



The enduring impact of COVID on the training and development of young professionals

Proceedings of the CMCE Consulting
Research Conference 24 November 2020



ABOUT THE CENTRE FOR MANAGEMENT CONSULTING EXCELLENCE

The Centre for Management Consulting Excellence has been established by the Worshipful Company of Management Consultants. Education is one of the primary objectives of Livery Companies and the establishment of the Centre is the Company's contribution in its own domain of interest. It is well placed to lead this initiative, with its broad membership from among the management consulting community.

Sharing know-how and commercialising research of value to the practice of consultancy is vital. The Centre aims to identify and share the most important new ideas for management consultants, thereby developing their performance to the benefit of their clients and the economy in general. It provides a forum for practitioners to share the fruits of their experience and academics to share the results of their research.

The Centre serves a broad range of stakeholders in the management consulting sector. They include practising consultants, academics, consulting firms, clients of management consultants, business schools, and students – all of whom were represented at this year's Conference.



*The Worshipful Company
of Management Consultants*

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

Change through Wisdom — Philanthropy, Education and Fellowship

The Worshipful Company of Management Consultants is a modern Livery Company. We are a professional peer group that contributes to the continuing success of the City of London and our consultancy industry, which itself works with, helps and supports all sectors of the present-day economy. We are a charitable enterprise, founded in 1992, incorporated by Royal Charter and an integral part of the network of the civic city, the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London. And the creation of the Centre for Management Consulting Excellence is a major initiative by the Company in this area.

Beyond this we have built up an enviable record in helping and developing not-for-profit organisations with our pro bono consultancy and mentoring. Similarly, we contribute to and enhance the education and professional development and standing of management consultants. Above all we support, stimulate and learn from each other through our professional fellowship, our formal and informal events and meetings and the varied activities of our special interest groups.

INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to introduce the proceedings from the second Consulting Research Conference run by the Centre for Management Consulting Excellence which builds on the conference we held in 2019. This was, we think, the first Consulting Research Conference ever, anywhere in the world.

The Centre was formed by the Worshipful Company of Management Consultants (WCoMC) almost four years ago, to support the Company's aim quoted in its Charter,

'To facilitate professional and social discussion and the exchange of information between Members of standing in the profession, their clients and society at large concerned with management consultancy'.

We do this by running events, producing reports and creating connections to exchange ideas and practical tools that help consultants significantly increase the value they deliver to their clients. We believe there is too much of a gap between the research into business and management carried out by academia and its practical application in consulting work and our aim is to help bridge that gap.

We are continuing to build relationships with business schools in the UK and elsewhere and this year will see the winners and finalists of our research awards participating in our Showcase events to build on the ideas in their publications.

These events – we expect to run around 10 such Showcases in 2021 – are open to all those who are interested in management consultancy as a practitioner, researcher, client or someone considering a move into the profession.

We also engage in projects to explore ideas of relevance to the industry. Our first report in 2019 published the results of a project we conducted into the skills required of management consultants in 2030. This forms the basis of some of the themes we are developing and exploring – a successful Showcase on cybersecurity last year being one example. We will publish a new report this year into the value that clients receive from consulting projects which will set out actions for clients and consultants to increase the value delivered. We are also looking into the relationship between consultants and academics and will publish findings later in the year.

Like all organisations we have had to make significant adjustments to our ways of working as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic although as a volunteer-led body issues such as furlough have not applied. We have, however, moved what were previously face-to-face events online and this has had the benefit of widening participation to include people not based in South East England. This conference was no exception but still relied on a formidable effort from CMCE/WCoMC members to pull it all together. Particular thanks are due to my predecessor, Calvert Markham for shaping this event, supported by the assessment and judging panel, Terry Corby, Denise Fellows, Peter Johnson, Malcolm McCaig, Karol Szlichcinski and David Trafford. The Urwick Cup was judged by John Corneille and Bob Harris, whose technical support for the conference proved invaluable.

Finally, congratulations to finalists and winners of this year's CMCE Research Awards and of the Urwick Cup, presented by the Worshipful Company of Management Consultants for outstanding research.

In these proceedings you will be able to read about the winning research, the people who were involved in the research and in the Conference, and the comments that were made by those present, all of which is intended to help in sharing leading edge thinking of value in management consultancy.

Our intention is to promote a dialogue and exchange of views so if you would like to follow anything up, please drop a message to us on info@cmce.org.uk.

Nick Bush
Director CMCE



Nick Bush is an independent management consultant, charity trustee and non-exec who helps plan and deliver customer-centric change for arts, non-profit and commercial organisations. He has many years' experience of implementing change across a range of industries, with extended periods in banking and telecoms. A Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Management Consultants, Nick plays an active role in helping the Centre for Management Consulting Excellence grow the value it provides to consultants and their clients and was appointed Director of CMCE at the end of 2019 to succeed Calvert Markham.

Contents

The enduring impact of COVID on the training and development of young professionals: presentation summaries from speakers

- KEYNOTE: The opportunities afforded by virtual reality and augmented reality to improve collaboration within business and revive an ailing economy *Jeremy Dalton*
- Consultancy in management education during and post Covid-19; hybrid education, remote collaboration and technology *Christine Rivers*
- The challenge of adoption of new technologies in higher education – populated with highly intelligent and opinionated people, just as is management consultancy! *Peter Chatterton*
- The challenge of a variety of environments: international, different types of consulting and client sector *Steve Asher*
- How some consulting firms have been dealing with remote training, the social impact of Covid-19 on students and employees, and the changing student and employee expectations *Kelly Matos*

CMCE Consulting Research Awards

Winners

- Management consulting: Towards an integrative framework of knowledge, identity, and power *Szilvia Mosonyi, Laura Empson, Jean-Pascal Gond*
- Barriers To Successful Early Growth For Small Management Consultancies: Evidence And Solutions *Joe O'Mahoney*

Finalists

- Aristotle and the Management Consultants: Shooting for Ethical Practice *David Shaw*
- The secret to AI is people *Nada R. Sanders, John D. Wood*
- Management Consultancy Insights and Real Consultancy Projects *Olga Matthias, Graham Manville, Julian Campbell*

The Urwick Cup

The enduring impact of COVID on the training and development of young professionals: presentation summaries from speakers

KEYNOTE: The opportunities afforded by virtual reality and augmented reality to improve collaboration within business and revive an ailing economy *Jeremy Dalton*

Despite the business potential, consumer use of virtual reality and augmented reality technology (XR for short) monopolises public attention; we mostly only hear about XR applications from consumer-facing organizations with large marketing budgets to promote and sell their products. When a game like Pokémon GO (AR) or Beat Saber (VR) becomes popular, it makes the news, appears in TV shows and movies, and gets discussed publicly. On the other side, commercial use of XR is generally not as well publicised – the technology is used internally to achieve a business objective and at best it may appear in a few niche business publications.

