



International Business Consulting (internationalisation) Basics (INCO) Part 4

INCONEXT

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5. Consultation Process Integration

Consultation process integration methods (or otherwise client organization-oriented intervention techniques) are divided according to target orientation towards a separate individual (person, client's representative) or client's group (staff, team, division).

Intervention techniques are grouped as follows:

- ✦ Interviews (gathering specific area-oriented information from a selected person/selected persons);
- ✦ Meetings (exchanging information with the client's group);
- ✦ Work in groups (exchanging information and finding solutions);
- ✦ Training (providing guidance to client's representatives on how to find a solution independently);
- ✦ Coaching (providing guidance to client's representatives on how to search for a solution);
- ✦ Mediation (introducing the third party, i.e. specialists who will help to find a solution, to client's representatives);
- ✦ Open conferences/events (discussing client's problems in the public sphere and using synergy to find the best solution).

Intervention techniques allow identifying/detecting the problem and implementing its solution.

Client organization-oriented interventions are performed using various methods, which include:

- ✦ Effective communication (using questionnaires and listening to client's representatives in order to gather the maximum amount of information about client's problems);
- ✦ Effective conflict management (distributing roles and arranging meetings for conflicting parties in order to find a satisfactory solution together with conflicting parties);
- ✦ Problem solving techniques (providing professional assistance to responsible persons in order to help them solve problems);
- ✦ Creativity techniques (developing staff creativity and using it in problem solving);
- ✦ Prevention techniques (preventing the spread and escalation of problems);

- ⤴ Empowerment techniques (providing client's staff with resources (supplies, motivation) necessary for problem solving);
- ⤴ Business constellation (using experience of business magnates and applying their methods to problem solving);

All the above mentioned intervention techniques can be divided into the following three major subgroups:

1. Diagnostic interventions (these interventions focus on problem identification and client's situation analysis);
2. Explanatory interventions (these interventions help client's representatives to orientate themselves in the situation and explain the approach to problem solving);
3. Confrontational interventions (these interventions are of provoking nature and encourage employees to become open-minded and to find inner reserves for decision making).

The success of systemic client organization-oriented interventions can be ensured only if the following rules are observed:

- ⤴ Provide the client with the basic knowledge in relation to the systemic problem solving attitude;
- ⤴ Single out the main stages of problem solving on the basis of hypotheses;
- ⤴ Create fear-free information content that allows problem discussion without any prejudice, reticence and restriction;
- ⤴ Familiarize yourself with management systems (language, rules, culture) that exist in the client's organization;
- ⤴ Focus on the client's problem rather than his/her personality;
- ⤴ Join the client's organisation in order to change it, but, at the same time, maintain the status quo without destroying operating systems;
- ⤴ Reduce internal resistance to change so that it becomes possible to perform determined actions and, at the same time, to keep client's staff initiative intact;
- ⤴ Consider needs, operation principles and traditions of the client's organization;
- ⤴ Ensure that client's staff approves the chosen and planned approach to join their team.

Exercise: Use the following two check methods in order to see whether the consultant manages to follow the abovementioned rules:

- ⤴ Situation and achievement diagnosis
- ⤴ Assessment of obtained results.

6. Marketing of Business Consultations

When dealing with marketing of business consultations, it is possible to single out the following methods:

- ⤴ Preparation for making contact with potential clients. The process involves compiling a data base for potential clients interested in consultation services, analyzing their general needs and financial possibilities, and familiarizing oneself with their external environment (performing segmentation of consumers). In the case of selected potential clients presentation, i.e. proposal for consulting services, is prepared on the basis of an effective channel for information transfer (a direct letter, a phone call, face-to-face contact and etc.);
- ⤴ Networking activities. They include participation in activities that unite business consultants (associations, work groups, clubs) and communication with organizations that express interest in such services or organizations that are related to business consultations, during which consultant's activities, services, competences and qualifications are introduced;
- ⤴ Giving publicity to activities. The process involves engaging in public activities and supporting activities and initiatives that target potential clients;
- ⤴ Advertising. The process involves using commercial methods for information transfer to potential clients.
- ⤴ Trademark management. The process involves investing resources in consultant's image and creating a trademark with a credible and positive reputation that attracts clients.

7. Qualification and standards of management consultants.

Management consulting is a service. Uncertainty of satisfaction and guarantee distinguishes this service from other products. Poor service which did not meet

expectations can not be returned to the seller. At best, it is possible to recover the money paid, but in general it is impossible to return the situation to the previous level before the provision of the service. There appear the special requirements for quality of service, its reliability, especially when it comes to business processes for which a business consulting service can lead to irreparable consequences.

A main question arising to those who hire a management consultant is how to effectively, efficiently and timely access the competence of business consultant.

International organizations joining management consultants help to find the answers to this question.

ICMCI- (International Council of Management Consulting Institutes) is an international membership organization and network of the consulting (management consulting) associations joining 45 business consulting organizations all over the world.

ICMCI mission is:

- ⤴ To raise prestige and reputation of the consultant profession;
- ⤴ To elevate the standards of management consultants and promote their achievement;
- ⤴ To promote the cooperation of management consultants in regional and worldwide level;

ICMCI relies on its own developed international standards:

- ⤴ To ensure the qualification of management consultants it uses qualification degree of Certified Management Consultant (Certified Management Consultant CMC));
- ⤴ Accredited Consulting Practices ACP shows the qualifications of Business management Consulting Organizations.
- ⤴ The organization has developed Code of Professional Conduct
- ⤴ ICMCI also published Common Body of Knowledge CBK;
- ⤴ Performs assessments of its member organizations;
- ⤴ Promotes the European standard of Management Consultancy Services

Certified Management Consultant CMC also known as an International Quality Standard for Individual Management Consultants is used both in Europe and the USA, Canada, Australia and in the countries of Asia.

