

## Editor's Note

### Painting a Broader Consulting Picture

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Welcome to another issue of the *Journal of Practical Consulting*. To all practicing and would-be practicing consultants, Happy New Year! 2008 offers another opportunity to roll up our sleeves and explore the world of consulting from the inside out as it were. This issue of *JPC* follows our usual broad review of themes and concerns from a variety of different consulting perspectives. The idea is that there is no single way of doing consulting. Expanding the definition and applications of consulting simply reflects what consultants are already doing. Along these lines, the articles in this issue offer useful insights into the field and practice of consulting that should make anyone pause and take note.

Mark Biteler's "When the Client Won't Move" is a provocative analysis of the causes of client resistance. If you have not encountered client resistance, then you are obviously not a practicing consultant. Biteler's article is grounded in established principles of human behavior and offers a thought-provoking twist to approaches that might otherwise be taken for granted. How we leverage what he identifies as the laws of human behavior makes for interesting reading.

Ravi Jayakaran's "A Time to Consult" offers broad strategies for expanding one's consulting career that encompass and yet go beyond the usual advice found on websites and the ABCs of consulting-type texts. A close reading of this article might just be the way to prime your consulting career for 2008.

Jeremiah Koshal takes a decidedly different approach by identifying the potential for "Caring Consultants" and seeing consulting generally as a caring profession. As a particular application of *social consulting*, the author examines the value of kingdom business development and the contribution this makes to both local and global consulting.

Bruce Macdonald rounds off this publication with a message in "Arrogance" that might be acerbic to some and yet, by all indications, is a matter of continuing concern. Macdonald highlights an essential truth: that arrogance gets in the way of effective consulting. I would be very interested in hearing challenges to this position or receiving considered responses to any of the articles that appear in this issue.

As I like to say, consulting is a dynamic activity. The more we practice, the more we learn and unlearn. Checking one's arrogance at the client's door and entering into a relationship

of sharing, caring, and delivering effective solutions should be non-negotiables. The fact that they are not says that *JPC* has a continuing role to play in disseminating information and inviting readers like you to share their practical experiences and sober thoughts on consulting.

To link directly to this journal, go to:

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Once again, enjoy!

## When the Client Won't Move: Understanding the Causes of Resistance by Leveraging the Laws of Human Behavior

Mark C. Biteler

*Aubrey Daniels International*

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As internal champions of change or those that work as outside consultants, we may have worked for clients and companies that have asked us to secure improvements in results only to find that our recommendations are taken half-heartedly or rejected outright. Our front-end assessment of the situation and the organization's culture using pinpointed tools such as surveys or onsite observation indicated a course of action. We may have conferred with key organizational leaders to establish alignment and uncovered the business drivers that were foundational for establishing the "why" to justify the effort and investment required to move to a new level of performance. We reviewed management communications and interviewed leaders at each level of the organization. All of this to make sure we were on target with our recommendations, and still the leaders would not move. Why? The author will offer key insights based upon 80 years of research within the field of behavior analysis.

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**W**hy would an executive of a successful company invest significant money with a consulting firm or alternatively, hire a full-time internal champion only to choose not to embrace the recommendations that are made? The answer to that question can be as varied as the personalities involved. Objections can range from being too expensive, to being "inappropriate for our group," or the definitive "that would never work here." When consultants hit the proverbial brick wall with a client or prospective client, they normally look for clues as to what the root cause of the resistance is. They assume, and rightfully so, that something has been missed. Possibly a question was not asked that should have been. Sometimes we are successful in uncovering the foundation of a leader's concerns; however, other times we seem unable to discover what the real concern is.

Applying the principles of human behavior from a scientific point of view can be useful in these situations. The late B. F. Skinner, the eminent Harvard professor, conducted research and developed theories related to why people do what they do. Using that body of work as a foundation, Aubrey C. Daniels developed a systematic methodology that allows us to practically apply the principles that Skinner formulated.

### Consequences: What They Are and Why They Are Important

Foundationally, “people do what they do because of what happens to them when they do it” (Daniels, 2000, p. 25). In other words, it is all about the consequences people experience following a behavior. Daniels stated, “Technically defined, behavioral consequences are those things and events that follow a behavior and change the probability that the behavior will be repeated in the future” (p. 25). Consequences are neither good nor bad; they are simply defined by their impact on behavior. Every person that we work with has a history of consequences that they bring to a current situation. For example, Bill was asked by his manager to develop an approach that would solve a performance issue. Bill spent hours developing an approach and then pitched the idea, only to have it rejected outright. If that happens two or three times in a row, Bill may not be ready to march up the hill again! In this case, the consequences that Bill has experienced are influencing Bill’s behavior. The ABC (**A**ntecedent-**B**ehavior-**C**onsequence) model is useful in understanding the affect on Bill’s behavior (Daniels, p. 35):

#### A: B → C

- **Antecedent:** Something that comes before a behavior that sets the stage for the behavior to occur at least once.
- **Behavior:** What the person says or does.
- **Consequence:** What happens to the performer during or immediately after the behavior?