What organisations are already using XR?

We analysed publicly available data from 7.2 million UK and US businesses looking for examples of commercial usage of XR technology. This included company websites, news articles, blog posts, social media activity, and more. Each example was linked to a registered company at Companies House (in the UK) and connected to an industry, geography, technology and use case.

We collected nearly 4,000 examples of commercial XR usage from nearly 2,600 unique organisations. In the UK, $\frac{1}{3}$ of these organisations were based in London indicating its strength as the central hub of XR activity in the UK. Conversely, $\frac{2}{3}$ were spread across the regions showing how widespread the technology is.

What outcomes can XR drive in business?

In our [Seeing Is Believing](#) report, we predict that immersive technologies will contribute a \$1.5 trillion boost to global GDP and enhance 23.4 million jobs by 2030. XR technologies can benefit businesses across all industries in a number of areas.

VR, which immerses users in a different environment, has been used to:

- transform training for millions of employees on a combination of soft skills and practical skills;
- create effective ways of collaborating and working remotely;
- design and visualise assets and environments that don't yet exist or which are inaccessible for financial, time, health or safety reasons.

Meanwhile, AR, which conveniently displays information relevant to a user's surrounding environment, has been used to:

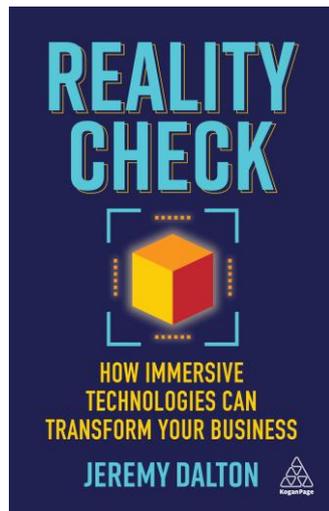
- help businesses optimise operational tasks;
- provide effective remote assistance;
- enhance product sales through the ability to try on personal items and try out physical goods in a customer's environment.

In learning and development particularly, virtual reality can be better, faster, and cheaper at scale than traditional training methods. In our [VR soft skills training study](#), we found that VR learners were:

- 4x faster to train than in the classroom
- 275% more confident to apply skills learned after training
- 3.75x more emotionally connected to content than classroom learners
- 4x more focused than their e-learning peers

At scale, VR can even be delivered cost effectively in comparison to classroom training and elearning. At 375 learners, we saw VR training achieve cost parity with classroom learning. At 3,000 learners, VR was 52% more cost-effective than classroom learning.

Further reading



Reality Check is a book that will be published on 3 January 2021 by Kogan Page Business & Management (28 January in US and Canada).

Reality Check is aimed at non-technical, business leaders who are interested in learning more about the incredible world of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) and how these technologies apply to business.

It is written in simple language and gets straight to the point of why VR and AR are valuable in organisations with case studies from companies all over the world across multiple industries that are using these technologies right now.

In the book you will get:

1. A strong understanding of VR and AR applications in business
2. Data from academic and corporate studies on the value of VR and AR
3. Common misconceptions about VR and AR discussed and debunked
4. How to mitigate challenges when deploying VR and AR solutions in business
5. A beginner's guide to creating quality 360 video (contributed by 360 video director Alex Rühl)
6. Insight on why now is the right time for VR and AR technology

For more information, visit RealityCheckXR.com



Jeremy Dalton leads PwC's VR/AR team, helping clients understand, quantify, and implement the benefits of virtual reality and augmented reality technology (sometimes collectively referred to as XR, immersive technologies or spatial computing). He works with organisations of different sizes across multiple industries, designing, developing and deploying XR solutions as well as delivering bespoke reports to help shed light on the value of XR technology.

He formally advised UK XR start-ups on the business and legal aspects of the technology in a publicly available report entitled 'Growing VR/AR Companies in the UK'. In his 'Seeing is Believing' report, Jeremy released an analysis on the global economic impact of XR through to 2030. He is also the author of the 'XR in Industry' analysis which examines commercial use of XR technology.

Jeremy is the author of Reality Check (www.realitycheckxr.com) - a book about XR in business and has given talks all over the world on this subject. He and his work have been featured in the media on radio, newspapers and online with The Financial Times, The Economist, the BBC, and others.

As part of his mission to educate, connect and inspire, he has worked with organisations including the World Economic Forum on XR initiatives and currently sits on the advisory board of Immerse UK, a UK government supported cross-sector network for businesses, research groups and educational organisations that are engaged with immersive technologies.

He also happens to be a Chartered Accountant (but prefers not to advertise that too loudly!).

Consultancy in management education during and post Covid-19; hybrid education, remote collaboration and technology *Christine Rivers*

Before Covid-19, blended learning and hybrid education were adopted by a few and consultancy in this area was limited. The Centre for Management Education at Surrey Business School shared their research in blended learning and hybrid education with a number of business schools and higher education institutions prior to Covid-19, but impact was limited. Since March 2020 we have seen a considerable increase and demand for consultancy in this area. The biggest area HEIs were looking for was implementation at an operational level with a positive impact on student experience. While achieving a smooth move to blended learning at the best of times, this was an even more ambitious goal during these unprecedented times. Two aspects restricted consultancy projects to take place: time and resources.

While we had the knowledge and skills to strategise, advise HEIs, we didn't have the time to implement the approach. Clients wanted ready-made, plug-in solutions, quick and efficient. It was clear that this was not always the way we were able to help, so maybe there is an opportunity to think about how this can be achieved in the future? While in the past we would have carefully assessed the scale of the project including roll out, this time we were only able to focus on the essentials and help where possible.

In our own business school, based on our research in blended learning, we were able to implement and roll out our new approach, called Active Digital Design (ADD). We had the knowledge, resources, infrastructure and support from senior management to do so. The latter has also been a barrier for some schools in other HEIs to follow our approach. Getting buy-in from senior management takes time. It became clear that HEIs were only able to adopt and implement bite size sections of our hybrid approach. For instance one of the popular aspects HEIs wanted to adopt, were cognitive module maps. The infrastructure of the VLE, the resources available and knowledge of staff allowed these to be introduced. However, other elements such as embedding content and short bite size video recordings with adjoined online activities and interactive quizzes were not always possible due to the requirements of the VLE or the skills and knowledge of staff.

Thus, implementing effective hybrid education effectively to enhance remote learning, collaboration and teaching needs careful assessment of availability of resources, skills and knowledge, commitment of senior management and capabilities of the infrastructure. Going forwards HEIs and business schools will have to *up their game* in delivering hybrid education. Recent findings of our follow up study on the impact of ADD showed that both students and staff want user friendly VLE spaces that

enable interactivity, peer engagement and remote learning and teaching that foster a community feel and are simple to navigate. Evaluating hybrid approaches in partnership with students and staff is critical to improve and meet a level of teaching excellence despite the circumstances. However, as we evolve, we need to ensure that staff and students have the necessary skills to engage with new approaches and can adopt to new aspects of learning and teaching easily. Thus, this becomes an ongoing cycle of experimentation but in partnership, which makes this type of consultancy all the more valuable and important.

