



Consulting That Matters

A HANDBOOK
FOR SCHOLARS
& PRACTITIONERS

JENNIFER H. WALDECK

DAVID R. SEIBOLD

EDITORS

Each year, thousands of consulting contracts are awarded by organizations to experts who help them with challenges involving people, processes, technologies, goals, resource allocation, decision making, problem solving, and more. These experts—consultants—diagnose problems, recommend solutions, facilitate interventions, and evaluate outcomes that are often related to human communication. Some consultants are academicians skilled in both doing and interpreting research for clients; others are practitioners with little use for research and theory. Driving all of the ideas showcased in *Consulting That Matters* is the premise that sound theory and research are critical to consulting success, and should be the blueprints for successful organizational transformation. Thus, this book is for all types of consultants, including the very best, and those who believe theory and research belong in ivory towers, not business settings. Featuring a “who’s who” of preeminent communication scholars/consultants, each contributor shares frameworks, strategies, and examples from their own diverse experiences, all grounded in rich, substantive theory and research. The volume offers even the most skilled and experienced consultants a range of alternative approaches, paradigms, and competencies to build their credibility and make them more valuable to their clients in a dynamic, ever-evolving business climate.

“... This book is a ‘must’ for individuals interested in learning about consulting processes, steps involved in different consulting environments, experiences and stories about consulting, and how to adapt to various problematic situations.” —*Daniel J. Canary, University of Utah*

“*Consulting That Matters* focuses on making a difference with our work whether we are scholars, practitioners, or both. ... The discussion of ‘making a difference’ through transforming practices and engagements is critically important for all of us.” —*Pam Shockley-Zalabak, University of Colorado*

“The authors have developed a ‘must-have’ resource for communication scholars who already apply or wish to apply their scholarship to communication consultation opportunities.... The rich overview of communication consulting featured in Part I is worth the price of the book.” —*Paul Lakey, Abilene Christian University*

“At exactly the moment you think you know what you’re doing, you need to read something to challenge what you believe. Even better when the book leads to new ideas and insights worth putting into practice. This is one of those books....” —*Randall Stutman, Capitol Reef Advisors*

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Praise for **Consulting That Matters**

“Consulting That Matters showcases contributions by prominent scholars who convey their expert knowledge about various kinds of consulting, their appreciation for the critical importance of communication processes, and their personal experiences that illustrate precisely different challenges and answers that they provided. It blends theoretical understanding and personal experiences very well....

Consulting That Matters covers an impressive range of different types of consulting and how consulting practices vary across those types. This book is a ‘must’ for individuals interested in learning about consulting processes, steps involved in different consulting environments, experiences and stories about consulting, and how to adapt to various problematic situations.”

Daniel J. Canary, University of Utah

“Consulting That Matters focuses on making a difference with our work whether we are scholars, practitioners, or both. The chapters and cases in this book effectively integrate the scholar’s ability to bring theory and research to consulting engagements with the values and frames of the consultant. The discussion of ‘making a difference’ through transforming practices and engagements is critically important for all of us.”

Pam Shockey-Zalabak, Chancellor, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs

“The authors have developed a ‘must-have’ resource for communication scholars who already apply or wish to apply their rich theoretical scholarship to a broad range of communication consultation opportunities situated in an increasingly complex society. The book offers a strong theoretical basis for communication consulting, rich case examples, theories informing practice and the reverse, and useful ‘how-to’ sections for those wanting to begin serving as communication consultants and/or those wishing to sharpen their skills. The rich overview of communication consulting featured in Part I is worth the price of the book.”

*Paul Lakey, Past Chair, Training and Development Division,
National Communication Association; Professor, Abilene Christian University*

“At exactly the moment you think you know what you’re doing, you need to read something smart to shake you up and challenge what you believe. Even better when the book leads to new ideas and insights worth putting into practice. This is one of those books. You can’t borrow my copy. I won’t be done with it for several years.”

Randall Stutman, Managing Partner, Capitol Reef Advisors

“This fabulous book is written by a who’s who of communication scholars. It does an excellent job of integrating the scholarly and the practical.”

Peter A. Andersen, Professor Emeritus, San Diego State University

“This book is a ‘must-have’ for anyone interested in or practicing action research/consulting. It provides the perfect blend of history/context, theory/practice, and serves a comprehensive guide to action research and consulting practice. I can’t imagine *not owning* this book! If you have ever considered consulting as a way to augment your scholarship, are a consultant interested in reinforcing your work with what is emerging from the research literature, or are curious about what consulting involves, you’ll want to read this work from the top scholars in communication. These scholars are well-known for their contributions to theory *and* their successes in consulting. Each chapter is a gem!”

Terre H. Allen, California State University, Long Beach

“As a communication consultant, coach, and trainer for more than four decades, I found *Consulting That Matters* to both introduce practical communication skills and techniques for use in a variety of environments, then to validate each with a copious review of salient research. This is a must-read for anyone aspiring to strengthen their capabilities as a practitioner of communication consulting.”

*Dennis Becker, Founder and Senior Coaching Partner,
The Speech Improvement Company, Inc.*

“An impressive array of communication scholar/consultants attest to the reciprocal relationship between theory and practice in this exciting contribution to the field. Using both short examples and extended case studies, the contributors explain how theory informed their consulting work in the field, which, in turn, led to new understandings about the theory. *Consulting That Matters: A Handbook for Scholars and Practitioners* will energize your consulting, your teaching, and your research.”

Deborah Socha McGee, College of Charleston

Consulting That Matters

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the highest quality standards for content and production.



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JENNIFER H. WALDECK
DAVID R. SEIBOLD
EDITORS



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Preface

Each year, thousands of consulting contracts are awarded by organizations to experts that help them with challenges involving people, processes, technologies, goals, resource allocation, decision making, problem solving, and more. These experts—consultants—diagnose problems, recommend solutions, facilitate interventions, and evaluate outcomes. Many times, these consultants are academics with some special expertise in the area of the organization's concerns; other times, they are employees of large or small professional consulting firms who do this type of work on a full-time basis. Although consulting is often associated with the “corporate world,” consultants also provide consulting services to federal, state, and local governments; nonprofit organizations; healthcare facilities; educational institutions; start-up firms; and those enterprises specializing in creative, technical, intellectual, and manufacturing work.

