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The Consultant's Role—Why I enjoy taking on multiple assignments

By George Xidon— information technology contractor / January/February 2014—Staffing Industry Review

While there are pros and cons to any type of work arrangement, consulting has provided a platform for me to experience new and exciting career opportunities. It also has provided an environment that promotes the development of meaningful professional relationships across a wide subset of clientele. Here are some observations I have found during my tenure as a consultant.

Variety. Working as a consultant enables me to take on stimulating challenges throughout the year. It also provides exposure through various roles, along with the opportunity to build my personal tool kit. I have enjoyed enhanced credibility within my marketplace due to the depth and breadth of experience consulting has provided me, solidifying my reputation as a subject matter expert. The personal satisfaction associated with working multiple tasks helps keep my work load relevant, and helps to mitigate feelings of stagnation that may come with more traditional roles.

Professional Network. An ancillary benefit to working across multiple projects is the ability to build a network of colleagues from various lines of business in a relatively short amount of time. The visibility consultants are able to get provides an opportunity to meet and work with professionals across multiple levels throughout an organization. Over the course of my career, these relationships have helped me grow and mature and I have applied the professional teachings and guidance to help me become a more effective professional.

Flexibility. For me, consulting provides an element of flexibility that translates to a more productive and healthy work-life balance. This certainly doesn't mean I have a sense of diminished workload and/or accountability. On the contrary, my experience has shown a level of professionalism and trust bestowed upon professional consultants to actively manage their work load appropriately. Of course, all contracts are different, and utilization requirements differ across various staffing firms, clientele and industries. The staffing firm and its client need to ensure the consultant understands the expectations up front before he or she starts the assignment.

In addition, consultants need to remain flexible regarding roles and responsibilities. Often, roles can evolve over time based on client requirements and needs of the organization. There may be additional assignments a consultant has to take on in addition to their daily workload. It's important to maintain a positive attitude and willingness to meet these challenges head on in order to maintain a level of value add for both the client and organization as a whole.

In this vein, staffing firms should also keep up with their consultants' roles as they change to ensure that they continue to be classified correctly.

(continued inside)

The Consultant's Role—Why I enjoy taking on multiple assignments *(Continued from cover)*

Customer. Overall success as a consultant is a mix of the individual and environment. The client's corporate culture needs to embrace contract employees as professional, value-added members of the team in order for us to be successful. If the culture of company perpetuates an "us versus them" mentality, the consultant's — and project's — success will be negligible. All parties need to realize that everyone is working toward a common goal, and leveraging each other's talents will yield greater returns for the organization.

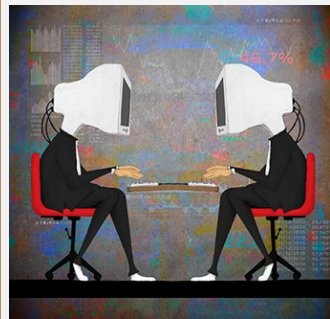
Staffing Firms. Staffing firms have a role to play to ensure mutual success. This is where communication becomes critical. Often, consultants can be an "army of one" in the trenches managing day to day operations. Communications with the staffing provider are crucial to overall individual success. Many have onsite relationship managers, who serve an invaluable role during the onboarding, contractual, and sustainment/growth of their consultants. This is particularly valuable for those new to the workforce or consulting in general. For a consultant to be successful, the staffing firm, customer and the individual have to work together.



Note from our Client/Manager on consultant Frankie (Wilbur) Smith working for a client in VA:

"Mr. Wilbur (Frankie) Smith is an exceptional service provider. I serve the organization by ensuring their IT needs are met. He exceeds the standard every single day; responding to hundreds of requests for assistance. He is here daily, timely, follows-up and follows through to make sure the customer has what they need. He is a professional and takes great pride in his work. He is a pleasure to work with and absolutely the best. I just wanted you to know how much I appreciate his service to our customers. It makes a big difference in my work to have him on our team."

Way to go Frankie! This is not the first time TCM has heard of your exceptional work. Thank you!



