

Management Consulting for SMEE Sector from Client Perspective

UDC: 005.942:334.7

Dr Dragan Dukić¹, Dr Ivica Nikolić²

¹ Philip MAKON Consulting Agency – Novi Sad

² Faculty of Real Estate Management – Belgrade

The paper analyzes the views of the owners and managers of small and medium-sized enterprises on management consulting in the transitional circumstances in Serbia. The management consulting service can be defined as successful only if the client is satisfied with the results and the manner in which the consultant is engaged, however, in order that the consultant be able to deliver the service in a satisfactory manner, he must have certain skills. The reasons for hiring consultants in the SMEE sector the consultants- competences, and the performance indicators of the management consulting service, represent the guidelines for consultants to achieve the best possible effects in consulting services.

1. Introduction

It is for more than the last twenty years the last century that the world economy recorded an increased growth in the consulting industry. Driven by the constant growth in demand, the margins grew to be inordinately high and the consulting firms were in a position to employ the best experts in the so-called war for talents [11].

The beginning of this century saw the changes in this area. The growth of the consulting industry was halted; it recorded stagnation and even negative results (Figure 1). The old rules of the game did not hold any longer [21]. Simultaneously, the customers have become ever more sophisticated and more demanding, aware of their importance, and therefore more powerful. This led to profit rates being reduced and even threatened the survival of the consulting firms on the market; however, the consulting sector proved to be flexible enough and managed to overcome the crisis.

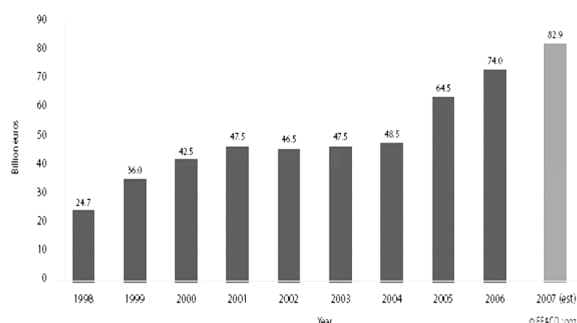


Figure 1. The size of the European management consulting market, 1998-2007 [27]

In the economic environment in this country, the services of the management consulting have been taken into serious consideration only in the few past years. The extremely changing business environment, the

globalization effects, an increasing competition on the market, etc., actually press the firms to change constantly and improve their business operations. In such a situation it is necessary that each segment of business be raised to as high a competence level as possible, this being the matter of the firm survival. This actually means that the firms have to do business even beyond the boundaries of their own knowledge and time available. It is beyond these boundaries that they require external aid from the individuals and firms commanding a high level of professional knowledge and skills in respective business fields. Such aid to the firms is provided, among other things, by the consulting agencies and independent consultants.

The amount of intellectual capital in the consulting firms is of great importance for their business doing. Besides, these firms usually possess large databases, highly sophisticated software and advanced telecommunication technology, which, together with the employees, makes a combination of highly desirable but scarce resources to even the largest companies in some other fields of work. At the same time, the fact is that consultants, as professionals whose work is exclusively based on knowledge, are not really willing to share their "know-how" with competition [25]. All these make the services of the top management consulting firms highly expensive and hardly affordable to a vast majority of the potential consulting services users. The gap is filled by small specialized consulting firms or individuals.

In understanding any management consulting process, it is important that the role of the client in the process be clearly defined [23, p.202]. Regardless of the evident growth in the demand for the management consulting services, the practice shows that there are certain grounds for the clients' dissatisfaction [8], the problems

the client wishes to solve when they decide upon using the consulting services [20]. These problems can be classed into two categories [6, p.16], namely:

- The problem to ascertain the quality of the service provider/deliverer (consultant) prior to purchasing the very service, and
- The validation of the quality of the service upon its execution.

It is necessary that both these relations be satisfied in order that the management consulting arrangement should be fully effective and assessed as successful.