In Bill’s case, the *antecedent* is the request from his boss to develop an approach. Bill writes a proposal, the *behavior*, and his boss rejects his proposal (*consequence*). As we mentioned earlier, if this happens to Bill repeatedly after he spends time and effort creating proposals and new approaches only to have them rejected, unless Bill enjoys these journeys of futility, the likelihood that he will stop developing proposals increases. We can say that the consequences that are being delivered by Bill’s boss have influenced Bill’s behavior and will now guide him in his future behavior, which is to say that past consequences have now become antecedents for future behavior. Future requests from Bill’s boss, in all likelihood, will not have the same effect on Bill’s behavior. This simple example begins to answer the question as to why a leader may be reluctant to move forward with our recommendations or in the worst case, reject them outright.

### The Practical Application of the ABC Model

From a behavioral science point of view, our recommendations—no matter how brilliant they are, are nothing more than antecedents. They are designed to trigger, prompt, or queue the leader to take action and make a decision. However, the research suggests antecedents are only partially responsible (approximately 20%) for causing the targeted behavior to occur. Our proposals, reports, meetings, e-mails, and phone conversations act as antecedents. The solution to the problem may be in shifting our attention to the *right* side of the ABC model. The research consistently validates the position that consequences play a much more powerful role, upwards of 80%, in managing future behavior.

An antecedent, in this case, our proposal, is necessary for the leader to make a decision, but it is the leader's history of consequences or the consequences that they perceive will occur, that will ultimately guide their behavior to move forward.

If we are honest, we can see the ABC principle working in our own lives. A simple example would be the reason we have coffee in the morning. It may be because we enjoy the taste or because it makes us feel more alert. Consequences, such as taste and/or feeling, keep us going back for more. We may go to a new restaurant based upon the recommendation of a friend (antecedent), but if we have a bad experience (consequence) with the restaurant staff or the food does not meet our expectations, we probably will not be back...unless we enjoy poor service and bad food! Clearly, antecedents trigger behavior, but it is the consequences that either increase or decrease the probability that we will engage in that behavior again.

It has been suggested that organizational practitioners need to know the lay of the land before charting a course (Cohen, 2007). Leveraging the ABC model can help us better determine the topography of an organization. It suggests that our front-end assessment include questions and dedicated efforts that are designed to uncover the organizational consequences that a leader, group of leaders, and their followers are, or have historically operated under. This goes beyond looking for the proverbial *points of pain*. Ultimately, our goal is to understand the flow or rippling effect of consequences through each level of the organization.

Working with a leading engine manufacturer, I was involved in selling large capital equipment related to measuring finished engine components prior to final assembly. The builder I was representing was a smaller player in the business and we were, it appeared, hopelessly outgunned. However, one of the most critical components of the engine was the crankshaft, which was extremely complicated to gage. In conversations with the manager responsible for the crankshaft line, I suggested that he would run a high level of risk (a negative consequence with a high level of certainty) in awarding the crankshaft project to our competitor if they wanted it delivered on time. As it turned out, he was very concerned about a delayed delivery, and all other things being equal, the perceived risk and related consequence drove him to award the sale to my builder. How do I know? He mentioned it when he awarded the order.

Consequences are consistently molding our client's decision-making behavior, and we are now engaged at a point when consequences will shape their decision (knowingly or unknowingly) regarding our recommendations. To fail to understand the history of consequences that a leader has experienced or is currently working under, is to miss a significant piece of the puzzle as to "why" a manager may or may not make a particular decision.

### **Consequences and Resistance to Change**

We could say that leaders and their followers are simply resistant to change, which is a typical fall-back position. Common sense suggests that leaders will resist change because they may not want change themselves. But is that view correct? The ABC model suggests that we will embrace change if the new behavior we are asked to engage in is likely to provide positive consequences. Let us take a moment to look at this practically.

How many of us go to the same restaurant for lunch every day, eat the same food at each meal or wear the same style or color of clothes every day? We may be creatures of habit, but we are constantly on the lookout for change and variety that we can bring into our lives. Why? Because we perceive that these things will make our lives better, more enjoyable, or more meaningful. How many times have operators been trained in the proper execution of a standard

operating procedure and the engineer or supervisor finds that they are deviating from the steps that are clearly outlined because they found a better way? We, and others, tend to embrace change when the consequences work for us. How much more does this principle work for the leaders we are working with?

This brings us back to our proposals, recommendations, and conversations we have with clients. If they provide consequences that are beneficial, where the client finds that their conversations with us are useful and helpful because we are providing accurate information, etc, we begin to shape our client's history of consequences working with us. The question remains: Have we anticipated the types of consequences that our plan or strategy will cause them to experience? What about their followers? Can we, and should we, address how the positive and negative consequences can and should be managed? The answer is yes. However, we cannot do that without understanding more fully the laws of human behavior as it relates to consequences.

Daniels (2000) put forth the following illustration that allows us to better understand consequences from a behavioral perspective.