	<p>Dr Christine Rivers is Co-Director for the Centre for Management Education and Director for Learning & Teaching at Surrey Business School, University of Surrey. Christine is also an accredited executive coach and consultant in Management Education. She has extensive experience in consulting business schools and educational providers in the areas of blended learning/ hybrid education and staff development. Christine’s consulting expertise and research focus is grounded in her PhD, which focused on remote collaboration, decision making and the impact of technology on learning and team effectiveness.</p>
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The challenge of adoption of new technologies in higher education populated with highly intelligent and opinionated people, just as is management consultancy! *Peter Chatterton*

The UK Government invested heavily in digital modernisation of university teaching, learning and assessment from the year 2000 onwards, through educational agencies such as the Higher Education Academy, Jisc, and the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education. The author played a key role in these modernisation programmes as a digital innovator, critical friend and mentor to universities as they implemented benchmarking and enhancement programmes. Despite this sizeable Government investment, the author argues that universities failed to institutionally embed digital learning. When COVID-19 arrived, this left large numbers of academics struggling to know how best to convert courses for online delivery and universities struggling to know how best to support tutors and students in rapidly responding to the pandemic. The author explains how this all came about, highlighting the complexities, issues and challenges that universities face in adopting new technologies in teaching, learning and assessment. He concludes by proposing six guiding principles for transforming learning programmes for online and blended delivery.

People issues

The table below highlights general people issues (though there are, of course, exceptions).

Tutors	Support staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overwhelmed by too much choice, information and resources relating to learning technologies and pedagogies. • Varying digital enthusiasm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support staff (such as e-learning specialists) tend to “over-innovate” i.e. always wanting to work on the next big tech.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomous academic cultures and ways of working (& some egos!). • Unhappiness with changing tutoring roles. • Unhappiness with needing to develop new capabilities e.g. coaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They also prefer to work with academic innovators and not those academics who are reluctant to embrace innovation (“laggards”). • They can tend to provide the wrong type of support e.g. creating content for academics, rather than supporting them in adopting DIY approaches.
Students	Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key student demand is for “consistency” of digital experience from all tutors. • Students demand wider cultural/community experiences than just teaching and learning. • Increasingly, students are ill-prepared for HE study (their schools experience is a very prescriptive model of learning). • There is considerable variation in understanding of what student/graduate digital literacy looks like and generally, there are low aspirations by both universities, educational agencies and employers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly too remote from the coalface and the “digital experience” (non-practitioners). • Under-appreciation of strategic importance and impact of digital technologies. • Due to the complexities, digital learning can be a “poisoned chalice” for management careers. • Faculty/School management (local level) fail to embed digital learning in business plans (and are not mandated to by central management). • “Not invented here” – new management often reject previous initiatives giving rise to “initiative-fatigue”.

Organisational Issues

- **Insufficient resourcing** – most academics complain, correctly, that they do not have sufficient time in their workloads to fully redesign their courses for online delivery.
- **Insufficient academic reward and recognition for teaching** – reward and recognition are skewed towards research rather than teaching, though this is slowly changing.
- **Integrating into institutional processes** – digital learning needs to be appropriately integrated into institutional processes in order to be fully institutionally embedded e.g. curriculum design/review, quality assurance and support processes.
- **Ownership at the local level** – Heads of faculties, schools and departments need to take ownership of digital learning and fully embed it into their business plans – this should be mandated by VCs/PVCs.
- **Over-reliance on multiple educational agencies** – universities have tended to rely on funding and support from educational agencies for their digital learning initiatives. These agencies have tended to create short-term initiatives with an over-emphasis on innovation rather than institutionally embedding.

Teaching, learning & assessment and technology challenges

- **Personalisation in industrial-size learning** – universities have mostly failed to provide a fully “personalised learning” student experiences within a context of industrial-sized student numbers.
- **Pace of change, complexity and too much of everything** – academics and management remain largely overwhelmed by the complexities and pace of change of learning technologies and models and fail to adopt computational modes of thinking to address this.
- **Rethinking teaching, learning and assessment models** – it is not uncommon for academics to try to replicate existing ways of teaching online e.g. Zoom lectures, but this is not sustainable. Models of learning need to be adapted to address the strengths and weaknesses of digital learning.
- **Rethinking staff roles and capabilities** – as students are encouraged to direct their own learning, tutor roles will focus more on guiding students rather than being providers of knowledge therefore skills such as coaching will become more important.
- **Bad things happening** – with increasing dependency on digital infrastructure, keen attention needs to be paid to e.g. cybersecurity, resilience. In addition, scenarios need to be considered such as “how do we know the student taking a (remote) online assessment is the one we think they are?”.
- **Student preparedness for digital learning** – at school level, students are used to prescriptive teaching models whereas a higher education nowadays requires students to become self-directed learners. This is a big leap! Furthermore, many STEM academics, complain about poor numeracy skills amongst some school-leavers and poor English literacy skills in some overseas students.
- **Innovation with advanced technologies** – many opportunities lie ahead for using advanced technologies in learning such as virtual reality, artificial intelligence, visualisation tech and data/learner analytics. However, there are significant barriers to their adoption, not least the added complexities of knowing how they really work (e.g. algorithms) and supporting academics in embracing them. Learner analytics, for instance, is currently being rather “over-sold” with expectations that computers will provide instant answers to learner progress. Furthermore, most established universities have large numbers of disparate systems and databases that have grown piece-meal, making it difficult to provide comprehensive, accurate real-time data to support analytics.

Guiding principles for transforming learning programmes for online and blended delivery

The author’s six principles for transforming learning programmes are predicated on building on established, effective and evidence-based pedagogic models such as constructiveness learning, inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, group work, reflective learning and social/informal learning.

1 Future-proof flexible curriculum design - to take account of uncertain and unpredictable futures, courses should be designed to be able to be delivered flexibly e.g. either 100% online or in blended modes, dependent upon prevailing circumstances.

2 Balance synchronous and asynchronous approaches – synchronous approaches (real-time activities such as Zoom lectures) cannot easily be sustained, therefore asynchronous approaches (i.e. activities that are not concurrent in time) must be adopted.

3 Adopt “assessment for learning” – this approach encourages regular (formative) assessments and feedback that don’t count towards student marks but are meant to stimulate ongoing dialogue between tutors and students and where tutors monitor how students act on the feedback provided.

4 High level of communications, engagement and community-building – this principle should be applied to almost all learning models as well as to student induction and should incorporate outsiders such as employers and alumni e.g. as guest experts, student mentors or providers of problems to be solved in group work.

