

# KEY SKILL AREAS FOR SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATIONAL CONSULTING

*David E. Hartl*

- 1. Negotiating Skills:** be able to develop entry agreements for consulting relationships; negotiate an accurate and satisfactory diagnosis for action; create action plans; find allies and support systems; implement action plans through negotiated agreements; create win-win agreements for learning and change; agree on how to measure progress and outcomes; negotiate the closure of consulting arrangements.
- 2. Interpersonal Skills:** empower yourself as a responsible and self-confident consultant; create climates of acceptance and trust for relationships; relate evenly and equitably to the full range of individuals included in the client system from front-line and field staff to owner / CEO / Governor / Mayor / Board Chair / Chief and others in positions of high authority; give and receive effective interpersonal feedback effectively; deal with diversity in client relationships; maintain a business orientation; creatively handle failure as well as success.
- 3. Problem Analysis Skills:** be systems-oriented and use whole-brain approaches to problem analysis; apply critical thinking elements; use creativity and intuition in problem analysis; apply team-oriented problem analysis; understand paradoxical problems; avoid conceptual errors and wrong-headed thinking.
- 4. Intervention Design Skills:** be able to assess appropriate situational considerations; develop inclusive understandings of differing client needs on which to base interventions; select/design various levels and types of interventions; involve client elements in implementing interventions; set appropriate standards for measuring intervention effectiveness; coordinate multiple and simultaneous intervention strategies; remember at all times that interventions must always be in service of the client's needs and goals.
- 5. Change Management Skills:** be cognizant of different types of change strategies and their consequences; seek to understand motivations and resistance to change; manipulate situation elements rather than people; understand and use logical steps in implementing planned organizational change appropriate to the specific client; use therapeutic paradox in individual and systems change to enhance "winning"; engendering continuous change capacities in organizations.
- 6. Facilitation Skills:** be able to serve the facilitator role and function; understand common dynamics of groups at work; creatively deal with group and individual resistance; apply techniques of involving people in group processes; handle negative or toxic individuals adversely impacting group effectiveness; apply techniques for developing decisions and agreements by group consensus; effectively use group process tools including flip charts and methods to document group outcomes.
- 7. Writing Skills:** be able to develop proposals, reports, project documentation, consulting program materials, working papers, concepts papers, strategic papers, meeting agendas and outlines, checklists, coaching notes, training program materials and handouts, correspondence.
- 8. Ethical Skills:** apply techniques for testing ethical practices; apply comparative ethical positions and statements of various kindred professions the published ethics of the field of Organization Development and their applications in consulting; techniques for individual and group values clarification.