

The concept and nature of management consultancy assignment

[Business](#), [Management](#)



A management consultancy can be defined, with regard to any business organization, as the process of providing with expert advice towards betterment of the organization such that higher value may be created for the organization. The main purpose of consultancy is to improve the performance of the organization as well as organizational members.

While there are several methods that can be applied for this purpose, the most important role is that of the consultant's who comes into direct communication with the organization and its members and provides with the accessory advices and recommendations for improvement (Mahoney and Markham 2013). Management consultancy is one of the most essential and growing feature associated with business organizations. It is considered as most important for knowledge and growth of the firms.

Consultants try to help organizations by translating principle ideas related to management and business practices thereby helping them to improve upon their performances (Sturdy et al 2009). I, being appointed as the trainee management consultant with one of the largest consultancy firms in the UK, would present in this report, an understanding of the concept and nature of management consultancy focusing on two broad aspects related to the process of consultancy, the role of the consultant discussing my strengths and needs for development for the purpose of consultancy, and presenting a plan for development of consultancy skills.

The Concept and Nature of Management Consultancy: The process of consultancy has long been into existence. In relation to business organizations, the process mainly includes offering advices to business firms

such that they can utilize their available resources and human labor towards more effective performance and achievement of organizational goals.

Consultancy represents a source of guidance for the businesses. Particularly in the present times, business processes and practices have become highly complex owing to globalization and increased competitions.

Hence it often becomes difficult for the organizations to deal with different challenges and issues effectively. It is at this point that management consultancy enables a clear understanding of the business environment and hence prepares the organizations towards effective performance and to deal with all challenges prevailing in the competitive world of business (Crotchet and Lancaster 2012). The use of external consultancy is based on some fees that are charged by the consultancy firms and the consultants.

The cost of external consultant is found to be more than the cost of internal analyst (Eva, Handle and Ralston 2010). However the benefits of depending upon an external consultant include the following: Broad range of expertise is obtained from external consultants through transfer of skills from the external consultant to the internal staff of the firm (Eva, Handle and Ralston 2010). The internal role of business gets developed with use of external consultancy (Eva, Helene Ana Ralston 2010).

In strengths and weaknesses of the organization can be analyzed by the consultant relating them to the existing business environment, and hence advise the organization accordingly towards developing its business practices towards improvement (Eva, Handle and Ralston 2010). The Process

of Management Consultancy: Life cycle model is an essential and effective model depended upon in most cases for practicing the process of management consultancy (Appendix A).

According to this model or theory, the consultancy process is considered to have different phases of organizational performance that involve starting from the beginning, improving upon the existing practices, and developing the firm. The different steps of the process include: Thought leadership; development of services; targeting clients; making contacts and communications; managing business proposals; defining researches; collecting data; analysis of information; projecting the plans; delivery of projects; withdrawal; project reviewing; and follow up of the process (Mahoney and Markham 2013).

It largely depends upon the needs and demands of the client organization, based on which a consultant can prepare for the different measures that he would recommend to the organization for its development. Two main aspects in relation to the process of consultancy include: (1) The organizational situation depending on which the organization demands from the consultant; and (2) The relationship of the consultant and the client organization. These two aspects will be discussed at this point of the research.

Organizational Situation and Demands of the Organization: In order to effectively recommend an organization for development, through the process of consultancy, it is extremely essential to undergo thorough research studies on both the internal and external environment of the

organization to analyze the organizational condition based on which further improvement measures may be recommended upon. The financial condition of the organization, its performances in the stock markets, its market share, its workforce, and working environment are some of the factors that need to be analyzed effectively.

It is highly essential to determine the current effectiveness of an organization to plan for its future. Measures such as SWOT and PESTLE analysis would also be obtained as necessary for this purpose. In short, a consultant needs to have complete idea about the present condition of the organization to be able to advise them with expert measures for development (Ex 2002). It is also demanded and expected by the organizations from their consultants that they would possess extensive skills of research and communication to understand the situation of the organization and develop them towards betterment and achievement of goals.

It is also an organization's demand that consultants should be flexible enough to understand the problems and challenges that the organization is encountered with or they might encounter in the near future and hence prepare them effectively for the future. As demanded by organizations, management consultants are expected to be highly effective in research methods, data analysis, flexibility, and credibility. Integrated services are expected from the consultants by business firms (Ex 2002; Adams and Zinnia 2011).

Client-consultant Relationship: In order for the process of consultancy to be effective for a business organization, the relationship of the consultant with the client organization is also an essential factor. Consulting assignments or projects may be short or long term depending on the needs of the organization. Over time a consultant tends to gain greater knowledge and understanding of the processes and performances of an organization with research and analysis.

