

Things I Wish I'd Known About Consulting Two Years Ago

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**The 2009 Inductees to the
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Suzanne Bates

1. **If you think you're thinking big, think again.** Think bigger. It still won't be big enough. (Still working on this.)
2. **Raise your visibility with media and marketing** –you won't achieve your goals if you're a best kept secret.
3. **Surround yourself with very successful** people and don't take advice from people who aren't.
4. **Be generous without being concerned about the outcome.** It always comes back to you somehow.
5. **Adopt technology earlier and get hip to what's happening** - especially when it comes to marketing.
6. **If you don't know why people are buying your services** – ask them and take it to heart and to market.
7. **Create a continuum of product at different price points/entry levels to generate more revenue and keep customers.**
8. **If you have employees, don't tolerate "baby birds" in your nest** – push them out and hold them accountable.

Seth Kahan

1. **My state-of-mind is my most important asset.** Taking good care of myself means creating work I love to do, getting enough rest, spending time with the people I love, and taking good care of my health. Financial success is most immediate as a result of doing these things.
2. **When I see things differently, people want to hear it.** My unique perspective is my core value offering. All of my products and services are simply ways to capture that and make it tangible so other people can benefit from it.
3. **When I focus with laser-like intensity on serving my highest value colleagues, I generate offerings that are attractive, valuable, and desirable to them.**
4. **I can easily make the time for the things most important to me.** I have the skills to generate these windows of time consistently and repeatedly.
5. **The clearer I am about what I want, the better I am at getting it.**
6. **I can do MUCH more than I ever dreamed possible.** My colleagues and friends are amazed at all I accomplish. It requires dedication and study, but it is within reach.
7. **I don't have to waste any time.** If my gut is telling me that an activity is inappropriate, unproductive, unhelpful, or a distraction, I can find a tactful and gracious way to remove it from my obligations quickly... usually immediately.
8. **A body of work is critical to success.** But, more than that, it is my legacy to the world. This body can include anything I am truly interested in and want to offer to others.

Pat Lynch

1. **I provide great value that people desperately need.** I have a moral imperative to share that value with them.
2. **I am an expert.** When I tell others with conviction that I am an expert, they believe me. I don't have to justify or explain myself – I just say it is so. Because it is a true statement.
3. **The only thing that stands between charging a \$50K fee for a \$50K proposal and charging a \$5K fee for that same proposal is my own belief about the value I provide.** By making the first sale to myself (see #4), I dramatically increase my income without changing anything except my mindset.
4. **Attitude is 95% of success in our profession.** Every time I attend one of Alan's events I come away with more attitude. No one can intimidate me unless I let him/her.
5. **It is critical to convert intellectual capital into intellectual property.** "Re-purposing" intellectual property is a wonderful way of leveraging one's value.
6. **Pushing back on statements or behaviors or beliefs increases my value to EBs and their organizations – and it's fun!** Those who take exception to my doing this are not people with whom I want to do business.
7. **The accelerant curve was a wake-up call:** Most of what I had been doing was on the left (free or low cost) side of the curve. I am well on my way to providing options all along the curve, and in the process am challenging myself to do things I would not have tried otherwise.
8. **One easy way to make people believe I'm a genius is to draw a process visual on the spot.**
9. **There is a huge ROI from sharing my value with others.** There is no need to hoard it or fear that others will steal from me. No one else can provide my unique value.

10. **The generosity of Alan's community is available to anyone who asks.** I have learned to ask and to listen to my colleagues' (mostly) wise counsel.

Linda Popky

1. **Things change, be prepared.** Situations change—clients come and go, the economy sputters, new opportunities arise. Be prepared to react to changes in the environment. Don't be caught blindsided.
2. **Never underestimate your value.** I offer tremendous value, and sometimes that is more obvious to other people than to me. My value can be applied to different industries, markets, and types of business and is only limited by my own creativity.
3. **Throw the baggage from the train.** Don't just drop your old baggage. Throw it from the train so that it no longer travels with you. Sometimes you might even have to stomp it into submission, but whatever you do, get rid of that stuff. You don't need it and it's holding you back.
4. **Marketing gravity matters.** Time and again, opportunities arise because of strong marketing gravity. What's important is to differentiate between high value and high time commitment, and not to be seduced by what's new and exciting. Instead, focus on what's tried and true and nibble at the new stuff.
5. **Wealth is not just about money.** If wealth is about discretionary time, then sharing the wealth includes giving of your time and talent to help others.
6. **The power of the accelerant curve:** Transform your intellectual capital into intellectual property by getting things out of your head. Make it simple for clients to work with you by creating multiple entry points for different prospects and various situations.
7. **The community is the network.** The value of a strong community cannot be over-emphasized. The focus is on quality and integrity, not quantity and ease of connection. Together, we can rise to a significantly higher level of success in a win-win situation.
8. **Never stop selling.** No matter how good things look today, keep selling for tomorrow. Never forget that the first sale is to yourself, and that's a sale you can't afford not to win.

