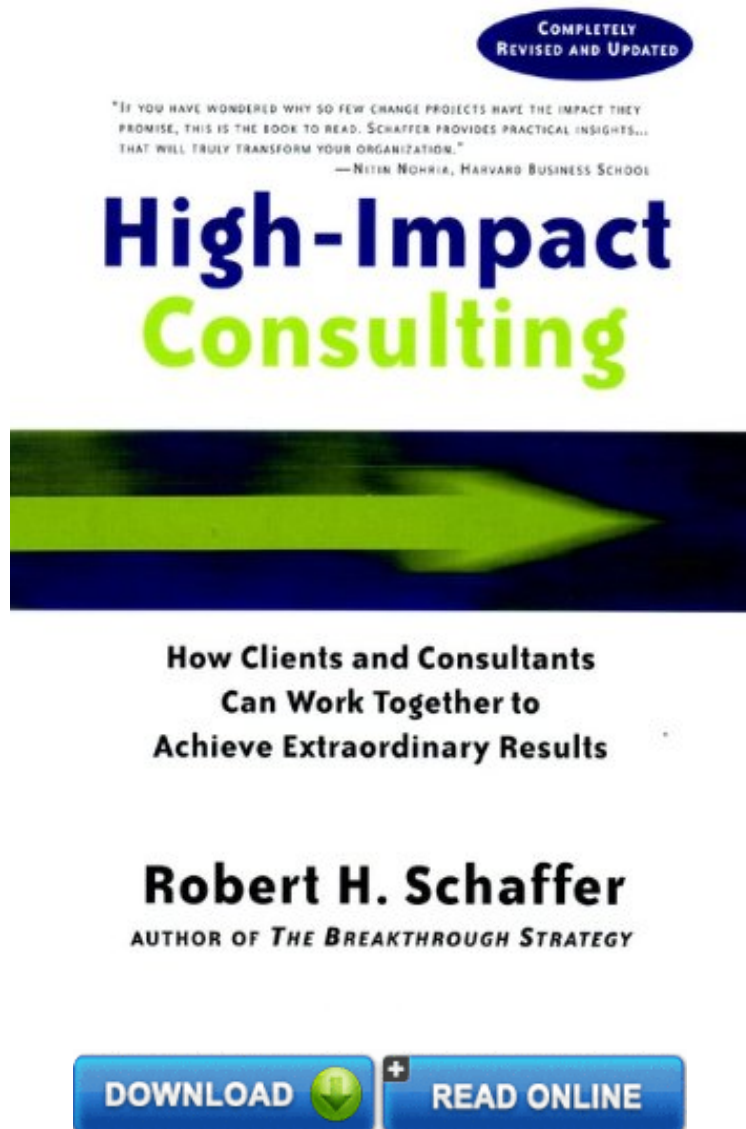


(Read free ebook) High-Impact Consulting: How Clients and Consultants Can Work Together to Achieve Extraordinary Results

High-Impact Consulting: How Clients and Consultants Can Work Together to Achieve Extraordinary Results

Robert H. Schaffer

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Robert H. Schaffer : High-Impact Consulting: How Clients and Consultants Can Work Together to Achieve Extraordinary Results before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised High-Impact Consulting: How Clients and Consultants Can Work Together to Achieve Extraordinary Results:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great book for consultantsBy B. StrandThis book was required reading for one of my university courses. The book is chock full of useful information that will help you give your clients what they paid for - excellent results!If you are wondering what this book is really all about, another title the author could have used is Results Driven Consulting. The author doesnt advocate the typical consulting model, which

consists of analyzing a situation and giving recommendations. Instead, it suggests that the consultant should stick around, and help implement those recommendations to make sure the client is fully satisfied (and will call you back for future engagements). Overall, an excellent and informative book. The writing is a little dry and time consuming, but well worth the effort!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Better Way of Engaging Consultants