Over the past thirty years, the editors of this volume, who are college professors, have engaged in a variety of consulting activities that have enriched our teaching and scholarship in significant ways. Simultaneously, we have encountered colleagues who resisted consulting because they did not view it as an intellectually enriching activity, and full-time practitioners who sought greater credibility and substance in all they did. The former group failed to realize the potential of the reciprocal relationship between scholarship and action. The latter group wanted to do what they were doing, but better. Whether they were delivering training, writing curriculum, developing leaders, building teams, designing effective systems

and processes, mediating conflict, helping organizations facilitate change, or any number of other activities, these professionals expressed a hunger for consulting frameworks that were grounded in some evidence pointing to their appropriateness or potential for positive outcomes. The first editor of this volume, Jennifer Waldeck, for example, has partnered with two professional consulting firms that were interested in a research-based approach to performance improvement. She introduced them to the classic and state-of-the-art findings and theoretical perspectives for better understanding the types of challenges their clients faced, and which guided the generation of solutions and productive plans.

In our view, theory and research are the blueprints for successful action within organizations. Believing strongly in this premise, and facing a scarcity of literature pointing to the value of a scholarly approach to consulting with respect to organizational problems, strategy, and opportunities, the origins of this project took shape. We knew that if we could assemble the right group of scholar/practitioners to write about their work and the issues associated with consulting from a research and theoretically based perspective, we could shed light on the reciprocal relationship between scholarship and the applied practice of consulting. We believed we had an opportunity to influence the thinking of both scholars and full-time practitioners that *consulting can matter* in innumerable ways when this approach is taken. The authors represented in this volume, and the manner in which we have assembled and organized their work, speak to both the ways in which consulting matters. These authors have a vast expanse and depth of both knowledge and experience. They write with conviction and eloquence, using plenty of real examples drawn from their own and others' experiences. They claim the critical importance of using research and theory in one's consulting work, and provide ample evidence with compelling illustrations from a wide variety of organizational types.

Further, the scholar-consultants featured here demonstrate the importance of careful observation and critical analysis of the environments in which they consult, and the constant application of ethical frames for determining how to proceed or whether to continue the consulting relationship at all. Numerous authors in this book share stories of declining or ending (potentially lucrative) consulting engagements based on mismatched values and beliefs or conflicting ethical concerns. The accounts here demonstrate the necessity of a healthy respect for how consulting actions and outcomes impact all stakeholders in a system, from front-line employees to upper management to customers, clients, and vendors (and everyone in between).

The authors' chapters also illuminate how their collaborations with their clients are typically interactive in a classic communicative and sociological sense; the nature of the relationships among consultants and members of their client organizations are the foundations of all they are able to accomplish in their

work together. This rigorous and collaborative approach to consulting ensures it addresses actual (rather than superficial or perceived) organizational challenges, increases the likelihood of success, and provides consultants with justification for what they do and why they do it. Working from a solid theoretical framework and thoughtfully allowing empirical knowledge to guide our decisions during consulting makes consultants credible, effective, and valuable to the organizations which seek their help.

Thus, across four parts and 21 chapters, this volume provides both full-time practitioners and scholars interested in exploring the applied implications of their expertise with in-depth exposure to:

- The external consultant's role in analyzing, diagnosing, and addressing organizational challenges
- The importance of using theoretical frameworks and empirical research findings for substantive consulting interventions
- How to identify and make a productive connection with prospective clients
- The range of needs assessment and diagnostic tools that consultants employ
- A variety of methodological designs for consulting interventions
- The skills required for effective consulting, such as persuasion, instructional design, facilitation, coaching, training and pedagogy, research ability, strategic planning, and more
- Specific consulting activities including training, leadership development, organizational development and change, and research
- Why and how new media and communication technologies matter in the consulting process
- How to evaluate consulting outcomes

More specifically, Part I, *Creating a Consulting Identity That Matters*, discusses a range of issues for scholar-consultants to examine:

- What exactly is consulting?
- Why would a client want to hire me?
- What does my background/my degree/my research area have to offer potential clients?
- What is the role of scholarship—theory, research, and data analysis skills—in consulting?
- How can I maximize the chances that my academic colleagues will view my consulting work as legitimate, meaningful, and related to my scholarship?
- Will consulting work distract me from my research?
- Can consulting help me with my research?
- Is it ethical for me to consult?

The chapters in Part I offer an introduction and framework to the importance of developing an epistemological paradigm for consulting work; working from a theoretical perspective; appreciating and using a wide range of methodological approaches and a working knowledge of the scientific method; as well as the ability to read, interpret, and draw upon theory and research at all stages of the consulting process.

Part II, *Creating a Consulting Experience That Matters: The Groundwork*, addresses issues critical to:

- Assessing the consulting context, setting, and situation before taking action
- Understanding clients and building trusting, collaborative relationships with them
- The role of stakeholders in understanding an organization and its challenges and opportunities
- Methods for identifying issues of interest, defining needs and problems, and potential strategies and solutions

Additionally, Chapter 6 offers advice on how to plan consulting based on what the consultant learns through a careful, systematic needs analysis. These chapters encourage readers to consider the importance of designing and making persuasive, action-oriented recommendations to clients. Part II concludes with a chapter that explores the communication skills necessary for credible, professional, ethical consulting that results in measurable impact.

Part III, *Facilitating a Consulting Experience That Matters*, investigates a range of consulting interventions and the challenges and opportunities each presents to facilitators and clients in the areas of:

- Creating shared understanding among stakeholders through facilitated communication
- Conflict resolution among organizational teams through the use of transformative mediation principles and methods
- Team development
- Training
- Using technology appropriately and effectively
- Conducting original research for clients

Finally, Part IV contains a series of brief essays and cases which illustrate the concepts, methods, and issues raised in Parts I–III. Each essay focuses on a highly specialized type of consulting or a specific project, and describes the context or client, the process, intervention, and evaluation methods. Each author gives special attention to unique challenges, theoretical considerations that frame or aid the

specific type of consulting in it, and how research findings can help guide what to do and how to do it.

We are indebted to the willing experts—friends and colleagues—who shared their time, talent, and experiences within these pages. The conversation concerning the relevance of theory to practice is not a new one; but we view the voices here as incredibly articulate and important for advancing that conversation. The insights contained in this volume expand the reach and usefulness of what we publish in our academic journals to the action of what happens within organizations. Further, these chapters speak to how our activities within organizations inform scholarship. And most importantly, they illustrate how the reciprocal relationship between scholarship and practice facilitates positive change for organizations and the lives of their members. And when this happens, we have engaged in *consulting that matters*.