This is essential as with greater understanding, the consultant builds a stronger relationship with the organization and is more effective in providing the organization with improved advice. There are several factors such as the business objectives, the values and principles of the business, the management capabilities, and so on, that are essential for the consultant to learn in order to be effective. The relationship of the client and the consultant is built gradually and hence is an essential part of the process of consultancy.

The relationship also focuses on the responsibility of the consultant to ensure that his advice is concerned towards the benefit of the organization (Ex 2002; Anderson 2011). The Role of the Consultant in Management Consultancy: The key role of a management consultancy involves advising the organization with expertise and business practices that should enable improvement of the business and its members and their performances. A consultant plays the role of an adviser, educator, coach, and leader for the organization.

He advises the organization and guides it towards how it can improve upon its processes. He educates the organizational members towards development of their skills and hence improves their quality of performances. He coaches and mentors the organizational members, trying to learn about their individual needs and expectation, meeting which is an essential step in improvement of organization. He is also the leader leading the organization and its team towards realizing the steps of improvement and hence implementing them (Sadler 2001).

Effectiveness of Consultant: A consultant can be said to be effective if he can fulfill the expectations and demands of the organization that he is consulting. In order to be effective he needs to be empathetic and hence listen and understand the needs of the organization and its members. He needs to be effective in conducting thorough research on data available for the organization and hence analyzing them to realize the condition of the organization. He needs to be non-judgmental. He should be fully involved and concentrated considering his responsibility sincerely.

He should involve all the members of the organization in the process to make and implement the process effectively. Most importantly, he would be effective if he follows a positive approach and encourages the organizational members towards positivist and enhancement (Kohl' 2013). Analysis of My Strengths and Needs for Development: As I am the appointed management consultant, it would hence be essential to have an idea and analysis on my strengths and weaknesses that would also be required to be developed in order to deal with the process of consultancy effectively.

The major strengths and weaknesses that I would note for myself are:

Strengths: Good communication skills Adaptable to new environment

Empathetic towards understanding the needs and demands of people

Weaknesses: Lesser work experience As far as the work of the consultancy is concerned, I would say that my strengths are in line with the needs of an effective management consultancy process. I shall be able to undertake ten means at ten organizations at a time deal with them and analyze the condition of the organization assisting them with the advice helpful for their improvement.

My communication skills being good, would enable improved relationship with the organizations such that my understanding of their problems and needs for development can be more effectively established. However, my experience is less and hence I would be required to develop my skills such that I can perform my role of consultant effectively. For this purpose a personal development plan has been planned that I would follow to enhance upon my skills of consultancy and hence prove to be effective in consultancy.

Personal Development Plan: The first thing that I would be following for my personal development would include a self-made questionnaire that I would answer to determine the areas where exactly I am weak and hence would require development. This would include questions such as what would be my contribution to the team, what my shortcomings are, my approach, my levels and causes of satisfaction, and related questions.

The six steps that I would follow for self-development include: Considering my skills, strengths and weaknesses; Decide areas to be developed; Create plan; Discuss the plan with others for opinions; Implement the plan; and Review the plan (Tattoos and Pullman 2005). For the plan to improve my skills, I would follow training, particularly being trained by my seniors, following my leaders and managers of the consultancy firm that I am associated with. I would follow their practices, question and clear doubts with them to learn how to perform the activities of consultancy and hence assist organizations effectively.

While my qualification would be obtained through education and learning, which will prove to be my theoretical basis; on the other hand, my practical lessons would be obtained from the organization under which I am working, undertaking classes of training and practices such that I can develop upon my skills of communication, understanding, analyzing business organizations, and consulting. SMART Plan for Consultancy: As could be obtained from the research, the SMART plans that can be obtained for effective consultancy include the following: Understanding the concept of consultancy well to realize how it can meet the needs of an organization.

Understanding the role of the consultant well through training and development measures that can help the consultant to become effective. Skills of consultancy need to be identified and incorporated in the process of training and development. Setting up and following the personal development plan. These objectives would be focused in order to achieve effectively process of consultancy for business organizations. Conclusion: It

can be concluded from the study that consultancy is an essential part of organizational development with business firms being dependent upon the consultants for their enhancement of business practices and performances.

Thus the role of consultant is most important in this case that requires fulfilling the demands and expectations of the organizations, along with having the necessary skills of implementing effective consultancy process. It is essential that consultants possess certain skills of consultancy to be effective in the process. L, being the concerned trainee management consultant in this case, would focus on a personal development plan such that I can perform my role of consultancy effectively.