2. Objectives and methodology

The above quoted problems trigger a question of to what extent the clients understand what management consulting is about and what their views of such a type of service are. It is for this reason that the objective of this research is to find out the reasons that drive the client to hire consultants as well as which strategic competencies contribute to the management consulting high performance. In addition, the aim of this research is to identify the elements the clients regard as the indicators of an efficient management consulting.

The research included the review of literature, followed by non-standardized as well as semi-standardized interviews with the small and medium-sized enterprise owners and managers, but also with the consultants. Thus the matrix of reasons for hiring consultants, of strategic competencies and of management consulting performance indicators was worked out. One of the advantages of such a method of research is the opportunity of generating both qualitative and quantitative data. The advantage of qualitative research is in that the complex as well as detailed phenomena in the management consulting process may be observed and understood in a holistic way.

The disadvantage of this methodology, however, is a possible subjective or biased or insincere answer the respondent or a client may give; or the sample may be insufficiently representative, due to the fact that the data on the actually delivered services of this kind to small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs (SMEE) is not available or not in order.

3. Clients' view of management consulting

The appreciation of management consulting has grown significantly in the last decade, due to, among other, the books and papers on the topic [10; 17; 4; 5; 19; 7]. In the economy of this country, it has especially been fostered by the state, more precisely, by the Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Development

Agency, which created a network of regional consulting agencies for the purpose of enhancing the setting up and improving the work of the small business sector in the country.

In the provision of the management consulting (MC) services, the relations between the consultant as a service provider and the client as a service beneficiary may be twofold (Figure 2), namely:

- Direct – direct communication prior to, during and after the service is provided, and
- Indirect – the service itself, in the way it is delivered and absorbed, in its quality, value, intelligibility, satisfaction, etc., is a type of specific communication between the client and the consultant.

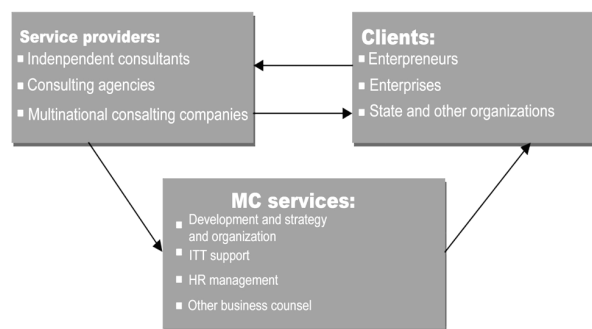


Figure 2. Direct and indirect client-consultant relationship

The customer (user) purchasing the consulting service was to a large extent been “taken for granted“ in the past, often a victim of powerful and convincing management consultants. Such an image of a consulting client was seriously criticized in literature [26; 9]. The commercial climate, however, has become much more difficult and demanding for consulting experts. The main reason for this seems to be the fact that in their work with the consultants, the clients gain more and more managerial knowledge and experience, they become more demanding, while the generally sceptical attitude to the consultants is increasingly present in the business world today.

It is for these reasons that this research is oriented to the client, i.e., to his understanding and views of the management consulting activities. A starting point of the analysis is the need and wish to answer some of the following questions [3, p.186]:

- How and on which basis do the clients “purchase“ management consulting (MC) services?
- How do they organize to accept “management advice“ from external experts?
- How do the firms and their managers benefit from these services?

- How do clients in their organizations perceive the consultants and which are the consequences (often negative) of such perceptions?
- How is the need for external management consulting services received among the managers in firms?
- How can we understand (potentially differently) the implementation of MC among managers in different contexts?
- Which are the consequences of consulting implementation in the client firm and how did such results come?
- In which way and under which circumstances can consultants help their clients through “learning and knowledge development“?
- How do the forms of consultant-client relations develop over time?
- Which are the characteristics of “successful tasking“ for the consultants?
- Which are the capabilities the consultants must have in order that they convince the client that they are able to provide a quality service and in order that they really deliver such a service?
- How do the clients estimate and value the consulting engagement performance?

