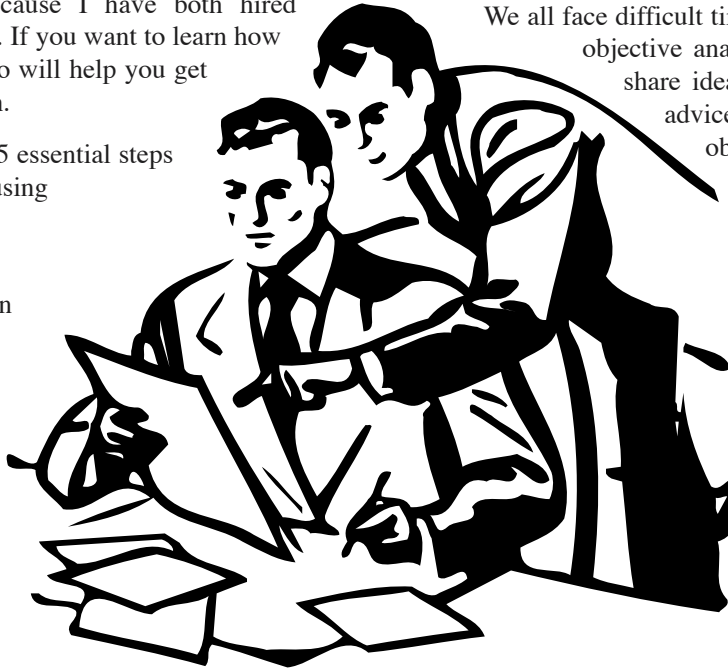
1. Discern your needs
2. Give yourself permission
3. Pick the best
4. Manage the process
5. Assess the value

DISCERN YOUR NEEDS

First, ask yourself, what is the problem that needs to be addressed?

Answering this question helps you clearly state what needs to be done. Only when this is accomplished can you proceed. Your reasons for hiring a consultant could include:

- **You don't know how.** A consultant offers *skills and expertise you don't have* in house.
- **You don't have the time.** A consultant, guided by experience and expertise, can *get the job done more quickly*.
- **You can't assign it to anyone in-house.** A consultant can work on *confidential projects*.
- **You need an outside perspective.** You might need a consultant when you are looking for someone to *see the situation objectively*, without the filters and preconceived notions that internal people may have.
- **You need everyone to participate.** Using a consultant will enable all staff to fully participate in a process such as strategic planning, without one of them having to *wear a facilitator's or coordinator's hat* too.



GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION

We all face difficult times when there is no new input, no objective analysis, no one to talk to, no one to share ideas with, and no one who can give advice based on experience and objective observation. It is exactly those items when we need a guide, someone who has been there; done that, to help us make the best decisions and lead us to reach our goals.

PICK THE BEST

Cast a wide net. The best ways to find a good consultant include:

- **Ask around** – word of mouth is still *the best* way to get information on which consultants have done good work in the past.
- **Rehire a known consultant** who has done a similar or equally difficult job or ask a consultant you trust for a referral.
- **Use lists of qualified experts** – you can get these from professional organizations or by doing a search on the Internet.

continued on pages 3

INSIDE

<i>Compliance Corner – Confronting Harassment Charges</i>	2
<i>Slow Down Your Listening!</i>	2
<i>Wisdom of the Ages</i>	2
<i>Plan Your Week in 30 Minutes</i>	3
<i>Sharon Hyder Answers Your Mgmt. Questions</i> . . .	3
<i>Trends – Records Management and Knowledge Management</i>	4

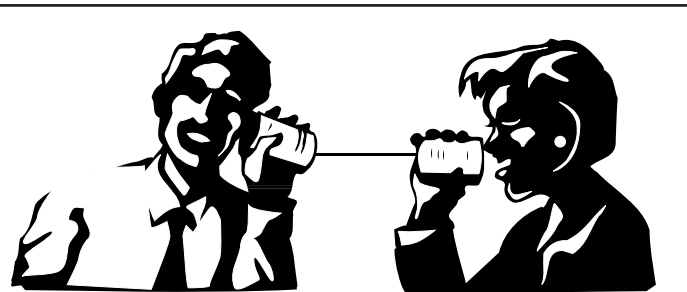


COMPLIANCE CORNER

CONFRONTING HARASSMENT CHARGES

How a manager investigates a sexual harassment complaint may determine the outcome of the lawsuit, if there is one. Here are points to remember when one of your employees comes to you with charges of harassment.