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Foreword

Consulting That Matters: A Handbook for Scholars and Practitioners

In the title, *Consulting That Matters: A Handbook for Scholars and Practitioners*, the editors clearly identify their audience as both researchers and practitioners. Their premise is that the two roles, being an academic researcher and being a consultant, should be merged. The editors take the approach that using research and theory in consulting practices is critical. They claim that “working from a solid theoretical framework and thoughtfully allowing empirical knowledge to guide our decisions during consulting makes consultants credible, effective, and valuable to the organizations that seek their help.” This makes perfect sense and prepares the reader for an examination of theoretical frameworks used by consultants that may not be obvious without the scholar/practitioner revealing them.

Consulting is the application of organizational communication principles and theories to real-world problems. The fact that many of the most published organizational communication researchers also serve as consultants may not be well known. This book has asked a number of authors to describe how their research informs their consulting practices.

In an edited volume the reader looks first at the premise of the book and then at the collection of authors assembled to address that theme to determine if the book will successfully meet one’s needs. In this book the theme is clear and the authors are well-known researchers who have years of experience as consultants. The authors are able to deliver what the editors have asked for: writing about the theoretical perspective they use in their consulting work, using a wide range of

methodological approaches, and applying these findings to the stages of the consulting process. So from this admittedly superficial review of the book it definitely meets these two criteria for a successful book.

Looking beyond those two initial criteria and reading the chapters the reader will find much more that makes this book useful to both scholars and practitioners. Part I includes the two editors (David Seibold and Jennifer Waldeck) and a third author (Joann Keyton) all of whom write from a personal perspective. The questions they ask are ones they have encountered in their own consulting work. Waldeck makes the argument that theory and research make consulting better. She traces the history of consulting by starting with one of the most widely known scholar/practitioners, Kurt Lewin. She also mentions the National Training Laboratories and acknowledges Charles Redding, the first scholar/practitioner in the field of organizational communication. He led the way for many others in the field of organizational communication and deserves our recognition. I was pleased to see her give even slight reference to some of the historical underpinnings of this field. I would add an additional reference that should be mentioned: the American Society for Training and Development (now the Association for Talent Development), which for many years produced some of the best consulting tools as well as a journal addressing issues in training and consulting.

Waldeck does an excellent job of arguing for the relevance of consulting to conducting research. Academics have often claimed that their research informs and enriches their teaching. Waldeck successfully argues that consulting informs one's research as well as teaching, and makes both processes stronger and more relevant. I absolutely agree with her premise. If the reader is looking for justification for consulting from a theoretical base you will find it here.

Seibold identifies a number of communication theories that are directly relevant to the work of a consultant. His review of these theories, and the use of his own personal cases, convinces the reader that these theories do indeed inform how he practices the art of consulting.

In the last section of Part I, which frames the discussion for subsequent chapters, Keyton provides some basic definitions of consulting which are necessary for the reader to understand exactly what kind of activity is being examined in this book. What Keyton does in this chapter is repeated throughout the book: she cites personal examples of actual cases she was involved with. These actual examples are much more helpful than the typical hypothetical scenes the reader encounters in other books. She gives just enough detail so the reader understands the problem and Keyton's approach to solving it. Her discussion of the paradigms of consulting is especially useful to readers who are trying to identify what their own approach might be. What is particularly refreshing is her honest appraisal of how one's paradigm may not allow the consultant to see the whole organizational problem.

In Part I of the book these three authors clearly establish what the reader should expect to follow: detailed explanations of consulting approaches and a wide variety of consulting challenges. Personal lived experiences in such diverse organizations as media companies, healthcare settings, law enforcement, and higher education are woven throughout.

Once the consultant fully understands the theoretical framework from which she wants to operate then a careful analysis of the organization's needs must follow. Understanding everything about the context of this particular organization is discussed in depth by Pettegrew; conducting a client needs assessment is detailed in Jorgensen's chapter; and collecting rich data through carefully constructed focus groups is proposed by Plax, Waldeck, and Kearney. The last two chapters in the second part of the book are very practical: how to write a proposal (Waldeck, Plax, and Kearney) and what communication skills the consultant needs (Beebe). It is surprising how many times the communication consultant does not practice what he preaches.

In Part III we begin to get actual examples of the use of theories in consulting. Coordinated management of meaning (Sostrin); transformative mediation (Folger); team development interventions (Seibold); and research services (Boster) are chapters which demonstrate to the reader, in very understandable ways, how a theoretical approach informs the consulting activity. Two chapters provide practical techniques for consulting: training techniques (Houser); and technology in consulting (Stephens and Waters).

Finally, Part Four features detailed case studies of consulting projects. These case studies are rich with illustrations of consulting in particular contexts. Each case study identifies challenges in unique settings: healthcare (Kreps, Pettegrew), the corporate environment (Daly), law (Ross and Waldeck), and education (Cody). Two other topics of interest are working with big data (Barbour, Faughn, and Husband) and workplace ageism (McCann).

This is not a book one would read cover to cover. Rather the reader might want to read the overview and then select those chapters that have a particular relevance to situations being faced. I would predict that the reader will return to this book over and over as those situations change.

What I like most about this book is that it gives you a wide variety of perspectives combined with actual consulting cases. These cases reveal a great deal about how each author approaches organizational problems. While the reader's approach may differ there is something to be learned from each author's perspective. And that is what reading this book should do: show the reader how communication theory informs practice and how these authors practice what they preach. I found it to be informative, insightful, and meaningful to my own practices.

When I wrote *The Consultant's Craft* I was trying to open up the field of consulting and provide a detailed explanation for those who wanted to engage in this activity. I wanted to explain how one might go about consulting from a communication perspective. What these authors have done is provide theoretical underpinnings for many of the approaches I described in my own book. Reading these chapters helped me articulate my own consulting approach. I commend this reading to you.

In the foreword to my book, Charles Redding said: "As members of organizations, who among us can honestly report having never endured some sort of damage associated with such phenomena as insensitive supervision, confusing instructions, fruitless meetings, deceptive announcements, vicious defenses of 'turf'... scapegoating memoranda, clumsy explanations, paucity of information, conflicting orders, ambiguity (both intentional and unintentional), worship of inane regulations, refusal to listen to bad news...? (Space limitations prohibit a complete inventory of evils)." The field of communication should be the place where people turn to meet these challenges. If a researcher really wants to test his theory he should go into the field. Try it out with organizational members whose livelihoods depend on how well they communicate instead of testing theories on college sophomores.