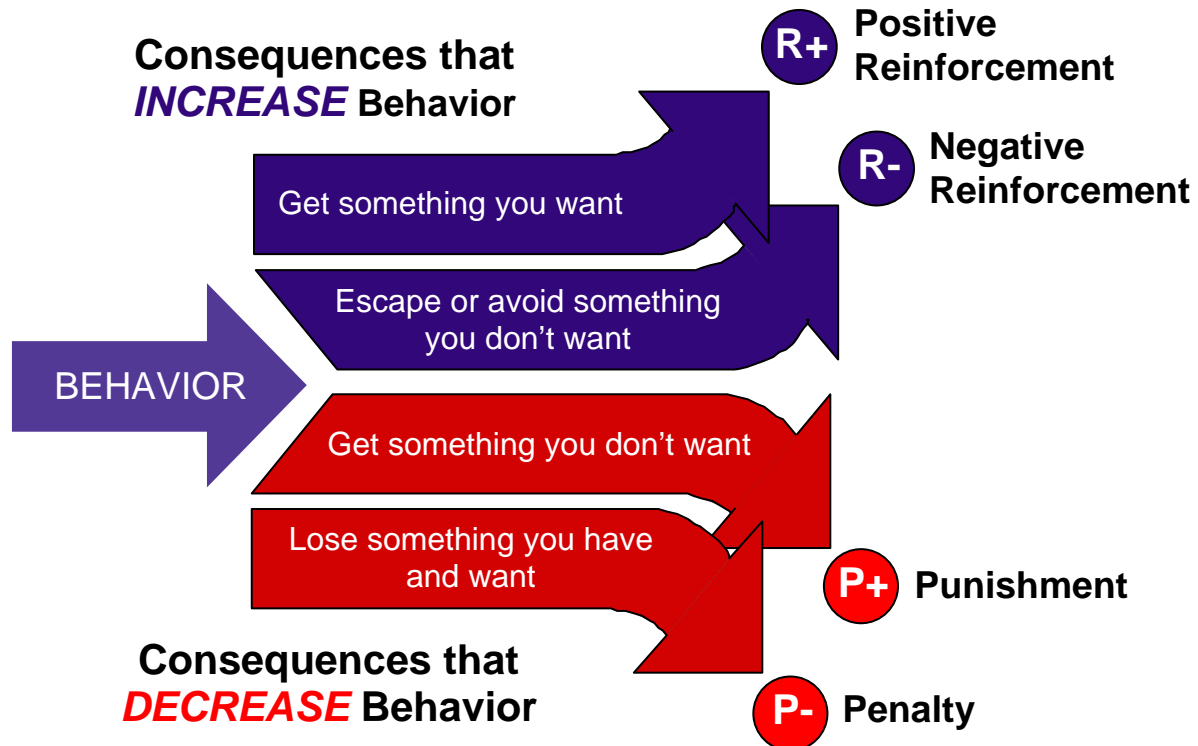


Figure 1. Aubrey Daniels International © 2007—Used with specific written permission of ADI. May not be used without the written permission of ADI in part or full.

The figure illustrates that there are four types of consequences. Two types of consequences, positive and negative reinforcement, increase the probability that the behavior will occur again; two decrease behavior, which are punishment and penalty. In the context of our discussion, a question presents itself—what types of consequences are most likely to occur for the leader, the staff and, just as important, for their followers—if our recommendations are embraced? Unless we can begin to engage and probe for those answers with our client's help, we run a high risk of failure. We must probe not only for the types of consequences that will occur,

but we must put forth consequences that can and should be inserted into the equation that will allow the leaders and their followers to experience more positive reinforcement than other types of consequence. Aubrey Daniels (2000) classified consequences in three dimensions (p. 36):

1. *Type: Positive (P) or negative (N)*. We ask the question, “Is the consequence positive or negative from the perspective of the performer?”
2. *Timing: Immediate (I) or future (F)*. Here we want to know if the consequence will occur as the behavior is happening (immediate) or some time later (future).
3. *Probability: Certain (C) or uncertain (U)*. This dimension expresses the probability that the performer will actually experience the consequence.

In addition, once we combine the type, timing, and probability of a consequence, research has established their relative power, as outlined in Figure 2 (Daniels & Daniels, 2004, p. 46).