1. Take *every* complaint seriously.
2. Contact Human Resources immediately to review company policies.
3. Remember: You're not a judge or jury. The manager's job is to collect the facts.
4. Keep your investigation confidential.
5. As you investigate, document everything: memos, conversations, reports, etc.
6. Evaluate yourself: Do you have any bias about the complaint?
7. Don't take the easy way out. Some managers solve harassment problems by transferring the person who made the complaint. This doesn't serve the accused or the victim, and can lead to serious legal trouble.
8. Do the follow-up: Make sure the harassment has stopped, and that the employee who complained is comfortable in the workplace.



SLOW DOWN YOUR LISTENING!

How many times do you find your mind wandering when someone is talking to you? No, you're not abnormal. And you don't have attention deficit disorder.

Most people speak at an average rate of about 120 words a minute. But most people can listen about four times faster. So your mind fills in the gaps by thinking of other things. Be aware of this and *slow down your listening*. Force yourself to stay focused, so that you can really comprehend everything the speaker is saying.

WISDOM OF THE AGES

If you gathered 100 experienced managers together and asked for their advice, they probably wouldn't say much about "competing value models" or "temporal rhythms". Instead, this is what you would hear:

Don't be afraid of the phrase, "I don't know." If you don't know the answer, don't try to bluff. If you're at fault, take the blame. If you're wrong, apologize. A wise person once said, "If you always tell the truth, you never have to remember anything."

Never Gossip. And if someone wants to gossip with you, politely say you're not interested.

This corporate adage rings true:

When someone gossips, two careers are hurt – the person being talked about, and the person doing the talking.

No task is beneath you. Don't think you are above anything. Be the good example and pitch in – especially if the job is one that nobody wants to do.

Share the credit whenever possible. Managers who spread credit around look much stronger than those who take all the credit themselves.

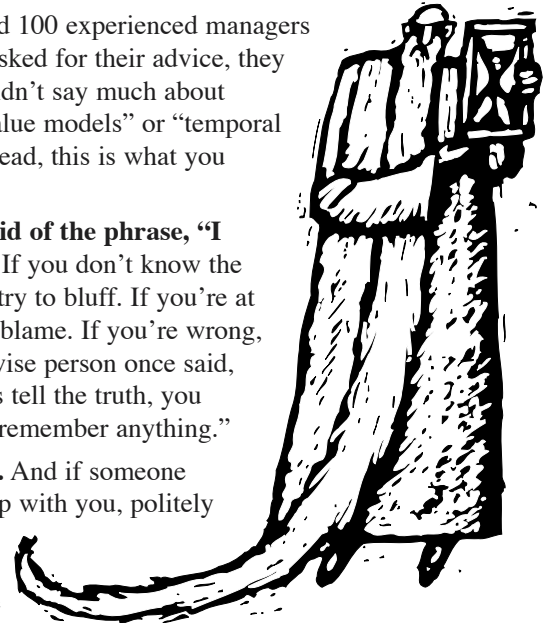
Ask for help. If you think you're in over your head, you are. Before it gets out of hand, ask someone for help – most people enjoy giving a hand. Besides saving yourself from embarrassment, you'll make a friend and an ally.

Keep your salary to yourself. Discussing salary is a no-win proposition. Either you'll be upset because someone is making more than you, or someone will be upset with you.

When you don't like someone, don't let it show, especially if you outrank them. Never burn bridges or offend others as you move ahead.

Let it go. What should not happen, often does: You weren't given the project you wanted, you were passed over for the promotion you deserved. Be gracious and diplomatic...and move on. Harboring a grudge won't advance your career.

When you're right, don't gloat. The only time you should ever use the phrase "I told you so" is if someone says to you: "You were right. I really could succeed at that project."



FAMOUS QUOTE

People can alter their lives by altering their attitudes.

— William James

PLAN YOUR WEEK IN 30 MINUTES

Experts say that you need only 30 minutes to plan your entire week. How to do it? Follow the OATS formula.



O: Objectives.

What results do you want to see by the end of the week? Write them down and rank them.

A: Activities. What do you have to do to achieve your goals? List the necessary activities, and put them in sequence.

T: Time. How much time will each activity require? To plan realistically, allow yourself more time than you think you will actually need. This gives you flexibility if unexpected problems develop.