The authors in this book have done just that. They have tested their own approaches developed in the privacy of their academic offices. Those tests have occurred in organizations where conflict and tension abounds and where the consequences of action may be quite dramatic. Congratulations to these authors who choose to share with the reader exactly what goes on when a communication consultant is asked to "fix things."

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PART ONE

Creating a Consulting Identity That Matters

CHAPTER ONE

How Communication Theory and Research Make Consulting Matter

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AN HISTORICAL BACKDROP FOR CONSULTATIONS THAT MATTER

The authors who have contributed to this book celebrate and illustrate the important role that theory and research play in their organizational consulting work. Despite the beliefs of clients who may be interested primarily in things like fewer conflict-ridden days, easier decisions, more productive meetings, higher-profit quarters, more satisfied employees, and greater competitive advantage, the prolific theoretician and social psychologist Kurt Lewin was correct when he famously wrote that “there’s nothing so practical as a good theory” (1945, p. 129). In thinking about that soundbyte most of us have heard or read many times, it’s easy to forget the original context from which it emerged. Although Lewin developed many theories during his career and advanced the importance of theoretical frameworks for good scholarship, he was not sitting in an ivory tower generating esoteric ideas. He was an *action researcher*, credited by many to be one of the “fathers” of the applied social sciences in the United States. His life’s work illustrates the reflexivity of theory, research, and practice which serves as the foundation for this book.

For example, some of Lewin's later work in the mid-1940s involved a series of commissioned experiments designed to test messages for combatting ethnic, racial, and religious prejudice. His research on attitude change and group behavior suggested that people who learn by experience are more likely to change their attitudes and behaviors than those who learn primarily through lecture and reading. This conclusion led to his development of the *T-Groups* methodology, which is the foundation of the kinds of human relations, cultural sensitivity, and group dynamics training programs still used within organizations worldwide (but perhaps known by a different and broader set of names). Although he died suddenly in 1947 before actually working there, Lewin was the co-founder of the National Training Laboratories (NTL) Institute, which continues to be a transformative source of applied behavioral training programs and ideas about organizational development (NTL, 2015).

In our own field, W. Charles Redding, a contemporary of Lewin's, was the first scholar/practitioner of organizational communication that I'm aware of. He is credited as the "father" of organizational communication. Engaged in activities such as communication skills training for military officers from the earliest days of his career, Redding applied the content of the discipline. Much like the field did, Redding's own work moved from a focus on skills to the application of social scientific methods and theory building, and he was instrumental in establishing the Communication Research Center at Purdue University. Redding believed firmly that empirical research produced knowledge that made organizations better places. The "Redding Tradition" influenced numerous luminaries in our field, including Sue DeWine. Redding's student and protégé, DeWine has been an advocate for consulting as a serious, substantive activity for several decades. Her most important contribution to the field was a book entitled *The Consultant's Craft*—the culmination of her many years of scholarly research and practice in service to numerous corporations, educational institutions, and government agencies. *The Consultant's Craft* represents the only existing book to date written from an organizational communication perspective that examines a breadth of consulting activities from needs assessments to strategic planning to communication skills training. Sue was one of my first teachers in the discipline at Ohio University, where I received my bachelor's degree, and she has shaped my thinking in important ways over the years. I am honored that she has provided a foreword for this volume.

This truncated historical account underscores that the earliest consulting work of the last century was performed by some of social science's brightest academic minds. They wore their "scholarly hats" to develop useful theories and conduct rigorous research to support the academic reputation and advancement of their work, and then took it to applied settings to positively impact and transform human behavior and organizational functioning. What they learned in their interactions with practitioners—leaders, managers, laborers, administrators, secretaries—undoubtedly prompted new scholarly questions to ask and hypotheses to test.

OVERCOMING BIASES ABOUT CONSULTING

However, along the way, consulting became somewhat of an academic pejorative, framed less by scholarship and more by popularized, watered-down approaches with little or no science behind them (cf. Van de Ven, 2002; Weick, 2001). As Boster points out in this volume, the prevailing attitude was “serious academics do not consult.” Although that hard line might have softened, many do feel obliged to conceal their consulting work from their academic colleagues (Perkmann & Walsh, 2008). Over time, the practice became polluted and often characterized as the sale of “useless best practices for high fees” (McKelvey, 2006, p. 825). Many academics view this type of work largely as opportunity-driven and a distraction from scholarly relevance (Lee, 1996), having little academic value (Boyer & Lewis, 1984), and lacking complementarity with rigorous research (McKelvey, 2006; Perkmann & Walsh, 2008). In this volume, Keyton notes an alternative but related critical view held by some that consulting privileges those in power.

Further, some professors react negatively to the idea of consulting for three reasons. First, their dispositions, skill sets, or research interests may not lend themselves to consulting or action, so they misunderstand, distrust, or resent those who can and do get paid for their efforts. Second, their only experience with it might have been on the (negative) receiving end of distasteful changes imposed by “hired guns” at their institutions, which often result in a more corporate, and less intellectual and academic environment than they prefer (Blumenstyk, 2014). Finally, consulting is stereotypically associated with the purpose of financial gain for the consultant and the client organization (Boyer & Lewis, 1984). Some academics have a biased view toward engagements that promote financial gain as capitalist and simultaneously anti-intellectual (Baumard, 2010; Nozick, 1998). The engaged scholarship community (cf. Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006), for example, prides itself on ethical considerations which suggest that scholars collaborate with organizations “doing good works” and, admirably, does *pro bono* and service work when appropriate (Simpson & Seibold, 2008, p. 270).

Even among people with neutral or positive attitudes toward consulting, there is confusion about what it really entails. Through conversations with colleagues on both the academic and practitioner sides, I have come to believe that there is a pervasive stereotype supporting the assumption that anyone with some management experience or knowledge, basic observation ability, general familiarity with the industry of interest, and some degree of communication competence can offer consulting advice. Consistent with these assumptions are popular books about consulting that promise “seven-figure salaries” for those with “supreme communication skills” (Weiss, 2011), and that encourage the use of fairly easily facilitated, predesigned cookie-cutter training and consulting activities (Weiss, 2005) similar to what a graduate-level teaching assistant might facilitate in a college classroom. Other popular

literature is focused more on the business of consulting, such as marketing (Block, 2011; Katcher & Snyder, 2010), than on its intellectual and practical substance.