3.1. What precedes consulting engagement

The activities preceding the consulting engagement are of great importance for an efficient execution of the project the consultant is engaged in. Among other things, they include: the recognition of the need for a consulting service, the description of the consulting project task, goals included, the decision on what kind of service and what type of consultant are required, recruiting an appropriate and qualified consultant, closing a contract with the consultant or the agency/company.

Prior to hiring a consultant, the client has to provide instructions clearly defining what he needs. These instructions are actually the job or task description, containing precise and up to the point instructions on what the consultant is expected to do for the client, as well as a sort of guidelines specifying the scope and the purpose of the job under consideration. The aims of the task description are the following:

- To enable the consultant to clearly and fully understand the task he is assigned.
- To explain what the consultant is expected to do.
- To explain the importance and the complexity of the job.
- To define the obligations of both the consultant and the client and specify the manner in which the project or process will be managed.

- To prevent any ambiguity about what is to be achieved in the end.

The job description is a basis for closing a contract with the consultant. The clearer and more straightforward the task description, the better for both the client and the consultant. Only if the task description is clear enough is it possible to monitor the operations and undertake corrective actions in case the work does not proceed as planned. We must, however, also bear in mind that the task description cannot anticipate every possible situation. For example, certain unpredicted and unavoidable circumstances may have a negative impact upon the work results or the deadlines. The usual questions the task description has to answer are the following:

- Why is a certain service necessary?
- Which are the expected results?
- Which goals are necessary to achieve?
- Which methods should be implemented in the work?
- Which skills are required?
- Who has to be included?
- Which period of time is required to achieve the goals?
- Is there a deadline by which the task has to be accomplished?
- Can the products of the process be quantified?
- How shall we know that the task will be accomplished in a satisfactory way?
- In which way will information be gathered in the course of the task accomplishment?
- What will the costs be?

The task description for the consultant can be written in numerous ways. The following lists only the general instructions with general points:

- Description of the situation – general information on the project or task context. Here the reasons for which the task or the project are important are stated and an insight into broader activities whose part the project/task is is given.
- Purpose – the task or project goal is explicitly stated, as well as the reasons for which external aid is necessary.
- Task or project goals – all individual goals and tasks are specified here. How clearly the goals and the tasks are defined will depend on how well the problem is analysed and which level of expertise is required.
- Project or task description – here the task is broadly described. Data is given on the client or the project or task beneficiaries, as well as the explanations as to what/whom it will affect and the location where the task will be accomplished.

- **Timeline** – it is important that the date of the beginning and the date of the completion of the project or task be clearly stated. This is also necessary because of the budgeting (overall duration, amount of costs, number of employees), both for the client and for the consultant. Finally, it is important for the purposes of monitoring during the process.
- **Liability** – in order that the management and control be efficient, it is necessary to specify who will be responsible and for what during the project or task execution. It is in this way that responsibility is fostered and confusion is prevented as to the roles and responsibilities of the consultant and the team leader in the organization.
- **Communication** – it is important that the communication channels and who the team leaders of both parties are be clearly stated in the task description.
- **Authority levels** – here the authority for each level of decision-making in the organization is assigned, so that the consultant can turn to right people to clarify certain issues.
- **Qualification and experience required** – it is important that the knowledge and experience required to accomplish the task be clearly defined. The consultants' competences include the skills (technical as well as those related to certain behaviours), knowledge, and attitudes. The more accurately the required competences are described, the easier it will be to the consultants to evaluate themselves before they accept the task.
- **Relevant policies** – it is often necessary that the consultant be given an insight into the internal policies and procedures, but also into the external ones, important for the project or task execution. In this way the consultants are given an opportunity to prepare better.
- **Project or task execution framework** – the description of the expected project or task realization. This includes a list of the most important tasks the consultant is expected to accomplish. It is on the basis of these, as well as on the basis of the description of other important elements of the project, that the consultants can suggest the way they will work and the methods and techniques they will use.
- **Expected outcomes** – focusing upon what the management consulting process should result in, the results (consulting products). It is important that the products be formulated in such a way that they can be recognized and measured objectively. It is also important that the expected level of the result or product quality is stipulated. Here the most important indicators are also stated [18, pp. 31,32].
- **Reporting plan and mechanisms** – in this part various types of reports required on different levels of