5 Academics to adopt DIY content creation – academics must be supported to create their own content – not just using Word/PowerPoint but also using different media e.g. videos created using audio-narrated PowerPoint techniques.

6 Implement longitudinal approaches to student academic, personal and professional development – in many cases, students can customise their course by selecting their own choice of modules to study but this can result in a series of loosely connected modules without overall course learning outcomes. Universities need to implement course-level learning outcomes (including a focus on student employability) as well as ways of supporting student academic, personal and professional development throughout the course through e.g. personal tutoring and use of e-portfolios.



Dr Peter Chatterton is a chartered physicist and digital innovator in the UK Government's digital modernisation programmes for universities, acting in the role of critical friend and mentor in programmes to enhance teaching, learning and assessment. He has been a prime mover in setting up industry/education partnerships and in developing student employability. He was a Visiting Professor at the University of Hertfordshire's Blended Learning Unit and has authored many technology-focused books, published by the Financial Times, Pitman Publishing, Routledge and Kogan Page as well as producing HE sector resources e.g. the QAA Flexible Curriculum toolkit and the Jisc Technology for Employability toolkit.

The challenge of a variety of environments: international, different types of consulting and client sector *Steve Asher*

We looked at the challenge of professional development for consultants who operate in an increasing variety of environments: international, different types of consulting and client sectors. This is equally relevant for sole practitioners, niche players and international consultancies as well as for major firms.

Definitions of a management consultant are continually evolving; expectations of development of professional competencies and literacies are continuously shifting. This requires a constant review of professional behaviours, consulting competence, market capability and knowledge.

In addition, it was recognised that the management consulting learning experience has changed in the pandemic, it has forced many young professionals to be more adaptable, while also introducing a great deal of uncertainty. Online experience has provided opportunities to connect more widely but not everyone finds it easy to adapt to the online environment. Online fatigue is beginning to kick in for many people and the virtual situation has presented many challenges for those trying to access developmental opportunities. This period is likely to produce a completely new management consulting professional development framework.

I want to highlight, in terms of education and training, what remote learning cannot wholly substitute in comparison to face-to-face sessions. The pandemic experience has focused the attention on the

obstacles to the development of interpersonal skills, the transfer of skills to others, and an understanding of organisational and country cultures.

As businesses build out of the pandemic economic stagnation, international growth will be an increasing focus. Building and sustaining cross-border relationships, interpersonal interaction, developing working relationships, the adaptability of international leadership and management consulting literacies will be vital skills to build.

Management consulting literacies

We highlighted the following key consulting literacies :

- IQ, EQ, CQ
- Social skills
- Empathy
- Cultural awareness

We considered who is training who in this respect, and how is this changing?

Cultural literacies in a virtual world

We considered how do we learn to work together online in an international environment, including opportunities for:

- Learning to value and leverage cultural differences
- Developing a keen understanding of national cultures
- Developing an international mindset
- Cultivating diversity and debate across cultures
- Building international alliances and partnerships

We reflected on what can be learned from more experienced colleagues when we are not able to work alongside one another. How do you form international social networks from which you can gain genuine insight?

The importance of cross-border social ecosystems cannot be overestimated. It is a vital skill to understand cross-border coordination and communication issues. But if we are not able to meet, how do we replace the informal conversations – the trivial chats in the lifts, along corridors that turn out to be anything but trivial.

We do not want to lose the value of sharing gossip, and war stories. Often driven by the tap on the shoulder and shadowing senior colleagues, these relationships that foster cross-pollination of ideas from unplanned conversations with trusted colleagues is crucial in developing consulting skills and knowledge.

But, are online interactions becoming too linear, predictable, structured, when curated via Zoom or Teams etc. and does this lack of spontaneity, or serendipity fuel a deterioration in creativity and innovation?

Are we missing training to see the bigger picture of cultural differences? And, is it productivity that suffers or innovation?

How do you learn to navigate the complex interplay of nationalities, to develop international social and emotional intelligence, picking up on linguistic cues and body language?

There is little clear evidence as yet of enduring developmental damage in this regard, but it is recognised we must not lose the sense of profound humanity at the core of management consulting expertise, and we need to be watchful of online challenges to the development of these social and relationship building skills.



Steve Asher is a practicing consultant specialising in international operations. He has developed his experience, knowledge and skills of for over 30 years, across a large spectrum of industry sectors and organisations of all sizes. His main areas of consulting involve advising companies on international deployment strategy and cross-border organisational design. Steve's main personal commitment is to support the training and development of young people entering management consultancy from a diverse background and a variety of industry focus.

New working norms within the consulting industry: An exploratory study into productivity and work experience post COVID19 *Kelly Matos*

In this exploratory study, the analysis emphasises productivity and working experiences of employees and students throughout the pandemic, focusing in on the consulting industry. Extensive literature analysis on pre, during and post COVID19 working from home practices was examined. Primary research was conducted, including a semi-structured interview with 10 students, specifically those who took the Cass Consulting Project module, and 3 employees in consulting, interviewed in July 2020. The five common themes which arose from the interviews, and inductive coding process, were interactivity, technological proficiency, health, communication, adjustments and routines, with the most prominent theme being [lack of] interactivity.

Due to the outbreak of COVID19, which forced people to work from home, flexible working was referred to as the model work method. Flexible working will be understood as a firm's provision of control and autonomy to employees regarding their working hours and locations. Employee productivity is one of the most important contributors to a firm's success and will be understood as an employee's capability to meet and exceed pre-agreed job tasks.

The consulting industry alone could lose a reported \$30 billion in 2020. As a result of the recession, multiple clients have cancelled, delayed or minimised the scopes of their projects, thus reducing firm's income. Working from home has limited companies' abilities to travel to client sites and maintain the usual levels of interaction as before, but many firms have been able to proceed with projects online (ibid.). Future predictions for the UK consulting industry include a drop in client fees and a revenue drop of 28% for consulting firms in 2020.

Top 5 consulting skills

One of the questions asked about the skills that interviewees felt were most important during and post COVID19 in the consulting industry. A ranking of top 5 FACCT skills was generated based on response popularity (also ranked in order).

1. Familiar and comfortable with technology
2. Adaptive to change
3. Communication
4. Commitment
5. Time management

Corporate recommendations

Some of the solutions arising from a KPMG report were for companies to use online collaboration tools such as KANBAN and Trello. Also, paying closer attention to employee wellbeing, suggesting physical and mental mindfulness practices, and incorporating regular feedback methods.

To ensure a productive environment, McKinsey’s considers the need for companies to alter their policies, working norms and provisions to ensure employees feel safe. Part of the process of ensuring this in the long term is for companies to create a supportive corporate culture where employees and leaders alike can gain clarity on how things are done, what is expected of them (work and behaviour wise) and how they can improve.