The frameworks and specific cases described in this volume, however, return the conversation to the science, rigor, ethics, and depth of good consulting. Pettegrew (in Chapter 4), for instance, emphasizes the importance of *clarifying the consulting context, setting, and situation carefully* before embarking on one's project. And overarching all of the methods, frameworks, and specific examples of consulting in the book is Keyton's reminder that *good consulting, like good scholarship, is undergirded by a set of philosophical and ethical values unique to the epistemology from which the consultant operates*. The consultant's paradigm, which should correspond to that which frames his or her scholarly research agenda, guides the nature and practice of the consultation. When one's scholarly and consulting perspectives are aligned, the consultant-scholar is in a position to see a great deal of reflexivity between the two activities and how they inform one another.

HOW DO THEORY AND RESEARCH MATTER?

Theory and research make consulting matter in many ways, a number of which are elucidated in this volume. Specifically, the chapters here illustrate ways that consultants (a) use theory and research to frame their interventions; (b) support their processes, actions, and recommendations with research findings; (c) translate research and theory for clients in a fashion that is applicable to organizational contexts; and (d) employ relevant methodological skills in their work. Theory and research distinguish truly effective, impactful consulting because it directs, substantiates, and legitimates what consultants do and how we do it.

The authors whose work is included in this book furnish evidence of the good that consulting can do when it is *grounded in theoretical frameworks and driven by research findings*. For example, in Chapter 9, Sostrin guides readers through his sophisticated, rich approach to improving patterns of organizational communication, which is framed by Coordinated Management of Meaning theory. In Chapter 10, Folger illustrates how his transformative mediation perspective can be applied in team situations to improve communicative outcomes. Seibold showcases his broad and deep experience with using empirical research on groups and teams to design teambuilding interventions in Chapter 11.

Among a series of brief essays in Part IV of the book, McCann describes how consulting aimed at bridging intergenerational differences in the workforce can be designed through the lenses of intergroup theories like Social Identity and Communication Accommodation. Kreps explains how he employed the research findings on dissemination of health messages in minority communities to design an effective AIDS/HIV education campaign for African Americans. Based on both

his consulting experience and stature as an interpersonal communication scholar, Cody points out how the interpersonal literature—such as Leary’s self-presentation framework and the research on self-disclosure—can aid external reviewers in conducting a useful academic program review. The bottom line is that substantive theories and research findings offer useful frames for a wide range of consulting activities which then guide the consultant on what to do and how to do it as the engagement unfolds.

While the previous examples reveal fairly macroscopic ways that consultants think about, plan, facilitate, and evaluate their work, a number of the examples in this book illustrate important “micro” approaches to using theory and research in consulting, as well. *Good consultants make decisions about the processes they use, the content they share, and the behaviors they exhibit during their engagements, based on research and its theoretical underpinnings.* For example, in Chapter 8, Beebe substantiates all of the skills he recommends consultants acquire and develop with evidence from communication and other social science literature. Similarly, successful trainers operate with mindfulness toward the behaviors that instructional communication literature suggests are related to learning, such as clarity (Houser, Chapter 12). Strong, credible proposals for consulting work can motivate organizational representatives to consider the possibilities of meaningful change, but only when they are written according to the principles of effective persuasion and audience analysis, as discussed by Waldeck, Plax, and Kearney. In Chapter 13, Stephens and Waters leverage the empirical findings on information and communication technology use to make recommendations on how consultants might make good choices relative to media use and face-to-face communication in their work. Still other chapters illustrate how consultants actually teach their clients about research conclusions in intervention settings. For instance, Daly describes coaching and training employees at a global oil industry firm about advocacy, leadership, teamwork, and change management; Ross and Waldeck share a case focused on cultural change, front-line empowerment, and leadership development for law enforcement personnel, guided by both research and theory. Taken together, these examples demonstrate how consultants use theory and research in their work. The authors in this volume show, in compelling ways, how their reliance on theory and corresponding research lends credibility to their interventions, and gives them confidence in their recommendations to clients. In some instances the consultations also inform theory and research (Seibold, Chapter 2).

In addition to discussing the utility of the theory and research they draw upon in their work, a number of the authors in this book illustrate the importance of being able to *translate theory and research into working principles that can be applied to problems in the organizational context.* For example, Plax, Waldeck, and Kearney describe “educating” clients, in language they can relate to, about the process of designing theoretically framed applied research (Chapter 6) as critical to successful

consulting outcomes. Boster recalls providing advice to law firms through the lenses of social influence theories in an audience-centered fashion and translating important statistical principles in a nontechnical way (Chapter 14). In sum, applying research and theory to consulting in ways that all stakeholders find meaningful and understandable is easier said than done, but is a vital skill.

Chapters in this book also demonstrate how *good consulting requires many of the same sophisticated skills that we use in our scholarship*. The parameters of research conducted for consulting clients in particular contexts and situations are usually different than those put in place by scholars who seek to build generalizable knowledge through basic research. Although we don't seek the same types of results and outcomes from consulting work as we might in our academic research, Boster aptly points out that "the methodological skills obtained while pursuing the Ph.D.... have tremendous value both in the public and private sectors." He goes on to describe a number of engagements in which he conducted original research for clients, including a public utility and firms in the K–12 educational products industry. In his chapter on the value of valid, reliable needs analyses, Jorgensen offers the reader a "research methods for consultants" primer. Pettegrew illuminates the use of ethnographic methods in work he performed within the healthcare industry. Plax et al. describe how they leverage focus group methodology in a number of their consultations, including considerations for sampling and developing interview questions. Waldeck et al. remind consultants of the importance of evaluating their processes, products, and delivery using sound testing methods. And Barbour, Faughn, and Husband share a case in which they relied on their analyses of archived 360-degree data to inform executive decision making at a Fortune 500 firm. When consultants employ strong research methodology and data analysis skills in the design and facilitation of their work and in analyzing its outcomes, their results become credible and legitimated. When they can then communicate the value of their rigorous procedures in understandable ways, they enhance their own credibility and value to clients.

CONCLUSION

To the reader unfamiliar with the rigors of truly impactful consulting—that which really matters—the importance of scholarly theories and research findings in these endeavors may not seem obvious. However, as this chapter foreshadows and the remainder of the book elaborates, strong consulting work is made robust in key ways by both theory and research. Consulting that matters in terms of the goals and needs of consultants, organizational clients, *and* organizational members is characterized by the appropriation of theory and research to design interventions

and facilitate useful outcomes. In turn, consulting relationships and activities hold great potential for nourishing the consultant's scholarship in a world where appropriate action matters and is valued.