the task or project execution are stated. In case of a simple task, only one, final report will be required. More complicated and longer-term projects may require reporting in intervals. It is important that the form and type of the expected reports (written, oral, or both), the intervals and to whom they should be submitted be stipulated, too.

- **Cost-budget** – in the majority of cases, the organization-client will allocate a certain sum for the job being done by the consultant. In the task description, however, this is rarely stated, because the consultants are expected to behave up to the market laws and offer the best possible quality for the price offered.

3.2. Strategy and strategic competencies

The comprehension of both broader and immediate environment, combined with organizational competence, allows for the formulation of a strategy that will fill the gaps and improve organizational performance [14]. The strategy is a set of rules and decisions guiding the organizational behaviour and is really intangible and abstract in concept, providing no direct or concrete results as to the organizational performance [1, p.31].

Greiner and Metzger [12, p.7] defined management consulting as "... contracted and delivered consulting service to organizations by specially trained and qualified people, who objectively and autonomously help the client organization identify the problems of management, analyse them, and who propose adequate solutions and also help implement the solutions." According to the definition, business consulting requires specific competencies and an appropriate level of knowledge which will enable the consultants to help their clients identify and solve management problems in their organizations.

The core business competencies are the skills the organizations have, those that help them conduct their business operations [14, p.126]. The majority of organizations have numerous core competences.

Some of these competencies are more important than the others. According to the same authors, such business competencies which are on a higher level compared to the core competences, are called strategic capabilities/competencies and are characterised by three specific features:

- They present the value for the customer,
- They are superior to those of the competition, and
- They are difficult to immitate or replicate.

A unique combination of strategic competencies, not easy to immitate, can be titled the key or core compe-

tencies [15]. Hence it can be concluded that the core competence is not just the summ of individual competencies, but a combination of complementary skills and a knowledge base built in a group or a team and resulting into a competency to perform one or a number of key processes on a high level standard [13]. The relationship among the competence, strategic competence and key competencies can be presented as on Figure 3.

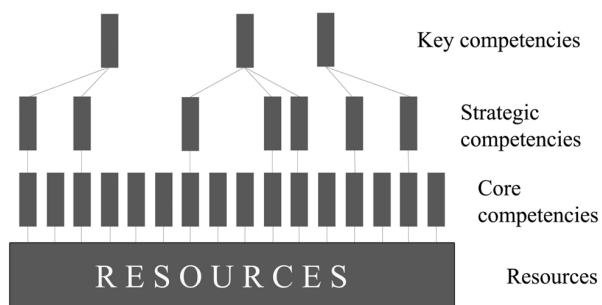


Figure 3. Relationships among core, strategic and key organizational competencies

By identifying its strategic and core competencies, by their adjustment to the environment and by their including into its strategy, the organization improves its performance and acquires a long-term sustainable competitive advantage.

Simon and Kumar [24, p. 366] analysed the works of eight academics in order to find out the common characteristics of the consulting all the authors quote in their works, which the clients mutually take to be strategic competencies driving the management consulting success. Each author uses his own terminology, however, some mutual characteristics of the consulting they pointed to are easy to identify. The list made within their study included any strategic competencies mentioned in three or more works (Table 1).