However, there may be a large handful who cannot work effectively from home due to other reasons such as dependants (children or grandparents) or external factors (construction or network issues) which will undoubtedly affect performance (PwC, 2020). As a result, leaders need to take a broad and empathetic approach to manage, remaining flexible with employees and being considerate of varying physical, emotional and psychological struggles employees may be going through while working from home, and in the transition of returning to the office (McKinsey, 2020; KPMG, 2020; PwC, 2020).

Individual recommendations

Though it is important for individuals to provide training opportunities, it is equally, or perhaps more important, for individuals to remain proactive and train themselves. Firstly, I propose the FACCT skills framework, created as a result of the primary and secondary data from this report. It provides practical suggestions in the form of a tick-box list for how to improve the top 5 skills highlighted in the data accumulation process (Figure 1). Enhancing these skills will assist individuals during COVID19 and prepare individuals for the challenging and ever-changing post COVID19 environment.

Figure 1: FACCT skills framework

Familiar and comfortable with technology	<p>Practise using various online sites with small groups of people (Zoom, Teams and Google Teams are the most popular ones)</p> <p>Online classes to practise technology skills such as Udemy or FutureLearn</p> <p>Students to practise with newer technologies such as Miro and Mural and both students and employees to experiment with new technologies to make suggestions to the institution/firm too</p>
Adaptive to change	<p>Test and find destressers that work for you. Examples include sports, reading, yoga and arts and crafts</p> <p>Set yourself one challenge a month where you step out of your comfort zone. Write these down along with how you have managed and how to do better next month</p> <p>Maintain an open mind when raising and discussing new initiatives and be open to challenging work/personal norms</p>

Communication	<p>Establish the preferred communication method with colleagues/friends/family</p> <p>Reach out to people for informal chats/coffee meets as well as work queries. This could be connections and strangers on work platforms or social media such as LinkedIn and Instagram</p> <p>Practise the use of body language and eye contact both online (Zoom, Teams) and offline and keep points clear and direct</p>
Commitment	<p>Find a passion, interest or something you are good at and dedicate time to do this if you're not already doing so</p> <p>Set professional and personal career SMARTER goals</p> <p>Review your SMARTER goals after 6 months and set new goals to keep you committed</p>
Time Management	<p>Make to do lists in order of priorities and before starting the day and then short- and long-term goals*</p> <p>Create a schedule including both work and personal events. Attempt to include at least one extracurricular task per day</p> <p>Use online sites such as Trello and Slack to ensure group teamwork, time management, implementing group targets and goals in addition to your own</p> <p>*Timeframes could be a week for short term and six months for long term but there's scope for experimentation based on personal preference</p>

To improve communication and relationship skills, as well as a method to be adaptive to change, the FLAB framework was created as a suggested guide for individuals (Figure 2).

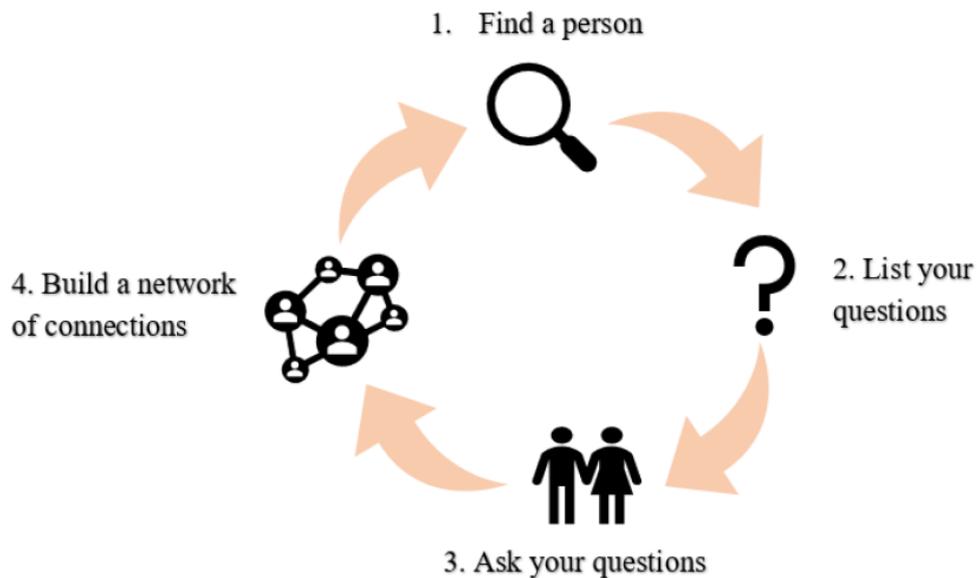
The FLAB framework

Find a person with an interesting or similar background to yours	Common ground is always a good conversation starter
List the questions you want to ask	<p>I was wondering if you could give me 5 minutes of your time to answer some questions I have regarding....</p> <p>I came across your profile as I am deeply interested in... Would you be able to tell me a little bit about your role?</p> <p>Don't forget – just because they are online doesn't mean they are not people! Greet them with basic manners before you ask questions and ask about them too. For example, ask about what they do and make a note of key things they mention</p>
Ask your questions	This could be through text or email, a video call, phone call, or face to face. Aim to practise all at least once to build your confidence and communication through all methods online and offline

Build a network of connections

Refer to the notes you took from the conversations with people. If you come across events, articles or other useful information, send it through to them to maintain a connection rather than just having an isolated conversation

Figure 2: FLAB framework



Turning routines into habits

Lastly, even though many have mention having a routine, finding an individual routine requires constant experimentation. Once it is found, one way of ensuring the routine is long lasting is turning it into a habit. Leading business reporter Charles Duhigg suggests the habit loop as a method of doing so – Cue, Routine, Reward. Initially, individuals should follow the three steps, but over time the loop will become automatic. Understanding how to take control of one’s daily life and create positive habit loops enables autonomy and control over routines, further maximising productivity.



Kelly Matos is an ex MSc Management student at The Business School, (Formerly known as Cass Business School), London. Given her interest in pursuing a career within consulting, she wrote a Business Research Project on productivity and work experience post Covid-19 in the consulting industry. Kelly is currently seeking an internship or full-time consulting role to gain industry exposure.

CMCE Consulting Research Awards



One of the main aims of the Centre is to promote sharing of academic research and practitioner experience in the management consulting community. In 2019 we successfully launched our Consulting Research Awards, with the support of the British Academy of Management, to recognise and promote outstanding relevant research and encourage its application to consultancy.

We currently present Awards for research in three main categories:

- Technology and consulting: the application of new technologies and their relevance to consultancy.
- Client-consultant relationships: issues around governance, trust, integrity, social responsibility and ethics and the implications of these for consultancy.
- The changing environment of the consultant: the demands that changes in society and the business environment are placing on consultants.

