



Consultants in An Execution Environment

The fact that an execution environment is so critically central to being successful raises the question as to why the typical business consultant does not give much if any attention to execution? Ed Ryan's approach to finding the right individual for the job also answers this question and provides insight into selecting the consultants we use. We discussed Ed's behavior-based selection process in our paper *An Overview of the People Process in an Execution Environment*. Ed, who founded Marketing Personnel Research (MPR, Inc.), recognized that "Who people are" is encapsulated in their behaviors, and he devised a highly successful system based on behavior traits for identifying the right person for the job. Ed's system is fundamental to the people process in an execution environment.

The typical business consultant will likely use some set of processes as the framework for their consulting, but as we have now seen, business processes are fragmented and an end to themselves in the absence of an execution environment. It seems that the credentials of many consultants are that they have an MBA from the best business schools, and their actual business experience tends to come from being with a consulting firm – maybe a leading one, or from a background in finance, accounting, and strategic planning, all of which are non-operating roles. Consultants with this type of background have never been tested in mobilizing line people to get things done. They have been responsible for doing things, but they do not have experience with getting things done, which is exactly the opposite of what an execution environment demands. They have not had to make the decisions needed to get things done and suffered the consequences of not getting things done. They don't have the experience, instincts, and behaviors to get things done. This is a good example of Ed's saying that we hire people (and consultants) for what they have done, and we fire them for who they are. Who they are is defined by their behaviors.

Some of the behavior traits of leaders who create execution environments are that they are evangelists, decisive even on tough issues fraught with ambiguity and lack of sufficient insight and information, get things done through others (stated differently, get others to do what needs to get done), follow-through, are brutally objective in their self assessments and their assessments of others and of situations, and they don't talk around things even in the face of disagreement and uncertainty



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as to what to do. A consultant who is right for the job of consulting on an execution environment would have to have these same behavior traits.

From my experience of leading organizations and of providing consulting services to a broad spectrum of organizations, which has allowed me to see more business environments than most people get to see, I can tell you that simply focusing on establishing an execution environment will bring you new levels of success, and coupling that with an enthusiasm to understand your customers' problems and solve them will make you a leader in your industry.

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Spotlight Business Consulting (SpotlightBC) was formed with a mission to provide businesses with consulting that is informed by a focus on execution. What distinguishes businesses with superior performance is the way they execute and overcome ambiguity and insufficient information and insight. Rather than simply apply our extensive experience, we are unique in offering you a contemporary, information-driven consulting process, every aspect of which is informed by a focus on execution.