## ***The Relative Power of Consequences***

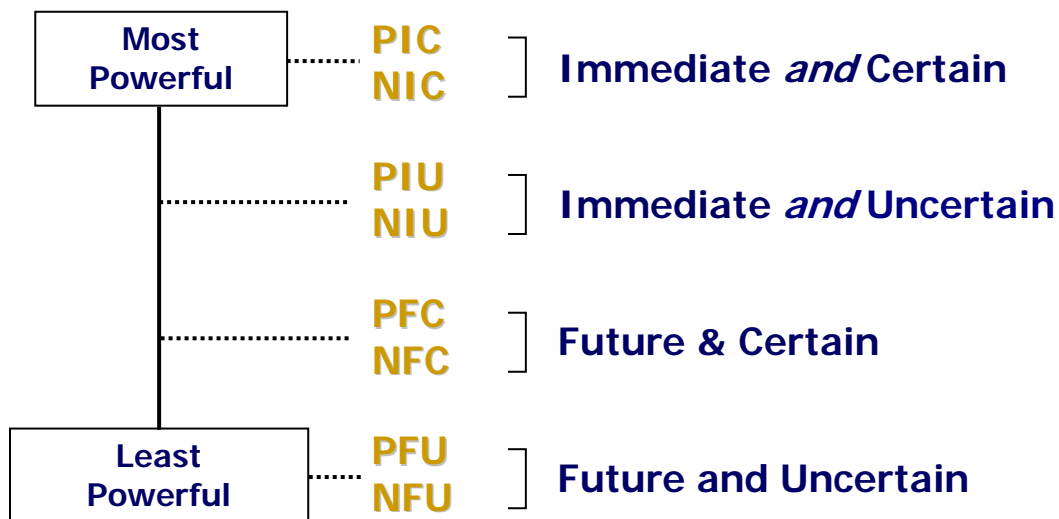


Figure 2. Aubrey Daniels International © 2007—Used with specific written permission of ADI. May not be used without the written permission of ADI in part or full.

Working with a global leader in telecommunications, we worked with their internal champion in implementing 290 projects—91% were related to improving quality, productivity, and morale. The projects focused primarily on manufacturing, research, and design issues. The client expected a 4:1 return, which we exceeded. The success and popularity of the program drove the number of projects to well over 400. The success was tremendous and highly publicized internally; however, one hurdle remained—the president achieved significant results in all key areas of the business, but was unwilling to require using the methodology throughout the company.

The opportunity came to present the results at a staff meeting. As good as our results were, we knew that the president's staff was resistant to using our methodology for a number of personal and political reasons. To secure their involvement, we knew a consensus would be needed. At the end of the presentation, the president expressed his appreciation and addressed his staff, saying that if they *wanted* to use the methodology in their organizations, they should feel free to do so. Those that were resistant now had an out. The battle had been lost.

As we debriefed, it became clear that we had missed a critical consequence that the president was facing due to late deliveries. Negative reinforcement was being used by the corporate leadership—which would typically be called a “point of pain.” Our presentation did not include recommendations for improving the on-time delivery that had a variety of root causes. We had addressed everything except what was critical to the person that could have required using our approach. Our team could have easily demonstrated that the consequences he was facing—negative, immediate, and certain (NICs), could have been shifted to PICs—positive, immediate, and certain consequences. It is not enough for consultants to expound on positive results that can be secured with a particular solution. The immediacy and the certainty of the results we believe can be realized should also be discussed and reviewed.

If we look at our clients as investors, which we should do if they are concerned with a return on their investment, additional behavioral research can be helpful. Robert Olsen (2007) in his article, “Investors’ Predisposition for Annuities: A Psychological Perspective,” suggested, “another factor that has risk implications of an affective nature is ‘familiarity.’ Other things being equal, objects or processes that appear familiar are feared less and are perceived as less threatening, even where the outcome is expected to be negative” (p. 54). This supports the thought that historical consequences, those familiar to our client, will undoubtedly effect their perception of the relative “safety” of our approach. Olsen goes on to suggest that even when we can “guarantee” high levels of measurable results within a certain amount of time, our client may be more interested in minimizing risk.

### Conclusions

In summary, the following recommendations have been made based upon research in the field of behavioral science.

1. Leverage the ABC model to better understand the drivers behind a client's predisposition to your approach.
2. Investigate the possible sources of consequences that the client may experience if they were to move forward with your recommendations. Simply asking questions such as, “What keeps you up at night?” or “Where are the points of pain?” does not go far enough.
3. Remember that
  - a. Research validates the position that consequences, not antecedents, have a stronger influence on behavior.
  - b. The most powerful consequences are PICs and NICs.
4. Consequences minimizing risk may, in fact, be more “reinforcing” and therefore more apt to gain approval than those providing a high level of return but with a degree of uncertainty in the mind of the client.



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**About the Author**

Mark Biteler is a human performance consultant and vice president of business development with Aubrey Daniels International. He has worked across a range of industries in the U.S. and Canada and currently focuses on leadership development.

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## A Time to Consult: Strategies for Expanding Your Strategic Consulting Career

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Consulting is an equal opportunities employer and an option that virtually every professional has considered at one time or another. Combining the right blend of experience, skill, and interest helps one move to the next level in their consulting career. Today, the demand is for *strategic consultants* who bring a cutting-edge quality of leadership to what they do. This article explores the broad scope of what it takes to be a consultant and offers some basic advice on effective consulting.

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Consultancy is a unique professional service that has not been sufficiently explored and investigated as a means of critical leadership development. All over the globe, consultants interface with cutting-edge organizations. These professionals are involved in engagements where the change strategy may be unclear. They help to provide services that are missing or weakly represented within the organization. Consultants bid or apply for consultancies based on available options in the market and let the TOR (Terms of Reference) determine their work choice and work profile. In the initial stages of the profession, there may be a need to accept a few “income-generating consultancies” that may not fit the area of growth one seeks. However, this need not be the case if one takes the time to plan strategically.