CMC ensures that its holder provides clients high competence and professional services.

CMC certificate ensures transparency, security of professional activity of a consultant and consumer confidentiality.

CMC certificate shall be issued by an official organization – management consultancy institution of the country. Persons seeking to obtain CMC certificate must meet the following necessary conditions:

- ⤴ Have at least three years experience in the professional activity of management consulting;
- ⤴ Collect and provide evidences of their competence (Profile of Competences);
- ⤴ Must follow Code of Professional Conduct in their professional activity;

CMC certification is a voluntary procedure, which is based on a regular check of the qualification of the professional activity of management consultant.

Certified management consultant is internationally recognized as the CMC certification system is recognized as a unique standard of persons engaged in international management consulting. For these reasons the CMC certificate serves as a guarantee for service customer that the certificate holder will provide professional, high quality consulting services.

The CMC certificate proves that its holder belongs to the elite of international management consultants:

- The owner of the certificate is registered in the national and international database of CMC.
- In his activity the owner of the CMC certificate can use tools of Public Relations and Networking developed by ICMCI- (International Council of Management Consulting Institutes).
- Membership in this organization strengthen the image of management consultant as a provider of transparent, safe and discreet consulting services;

The developed system serves for consumers of business services as a guarantee of quality assurance:

1. The CMC standards define a consulting process, qualification, ethics and allows to compare and access different specialists working in the same consulting area;
2. Regular qualification assessment ensures continuous professional development;
3. Continuous improvement of qualification ensures a stable and constantly renewable growth of competencies of management consultant;

Management consultants seeking to acquire the CMC certificate must prove their competencies. Different techniques are used for competence testing:

- ⤴ Review and assessment of documents proving candidate's qualification and competencies;
- ⤴ Assessment of a candidate by Certified Management Consultant CMC;
- ⤴ Assessment of practical activity and specific knowledge;
- ⤴ Feedback and recommendations of management consultant- candidate, clients and third parties;
- ⤴ Written examination;
- ⤴ Group competence assessment - Case Study;
- ⤴ Survey- interview of a candidate;
- ⤴ Candidates' inner presentations and discussions;
- ⤴

Besides their professional activity the certified management consultants are also engaged in:

- ⤴ In social activities in the organizations joining management consultants
- ⤴ Publicizes and affirms their high professional qualification (represents CMC system);
- ⤴ Helps candidates to prepare for CMC certification, provides their candidatures to institution joining country's management consultants i;

This activity is necessary for recognition of high standards system by public, parts interested in management consulting activity, assurance of quality of activity of management consultants, increasing of demand for services provided by high-quality specialists.

European Standard of Management Consultancy Services also have been developed.

European Standard of Management Consultancy Services have been developed in order to define the quality requirements for consulting services and conforms to European Services Directive 2006/123/EC.

The objective of this standard is to increase the availability of management consulting services, publicity in developing common reference system, taking into account Stakeholders needs..

The system should serve both private and public individuals in order to create equal condition for provision of management consulting services across the European Union level.

It is expected that the developed system will be recognized by trans-national level and will serve for sharing and dissemination of best practice of European management consulting activity.

Conclusions

The international management consultin is a complex, dynamic process, the efficiency of which depends essentially on the same client and consultant perception.

Knowing of Management Consulting Framework allows us to select the appropriate consultant to address the issue, which in turn ensures smoothness, effectiveness and timeliness of the counselling process.

Proper use of an external management consultant services provides timely, effective decision-making advantage over competitors, also significantly reduces making fundamental errors in the decisions of foreign markets-oriented entity.

The proper preparation for cooperation is essential in order to maximize the benefit of services provided by business consultant:

1. Clearly understand that the consultant will not perform all work for you. The consultant is an advisor, helper and assistant which helps you to find the solution of issue/target and helps in ones life;
2. When selecting a consultant it is necessary to find out precisely and clearly the limits of his competence, operating field and methods, to conclude a contract with the one, who specializes in the field of solutions in your raised issues/tasks;
3. To formulate clearly and precisely the existing problem, the target set and make sure that both your and your consultant understanding and perception of the problem is the same;

4. Clearly and precisely indicate cooperation object, subject, terms and other conditions in the contract with the consultant. This will help to avoid misunderstandings, unreasonable expectations and dissatisfaction with the result;
5. Get ready to fully assist the consultant, to provide him with the requested information, give the time to clarify the situation. The results of your cooperation directly depends on it;
6. Carefully select the consultant, and after this has been done do not hide from him any details of your activity. Provision of accurate and timely information to a business consultant is a guarantee of quality of activity of a business consultant;
7. Regularly discuss and evaluate the intermediate results of activity of a business consultant. This will help to timely note deviations, mistakes and correct them without waiting for the irreversible damage;
8. If you are not satisfied with the quality of services provided by a business consultant, do not conflict and terminate the contract. Find out the reasons of unsatisfying results and join efforts for fixing it. Often a small timely correction is much more efficient than the consequences of termination of the contract and hiring of a new consultant;
9. Honestly and without embellishment give the consultant back link information (feedback) about the results of your collaboration and satisfying the expectations. This will help him to improve the quality of his services. Who knows, may be you will it again and again.

In today's dynamic business world the global competition is often replaced by cooperation. Using the services of an external consultant is a typical example of such cooperation. Division of labor, use of information and experience gained by another subject makes business process more effective, as a result of which each cooperating parts enjoy additional earned value and benefits.