3.3. Management consulting performance measuring

In case the consultant offers inadequate counsel, the consequences the client experiences may vary, from the decreasing growth rate, to the crisis situation

Competence	No. of quotes in literature	Authors quoting competence
Client-consultant communication	7	Bobrow(1998), Bowers and Degler(1999), Czerniawska(1999), Ford(1979), Hegyi-Gioia(1999), Popovich(1995), Riley(1999)
Client collaboration and inclusion	6	Bowers and Degler(1999), Czerniawska(1999), Dowling(1993), Hegyi-Gioia(1999), Popovich(1995), Riley(1999)
Core competencies breadth	5	Bowers and Degler(1999), Czerniawska(1999), Dowling(1993), Ford(1979), Popovich(1995)
Technical knowledge	5	Bowers and Degler(1999), Czerniawska(1999), Dowling(1993), Ford(1979), Popovich(1995)
Problem definition (identification)	4	Bobrow(1998), Bowers and Degler(1999), Ford(1979), Hegyi-Gioia(1999)
Integrity and honesty	4	Bobrow(1998), Bowers and Degler(1999), Hegyi-Gioia(1999), Ford(1979)
Ability to understand the client	3	Bobrow(1998), Bowers and Degler(1999), Riley(1999)
Marketing	3	Bobrow(1998), Bowers and Degler(1999), Czerniawska(1999)
Setting reasonable expectations	3	Bobrow(1998), Ford(1979), Hegyi-Gioia(1999)

Table 1. Strategic competencies, from the clients' point of view, leading to the management consulting outstanding performance – academic literature analysis

emergence, to the bankruptcy of the organization. Many unfavourable consequences of an ineffective consulting can be prevented if adequate steps are undertaken in the previous, but also in the current evaluation of the consulting engagement effects.

The need for measuring the management consulting impacts upon organizational performance led to a

complete change in the management consulting understanding. The activity-based consulting is replaced by the result-based consulting, as is presented in Table 2 [22]. The consulting interventions are connected with the firm's specific business needs, where consulting is viewed as a measurable variable that ought to have a certain impact upon the firm's performance. In case the results of the consultant engage-

Activity-based consulting	Result-based consulting
The need for consulting intervention is not defined	Intervention is related to specific business needs
Performance is not estimated	Effective performance estimate
No specific or measurable goals	Specific and measurable goals are defined
No efforts are made to prepare the participants in the consulting process to achieve results	Results/expectations are communicated to stakeholders /participants
No efforts are made to ensure the implementation supportive working environment	Business environment is prepared to support implementation
No efforts are made to establish partnerships with key managers	Partnership with key managers and clients is established
No result measuring or cost-benefit analysis are conducted	Results are measured and cost-benefit analysis is conducted
Planning an reporting on consulting intervention is focused on inputs	Planning an reporting on consulting intervention is focused on outputs

Table 2. Consultant paradigms based on activities and results

ment are not known, the most direct consequence for the firm is that the firm's precious assets are being spent without any chance of control.

4. Research findings analysis

The majority of clients interviewed come from larger cities (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš, Kragujevac, Subotica, ...). In general, they all have certain attitudes on the consulting engagement, regardless of the fact that they do not currently engage any consultants. Some clients have already had some serious experiences in consulting engagement, with different outcomes.

The industries in which the clients do business vary from commerce, to manufacture, to construction works, to tourism and hospitality industry, etc.

The areas of business for which they did or would hire a consultant also range broadly, from information technologies, to financial and taxation consulting, marketing, to strategic consulting, training and development, organizational change, etc.

The findings of this research have shown that clients hire consultants for various reasons, but also that they encounter a lot of ambiguities and uncertainty in this respect. In conclusion, however, it can be said that common to all of them is that they expect that the result of consulting engagement (and cost) be tangible. The mutual attitude of (prospective) clients is that the consultant should focus upon the client's needs.