As an academic who has done quite a bit of consulting, including several years of full-time work with a professional consulting firm, I discovered very quickly how useful my knowledge of social science—theory development, testing, research design, measurement, assessment, statistics, qualitative data analysis, archival data retrieval and analysis, interviewing, writing, and more—was to my work in applied settings. Although clients may not speak the language of science in the same way that scholar-consultants do, they operate from a similar perspective. They rely on evidence to design products, scan and assess their environment, determine performance standards, defend product quality, promote products and services, monitor morale, solve problems, make decisions, and more. They appreciate defensible, objective, and evidence-based approaches to defining and addressing the challenges and opportunities they face. They are impressed by the systematic rigor that a scholarly approach brings to their project, leading to a fruitful relationship and a challenging engagement that raises interesting questions (and answers) for consultants—which we can incorporate into both our scholarship and teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels. And, despite the bias some might hold against the financial gains attached to consulting work, we cannot ignore the fact that when we bring the credibility of theoretical frames, rigorous methods, and research-based recommendations to our consultations, we tend to elicit profitable, highly valued results for clients, which is more than we can ask or expect of pure research.

So, rather than dismiss consulting as incompatible with scholarship, we need to remember and embrace our applied roots. The landscape of social inquiry and problem solving that we know today began with the work of social scientists like Argyris, Lazarsfeld, Lewin, Lippitt, Merton, and many others who implicitly understood the reflexivity of their theory, research, and practice. They made a significant difference in the social, economic, and political fabrics of the United States with their work; the mutually informative nature of their research and practice was an everyday reality of their scholarly lives. Their work models an important lesson for contemporary academics interested in applied work: Consulting need not be limited to the simplistic, opportunity-focused work that merely yields an extra paycheck for the academic. Indeed, it can be financially rewarding; but it can also be an *intellectually* rewarding activity that stands to enhance the organizations consultants serve, and the lives of organizational stakeholders. In considering the relationship between research and practice in professional settings, Van de Ven (1989, p. 486) echoed Lewin in reminding us that “good theory is practical precisely because it advances knowledge in a scientific discipline, guides research toward crucial questions, and enlightens the profession of management.” When consultants utilize sound methods, theory, and

corresponding research-based knowledge in their work, organizations, their members, the consultant, and his or her academic discipline stand on the precipice of outcomes that truly matter.

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The Communication Scholar's Unique Perspective on Organizational Consulting

Personal Reflections and a Design Approach

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Theory and practice are not merely interdependent. They also can be reciprocally enhancing—and should be. Recognition of the interconnections between theory and practice is not new in communication. As Craig (1989) notes, “the history of communication as a practical discipline is a history of communication practices and their cultivation by critical reflection” (p. 116). Craig’s efforts to explicate a practical theory of communication (1995; 1999; 2006; Craig & Tracy, 2014) concomitantly have underscored communication as a practical discipline *and* the need for theory that addresses practical problems and creates new opportunities for action.

Drawing on distinctions introduced by Barge (2001), Barge and Craig (2009) identified three principal forms of practical theory. *Mapping* approaches to practical theory offer a map of the communicative terrain of actors’ experiences through empirical descriptions of problems, tactics, and outcomes. A wide range of applications of social scientific theories and methods exemplify mapping including, for example, use of the Extended Parallel Process Model to create and assess the utilization of fear appeals in messages in public health campaigns (Witte & Roberto, 2009). *Transformative practice* approaches to practical theory involve the development of theory to be utilized by practical theorists who intervene in communicatively problematic situations. For example, as a social constructionist model of

communication, Coordinated Management of Meaning theory provides heuristic concepts that the theorist-practitioner can appropriate to understand communication episodes and patterns in specific situations and direct efforts to intervene (cf. Pearce, 2007). *Engaged reflection* approaches to practical theory seek to develop a reflexive relationship between theory and practice such that “theory emerges out of systematic reflection on communication problems and practices and, in that sense, is grounded in practice” (p. 63). Besides Grounded Practical Theory (Craig & Tracy, 1995), communication as design (CAD) is another form of practical theory as engaged reflection. According to Jackson and Aakhus (2014), the design of communication perspective entails empirically examining communication problems and answers to which extant communication theories can be applied as “design languages” (p. 131) and that may stimulate powerful new theoretical concepts and practical design objects.

Communication consulting to organizations—that is, engagements with organizational members and other stakeholders concerning communication-related challenges—involves partnering relationships in which theory and practice are not merely recursive but should be reciprocally enhancing. Ostensible challenges of employee (or customer) satisfaction, production quality and quantity, planning and intentional organizational change, forming and maintaining effective teams, determining optimal structures for key organizational processes, facilitating coordination and cooperation between and across units, and so forth typically require consultants to address and assist with correlative communication challenges that are at the nexus of theory and practice: “problems of participation and voice, efficacy and influence, inequity and marginalization, performance and productivity, oppression and powerlessness, intergroup conflict, misunderstandings, and quality of work life, among many others” (Seibold & Flanagan, 2000, p. 181). Indeed, the chapters in this book are replete with authors’ framing of their consultations in terms of prominent communication theories and concepts—many of which they helped to originate as communication scholars (see especially the chapters by Folger, Sostrin, Boster, Cody, Barbour, Daly, McCann, Stephens & Waters, Seibold, and Kreps). In some instances, those authors describe how their consultations have informed or reformed communication theory and research (e.g., see chapters by Pettegrew; Seibold; Boster; and Plax; Waldeck, & Kearney).

Many of the chapters in this volume also exemplify approaches to practical theory. Mapping approaches are most evident in Sostrin’s recommendations concerning use of CMM is an example of the transformative practice approach to practical theory. While there are few explicit examples of engaged reflection approaches in these chapters (for an exception see Seibold’s critical praxis method of team development in Chapter 12), most authors implicitly bring a communication as design (CAD) approach to their consulting. For example, Folger addresses the “unique design considerations that have to be taken into account when conducting team

building interventions from a transformative perspective” (Chapter 10, p. 169). Cody (Chapter 20) discusses the challenges for external reviewers of designing effective reports to university administrators following evaluations of academic units and program on their campus. Houser (Chapter 12) argues that appropriation of instructional communication principles can guide the design of effective organizational training programs. Waldeck, Plax, and Kearney (Chapter 7) explicate six primary topics that must be attended to in planning and proposing consulting work, and each of these areas can be thought of as challenges to the design of the proposal and the project. Finally, the three methods of team development interventions reviewed by Seibold (Chapter 11) represent three different designs for interacting with those teams and for facilitating members’ interactions.