The Complete Guide to Mastering Your Video Interview

By Guest Contributor—Posted January 09, 2014

According to a 2011 Aberdeen Group study, two-way virtual interviews are the most common and preferred type of interview for connecting with remote candidates.

How do you ace one of these two-way virtual interviews? For starters, you recognize that it is a real interview. All the same rules of being interviewed in person apply: know the company's background, prepare your answers for difficult questions about yourself. Here are 10 other tips to ensure that you make it through a virtual interview without a hitch:

Before the Interview

1. Download the Required Software for the Interview

Learn how to use it properly. Set up a professional user ID. Practice using the software with a friend to get an idea of how smooth the image and sound flow. Make sure your camera and microphone are working properly. Plan ahead for any difficulties with your internet connection.

2. Carefully Stage your Setting

Arrange your interview area by making sure your desk is cleared of unnecessary items. Be sure your background is clean and uncluttered. To ensure that the interviewer has a clear view of you on his end, check how the lighting will be during the time of day for which your interview is scheduled.

3. Get Rid of Any Distractions

Turn off your telephone notification sounds. Make certain your pets are in an area where they can't be seen or heard barking. Inform your family and friends that you are not to be disturbed for the period of time you are being interviewed.

4. Appearance Counts

Keep in mind that how you look on camera carries the same weight as it would in an in-person interview. Dress appropriately—all the way down to your shoes. You never know when you'll have to get up for something and then caught on camera in your sweat pants.

5. Stand out from your Background

Make it easier for the interviewer to focus on you. A plain, neutral colored wall is best. Or, perhaps, a neat, organized bookshelf as a backdrop will work.

During the interview

6. Eliminate all Distractions for Yourself

Close all your computer's browser windows, except one allowing you to refer back to the company's web site. It's good to have a copy of your resume in front of you, but don't keep referring to it during the interview. You should already be well-versed on its contents. *(Continued on back)*

TCM is currently accepting resumes for Recruiters and Account Executives in our Norwell office. To apply for this position, please send an email letter of application and your resume to resume@tcml.com. The Computer Merchant, Ltd. is an EEO/veteran/disability employer.

Please keep in mind, TCM has a very generous referral program that can earn you from \$500-\$1000 per placement. Certain restrictions apply. Please speak to your Recruiter or AE for full details.





TCM was designated the #1 supplier for Q3 with one of the country's insurance leaders. This was truly a team effort – from Recruiting, Onboarding to Payroll and Accounting, everyone had a hand in making TCM #1 out of 46 suppliers for this prestigious client. Congrats team!

The HR Department has added a new member to the HR team as an HR Administrator - **Karen Mulligan**! Some of you may have worked with Karen during your onboarding process. Karen joined TCM a little over two years ago and has been a tremendous asset to the company with her work in Onboarding, Supplier Services, Contract Review, Document Management and much more! The HR department has been very busy and in need of a staff member familiar with our processes with an eye for compliance - Karen was the perfect fit! She will be involved in all things "HR" while she continues to work with the Onboarding team in a supervisory role. Congratulations Karen!

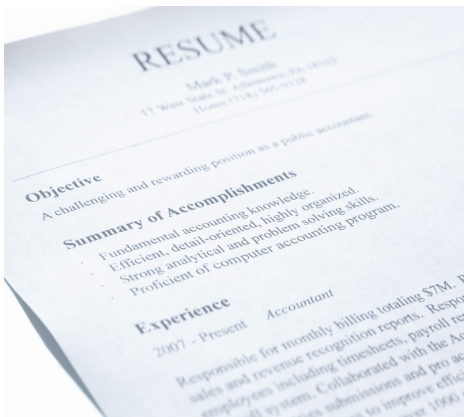
Sent to Scott Parsons, Vice President: *"Good Afternoon Scott...You have an awesome team there and they all should be commended. I directly work with these two individuals, **Logan Ramseyer and Krystal Berntsen**. Both took the time to answer any/all my questions and help me when I needed it.*

*I cannot stress enough what these two individuals and their staff have done. It is rare that someone can boast that they will help and actually deliver or go beyond what is said. You have true assets. The project is winding down at the end of March. I know that **Logan and Krystal** will be there with me every step of the way and I appreciate them for who and what they are. Again, pleasure doing business with TCM."*



Meet the TCM Payroll Team...