4.1. Reasons for consulting engagement

As a result of the research conducted, a set of main reasons for consulting engagement was identified. According to the importance the clients attach to cer-

tain reasons for consulting engagement, seven commonest reasons are identified:

1. The need to solve the problem promptly;
2. The need for new, modern solutions;
3. The need for additional help or resources;
4. The need for an independent and objective advice;
5. Achieving or sustaining competitiveness;
6. Insufficient staff to execute a certain project;
7. Insufficient in-house expertise.

Two reasons dominate the all the others, the need for prompt solutions and the need for modern solutions. It is also indicative that the clients lack the in-house expertise least. Is it really so or the clients still do not recognize the role and the importance of expertise in the field of management, is a rather interesting issue to be researched into in the future.

The reasons stated, generally speaking, point to the fact that, when they decide to engage a consultant, the clients demand something they are not capable of doing themselves in their own firms. To a certain extent they are then dependent and exposed. Hence the consultants should deal with their clients with the sense of strong ethical responsibility:

- They should consider the client's interests as a priority;
- They must provide a real benefit to the client;
- They must not abuse the client's trust.

Summing all the reasons for which the clients hire consultants, the already defined mutual demand for consultants can only be confirmed, the one that Bergholz [2, pp. 29-33] formulated on behalf of all clients: "Help me, or show me how to improve the business operations of my firm. I know you have the knowledge I do not. I cannot ask you directly, but you can find ade-

quate solutions, without diminishing my feeling of self-respect. Your feed-back information and advice may be useful. I count on you to be able to find effective ways to deliver them to me...”

4.2. Consultants’ strategic competencies – clients’ standpoint

The literature review (Table 1) shows some consultants’ strategic competences identified by the clients. The research, however, was conducted in 2000, on the sample of 500 top firms in Australia. The findings nevertheless served as a starting point for this research. In the business circumstances in the transition countries, such as these in Serbia, and on the sample of small and medium-sized enterprises, or entrepreneurs, the findings are somewhat different and biased.

Twelve strategic competencies have been identified as a final result of the research and analysis, that the clients, i.e., the owners and the managers of small and medium-sized firms identified as important for the consulting success. These competences are:

1. Innovativeness and creativity
2. Integrity and honesty
3. Rationality
4. Efficient problem solving
5. Expertise
6. Ability to identify problem/opportunity
7. Client-consultant communication
8. Quality of service
9. Objectivity
10. Value adding to client organization
11. Knowledge of business environment
12. Consultant’s own success

Three strategic competencies identified as most important are innovativeness, honesty and rationality. This is fully in line with the client’s need and wish to get prompt and modern solutions, which are actually the main reasons for which he purchases consulting services.

Simultaneously, although it is not crucially important for the client, the need is stressed that the consultant has to be able to solve his/her own problems, that is, to make himself successful. Clients simply do not trust the consultant who has not proved to be an expert on his own case.

4.3. Consulting performance indicators – clients’ standpoint

In practice, the client who decides to use professional business consultants’ services can learn whether the consultant is capable of doing what he is expected to do in an easy and simple way. He can do it in that he hires

consultant(s) for small projects, which mean not so much work and not so high costs. If satisfied with the results, he can continue and extend the collaboration. Consulting, therefore, is no charade. You can cheat only once. There are various factors on the basis of which the clients can decide whether the consulting service is successful, be it a “pilot” project, or a small, or a larger management consulting engagement. According to clients, the major indicators of management consulting performance are the following: timely service provision and achievement of set goals. The indicator considered by the clients to be least important is the implementation of the proposed solutions. More precisely, the importance of this indicator increases with an increase in the number of employees. The management consulting performance indicators mostly quoted by the (prospective) clients from the SMEE sector are as follows:

1. Timely provision of services
2. Achieving the set goals
3. Client’s satisfaction
4. Achieving measurable financial results
5. Employee behaviour in the client organization
6. Implementation of the proposed solutions

We see that both financial and non-financial performance indicators are listed. This is in accord with the literature [16] which suggests a balanced measuring of results, not only financial measurements. Hence each individual strategic competency is put into a relation to each of the performance indicators. The result is that the majority of strategic competencies affect both financial and non-financial indicators.