Overview

In this chapter I attempt to illuminate the unique perspective that communication consultants bring to their engagements with organizational members and stakeholders. My thesis is tripartite. First, as representatives of a practical discipline yet steeped in recursive theory-practice relationships, communication consultants also are practical theorists in the main. To greater or lesser degrees, their goals are those of practical theory: “to address practical problems and generate new possibilities for action” (Barge & Craig, 2009, p. 55). Second, and central to my thesis, organizational communication consulting inherently involves “design work” (Jackson & Aakhus, 2014, p. 125) that reflects the application of theory to be sure but, more than that, involves theory building. The authors of chapters in this volume repeatedly demonstrate that effective consultants must employ a wide range of skills and must be credible in enacting their varied roles—and their chapters offer detailed descriptions of those skills and roles. I wish to add to that conversation the importance of managing the theory-practice interface in all its richness and potential, beginning with recognition of the design work that interpenetrates our interactions with clients and their interactions with each other and their stakeholders. Third, for the well-being of society and its institutions (including organizations), for the growth of knowledge, and for the benefit of our discipline, “the academy” should encourage organizational communication consulting that facilitates the mutual enhancement of theory and practice.

Toward those ends, I offer personal reflections on the extent to which my engagements over nearly 40 years have (and have not) met those standards—and opportunities for others in communication to do so. First, I underscore my core commitment to socially relevant communication research, document my organizational consulting experiences as an extension of that commitment, note some applied scholarship that resulted, and reflect on what have become premises and ethics in my approach to organizational consulting partnerships. Second,

I highlight in two major and representative consultations some ways in which I utilized theory/research as a basis for *designing* organizational consultations—including complex design challenges I am now facing (and, I suspect, most communication consultants encounter). Although I ground these discussions in my experiences, I also hope to show how the design choices I have made are at once like those of other organizational communication consultants and (relatively) unique to communication consulting. Third, I conclude with a summary of many of the unique attributes of communication scholars' approaches to organizational consulting.

Although I discuss in some detail my own consulting experiences, those consultations are only a part of my focus here and more complete discussions of them are available in what may be treated as companion pieces by Seibold (1995, 2005) and Seibold and Meyers (2012). Rather, in this treatment of my consulting projects I seek five other ends: to distinguish my consultations from the service engagements that also were part of earlier discussions; to use my consulting experiences as representative of those of other communication scholars; to draw from my consultations (and those of others) inferences about communication scholars' unique perspective on organizational consulting; to use these projects as a platform for discussing CAD and consulting as design (neither of which were part of my earlier discussions); and to emphasize even more than before the links between theory and practice in these consultations.

COMMITTED TO RESEARCH <-> CONSULTING COMMITMENTS

Commitment to Socially Relevant Communication Research

As initially discussed in Seibold (2005), my commitment as an academic researcher long has been to conducting theoretical studies that are methodologically rigorous *and socially relevant*. Like most communication faculty members, I view my role as a professor to teach students to solve communication-related problems for the betterment of society, and to engage in scholarship that has the potential to improve society through consumption by organizational and community members or through application by practitioners. Thus, and in combination with efforts at theory development (Ballard & Seibold, 2003; Seibold & Meyers, 2007; Lewis & Seibold, 1993; Poole, Seibold, & McPhee, 1996; Seibold, 1975) and theory testing (e.g., Ballard & Seibold, 2004; Lemus & Seibold, 2008), much of my scholarship also has been *applied* in nature (Seibold, 2015; Seibold, Lemus, Ballard, & Myers, 2009). Representative applied research studies across the past 40 years include investigations of interpersonal and mediated processes through which persons learn of newsworthy events such as assassination attempts

(Steinfatt, Gantz, Seibold, & Miller, 1973); procedures for making meetings more successful (Seibold, 1979); persuasive strategies for increasing charitable donations (Cantrill & Seibold, 1986); communication approaches to addressing alcohol problems in personal relationships, in friendships, and in the workplace (Seibold & Thomas, 1994; Thomas & Seibold, 1995); processes and effects of 're-engineering' in an aerospace organization (Krikorian, Seibold, & Goode, 1997); communication practices related to innovation adoption (Lewis & Seibold, 1996); jurors' rules for decision making (SunWolf & Seibold, 1998); consultant-client relationships (Seibold, 2001); working with organizational members to co-create research (Simpson & Seibold, 2008); argument in naturally occurring jury deliberations (Meyers, Seibold, & Kang, 2010); business process modeling (Franken & Seibold, 2010); a coach's leadership tactics with members of a collegiate basketball team (Kang & Seibold, 2014); and factors that influence work-life balance among couples who own and manage their own firms (Helmle, Botero, & Seibold, 2014).

My professional profile, as outlined above, is not unique among communication consultants. Indeed, most of the authors in this volume have pursued both theoretical scholarship and applied research, *and* bought both to bear in their consulting—which is a unique feature of communication scholars' consultations. Far from bifurcating "basic" and "applied" research, communication faculty members see them as inherently connected. Those who then consult appropriate each as needed, and view the arena of consulting practice (and clients' challenges) as opportunities for informing or reforming theory (e.g., see chapters by Sostrin; Daly; Folger; Seibold; McCann; Kreps; Boster; Waldeck, Plax, & Kearney; and Stephens & Waters).

Consulting and Social Relevance

Throughout my career, being engaged in socially relevant research and practice also has meant consulting with organizations. Over the course of more than 35 years, I have consulted with 75 organizations and at over 100 locations. Approximately 65 percent of these consultations involved work with for-profit organizations ranging from minority-owned small enterprises to *Fortune 500* corporations. They have been in diverse sectors (energy, technology, telecommunications, hospitality, retail, professional services, consumer goods, agriculture, financial services, insurance, and entertainment) and their products include technology, utilities, clothing, and food. Roughly 30 of the consultations have been with government and nonprofit organizations in numerous areas (e.g., education, philanthropy, transportation, environmental protection, international development, health, and human services), and with a few professional associations. The balance have been consulting projects in which colleagues and I offered services to organizations unable to undertake them on their own (e.g., a hospice, charities, and civic organizations).

Especially between 1983 and 2000 I committed nearly a day each week, most vacations, and the majority of summer recess in a variety of roles with at least 3000 persons from nearly fifty countries. These consultations included serving as executive coach, strategic planning consultant, facilitator, technical advisor, program evaluator, trainer, curriculum designer, process consultant, and featured speaker. The following are representative of my consulting projects with non-health organizations and health-related organizations, which I then relate to the unique qualifications and perspectives of communication consultants generally.