Relevant research does not have to be about consultancy; it can be anything that is potentially of value in management consulting and nominations can be made by the author of the research or by anyone else. The research should have been published recently – preferably in the last two years.

Submissions for Awards are judged by an Assessment Panel against the following criteria:

- The relevance of the research to management consultancy.
- The potential value of the research to those involved in management consultancy
- The potential or actual impact of the research
- The appropriateness of the research to the award category for which it has been entered.

Those nominated for an Award submit a summary to the Assessment Panel explaining how their book or paper meets these criteria.

The summaries submitted by each of the Winners and Finalists are shown in the following pages.

Winner in the category Client Consultant Relationships: Management consulting: Towards an integrative framework of knowledge, identity, and power

Szilvia Mosonyi, Laura Empson, Jean-Pascal Gond

Published in *International Journal of Management Reviews* 22 (2), 120-149

Summary

Management consultants, in addition to delivering exceptional client service, often observe their primary subject - the client - to derive generalisable conclusions and frameworks that, in turn, help entire industries solve complex and transformational challenges. Examples of this abound and the most famous are McKinsey's "Three Horizons" or Boston Consulting Group's "Growth-Share Matrix". Academics have influenced the consulting practice as well, most notably with Michael Porter's "5-Forces" or Clayton Christensen's "Disruptive Innovation". There are many other examples, but these were able to transcend academia, consulting, and business circles alike and have become common ways by which to understand corporate behaviour and competitiveness.

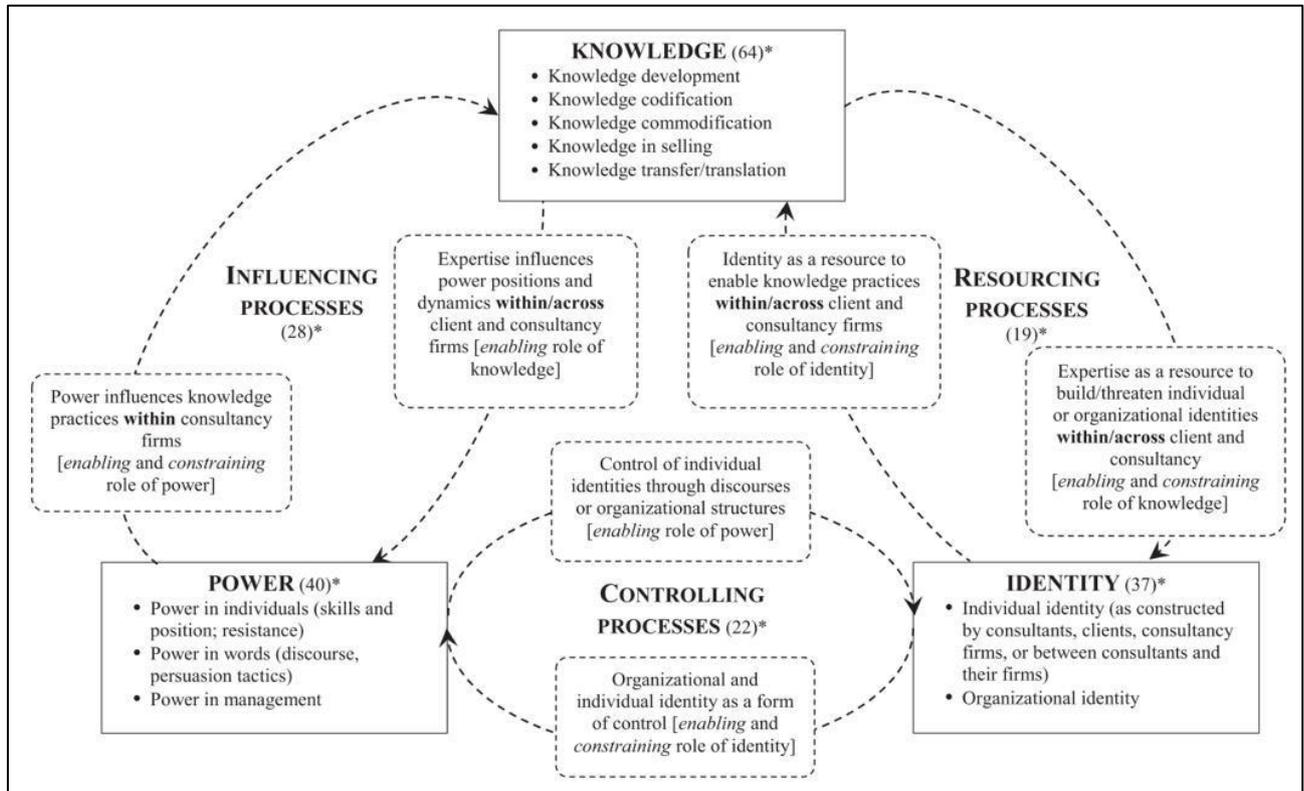
Scientists relentlessly pursue general truths that can then be applied by practitioners. Some study microbiology, while others focus on the cosmos. We, on the other hand, have been on a multi-year journey of understanding the client and consultant relationship. A survey of academic literature of the past three decades helped us identify three themes that govern the client-consultant relationship and reveal a framework that can help consultant teams secure and retain critical client relationships, navigate the complexity and intimacy of the interaction, and continuously help derive more value for the client and themselves. At no time has understanding these dynamics been more important than now as the physical separation between clients and consultants has increased given the global pandemic, while the pace of uncertainty, strategic surprise, and demand for insight has only accelerated.

The Influencing - Resourcing - Controlling (IRC) framework can help global consulting firms and boutiques alike navigate the interpersonal links that bind consultants with their clients. The IRC framework identifies:

- Three themes that inform all client and consulting relationships: knowledge, identity, and power.
 - Where **knowledge** is represented through the different knowledge practices that consultants engage in with and without their clients (e.g. knowledge development).
 - Where **identity** is who you are as a consultant, as a client, and as a company. These identities are constructed in interactions.
 - Where **power** is not just exercised by management, but is inherent in individual skills, positions, and interactions.
- Three processes that connect these themes: *influencing*, *resourcing*, and *controlling* (IRC).
 - **Influencing**: The various aspects of power influences how, for example, knowledge is developed within the consulting firm or transferred/translated with the client during the project. At the same time, expertise influences power positions and dynamic within and across client and consultant firms.

- **Resourcing:** Expertise serves as a resource for both consultant and client identities, while individual and organisational identities are also resources that can enable or constrain knowledge practices within and across client and consultant firms.

Figure 1: IRC Framework



- **Controlling:** The relationship between identity and power is based on control. Organisational structures and discourses can control how individual identities are formed, however on the other side these identities – what consultants / clients think who they are – can also serve as control mechanisms either enabling or constraining the client-consultant relationship.