Consultants have growth and development needs. They are not merely high-tech, high-cost service providers. While many types of consulting provide opportunities for earning significant fees, this is not the ultimate purpose of consulting. In many ways, the job provides opportunities for consultants to experience compressed, high-speed learning in a short period of time. It provides opportunities for individuals to work in multiple country contexts, varied situations, and on high-impact issues where results can be seen immediately.

Since consultancies typically cost organizations a great deal, clients usually ensure that their staff is made available to the consultant. In an ideal situation, the engagement will also provide contact with the highest level of leadership and access to critical documents. As an illustration, when facilitating strategic planning for government departments, bi-lateral organizations or INGOs (International Non Government Organizations), a short-term consultancy can provide as much senior-level management experience and perspective expansion to a consultant that would have come from working for an organization for 2 years. The work of

the consultant is normally concentrated and intense, requiring a degree of diligence and hard work in the form of reading, research, discussions, and interaction at various levels.

### **Vital Elements of a Strategic Consulting Career**

Listed here are vital elements that every consultant should take into account when planning their strategic consulting career:

#### *1. Timing*

There is an appropriate time for launching out as a consultant. The decision requires a lot of advanced planning and relationship building with individuals and organizations. An important thing to bear in mind is that many contacts within organizations are unlikely to be in that position for longer than 2-3 years. That is the typical shelf life of a contact. Armed with this knowledge as a prospective consultant, you should begin developing contacts at least 2 years before you plan to start consulting. Also, be aware that the bulk of consulting requests tend to come in the third and fourth quarters of the fiscal year.

Knowing the right time or the appropriate stage in your career to launch out as a consultant is very important. The best stage is probably after you have at least 8-10 years of experience in the field in which you wish to consult. This means you should be somewhere around upper middle management or senior management. Launching out at this stage will enable you to secure the more important consultancies, where you will not merely be putting together predetermined research data or collecting it. Starting out too early in your career will usually result in low paying, high labor intensive, and usually thankless consultancies where you are likely to get pushed around.

#### *2. Interest and Expertise*

It is important to be involved in consultancies that are directly related to your field of interest and expertise. After working for several years, you should be aware of your interests and the dimensions of development that are most interesting to you. It is important to realize that “expertise” does not necessarily relate to academic training or educational preparation. Over the course of my career, I met and interacted with an expert in participatory development, a subject that was far removed from the areas in which I received my technical training. Today, I am passionate about participatory development and most of my work remains related to this aspect of development.

Consultancies provide the opportunity for focus and attendance to critical issues. This can make a consulting engagement enjoyable, interesting, and deeply satisfying. As every consultant will know (or eventually discover), finding that perfect organization—one that is consistent with the individual’s long term goal and vision, that has a regional or global perspective—can be a real challenge. The reality is that the opportunity will usually occur but once in a lifetime. Being a consultant provides you with the unique luxury of waiting, learning, and gaining experience (and hopefully being handsomely compensated) while you wait. At the same time, do not wait forever. When the opportunity comes to make the transition into the “dream dimension” of that perfectly aligned organization—take it.

### 3. *Range and Scope*

In selecting the type of consulting assignments to accept, search for a wide range of issues within your area of interest. Try not to get locked into doing the same thing over and over. Besides experiencing boredom, this is likely to lead to a “type casting” of your services in the eyes of potential clients. Before long, similar offers will follow, which the hungry consultant always accepts. However, the consultant soon finds it difficult to break out of a pre-cast mold. It is important to recognize that each organization has its own work culture and working pattern.

Exposure to a wide range of organizations inculcates flexibility and adaptability, and generates maturity. Attempts should also be made to consult at different levels of development (micro-meso-macro). Over time, this has the effect of widening one’s perspective: enabling the consultant to get a better handle on macro development issues. Figure 1 offers a visual representation of the diverse micro-meso-macro consulting opportunities.

In Figure 1, each concentric circle represents a higher level of development starting within the context of community development where interactions are with individuals, families, or mini-communities (sub-groups). At a wider or higher level, this then moves into the realm of community development; the next level moves to macro development. As the circle widens, determining issues become those of macroeconomics, politics, and understanding of the role of worldview, ideology, and values dimensions in development. Beginning with community development, as one backs up into the ever-widening concentric circles (see Figure 1), one sees the link that each of these has to issues that determine facilitators and retarders to progress in development.

### 4. *Income Management*

While consulting, it is necessary to be in a position to say ‘no’ to consultancies that do not fit into your plans for growth and development. This means you will need to have at least some backup resources to see you through the lean years when you are responsible for all expenditures and income is limited or non-existent. Basic expenditures usually involve the cost of running a small office with up-to-date technology for communication and documentation. If a spouse is working, this can be a great help. Every time you are paid for consulting work, set aside some “rainy day” funds to see you through times when you have to turn down work that is not aligned to your personal growth strategy.

This also calls for some degree of rationalizing on fees. Do a little research in your context to see what other consultants are charging for their service and then you can establish the optimum rate to charge. While it is important to not be prohibitive in charging, do not cheapen yourself by charging too little. You will discover that undercharging is counterproductive. If you do want to give an organization a special rate, go ahead and charge at your normal rate, but give the organization a special discount on the total. They then become aware of what you are doing for them. I have always made it a point to provide free consultancy services for some organizations that I know will never be able to afford a consultant. In many instances, a string of paying consultancies has followed this free work. (However, never let this be your motivation for providing free consultancies!)