Katherine Radeka

1. **Take care of my health and well being first.** If I'm not happy and healthy, I'm not helping anyone.
2. **Volunteer from a position of healthy selfishness.** Nonprofits and trade association work can generate marketing gravity but it can also crowd out other things that will be more valuable. I need to continuously monitor and adjust my involvement to ensure that the ROI is there.
3. **Stop wasting time with low level buyers.** No!! STOP!! Today that's anyone below VP level. I especially wish I had known to never waste time with anyone who was not a line manager, especially anyone with "lean" or "six sigma" in their titles. Those people never have money and have a lot of ill-conceived notions about what the solution looks like.
4. **Strategy work is not only lucrative, it's fun!** Two years ago, I thought I was stuck working on implementation details, because that's what I've always done. How silly that was!
5. **I do my best work with clients. and get paid the most, when I do the least amount of pre-planning.** An engagement where I don't have to plan is one where I'm being brought in as a trusted advisor with sheer intellectual firepower. Those engagements are both intensely demanding and intensely rewarding for both me and my clients.
6. **I need both strong marketing gravity and a consistent sales process to bring in the clients I want to work with the most.** Marketing gravity isn't enough when there are specific companies that can benefit from my work. A consistent sales process brings other people into my network.
7. **Mid-sized businesses are just the right size for me.** The big companies take too long to pay, and too long to implement the advice they've paid for. I like working with companies who are small enough that we can make a big difference in a short period of time, but large enough that I can create significant value. And they pay me without a hassle.

8. **I have to own every segment of my accelerant curve.** A smooth flow down the curve benefits me and my clients.
9. **There are things to delegate and things to keep.** I need to delegate as much of the infrastructure and administrative work as I can, no matter how much I enjoy it, since it distracts me from my core mission. I can delegate low-level delivery work, especially training. I cannot delegate most of the activities related to marketing gravity as much as I want to, because I am the best salesperson that my company has.
10. **It's possible to sustain my health and energy while I'm traveling with just a little bit of planning.** Hotels have fitness centers and exercise helps me sleep in strange beds. More often than not, rooms with refrigerators and coffee makers for breakfast. Most clients accommodate my desire to bring a healthy lunch with me. Then I get home and I'm not totally drained on the weekend. Imagine that!

Last but not least. . .

11. **This is a rich and vibrant community - make the most of it!** I have three accountability partners I met through this group: daily, weekly and semi-monthly. Their support has greatly helped me this year. When I have an urgent question, the Forum is right there. I'm sure that I've met people here that I'll consider friends for the rest of my life.

Scott Simmonds

1. **Eighty percent of the value your client gets is from 20% of your work.** Figure out how to get the client to expect the 80.
2. **Human behavior is predictable** - behavior is repeated that is rewarded.
3. **Figure out what the result will look like and build what needs to be done to get there.**
4. **Throw away anything built by or for Microsoft.** Buy Mac. It is simply the best.
5. **Forget personal life vs. business life.** Build a life.
6. **Problems and challenges are inevitable.** Plan them into every task. Planning for perfection is just dumb. Every single project and plan has flaws. Be ready to manage the flaws when they come up. Condition your client to the fact that problems will come up. Use problems as an opportunity to prove your worth.
7. **American business people are conditioned to meetings.** Fight the urge to meet. Get the decision makers on the phone and take action. Now.
8. **There is always a way to reduce work intensity.** It is merely a matter of constantly looking.

Phil Symchych

1. **World Class** – I help my clients achieve world-class results in terms of dramatic revenue growth and profit improvement. The ROI of these results is huge in terms of value for the client, improved lifestyle, ease of future business transition, repute in the market place and wealth creation.
2. **Unbundle** – I was doing too much work and providing too much value for too small of a fee. When I unbundled and charged separately for projects while clearly communicating the value, my fees went up and my labour intensity went down. Ironically, client satisfaction went up because they were focused on specific value and not on volume. Less is more profitable.
3. **Marketing Gravity** – It not only increases new business requests but also establishes a premium value on my services. Marketing is the number one factor in success.
4. **Pricing** – I need to stop competing with myself and price everything as if I don't need the work and am willing to walk away.
5. **Zoom** – I need an accelerant curve. I only have an accelerant cliff. The start can be terrifying and the landing is bumpy.
6. **Leverage** – I use my client or a contractor to perform labour-intensive parts of projects, such as the financial projections, and I provide the higher value parts of strategy and negotiating.
7. **Coaching** – One-on-one coaching and mentoring is a very rewarding and profitable way to make a significant impact on an individual's business and life.
8. **Intellectual Property** – I have lots of information and experience in my head that needs to be productized so I can leverage it with other people, such as clients or contractors, and create products and workshops.
9. **First** – Client success was always priority number one. Now, my priority is my own success. Interestingly, this has helped me be more valuable to my clients.

10. **Action** – Results come from actions taken. I need to accelerate my speed to success by taking action, learning and adjusting along the way, and creating momentum to bust through growth barriers.
11. **Life is a team sport** – Many people including Alan, Rob Nixon, Guido Quelle, Stuart Cross, Libby Wagner, Chad Barr and others in this community have generously provided me with fantastic advice on marketing, business models, marketing, being specific, and marketing. These have made a huge difference in my life.

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