Management consulting	Performance indicators:					
	Timely service delivery	Achieving agreed goals	Client satisfaction	Achieving measurable financial results	Employees behaviour in client organization	Implementation of proposed solutions
Strategic competencies:						
Innovativeness and creativity			•		•	•
Integrity and honesty		•	•		•	•
Rationality	•	•		•		
Efficient problem solving		•		•		
Expertise	•	•		•		
Ability to identify problem/opportunity	•	•	•	•		
Client/consultant communication			•		•	
Quality of service		•		•		•
Objectivity		•	•	•		
Value adding to client organization value adding		•		•	•	
Knowledge of business environment	•	•				
Consultants own success			•		•	

5. Conclusion

Evidently, the users of management consulting services in Serbia are concentrated in larger cities and come from various industries. Also, the range of fields for which they decide upon consulting engagement is broad. The number of prospective clients is much larger; they do have certain needs, however, they have not decided upon hiring consultants, mainly because this type of services seems too mystified to them. The management consulting services are not available to a sufficient degree in less developed regions, which hinders the development of small, mainly manufacturing firms and entrepreneurs in these parts.

This research has shown that consultants should command multidisciplinary skills, be competent, creative and have excellent character traits. A successful management consulting must operationalize and implement as many strategic competencies as possible. In the long run, through the consulting service delivered, these competences affect at least one, and usually more performance indicators. In practice, on making the decision to engage a consulting expert, the client's assumptions and demands become expectations. Hence it is of great importance that the consultants should be capable of understanding the client correctly and fulfilling his expectations as accurately as possible.

The smaller the client's firm, the greater entrepreneurial spirit and management style; therefore, it can be taken for certain that the owners and managers of small and medium-sized enterprises are entrepreneurs. They are energetic and they make decisions fast, hence they attach most importance to the need for concrete and prompt solutions. Aware of fast changes in the business environment, they expect the solutions offered to be modern and creative. Hence such clients prefer the consultants that are fast, accurate, innovative, rational, honest and experts.

Time is a key factor and also a consulting service performance indicator. For the client, the timely service provision, together with achievement of set goals, tops the list of the management consulting performance criteria.

There is yet another important point. The clients do not want consultants who did not prove successful on a personal plane. They could be said to consider failure to be contagious. It is for this reason that the clients consider the consultant image, status and references highly important. The only exemption are the key consultants. As a complex and subtle process going on between the consultant and the client, manage-

ment consulting is based on mutual correctness and usefulness and is a result of mutual trust. The clients may decide to engage more than consultant, for different parts of the project each; however, they wish to build long-term relationships with one, and only sometimes with several key consultants. The consultants are necessary for the clients, in that they help them get a comprehensive view of their business, they remain with the client for a longer period of time and take part of responsibility for the client's business operations. Here, their position is similar to that of a general practitioner, who remains indispensable, regardless of people increasingly using the services of specialists to get cured. The role of key consultants is such that they offer advice in all kinds of situations and help their client make the right decision. Such counselling need not be too expensive. It demands maturity, anticipation and empathy from the consultant, rather than complex administrative procedures.

Nowadays, there is a difference between the approach the consultant takes in measuring his performance and that of the clients' measuring the same performance. This does not mean that consultants evaluate incorrectly, only that they should take more care of what the clients demand and expect from the services they purchased. At the same time, the greater the choice among the alternative consulting services providers, the more considerate the consultants will become towards the client and the more reasonable their fees, and the more knowledgeable the clients as to what they can and what they should expect for the price they paid. Since the ratio of market power moves from the consultants towards their clients, it is important that both parties redefine their roles and approaches. For the consultants, it is a strategic task and the matter of survival.