## The Expanding Horizons of Development:

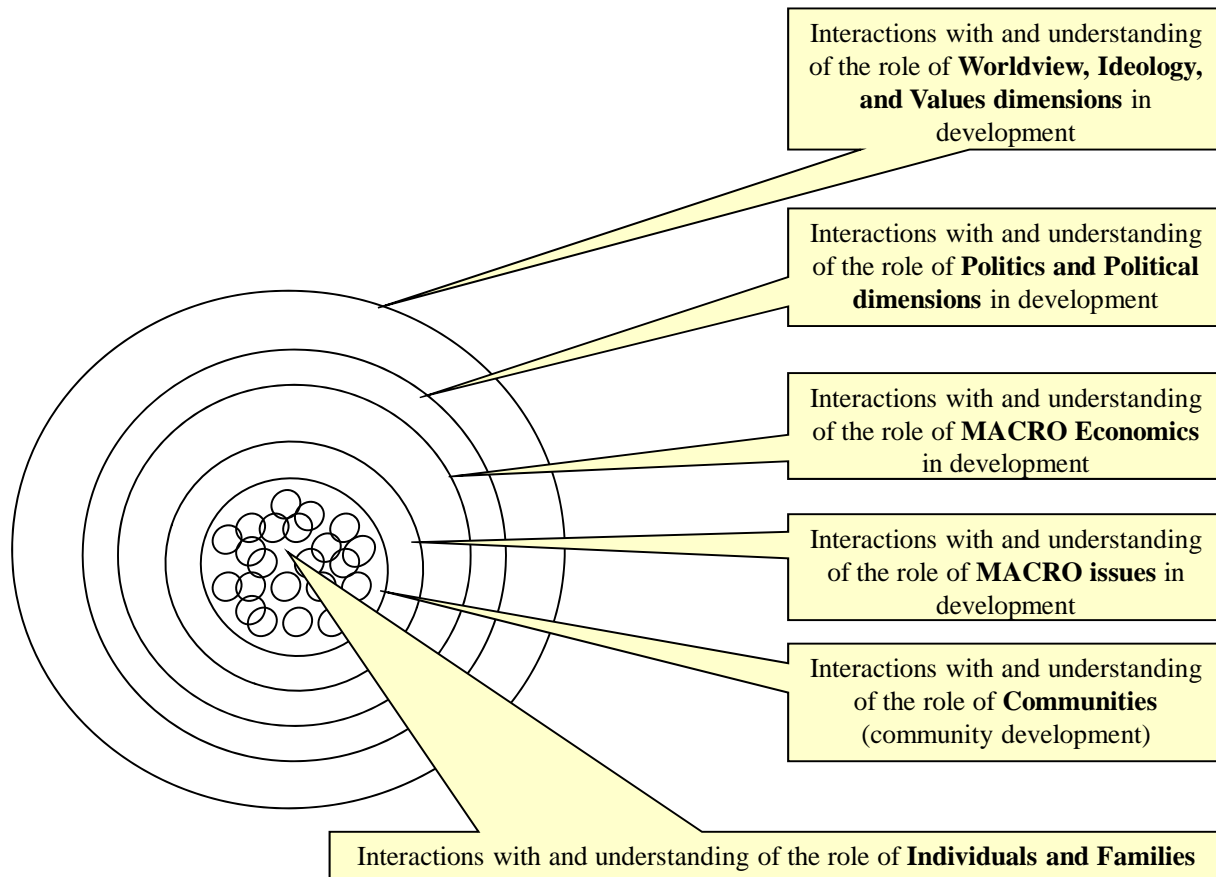


Figure 1. The link between Micro-Meso-Mega issues in development.

### 5. Reflection

While working on intensive consultancies, you will sometimes be working 16 to 18 hours a day. Toward the end of the consultancy, this time will largely be devoted to a lot of analysis and report writing. The momentum of this “fast-forward mode” can be maintained, even after the consultancy, and harnessed for getting some of that long-pending writing work completed. Allow for gaps between consultancies to do this reflection, analysis, and writing work. Initially, some of this may only be in the form of doodling or “saying in your own words” what you have read or learned from the consultancy. Gradually, try to use these thoughts to write articles and expand your own development framework.

## 6. Rest and Renewal

Plan for and organize your consultancy calendar carefully. Allocate a maximum of 60-70% of the time in a year for actually being involved in consulting. An important thing to remember is to make time for rest in between consultancies. This can be achieved by blocking off vacation time on an annual calendar before it begins to get clogged up with assignments. Work around these blocked dates and tell those who ask that you are already committed to other plans.

### Important Reminders

1. The client is the ultimate stakeholder. Basically, it is not about you, but about them.
2. Take advantage of every “hands-on” consulting opportunity, even at a late stage in your career.
3. Do not be lured by the client or handsome remuneration to neglect that you have a life outside of consulting. Consulting can easily lead to exhaustion and burn out, so do not do it all your life!
4. Consider these steps to plan your next strategic consulting move.