By bronx book nerd

Unless you are using consultants for the equivalent of outsourcing tasks, there is a much better way to work with consultants than the conventional way. In the conventional way, consultants offer you products and solutions, usually whatever their latest offering is, they engage you and then flood your business for months with consulting staff who conduct lots of research and interviews, they then conclude with a presentation and you, the client, either do something with the recommendations or not. Often, consultants' approach is to do something grand and comprehensive, like process reengineering of every major process, or a major reorganization. In the end, many of these engagements provide very little in terms of actual results, plus they cost a lot. So what is the alternative? For decades, Robert Schaffer has been pitching and practicing "high impact consulting", .i.e. consulting that focuses on results and makes both the client and the consultant accountable for the results. This type of consulting involves the client every step of the way, building competency in analytic tools and methods, as well as confidence in the client that they can tackle productive change effectively. Under high impact consulting, the consultant and client together identify rapid cycle projects that generate meaningful results in typically six to eight weeks. These engagements do not wait for lengthy studies and analysis; rather, they rely on the existing knowledge and creativity within the client staff. The projects are flexible in their approach, and may change solutions as they receive feedback. In the end, in contrast to conventional consulting, high impact consulting provides measurable results on which clients can continue to build. Schaffer provides numerous examples of high impact successes, not only of his firm but of competing firms as well. There is a lot more to learn from this book than what is stated here, including a very insightful chapter by Schaffer on some of the psychological/anxiety factors that make both clients and consultants favor conventional consulting. If you read this book, you will see the consulting discipline in a completely different light.

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. A must read for consultants and managers

By Khaled Hassan

High Impact Consulting is a must read for both consultants and managers striving to excel in today's competitive, fast paced market. The book provides a recipe for consultants to perform better in their job and tells managers what to expect from a good, high impact, consultant. I was first introduced to this book by Prof. Alan Goldman as a required read for the Organizational Consulting class at Arizona State University, MBA program.

The author starts by comparing low-yield, conventional consulting to the high-yield, high impact consulting. He concludes that traditional consulting suffers from five fatal flaws that lead to an implementation gap in the client organization since most consultants don't make client implementation a central focus of their consulting practice. It is vital for consultants to make certain that clients absorb, use, and benefit from the solutions the consultants offer. In order to do that, the author advocates that high impact consulting corrects the five flaws of traditional consulting through the following

1. Define the project in terms of specific client goals that will be attained instead of defining the project in terms of the consultant deliverables.
2. Determine the project scope based on what the client is willing and able to implement instead of ignoring the client readiness.
3. Divide the project into increments with rapid cycle time for quicker results to give momentum to the project instead of aiming for one big solution that requires huge investments and long cycle time.
4. Consultants should work with clients in a collaborative, full partnership mode through every stage of the project instead of passing the responsibility back and forth.
5. Leverage the use of small consulting teams instead of labor-intensive use of hordes of consultants through active participation of the client and helping the client make better use of their own talents.

The author uses a wealth of examples to support those ideas based on his personal experience and the experience of other consultants that worked with him. The remainder of the book provides recommendations for the consultant-client contracting process, the need for senior management support to ensure success of the consulting project, and how to overcome client and consultant anxiety.

The reader would find this book easy to follow with clear ideas that are based on the author's experience, not on academic research. Working in the aerospace industry for a number of years, I can relate my personal experience to many of the conventional consulting flaws that the author introduced and attempted to fix. I have witnessed a number of consulting projects that companies would spend thousands of dollars on with no clear outcome or successful implementation. This book definitely made me an advocate of high impact consulting when I do internal consulting or when I seek help of external consultants.

The main drawback in this book is the author's writing style. In his attempt to deliver and clarify his ideas to the reader, the author falls into the trap of repeating himself over and over and over again. It would be helpful if the author uses future book revisions as an opportunity to focus his ideas and avoid repetitions. Also, in this era of globalization, it would be useful to add a chapter about cross cultural consulting and how high impact consulting would be adjusted to accommodate cultural diversity.

In this new and revised edition of the landmark book High-Impact Consulting, Robert H. Schaffer reveals how senior managers unwittingly collude with their consultants to perpetuate the great waste inherent in "the five fatal flaws of conventional consulting." Drawing on his own work with companies-- Motorola, Rio Tinto, IBM, General

Reinsurance Corporation, The World Bank, and other successful organizations-- Schaffer offers a field-tested approach to working with consultants that has proven to get results. He identifies the key elements of an effective project design, particularly that project objectives are defined in terms of client results rather than just consultant deliverables. The process enables clients to be certain that the work is carried out in ways that ensure success.

