

## Editor's Note

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Welcome to this second issue of the *Journal of Practical Consulting* (JPC). In this issue, we continue our attempt to broaden the definition and understanding of consulting. The articles gathered here reflect on topics that are critical to the practice of consulting. Livit's article, "Are You Really Listening?" alerts us to a problem that clients often raise. As the declared specialists in a particular area, there is always the danger that consultants may take themselves too seriously or be driven by their own particular agendas. The broad messages are that (a) it is not about you; it is about the client and (b) consultants who listen are more likely to be effective.

In "A Brief Examination of the Nature, Contexts, and Causes of Unethical Consultant Behaviors;" the authors explore consulting ethics. Ever since the Enron scandal, we like to think that businesses have been more attentive to issues of values and ethics in business. The consulting profession is not immune from the typical concerns of ethics and could benefit from a closer examination of its practices. Redekop and Heath provide a useful framework discussing consulting ethics and examine some of the causes of unethical consultant behaviors.

In the same way that ethics has become a hot-button topic, so too has diversity in the workplace. Partly inspired by an increasing trend toward globalization, many organizations today find it difficult to ignore the importance of culture in the marketplace. In "Diversity as a Competitive Strategy," Cunningham and Green compare two approaches to the introduction of diversity and suggest ways in which consultants and others might usefully help organizations adapt to the emerging cultural needs of the workplace. The authors identify the practical benefits of cultural awareness to the consulting task and organizational effectiveness.

The fourth article in this issue, "The Tower of Babel and the Rally Driver," examines resistance to change which is a perennial problem that consultants face. Cohen employs a metaphor to drive home important points about overcoming resistance in the workplace.

Each of the broad topics covered here: listening, ethics, diversity, and change warrant a special issue which JPC may consider. We will return to these themes in later issues of JPC. Here, we simply introduce themes that define the broad tasks and challenges of consulting. As part of JPC's commitment to defining and refining the practice of consulting, I invite you to suggest other themes or perhaps submit articles of your own. In many ways, because they represent a diverse group of professionals and introduce innovative and creative ideas on many different levels, consultants are the heralds or shock troops of organizational and cultural change. JPC hopes to capture some of this dynamism and extend the community of practicing consultants. Enjoy this issue, and spread the word!