Launching a Career in Consulting

Walden Presenters:

Nicolle Skalski, M.M., Senior Career Services Advisor
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Gary Kelsey, Ed.D., Core Faculty, School of Public Policy and Administration

Walden University Career Services Center
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The Career Services Center Team

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Bilingual Senior Career Services Advisor
Webinar Coordinator and OptimalResume Manager

Angie Lira, M.A.
Senior Career Services Advisor
Social Media Manager, Golden Key Advisor and Website Guru
Dr. Gary Kelsey, Ed.D.
Core Faculty, School of Public Policy and Administration
Expertise and Research Interests:
- Non-profit sector leadership
- Board Governance
- Fundraising
- Program Development
- Strategic Planning
Walden Student and Alumni Success Stories

Marian Willeke, PhD
- Independent Education Consultant
- Walden Richard Riley School of Education

Fred Sahakian, MPA
- Management Analyst and Consultant
- Doctoral Student, Walden School of Public Policy and Administration
Alecia Brooks, DBA

- Business Consultant: Leadership and finance
- Walden School of Management
What is Consulting?

A Consultant is an individual who provides content and/or process expertise to individuals and organizations.

Consultants need:
- In-depth knowledge and expertise
- Established contacts and networks
- Excellent listening, verbal and written communication skills
- Excellent time management skills
- Motivation and self direction
- Ability to be flexible and handle many tasks/projects simultaneously

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A Consultant May Provide

- Leadership coaching
- Technology assistance
- Strategic planning
- Marketing
- Program development and implementation
- Non-profit board training
- Staff training
- Retreat facilitation
Advantages to Being a Consultant

- Flexible hours
- Increased network and knowledge base
- Ability to work with a variety of clients and projects
- Control over workload and clients
- Ability to determine your own income
Challenges Consultants Face...

- Flexible hours are necessary
- Clients who are not clear about what is needed
- Client needs/requests outside of original consulting agreement
- Workload may vary
- Inability to predict income
- Isolation
What Kinds of Industries Hire Consultants?

- Business & Management
- IT & Information Systems
- Education
- Human Resources & Talent Development
- Marketing, Communications & PR
- Non-Profit
- Accounting & Finance
Things to consider...

- Are you qualified?
- Do you have a demonstrated track record?
- Are you able to compete?
- Do you have a strong network?
- Do you have a business plan?
- Does your current employer restrict outside employment?
- Do have finances in reserve?
Setting up Your Business

• Name your business
• Register your business
• Small Business support specialists:
  - Attorney
  - Business Software
  - Small Business Accountant
  - Insurance
Marketing Your Consulting Services

• Identify your target market
• Create a marketing plan
• Determine marketing materials and approach
How Much Should I Charge?

• What is your time and expertise worth?

• How will you bill for services?
  – Hourly fee
  – Project fee
  – Retainer
  – Other?

• Will you provide services on a sliding-scale or pro-bono basis to select organizations?
Alumni Presenter

Marian Willeke, PhD
Richard Riley School of Education
Independent Consultant

- 2005-2007
  2 years of instructional design contract with single university

- 2008-2015
  Various director roles growing university from 200 students to 3,000 students and 2 programs to over 10 programs

- 2010-present
  - Academic contracts for adult program development
  - Corporate contracts for training methods/strategies
  - Academic Coaching / Train the Trainer
  - Conference speaker and blogger

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Marian’s Advice

• Gain a broad range of experience
  It’s essential to understand context of the specialty because issues usually are gaps between other departments or teams. You have to recognize them.

• Balance models and theories with context driven application
  Living in the theoretical will not help your client.

• See each client as unique. Hear them.
  Find out their vision. Helping a client to a shared vision will help them self-resolve issues.

• Network and Learn
  Start with smaller conferences and get to know the speakers. Do pair-up conference talks. Get “hallways chats” going. Be intentional with goals and proving ideas.

• Invest in professional marketing and branding.
  Don’t focus on the website, focus on the brand.
Doctoral Student Presenter

Fred Sahakian, MPA
Management and Technology Consultant

Further Evaluation Consulting
http://www.FurtherEvaluation.com

- PhD student in Public Policy and Administration
- More than 15 years of experience helping the Government, Non-Profit, and Small Business sectors
- Operations Management, Technology, Communications and Marketing, and Non-Profit Organizational Development
Helpful Resources

Free online project management software-
http://www.Toodledo.com

Free phone number and voicemail from Google-
https://www.google.com/voice

Branding for Dummies by Bill Chiaravalle and Barbara Findlay Schenck
http://www.amazon.com/Branding-For-Dummies-Bill-Chiaravalle/dp/0471771597

Incorporate your Business
http://www.delawareintercorp.com
Walden Virtual Alumnus Success Story

Alecia Brooks, DBA

- Business Consultant: Leadership and Finance
- Walden School of Management
Time for Questions!
Consulting Resources

Business Support Resources

Small Business Support

• U.S. Small Business Administration: http://www.sba.gov/
• SCORE: http://www.score.org/

Legal Support

• American Bar Association: http://abanet.org
• Find an Attorney: http://findanattorney.com
• Lawyers.com: http://lawyers.com

Tax Assistance and Software

• H & R Block: http://www.handrblock.com
• IRS: http://irs.ustreas.gov
• Intuit Turbo Tax for Business: http://www.intuit.com
Consulting Resources Cont’d

Industry Associations

• Association for Consulting Expertise: http://consultexpertise.com
• Association of Professional Communication Consultants (APCC): http://consultingsuccess.org
• Association of Professional Consultants (APC): http://consultapc.org
• Professional and Technical Consultants Association (PATCA): http://patca.org/
• The Center for Independent Consulting: http://www.centerforindependentconsulting.com/
Consulting Resources Cont’d

Consulting Publications and E-zines

• Consultants News
• Consulting Magazine
• Inside Consulting
• Kennedy Consulting Research and Advisory Wire
• Management Consulting News
A final thought...

“You are surrounded by simple, obvious solutions that can dramatically increase your income, power, influence and success. The problem is, you just don’t see them.”

JAY ABRAHAM
References


