

Choosing and Using a Consultant

Executive Briefing Synopsis

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Ever used a consultant? Ever had a problem with a consultant?

This executive briefing outlines tested and proven best practices for the selection of consultants and the management of relationships with them.

Consultants are often used because:

1. You can get more done in less time
2. You can do some kinds of work that could not otherwise be done because the requisite skills are not available or not available in sufficient quantity on your staff
3. You can get work done sooner by using consultants to supplement existing staff
4. You can avoid the long term commitments made to employees
5. Consultants are frequently more objective and more credible than staff members

Although there are risks, the risk of engaging a properly managed consultant is probably lower than the risk of hiring a new employee.

Topics covered by the paper include:

- Why consultants have value,
- Differences in consulting firms,
- The cost of consultants,
- Finding and choosing the right consultant,
- Contracting with consulting firms, and
- Managing consulting projects.

Choosing and Using a Consultant is intended for senior and middle management. It includes a model consulting contract and a model statement of ethics in appendices.