

Organizational Consulting

*How to Be an Effective
Internal Change Agent*

Alan Weiss, PhD



John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Organizational Consulting

Also by Alan Weiss

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This is for all human resources people who have opposed silly management policies, exposed illegal and unethical conduct, and who are unafraid to speak their minds—corporate politics and powerful executives notwithstanding. In other words, it's for those who have fought the good fight. You know who you are.

Acknowledgments

My thanks to my editor at Wiley, Michael Hamilton, who makes it so easy that I should be paying him. Unfortunately for him, this acknowledgment will have to suffice.

Contents

Introduction

xiii

PART ONE: THE ENVIRONMENT 1

Chapter 1

If It Walks Like a Duck

***What Constitutes an Effective Internal Consultant?* 3**

The Role of a Consultant 3

The Key Players 7

The Basic Dynamics 11

The Nature of the Work 18

Suggested Reading 21

Chapter 2

Creating Peer Relationships

***How to Be Perceived as a Credible Partner by Line Management* 23**

Eschewing the Touchie-Feelie Nonsense 23

Taking the Role of a Peer 27

Proactive versus Reactive Advice 32

Avoiding the IRS Syndrome 36

Suggested Reading 43

Chapter 3

Tools of the Trade

***What You Must Possess to Avoid Being Thrown out the Door* 45**

Key Behaviors 45

Mandatory Skills 51

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Useful Experience | 56 |
| Intellectual Armament | 58 |
| Suggested Reading | 62 |

PART TWO: THE INTERACTIONS 63

Chapter 4

| | |
|--|-----------|
| The Role of Conceptual Agreement | |
| <i>The Absolutely Best Way to Establish a Win/Win Project</i> | 65 |
| Relationship Building | 65 |
| Trust | 69 |
| Objectives, Measures, and Value | 73 |
| Pushing Back | 78 |
| Suggested Reading | 83 |

Chapter 5

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Formulating the Proposal | |
| <i>How to Ensure that You and the Buyer Meet Each Other's Expectations</i> | 85 |
| Summations, Not Explorations: The Nine Steps to | |
| Irresistible Proposals | 85 |
| Providing Value-Based Options | 90 |
| Establishing Joint Accountabilities | 94 |
| Avoiding Scope Creep | 98 |
| Suggested Reading | 103 |

Chapter 6

| | |
|--|------------|
| The Value Proposition | |
| <i>Why Every Client Knows What's Wanted but Not Necessarily What's Needed</i> | 105 |
| The Difference between "Fix" and "Improve" | 105 |
| The Difference between Input and Output | 110 |
| Asking the "Why" Question | 114 |

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Confronting Basic Premises | 119 |
| Suggested Reading | 124 |

PART THREE: THE INTERVENTION 125

Chapter 7

| | |
|---|------------|
| The Pros and Cons of Living There | |
| <i>How to Maximize Strengths and Minimize Weaknesses</i> | 127 |
| The Beauty of Institutional Memory | 127 |
| Looking Outside the Organizational Footprint | 132 |
| Force Field Analyses | 137 |
| Combating People Like Me | 144 |
| Suggested Reading | 149 |

Chapter 8

| | |
|---|------------|
| The Politics of Terror | |
| <i>How to Reconcile Tough Issues without Being Drawn and Quartered</i> | 151 |
| Factual versus Emotional Confrontation | 151 |
| Avoiding Internecine Warriors | 156 |
| Persuasion through Self-Interest | 161 |
| Avoiding the Savior Complex | 167 |
| Suggested Reading | 171 |

Chapter 9

| | |
|---|------------|
| Knowing When to Stop | |
| <i>How to Disengage, Give Credit, and (It's Allowed) Take Credit</i> | 173 |
| Assessing Progress and Completion | 173 |
| Making a Clean Break | 178 |
| Closing the Loop with the Buyer | 183 |
| Blowing Your Own Horn | 187 |
| Suggested Reading | 192 |

PART FOUR: THE AFTERMATH 193**Chapter 10****Assessing Value*****How to Follow-Up and Leverage Your Success* 195**

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Developing Your Skills | 195 |
| Developing Other Buyers | 199 |
| Creating a “Brand” | 203 |
| Marketing “Gravity” | 208 |
| Suggested Reading | 214 |

Chapter 11**The Ethical Quandaries*****When to Put Up, Shut Up, and Give Up* 215**

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| The Ethical Template | 215 |
| Blowing the Whistle | 221 |
| Living to Fight Another Day | 226 |
| When It’s Time to Go | 231 |
| Suggested Reading | 235 |

More Suggested Readings 237**Index 241****About the Author 256**

Introduction

This is the first book I've written (of more than 20) focused solely on internal consulting. There are two reasons for that. First, the publisher asked me to do it. Second, as an independent consultant, I've often competed against internal resources for projects, and I figured "Why provide help to the competition?" In actuality, I've worked hand-in-glove with a great many exceptional human resources professionals, trainers, internal consultants, and other organizational change agents over the years. They are some of the best colleagues I've had, and I've learned more from them than they've learned from me. So perhaps the third and best reason for this book is actually payback.

What I often hear from internal people when I'm hired by an executive is, "Thank goodness you're here. You'll tell them the same things we've been saying for years, but at your rate of pay, they'll listen to you!" Unfortunately for the organization, that's been all too true.

My intent in this book is to demonstrate that internal consulting is more similar to external consulting than it is dissimilar. But the inherent advantages of being a part of the culture are often sacrificed in the name of the fad-of-the-month, the latest guru, and other dalliances into worlds strange and far away—and not of the least interest to line executives (and not of the least relevance).

As I write this I've just read a book review of something called *Guiding Change Journeys*, largely panned by *Training* magazine. It includes advice on getting senior managers to sit together, close their eyes, and meditate; there are "archetypal change journeys"; "karmic loops"; and "dragon charts." There is simply too much of this stuff circulating in the human resources community. It's laughable to the rest of us, but it's killing internal change agents.

One final word: I offer here the best of my advice gained over 25 years consulting to Fortune 1,000 organizations of every type. I don't