



ONLINE TOOLKIT

Coaching and Consulting

The differences between the two

To explore the issue of differences between coaching and consulting, it's a good idea to first explore different types of consulting. Types of consulting can be described on a continuum with, at one end, the Expertise Model and at the other end, the Process Model. Briefly, in the Expertise Model, the consultant is the expert who is engaged to gather data and present solutions to the client, whereas in the Process Model, the client is fully engaged in finding data, figuring out and applying solutions. There is a continuum of combination styles within this framework.

While coaching is a distinct discipline differentiated from consulting, there is some overlap in values between Process Model consulting and coaching. The following table shows some of the major differences between Expertise Model consulting and coaching.

Consultant	Coach
Even when one person is the main client contact, the consultant usually works with more than one person, often in a team, group, board or department	Works on a one-to-one basis; may coach more than one person in an organization, individually
Structures projects for specific deliverable or result which the consultant is primarily responsible for	Supports the client to achieve her or his own result or outcome
Usually problem-focused, i.e. identifying and trying to correct problems or weaknesses	Builds on client's strengths
Regarded as the "expert" who will solve problems (the magic bullet)	Enables client to solve problems or change things for the better
Consultant brings technical expertise to advise on solutions	Coach brings relationship expertise to support the client's solutions

If behavior change is needed, consultant generally does not get involved in it	A focus on individual and interpersonal dynamics supports behavior change
Gathers data and reports on what needs to be done	Facilitates growth
Time-limited; generally short term and project oriented	Occurs over a period of time which generally involves renewable contracts; generally spread over time
Short-term results	Long-term results (sustainable)
Provides information	Promotes self-discovery
Goals generally related to programs and funding	Values-based goal setting
Requires limited commitment from client to implement	Maximizes client's commitment to implement solutions

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