IT Consulting Skills: Becoming the Trusted Advisor

We define consulting as **influencing without direct power**. In today's cross-functional, matrixed and flattened organizations, the only power left is the power of influence. Master that and you virtually guarantee success.

Help your staff master it, beginning with this workshop, and you'll soon be coaching a top-flight IT team that commands the respect of the organization.

Unlike Agile or Scrum classes that focus on internal team productivity, this workshop will give you the skills, tools and confidence to shine when you interact with the key stakeholders who drive your team's work activities and workload.

Who Should Attend
This workshop is designed for all IT professionals.

Delivery Options

Virtual Instructor-Led
Each module is 3 hours

Module 1: Influencing; Building Trust; Meeting Management

Module 2: Using a Consistent Approach; Case Study & Practice; Managing Your Emotions

Module 3: Providing Optimism; Networking; Knowing Your Clients

Module 4: Listening & Asking Questions; Practice & Applications; Wrap-up
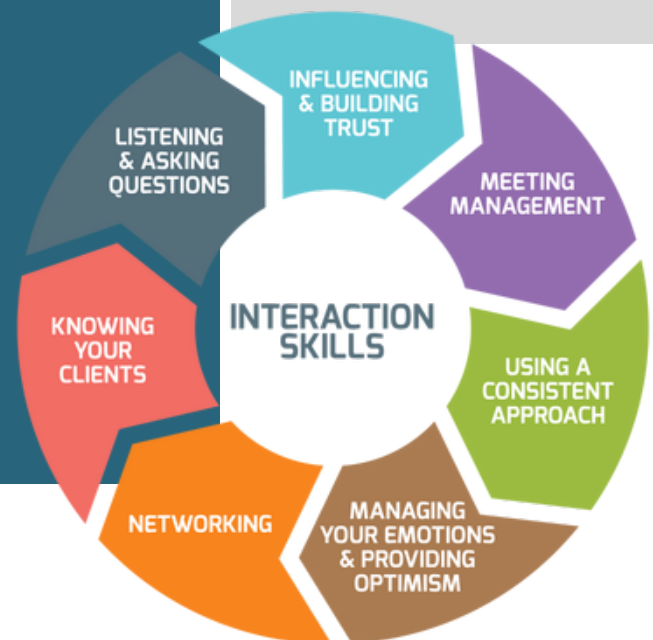
Classroom Instructor-Led
Two-day workshop

- See agenda, page 2

Program Goals

After participating in this program, you will be able to:

♦ Implement O&A's 11-step Consulting Cycle

♦ Build trust and rapport in the initial discussion

♦ Use the "stew pot" to handle difficult clients and situations

♦ Position your organization for high payback opportunities

♦ Build a listening organization, using the H.E.A.R. Model

♦ Run effective meetings to gain respect

♦ Manage client resistance and expectations (realistic and not!)

♦ Analyze situations more effectively

♦ Increase your influence without direct power

COMPREHENSIVE WORKSHOP AGENDA

IT Today & The Mindset of an Effective IT Consultant

A view of where your IT organization is — and needs to be — from a client perspective. A thorough examination of the mindset needed within your organization to effectively consult.

Influencing and Building Trust

A look at, and application of, the 7 influence bases IT can use with clients. A simple and effective graphic to use to increase trust with your clients.

Managing Meetings

Internal consultants spend a lot of time in meetings. Running an effective meeting is an imperative consulting skill. You'll learn the techniques to gain more respect for the way you run or participate in meetings.

The O&A Consulting Cycle

No more seat-of-the-pants consulting. We'll provide you with an 11-step framework to guide you, stage-by-stage, as you work with your clients.

Case Study Exercise: Managing Your Emotions & Providing Optimism

A difficult, high-level client comes to you with requirements and a solution. You will need all of your skills to successfully negotiate and build a strategy for short- and long-term success that works for both of you.

With this real-life case, you will develop a strategy that integrates technical, business, and human aspects into a successful solution, while you look at your own reactions to stress/pressure. You'll apply a simple framework and tips to manage emotions, enabling you to remain objective so that your voice is heard, even when you don't agree. You'll learn how to manage expectations and be authentic, ensuring your IT organization won't be known as the "Department of NO."

Networking

This skill set is imperative to moving up the IT Maturity Curve. We will provide the "how-to" and a time for practicing this essential skill.

Knowing Your Clients

To provide value, you have to know what your internal clients are facing on a daily basis and have a holistic view of their business. In addition to getting a simple, repeatable template to use, you'll spend time exploring what your internal clients are facing, both tactically and strategically.

Effective Listening & Asking Effective Questions

Listening is a vital human interaction skill for all consultants. However, this does not mean sitting back and being quiet. Using our proven four-stage interactive listening process, you'll learn how to hear your clients. You'll leave with a starter list of questions that position IT as strategic consultants rather than irritating and reactive.

Applying Influence in Real-World Scenarios

These consulting practices will equip you to develop options for handling difficult situations. Internal consultants will practice effective listening, asking questions and resisting the tendency to jump in with a solution. The analysis portion of this exercise will provide solutions to real-life situations like:

- Business stakeholders with unrealistic expectations or deadlines without requirements
- Constantly changing requirements and scope
- The need to increase business stakeholders' willingness to add infrastructure improvements
- Lack of understanding of technology by the business

Personal Action Plan

The lasting value of this workshop lies in the actions you will take back to the job — actions based on the ideas you gain, the skills you sharpen and the increased confidence you develop in your ability to serve clients. This action plan provides a framework for developing a consulting strategy you can use immediately. Each participant will receive a letter he/she has written with commitments 30 days after the workshop to increase learning "stickiness."