Non-health organizations. My consultations with non-health organizations (not including those discussed in Chapter 11 in connection with team development projects) have included collaborating with members to improve communication in a family-owned trucking firm; conducting staffing audits and human resources needs assessments; mediating conflicts; facilitating problem-solving discussions among quality circle participants in a tool and die plant; working with supervisors seeking to improve relations with employees; offering training workshops on strategic planning, assertive communication, managing conflict, interpersonal influence, and facilitation techniques; improving Human Resources professionals' consultative skills with their internal clients; collaborating with line and personnel managers in the design of organizational change interventions for a computer applications group, for several scientific research teams, and for a business services unit; assisting sales managers with presentation skills and providing training for sales representatives; consulting with a national firm concerning the acquisition and restructuring of a technical services subsidiary; working with members of an employee stock ownership (ESOP) organization to improve performance and productivity; troubleshooting organizational communication problems; evaluating and redesigning a major consulting firm's employee opinion surveys; conducting and reporting internal communication audits in a variety of retail, service, and technological organizations; designing and conducting a survey to assess the communication effects of a telecommunication company's decision to centralize operations; designing and implementing an intervention at all management levels for improving internal communication in a utility company; designing and implementing a program to improve managers' skill in communicating strategic goals to employees; training and facilitating top managers in strategic planning; coaching executives concerning leadership skills; and consulting with top management concerning communication plans for reorganization.

Health organizations. I also have had opportunities to serve as a consultant, evaluator, and trainer for numerous health-related government agencies and health services organizations. My roles have included assisting with the design, implementation, and analysis of formative and summative evaluations of administrative teams and their plans, health education specialists' activities, and health communication programs (e.g., inquiries from the public, mass communication campaigns, publicity

efforts, continuing education for health professionals); providing training in communication and conflict management skills for technicians and supervisors in five departments of a hospital laboratory; investigating causes for volunteer turnover in a hospice care program; conducted a staffing audit and organizational assessment of the communications office of a large federal agency; training and development work with health executives, managers, professionals, and lay volunteers; acting as national project evaluator for a federally funded three-year project to improve the pre-professional training of education and allied health professionals who serve children with disabilities; working with other communication researchers to facilitate introduction of an interaction design model of external communication at a federal agency.

Nearly all of these engagements involved linking theory/research with my/our practices (Seibold, 2005). For instance, in a course I was teaching on field methods of research and program evaluation research, graduate students and I collaborated with administrators and health educators in a regional health center to assess their programs' effectiveness, including a widely disseminated newsletter. Given adequate time to design the evaluation, we examined research literature on media and health communication campaigns. The theoretical frameworks there aided us in designing the study, facilitated interpretation of findings, and enhanced our ability to share them with program personnel in perspectives and terms on which health educators relied (Seibold, Meyers, & Willihnganz, 1984). This consultation raised questions that encouraged us to examine the marketing research and program evaluation literatures and led to the utility of an integrative model of health organizations as a framework for program assessment that these administrators and educators embraced (Meyers, Seibold, & Willihnganz, 1983) and alternate market segmentation approaches for understanding consumers' utilization of health services (Meyers & Seibold, 1985).

Again, my portfolio of consulting engagements is not unique among communication scholars. While it may be longer as a result of my age and longer tenure in the field, it is no more varied or involved than most of the authors in this volume and many others of whom I am aware. And this is another unique aspect of communication scholars' organizational consulting. That is, given the breadth of the field, the added breadth that accrues from the multidisciplinary orientation of its members, the comfort (and commitment) of communication scholars to theory-practice relationships, and of course the communication aspects of nearly all consulting projects, communication scholars have the potential to become involved in a very wide range of projects—wider than I have witnessed among scholars from other disciplines.

Consulting: Partnerships, Premises, and Principles

Partnerships. In most of the cases above I was partnering with the organization to aid members in some agreed upon ways (and in many others that were emergent). Usually

this was as a paid consultant (working alone or for a consulting firm contracted to the organization and subcontracting to me to perform the service). Sometimes it was pro bono as a member of the community served by the organization, and occasionally as a university teacher offering engaged learning experiences for college students.

A vital component for meaningful organizational consulting and for serving as well as I/we could was drawing upon theoretical research findings (and methods) and linking theory and practice (a key point in this chapter). This was not a process of bringing theory *to* the consultations. It was a recursive process as opportunities for theory development arose *in* and *from* the engagement (two examples are reviewed in the next section). Furthermore, and as Jackson and Aakhus (2014) propose concerning the CAD perspective that was explicit or implicit in all of my consulting, these engagements have the potential to stimulate powerful new theoretical concepts. That certainly proved true in many of my projects in which I/we ‘discovered’ relationships that could be investigated in the context of the engagement and that had the potential to advance scholarship concerning interpersonal influence, groups, health, and organizations. For example, an extended consultation concerning turnover of oncology nurses in a hospice led to a theoretical contribution concerning role conflict reported in Berteotti and Seibold (1994) and insights into volunteer motivations discussed by Seibold, Rossi, Berteotti, Soprych, & McQuillan (1987). A pro bono/engaged learning project concerning organizational restructuring and changes work practices in a food processing plant led to proposing the innovation modification model introduced by Lewis and Seibold (1993). And a series of consultations with managers and professionals seeking to improve how they delivered constructive negative feedback to peers and subordinates led to challenges to the research literature on criticism-giving provided by Mulac, Seibold, and Farris (2000). These are but a few of many examples in which opportunities to inform or reform theory via academic publications emerged from practices observed in the course of my organizational consulting, which is another relatively unique facet of communication scholars’ approach to organizational consulting. In most cases, of course, the same amount of effort was devoted to consultations that were of no overt or immediate scholarly value.

As noted elsewhere (Seibold, 2005), my impulses to partner with organizations in the ways mentioned above were varied. I engaged in these consultations *for the members of the organization* (sometimes for managers or administrators but more often for the teams of employees); *for the cause* (to aid those who could not find help and whose aims I believed to be vital or admirable); *for the experience* (a new problem, a new location, new persons); and, yes, *for the reward* (remuneration, appreciation, advancement).

To conclude this portion of my personal account and reflections, I know of numerous communication scholars who have had careers like mine (including many of the authors in this volume): balancing active and visible academic roles