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### About the Author

Ravi Jayakaran, Ph.D. has written several books on integrated development programs and the use of participatory methodology. Several of these have been completed in instalments between consultancies, including his latest book entitled *Facilitating Child Participation in the Development Process*. Besides working long term for several international NGOs, Dr. Jayakaran has also consulted for the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the UNDP, and several Global organizations. Dr. Jayakaran is passionate about issues of participatory development, rapid assessment, and research. He has recently developed a tool called the OQ2AE Summary (Overall Qualitative and Quantitative Assessment and Evaluation summary). This is a methodology that brings both the qualitative assessment and quantitative evaluations into one common summary that can be depicted in the form of a graph and is used for the assessment and evaluation of the HIV/AIDS awareness program of the MoEYS (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) in Cambodia. Dr. Jayakaran is based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia where his wife Vimla is a teacher at the International School of Phnom Penh.

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## Caring Consultants and Kingdom Business Development

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With approximately one billion people around the world being unable to afford basic subsistence living and another 1.5 billion lacking basic amenities, kingdom businesses are helping make both an economic, as well as, a spiritual impact in developing countries. Kingdom businesses are businesses started by Christians that pursue a multiple strategy: profitability and sustainability, and job creation and income generation. In a world mired by endemic corruption and an absence of moral values, kingdom business consultants, with their caring and other-centered attitude, are teaching business owners not only how to grow and be more profitable, but also how to multiply their efforts through ethical and honorable business practices. By using their business acumen to interact with people from all circles—business and government—kingdom business consultants are able to transform society by impacting national policies through a myriad of ways.

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Approximately one billion people around the world today (mostly in developing countries) are described as “the poorest of the poor” or the “extreme poor.” These people are not in a position to afford basic subsistence living. There are roughly another 1.5 billion people who are described as the “poor.” This group lives above mere subsistence. In other words, though death is not at their door, chronic financial hardship and a lack of basic amenities—such as drinking water and functioning latrines—are the realities of their daily lives (Sachs, 2005). This means that a majority of the people in the developing world are deeply concerned about their finances—how they can earn enough to live, feed their families, access basic medical help, and even break free from the bonds of poverty.

Endemic poverty (i.e., living below the poverty line) exists in developing countries due to a myriad of problems, including:

1. Corruption—the misuse of public power for private gain (Gaviria, 2002; Neelankavil, 2002; Wilhelm, 2002)
2. The absence of ethics or morals in business
3. An inability to access books, learn marketing, strategic planning, and leadership training which would help individuals grow their businesses

Many from both developed and developing countries argue that endemic poverty will be solved through vibrant economic activity—not grant projects run by governments and

multilateral agencies, nor the small, piecemeal interventions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (George, 2006). But what kind of economic activity can rid developing countries of poverty? Is it pure capitalism? Probably not. Many peg their hope on *kingdom business*.

### **What is a Kingdom Business and What Does a Kingdom Business Consultant Do?**

Around the world, most business owners make the mistake of falling in love with their own ideas, products, or services. They forget about their customers, employees, and the communities around them. In other words, they only care about how the success of their products or services will impact their own lives. However, those businesses that change their purpose to bring the utmost benefit to the customers, employees, and the surrounding communities are bound to bring about long-lasting economic, social, and spiritual transformation.

Kingdom business consultants teach business owners not only how to grow and be more profitable, but also how to multiply their efforts through ethical and honorable business practices. Kingdom businesses pursue a multiple strategy (Eldred, 2005):

1. Profitability and sustainability
2. Job creation and income generation

#### *Profitability and Sustainability*

Kingdom businesses recognize the dual purpose of business: where individuals operate with integrity, treat employees fairly, provide high quality products and services, and offer a livelihood for business owners and employees (Ewert, 2006; Rundle & Steffen, 2003). In a kingdom business, the business purpose is larger and deeper than mere financial profit—though making a profit is still a priority.

#### *Job Creation and Income Generation*

Greater participation of businesses in the economies of developing countries will bring needed economic growth by contributing significantly to the provision of productive employment opportunities, the generation of income, and ultimately, the reduction of poverty (Luetkenhorst, 2004). Kingdom businesses stress the strategy of creating jobs and wealth for the local people as a way to eradicate poverty (Claydon, 2004; Johnson & Rundle, 2006). Since most developing countries are experiencing high unemployment, many people would be very open to being part of a business mentorship program, where they are taught how to make money and create jobs while growing in the practices of integrity and excellence. Kingdom consultants teach business owners how to dedicate the mission of their businesses to the best interests of the employees, the customers, and the stakeholders. Furthermore, every stakeholder is treated with dignity and respect, and not simply as a means of profit (Eldred, 2005).

### **What is the Impact of Kingdom Business Consultants upon Societal Transformation?**

Most ordinary business owners ask, “What is in it for me in this business?” A kingdom business owner or consultant instead asks, “What can I do to make the lives of all the stakeholders better?” That is what sets kingdom business owners or consultants apart from



everyone else. Kingdom business consultants equip others to achieve greater potential in their lives by working wholeheartedly with faith, hope, and love. All aspects of a business are considered to be a potential ministry and a subject of prayer and grace.