From left to right: Kathy Jo Rodick, Chris Bulger, Mary Crager, Jessica Wegner, Kurt Younie. Together these individuals have 55 years of experience at TCM, making sure everyone gets paid, both internal (core) employees and contractors in the field. In 2013 our payroll department issued approximately 4000 paper checks, 34,500 direct deposit vouchers and received close to 7,000 phone calls. Busy place to say the least!!



The worst words to have on your résumé

Unless you want to end up on an employer's "Do not call" list, think twice before you put any of these empty words on your résumé -- they won't accomplish as much as you might hope.

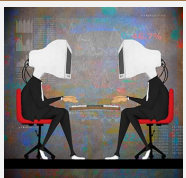
Do you consider yourself a hard worker? A real go-getter? Someone who likes to think outside of the box? Then you're just the type of person who needs to review their résumé ASAP.

A recent CareerBuilder survey found there are some words hiring managers and human resources pros just don't want to see on your résumé. And if you've called yourself a go-to person, a team player or a strategic thinker, you'll need to make a few changes before you send your résumé to anyone else.

- CareerBuilder

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|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Best of breed: 38 percent | • Go-to person: 22 percent | • Strategic thinker: 12 percent |
| • Go-getter: 27 percent | • Thought leadership: 16 percent | • Dynamic: 12 percent |
| • Think outside of the box: 26 percent | • Value add: 16 percent | • Self-motivated: 12 percent |
| • Synergy: 22 percent | • Results-driven: 16 percent | • Detail-oriented: 11 percent |
| • Team player: 15 percent | • Bottom-line: 14 percent | • Proactively: 11 percent |
| | • Hard worker: 13 percent | • Track record: 10 percent |

Interesting Statistic: Sixty-eight percent of hiring managers and human resources pros will spend two minutes or less reviewing each résumé they receive; 17 percent will actually spend 30 seconds or less.



The Complete Guide to Mastering Your Video Interview *(continued)*

7. Don't Stare at the Interviewer on Your Screen

Look directly at the camera, which is the equivalent of looking the interviewer in the eye. If it's tempting to watch yourself in the small image on screen, turn that off. Smile warmly throughout the interview, as appropriate, so you don't appear rigid, with a deer-in-the-headlights gaze.

8. Resist the Urge to Fidget

Playing with your hair or jewelry is very distracting. It also signals a lack of confidence. Minimize body movements, such as shifting from side to side, knee shaking under your desk, or foot tapping. These can make small noises that get amplified through the microphone, and is disturbing to the interviewer.

9. Speak Clearly & Wait to Respond

And make sure that the interviewer has completely finished speaking before you respond. Be aware that online conversations can occasionally lag, and that will cause an interview to get out of sync. Practice eliminating subconscious noises, like "Um", "Er", and avoid empty phrases such as "You know?" and "And stuff."

10. Take Notes During the Interview

Taking notes during an interview is appropriate, but do so in pen so that you aren't clicking away on your keyboard. Continue to make as much "eye" contact as possible as you write.

Bonus Tip:

Allow the Interviewer to Disconnect First

He may have last minute thoughts or questions, and if you terminate the conversation before he does you could miss the opportunity to add something critical. Also, you don't want to appear to be in a rush to end the interview. Finally, once you have ended the interview session, double-check to make sure you are actually disconnected before you go on with your daily activities.

This article was written by Pamela La Gioia, who has been a telecommuting researcher since 1993. She is the President of Telework Recruiting, Inc., a web site boasting over 2,000 companies that hire teleworkers. She writes on all aspects of telecommuting, and has been featured or quoted on CNNMoney, The Wall Street Journal, USA, and Today.

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