We believe, the value of this research for practitioners is threefold:

1. We provide a **robust summary** of three decades of consultancy research and suggest an alternative way to think about consulting and the client-consultant relationship.
2. Our IRC framework **creates a language and a platform** on which practitioners and academics can continue to engage on and set an agenda for future research.
3. Applying and adopting this framework will **help consultants derive more value** from their client relationship.

The framework can be understood across the spectrum of the consultant hierarchy - helping partners better navigate client relationships and assisting junior consultants to have the most impact while working for their clients.

As an example, there are multiple training programmes especially in larger consultancies that focus on the three themes separately – such as, the circles of power within the client firm. Our framework demonstrates that the concept of power is played out in a much more complex manner and is embedded in relationships – relationships between client and consultant at various levels, relationships within the consulting firm, and relationship with other themes such as knowledge and identity. Therefore, it is not enough to understand and map the power the client holds within its organisation, but consultants need to consider their own knowledge/identity-power dynamics and how that influences the client-consultant relationship. This is just one way that our framework allows for increased reflexivity in consulting practice and more in-depth understanding of its key themes of knowledge, power, and identity.

This framework is being adopted by academics and university programmes teaching management consulting to undergraduate and graduate students and thus the next generation of leaders entering the consulting ranks will be familiar with the theory and we hope that they will see this framework make its way to consulting firms and be adopted by practitioners. Understanding and practicing the IRC framework can help senior consultants provide the most insight to key client stakeholders, inform consulting teams how to best navigate engagements and secure new ones, and help junior staff be more effective.

 A portrait of Szilvia Mosonyi, a woman with dark hair, wearing a dark green top and a patterned scarf, looking directly at the camera.	<p>Szilvia Mosonyi is Lecturer in Responsible Leadership, Queen Mary, University of London</p>
 A portrait of Laura Empson, a woman with blonde hair, wearing a grey jacket and a pearl necklace, looking slightly to the side.	<p>Laura Empson is Professor of the Management of Professional Service Firms at Cass Business School, City, University of London</p>



Jean-Pascal Gond is Professor of Corporate Social Responsibility at Cass Business School, City, University of London

Winner in the category The Changing Environment of the Consultant: Barriers To Successful Early Growth For Small Management Consultancies: Evidence And Solutions

Joe O'Mahoney

Paper presented at the Management Consultancy Track at the British Academy of Management Annual Conference, BAM in the Cloud, 1st-4th September 2020

Summary

Relevance to management consulting

This paper is part of a wider project studying *how small management consultancies grow successfully* – a research topic which, oddly, has not been addressed in any detail before. Using in-depth interviews with 42 founders who grew and sold their consultancies, the paper identifies five common barriers to growth and how these were overcome. These are, cash-flow; client acquisition; recruitment; the complexity of operations; and governance strategy. In each case, the challenges are outlined, and the tactics deployed by the consultancies to overcome these are detailed. These represent the empirical contributions which will be most relevant to management consultants.

The theoretical contribution, which will be of more interest to academics, is that the paper finds no evidence to support the dominant theory of growth for professional service firms. This theory follows Laura Empson's argument in 2012 that growth in professional service firms leads to crises of governance, followed by changes in the form of the organisation. Instead, the paper finds that most interviewees actually anticipated crises and made necessary changes in advance to their governance, structure and policies to avoid unnecessary disruption.

The paper argues that the dominant 'problem based' theory of growth is limited because it rests on three assumptions that this paper finds no evidence for. The first is that founders do not anticipate crises until they are in them. The second is that founders jealously guard their power. The third is that time spent on management administration (controls and co-ordination) represents a serious challenge to the success of consultancies.

The paper finds that, at least in the sample of successful firms, there was no support for these assumptions, and indeed significant evidence that founders were experienced (or educated, or networked) enough to anticipate significant challenges, and were generally more than happy to sacrifice a smaller slice of control for a bigger piece of cake. Concerning the third assumption (management administration) the paper notes that Empson's argument predates the existence of Professional Service Automation (PSA) software, and therefore does not take into account the significant decrease in management administration enabled by the digital age.

The potential value of the research to those involved in management consultancy

Most obviously, the paper provides advice to ambitious founders or owners that seek to grow and potentially sell their management consulting firms. These tips concern cash-flow; client acquisition; recruitment; the complexity of operations; and governance strategy and should also give confidence to consultants that they are not the only people that experience such challenges!

For academics studying the consulting industry, the paper provides a call that more research is needed. If 'problem based' theories of growth are limited, at least when studying small firms, then alternative

theories of growth which take into account new technology, greater consultant experience, and a difference economic environment are needed.

For policy makers and investors, the paper also provides an insight into the forms of support that are most valuable to small professional service firms. The potential of PSA certainly raises significant opportunities for firms to reduce the time and cost associated with management operations, and the importance of the growing experience and expertise of founders in recognising and overcoming future challenges should also be recognised.

The potential or actual impact of the research.

The paper, which is under consideration for the British Journal of Management, has formed the basis of talks at the British Academy of Management Conference 2020, and talks for the ICMCI and CEEMAN. It is also part of a wider project that will be published as a book by Routledge in April 2021. The paper is also contributing to an online course for management consultants that will be launched in Summer 2021 for Consulting Mastered Ltd.

The paper itself contains fairly simple and easily implemented advice for ambitious consultancies. Indeed, several of the points have been incorporated into the coaching that the author undertakes with firms. For example, the advice around Professional Service Automation was implemented by a growing consultancy called Digitopia, who the author is currently supporting.

The appropriateness of the research to the award category

The award category is 'The changing environment of the consultant'. The paper fits this in two senses: first the change that a founder experiences when they are seeking to grow a firm. Here, the paper provides insights to support such founders. Second, the changing nature of growth itself. Here, the paper argues that theories developed when founders were perhaps less experienced or educated about growth or when digital opportunities were not so prevalent and affordable, need to be developed.

More widely, the growth of SMEs is fundamental to a healthy, vibrant economy. Indeed, as a McKinsey & Co. study argues 'better understanding and improving the SME ecosystem [by] enabling the growth of SMEs' is a central part of solving the productivity gap in many countries (Albaz et al. 2020:5). Small management consultancies, which represent 97% of Western Europe's consulting market (IBIS 2020), are a crucial part of this ecosystem and the growth of small consultancies is around 20% per cent per annum - four times the rate of the largest consultancies (MCA 2019).

However, despite the importance of growing smaller consulting firms to the wider economy, there are few evidenced-based studies of the *growth* of small consulting firms. Given that 45 per cent of small management consulting firms fail within their first five years of operations 'it is surprising how little empirical research has been conducted in this field' (Reihlen & Werr 2015:22). This paper seeks to begin addressing this absence.