"If senior executives are going to spend large sums of money for internal consultants or outside firms, you need to be clear about the actions you must take to avoid disappointments and to make sure that expert advice is translated into tangible, bottom-line improvements. This book offers many practical ideas on how to do that." — George M. C. Fisher, former chairman and CEO, Eastman Kodak Company "Most consulting is practiced in ways that are doomed to failure. If you use expert advisers, whether from your staff or from a consulting firm, this book provides plenty of insight on how you can increase the odds of a high payback." — Lawrence J. Toole, former senior vice president and manager, human resources, GE Capital "The allure of using consultants for tough business problems is fraught with risk. As Bob Schaffer explains, the relationships between business managers and consultants frequently end in disappointment. High-Impact Consulting should be read by all managers about to use a consultant, and by those consultants who want results as well as fees." — John H. Biggs, chairman and CEO, TIAA-CREF "Effective consultants, whether external or on company staff, must sell and deliver significant and measurable results. Too often what is delivered is just advice and activity. Bob Schaffer tells client executives how to demand stretch results and teaches consultants how to change their practice to deliver them. His approach works." — C. Richard Larrick, manager, mill improvement process, Georgia-Pacific Corporation; former president, Paper Industry Management Association

From the Publisher "If senior executives are going to spend large sums of money for internal consultants or outside firms, you need to be clear about the actions you must take to avoid disappointments and to make sure that expert advice is translated into tangible, bottom-line improvements. This book offers many practical ideas on how to do that." — George M. C. Fisher, former chairman and CEO, Eastman Kodak Company "Most consulting is practiced in ways that are doomed to failure. If you use expert advisers, whether from your staff or from a consulting firm, this book provides plenty of insight on how you can increase the odds of a high payback." — Lawrence J. Toole, former senior vice president and manager, human resources, GE Capital "The allure of using consultants for tough business problems is fraught with risk. As Bob Schaffer explains, the relationships between business managers and consultants frequently end in disappointment. High-Impact Consulting should be read by all managers about to use a consultant, and by those consultants who want results as well as fees." — John H. Biggs, chairman and CEO, TIAA-CREF "Effective consultants, whether external or on company staff, must sell and deliver significant and measurable results. Too often what is delivered is just advice and activity. Bob Schaffer tells client executives how to demand stretch results and teaches consultants how to change their practice to deliver them. His approach works." — C. Richard Larrick, manager, mill improvement process, Georgia-Pacific Corporation; former president, Paper Industry Management Association

From the Inside Flap Even though corporate clients continue to spend millions of dollars on consultant-based solutions, the success rate of these high-priced remedies is far from what it should be. No matter how wise and creative the input of a consultant, says Robert H. Schaffer, it will pay off only if the client does what is necessary to benefit from the advice. But often there's a big "implementation gap" between what client's must do to make a project succeed and what they are actually able and willing to do. In this new and revised edition of the landmark book *High-Impact Consulting*, Robert H. Schaffer reveals how senior managers unwittingly collude with their consultants to perpetuate the great waste inherent in "the five fatal flaws of conventional consulting." Drawing on his own work with companies — Motorola, Rio Tinto, IBM, General Reinsurance Corporation, The World Bank, and other successful organizations — Schaffer offers a field-tested approach to working with consultants that has proven to get results. He identifies the key elements of an effective project design, particularly that project objectives are defined in terms of client results rather than just consultant deliverables. The process enables clients to be certain that the work is carried out in ways that ensure success. The author explains the importance of accomplishing results quickly and then using these "rapid-cycle wins" as vehicles for sharpening management skills, strengthening work disciplines, and introducing new technology. In addition he tells managers and consultants how they can build on these early successes and tackle larger accomplishments and organization wide improvements. This thoroughly updated edition features valuable new insights and illustrative cases. It also includes a wealth of practical new tools that make the book a user-friendly, quick reference for both client managers and their consultants.