REFERENCE

- [1] Ansoff, H.I., *Implanting Strategic Management*, Prentice-Hall International, Englewood Cliffs, Nj., 1984.
- [2] Bergholz, H., *Do more than fix my company*, Journal of Management Consulting, November, Vol. 10 No. 4, pp. 29-33, 1999.
- [3] Buono, A.F. et al. *Management Consulting: Introducing the Client*, Scandinavian Journal of Management, Volume 22, Issue 2, p.186-187, 2006.
- [4] Buono, A.F., *Developing Knowledge and Value in Management Consulting*, Greenwich, Conn. : Information Age Publishing, 2002.

- [5] Buono, A.F., *Creative Consulting: Innovative Perspectives on Management Consulting*, Greenwich: Information Age Publishing, 2004.
- [6] Clark, T., *Managing Consultants, Consultancy as the Management of Impressions*, Open University Press, Buckingham, 1995.
- [7] Czerniawska, F., *The Trusted Firm: How Consulting Firms Build Successful Client Relationships*, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, England, 2007.
- [8] Easley, C.F. J., Harding, C.F., *Client vs consultant*, Journal of Management Consulting, November, Vol. 10 No. 4, p.3-8, 1999.
- [9] Fincham, R. *The consultant-client relationship: critical perspectives on the management of organizational change*, Journal of Management Studies, 36(3): 331-351, 1999.
- [10] Fincham, R., & Clark, T., *Critical Consulting*, Oxford: Blackwell Business, 2002.
- [11] Gladwell, M., *The talent myth - Are smart people overrated?*, The New Yorker, July 22, p.28, 2002.
- [12] Greiner, L.E. and Metzger, R.O., *Consulting to Management*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, Nj., 1983.
- [13] Hamel, G., Prahalad, C.K., *Competing for the Future*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, 1994.
- [14] Hubbard, G., Pocknee, G., Taylor, G.A., *Practical Australian Strategy*, Prentice-Hall, Sydney, 1997.
- [15] Javidan, M. *Core competence: what does it mean in practice?*, Long Range Planning, Vol. 31 No. 1, pp. 60-71, 1998.
- [16] Kaplan, R.S., Norton, D.P., *The balanced score-card measures that drive performance*, Harvard Business Review, January-February, pp. 71-9, 1992.
- [17] Kipping, M. & Engwall, L., *Management Consulting. The Emergence and Dynamics of a Knowledge Industry*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002.
- [18] Kumar, V., Simon, A. and Kimberley, N., *Strategic capabilities which lead to management consulting success*, Management Decisions, Vol. 38 Nos 1 and 2, pp. 24-35, 2000.
- [19] McKenna, C., *The World's Newest Profession: Management Consulting in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, U.K., 2006.
- [20] Monteleone, F., *Anyone need a consultant?*, Computerworld, 31 January, Vol. 34 No. 5, p. 52, 2000.
- [21] Niewiem, S., Richter, A., *The Changing Balance of Power in the Consulting Market*. Business Strategy Review, Spring, Vol. 15 Issue 1, p8-13, 2004.
- [22] Philips, J., *The consultant's scorecard: tracking results and bottom-line impact of consulting projects*, McGraw-Hill Companies Inc., New York, 2000.
- [23] Schein, E.H., *The concept of 'client' from a process consultation perspective*, Journal of Organizational Change Management, Vol. 10 No. 3, pp. 202-216, 1997.
- [24] Simon, A., Kumar, V., *Clients' views on strategic capabilities which lead to management consulting success*, Management Decision, 39/5, p.362-372, 2001.
- [25] Simon, G.A., *What to share?*, Journal of Management Consulting, November, Vol. 9 No. 4, p.79, 1997.
- [26] Sturdy, A., *The Consultancy Process - an Insecure Business*, Journal of Management Studies, 34(3): 389-413, 1997.
- [27] <http://www.feaco.org/en/index-action-marketInformation.html>