S: Schedule. Look at your calendar and decide when you can do each activity. Most people underestimate the power of a schedule, but you won't get anything accomplished, if you don't schedule time to do it.

CONSULTANTS

from page 1

MANAGE THE PROCESS

Make sure you have a contract with the consultant. A contract clearly states who is responsible for what. A contract is a two-way street. You expect the consultant to do a good job, produce acceptable results, and complete the work on schedule. The consultant expects to be paid on time for the work he or she does.

ASSESS THE VALUE

When the consultant has finished his/her work for you, it is useful to review the whole experience. Look at both the accomplishments and problem areas.

THE BOTTOM LINE IS: Did the consultant help the organization solve the problem? Is your organization better off as a result of the services of the consultant? Has the organization learned a new skill? In conclusion, set your expectations at a realistic level. A consultant is simply another human being with experience different from yours. Don't expect miracles. Expect that over the long term, advice from a good consultant will help you make the right decisions more times than not; will help you take short cuts rather than reinventing the wheel; will improve your chances for success; and will make your job much easier!

SHARON HYDER, CMC, CRM ANSWERS YOUR MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS

One of my most valued employees has a hot temper. This person flew off the handle and quit. I'm not sure if I handled the situation properly. Do you have any suggestions?

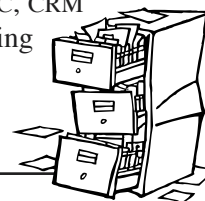
When an employee shouts "I quit!" and stomps out of your office only to call the next day asking to return to work, what are your options? Here are some ways to approach the situation without burning any bridges behind you.

- **Allow a cooling-off period.** Give a day of grace to let everybody calm down and rethink their positions. Don't take any irreversible action such as issuing a final paycheck, until at least 24 hours have passed.
- **Ask a neutral third party** to call the employee at home and confirm the resignation, or find out what happened. A manager from another department, or someone from Human Resources, may be a good person to do this.
- **Be open for requests to return.** People sometimes say or do things they don't really mean. Don't let your ego get in the way of a sincere "I'm sorry" and a genuine desire to return to work.
- **Find the facts.** Was the employee having a bad day? Are there other factors that might have caused an overly emotional reaction to a specific situation? Ask the employee for his or her side of the story.
- **Maintain discipline.** If you do let the employee come back to work, be sure to state firmly that walking out is not an acceptable way to solve problems.



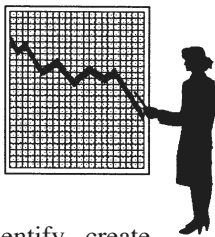
DOES YOUR COMPANY HAVE A COMPLIANT RECORDS PROGRAM?

CONTACT SHARON HYDER, CMC, CRM
for information regarding implementing
a compliant records management
program for your organization.



Trends...

Records Management and Knowledge Management



Knowledge management (KM) is a range of practices used by organizations to identify, create, represent, and distribute knowledge for reuse, awareness, and learning. Electronic records repositories are a fund of organizational knowledge, a positive asset contributing to organizational efficiency and productivity. Following are two examples of effective use of records for KM in a U.S. federal regulatory agency.

1. **Public Information Resource.** A U.S. federal regulatory agency implemented an integrated EDM/ERM system in 2000. The agency maintains an aggressive public information dissemination policy. The records repository in the EDM/ERM system is the primary source for web content on the agency's public website, providing access to all image and text documents the agency has made public since 1999. The holdings are vast, and each day several hundred new documents appear. The agency did not initially plan the

system for KM. KM evolved as the agency realized the valuable knowledge assets resident in its electronic records repository and applied those assets to web content management.

2. **Legal Knowledge Base.** The agency's EDM/ERM system also functions as an indispensable knowledge base for agency attorneys when they are writing or revising regulations applicable to the agency's regulated industry. Upon receipt of a regulation writing assignment, an attorney consults the electronic records in the EDM/ERM system. The system's full-text search capability enables the attorney quickly to retrieve all materials relevant to the assignment, its regulatory history, key agency decisions pertinent to the task, and information on industry facilities where the problem the regulation is to address has arisen. Virtually all of the research resources needed to complete the assignment resides in the agency's EDM/ERM system. Attorneys may know that the system performs records management, but they first think of it as a rich knowledge resource.

Relationships such as the foregoing between records management and KM deserve far greater attention from RIM professionals than they presently receive.



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MANAGEMENT REPORT

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