

The Consultant and the Library

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Public Safety Consultant

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Public Safety Consultant

The Consultant

- Part negotiator
- Part expert
- Part star-gazer
- Part researcher

The Negotiator

- Resolve disputes
- Become well versed in history of issues
- Suggest alternative strategies
- Gain consensus

The Expert

- Personal knowledge
- Professional knowledge
- Professional experience
- Consulting experience

The Star-Gazer

- Perspective
- Inventor
- Abstract thought
- An absence of baggage

The Researcher

- Technical facts
- Community and issue history
- Statutory requirements
- Peripheral issues
- Other disciplines

Types of Consulting

- Problem solving
- Technical
- Validation
- Investigation
- Prostitution

The Consultant's Information Needs

- Process assistance - tools which enable the consultant to understand and rearrange data
 - statistical methodologies
 - demographics
 - benchmarking techniques
 - computerized mapping

The Consultant's Information Needs (cont.)

- Develop better understanding of client community's environment, culture, climate and history
 - Local history
 - Newspaper archives
 - Prevailing standards of service
 - Political realities

Example: Fire Department Consolidation

- Review of one year of newspapers
- Law library research
 - consolidation statutes
 - legislative acts related to fire organizations
- Budget analysis

Consolidation (cont.)

- Apparatus standards
- Insurance Services Office “standards”
- Occupational Safety and Health
- Organizational issues and dynamics

Example: Rescue Related Death

- Staffing standards and patterns
- Interpretation of Federal Regulations
- Budget Analysis
- Dangers of radiation
- Dangers of carbon dioxide

Rescue Related Death (cont.)

- Ambulance transport standards and practices
- Psychology of conflict free egos attempting to function effectively in a competitive power cauldron
- One death, four critically injured, one billion dollars

The Fire Library

- Focus tends to be narrow rather than broad
- Need for combination of technical “fire stuff” with resources from other disciplines

Other Disciplines

- Psychology
- Sociology
- Political Sciences
- Chemistry
- Physics

Why Do We Need All This Other "Stuff"?

- Community safety issues have grown much too complex for a single-discipline solution
- The "Fire Suppression Rating Schedule" is just one management tool - not the final and definitive word

Consultants Need to Broaden Their Focus, too!

- We must recognize the need for a multi-disciplined approach to problem solving and decisions making
- We must become very knowledgeable about the “helping” disciplines and their resource materials

The Challenge

- Consultants are frequently called into situations in which the client has limited technical and documentary knowledge of the issues that must be defined

The Key to Success

- Ability to access a broad range of the latest information in an expeditious manner
- Quick turn-around of information
- An understanding of the library index system

Questions?