Kingdom business consultants are able to affect the policies and directions not only of businesses, but also indirectly impact national policies. Because successful businesspeople are looked upon favorably and are respected by people in developing countries, they are able to rub shoulders with public decision-makers, and in the process make a meaningful contribution to laws and policies. Such laws and policies have an exponential impact on society in the long run (Smith, 1998). This happens when kingdom business consultants train protégés who are able to spread their influence throughout political and social systems. Furthermore, governments are better off dealing with successful individuals than someone without any track record (Lai, 1998).

Thus, kingdom business consultants can affect change in developing countries by:

- Teaching businesses to offer further education and training, along with incentives to their employees, to help them grow in knowledge and expertise.
- Encouraging businesses to pay their taxes to contribute to the cost of improving infrastructure and partnering with other organizations for education and other forms of community development in the rural areas.
- Assisting businesses to model integrity and to resist and expose government corruption by refusing to pay bribes. They can form business coalitions and partnerships with NGOs and other community-based organizations in order to improve their lobbying efforts with the government.
- Inspiring businesses to model innovation in the marketplace by creative marketing and customer service.
- Evaluating outcomes: business owners and staff understand that integrity is the only way to do business; the business is successful and growing; their reputation in the community is one of a high standard of ethics; and a ripple-effect of good business practices spreads throughout the business community

For all of these reasons, kingdom business and kingdom business consultants offer a valuable resource to developing nations. Their example of integrity and practical skills, including specialized training along with job creation, help to impact these nations for good.

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### About the Author

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## Practitioner's Corner

### Arrogance: Who Needs It?

Bruce Macdonald  
*Renewal Consulting*

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Every year, I am invited to the island of Hokkaido, Japan to lecture on leadership development to a group of students from a small institution located near the city of Sapporo. On average, I spend about two weeks with the student body. For me, it is one of the highlights of the year. On a particular trip in October 2006, I was privileged to speak to a group within the city of Eniwa—about an hour outside Sapporo. After my lecture on innovation, I had a memorable conversation where I mentioned that one of the problems with Americans traveling overseas is the tendency to behave as if they had all the answers. The woman I spoke with agreed emphatically and went on to share her personal experience with Americans.

Over the years, I have been able to conduct a number of values surveys both in the United States and Japan. Only in Japan was humility selected as a coveted value. In the U.S., humility never came close to being chosen as a desired ideal. Could this offer a clue as to why American consultants traveling overseas may be perceived as arrogant?

The value of engaging with local culture is obvious (at least it should be). While the influence of power is always at the back of the consulting relationship, most consultants should realize the need to minimize power as a variable in the consultant-client relationship. No matter the culture or location of a client, consultants should consider how humility could make a difference in their relationships.

George Washington, an unlikely source for this topic, realized that power had the ability to corrupt. The general who would later become the nation's first president acknowledged his lack of education and military experience when accepting his new role in the American Revolution. Few consultants would dream of acknowledging their ignorance. General Washington also understood that real power was vested in elected officials in Congress. Whether he saw these officials as the true clients—representatives of the people—is debatable. What is clear is the *otherness* or outward focus of his leadership style. But aren't consultants supposed to be the experts? Now may be a good time to heed the notion that "it's not about you, it's about them" seriously. In his speech to Congress on June 16, 1775, Washington declared:

I am truly sensible of the high honor done me in this appointment, yet I feel great distress from a consciousness that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important trust. . . . But lest some unlucky event should happen unfavorable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room that I this day declare with the utmost sincerity, I do not think of myself equal to the command I [am] honored with. (McCullough, 2005, p. 49)

Consultants seldom make speeches. While they may declare their intentions and passions to clients at briefing and planning meetings, it is usually their reports, proposals, and recommendations that speak. In this regard, self-effacement typically runs contrary to the consultant's self interest.

Consultants should be lifelong learners who approach the consulting task with a sense of wonder. An open mind and willingness to learn while indicating one's lack of knowledge can become a springboard for stimulating conversations with a client, yielding useful and unexpected insights. Declaring a willingness to learn (and, where necessary, unlearn) displays a vulnerability that may run counter to the commonly preferred model of expert consulting. However, it also reveals a more honest approach. Remember, consulting is less about the tools and techniques, but more about the attitude, and above all, the relationship. I believe that this plays into the current demand for values-based consulting or for consultants who are authentic about who they are, what they represent, and ultimately, what they are able to deliver. Put simply, the best consultants lead humbly with their hearts as opposed to arrogantly with their heads.

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### About the Author

Bruce Macdonald, Ph.D. is president of Renewal Consulting, a company that provides educational tutorials on occupational stress awareness and prevention, as well as leadership and personnel development. Dr. Macdonald has conducted seminars throughout the United States as well as in Japan. He has also authored a number of articles pertaining to leadership development. In addition, he is the industry chairman for the Hampton Roads Postal Customer Council.

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