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Joe O'Mahoney is Professor in Organisation Studies, Cardiff Business School

Finalist in the category Client Consultant Relationships: Aristotle and the Management Consultants: Shooting for Ethical Practice

David Shaw

Published in *Philosophy of Management* (11 December 2019).

Summary

The relevance of the research to management consultancy

This paper sets out a guide that management consultants, and leaders of management consultancy firms, may follow in order to ensure that their practice is ethical. The ethics of management consultants, and of management consultancy firms, are often questioned, sometimes with justification. Guidance on management consultancy ethics that has a strong theoretical foundation is therefore of considerable relevance for participants in the management consultancy industry. It might be thought that the choice of a work of Aristotle as the analytical foundation for the research would limit its relevance to a contemporary, management consultancy audience, not just because it was written nearly two and a half thousand years ago but specifically because Aristotle lived in a world in which there was no such thing as a business corporation, let alone a management consultancy industry. This, however, is not the case. Aristotle's development of virtue ethics constitutes a substantial and authoritative contribution to modern Western philosophy, and it remains a major influence on the work of contemporary writers on business ethics.

The ethical standards that management consultants should observe are of direct relevance to current questions about how far management consultancy should be regarded as a profession. Management consultants increasingly aspire to professional status, and many individual consultants seek formal accreditation by professional management consultancy bodies. This paper specifically compares the ethical standards required of members of the traditional professions, such as doctors and lawyers, with those that should be expected of management consultants. Aristotle's father was the physician to the King of Macedon and, perhaps for this reason, Aristotle frequently discusses themes relating to medical ethics in his work. Modern writing on the ethics of the traditional professions continues to draw extensively on the ideas of Aristotle. This paper compares management consultancy ethics with accounts of the ethics of the traditional professions that are based on Aristotelian virtue ethics, and this comparison is of great relevance to management consultants' claims to professional status. While there are clear similarities between management consultancy, as a kind of helping profession, with medicine and the law, there are also major differences. For example, clients of management consultants are in a far less vulnerable position than a sick patient seeking the help of a doctor, or an accused person seeking the help of a lawyer, and as a consequence it is reasonable to expect them to be in a much better position to look out for their own interests in their relationships with their management consultants. Any formulation of management consultancy ethics has to reflect those characteristics that are unique to management consultancy practice. Whether or not management consultancy should be regarded as a profession and, if so, what kind of profession it is, is highly dependent upon the ethical standards to which its members should and can be held to account.

The potential value of the research to those involved in management consultancy

This paper sets out a structured analysis of the virtues that a management consultant should be expected to display, and details of the practical implications of each. Management consultancy firms frequently publish codes of ethical practice to which they claim to aspire. These codes of practice, however, are often general and vague, and liable to be overridden where there is a potential for

conflict with the pressures on individual management consultants to meet sales, profitability and utilisation targets. Application in practice of the guidance proposed in this paper would have value in ensuring that the management consultancy business undertaken would be good business, that is, business wherein the management consultants have the necessary knowledge and skills to do a good job, meet their clients' expectations in full, achieve outcomes that are in the overall interests of their clients, take bold action where that is what the situation requires, and participate in organisational politics but only to the extent that it is in the clients' overall interests. Application of this guidance should serve to make management consultants wary of being drawn into accepting bad business that will not be in the clients' overall interests, for example where clients seek to hire consultants so that they can simply be the mouthpiece for unpopular decisions that they have already decided upon, or where clients seek to enlist management consultants to assist them in winning a particular political battle with colleagues where these clients' desired outcome may not be in the overall interests of their organisation. At the same time, the guidance set out in this paper seeks to define the boundary between the ethical obligations of the management consultants and the responsibilities of the clients to look after their own interests, taking into account the differences from an ethical perspective between management consultants' clients and the clients of members of the traditional professions.

The potential or actual impact of the research

This paper sets out a clear set of guidelines for ethical practice in management consultancy firms, which could readily be adapted to the needs of particular firms' codes of ethical practice. The likely impact of this guidance is increased by its strong theoretical foundations in the academic literature on ethics. Ultimately - so far as members of management consultancy firms are concerned, rather than sole traders - the impact of the guidance is dependent upon its active sponsorship and implementation in practice by the senior leaders of management consultancy firms. The paper draws attention to the need for senior management to assume full responsibility for their firms' adherence to high ethical standards, and to be wary of giving vague or mixed messages to individual consultants as to the need to adhere to them in the presence of commercial pressures not to do so.

The appropriateness of the research to the award category for which it has been submitted

This paper is submitted for consideration within the category of "client consultant relationships". The issues discussed in this paper, about the ethical standards that management consultants should be expected to meet, and the boundaries between the ethical obligations of the consultants and the responsibilities of clients to look out for their own interests, are central questions in the management of consultant-client relationships. The success of consultants' relationships with their clients depends ultimately on how far clients believe that they can trust them. Clear, robust and well-supported ethical standards have a vital role to play in underpinning management consultants' reputation for trustworthiness.



David Shaw is an independent researcher on the philosophy of management. Until the end of 2020 he was a Teaching Fellow at Queen Mary, University of London

Finalist in the category Technology and Consulting: The secret to AI is people

Nada R. Sanders, John D. Wood

Published in *Harvard Business Review* 24 August 2020

Summary

The relevance of the research to management consultancy.

This research, based on empirical evidence, was designed to identify the key to successful implementation of AI technologies and digital transformation in organizations. To find out the key to technological enterprise success, we conducted a multistage study over five years, beginning with a survey of senior managers and executives, followed by interviews and surveys across a wide range of industries to identify technology implementation strategies and barriers. Our key takeaway is counterintuitive. Our results show that competing in the age of AI is not about being a technology-driven company per se. Rather, the secret to making technology work in organizations is the business model itself, where machines and humans are integrated to complement each other. Machines are used for repetitive and automated tasks and will always be more precise and faster. However, people are used for those uniquely human skills of creativity, intuition, adaptability, and innovation - increasingly imperative to success in today's economy. We find that these human skills cannot be "botsourced," a term we use to characterize when a business process traditionally carried out by humans is automated and performed by a robot or an algorithm. We find that the key to success is not for business leaders to hire the best human talent or adopt the best algorithm; rather, it is *how to integrate existing human and technological resources* with the right process to get the best from both.

This is a huge finding for consultancy organizations as they move forward in their work with organizations. We find that consultancy should focus more on the human-technology integration rather than primarily focusing on technological implementation.

The potential value of the research to those involved in management consultancy

The research has a direct impact and high relevance to those involved in management consultancy as it relates to technology consultancy. The research specifically reveals the key elements of technological implementation success and shows that it has more to do with organizational change management and people, rather than the technology itself. Our research shows that to achieve success consultants should focus more on the organizational culture, the people and their buy-in of the technology, and less on the advancements of the technology itself. We find that competitiveness in the age of AI depends more on how people use existing technology rather than adopting the latest technology per se. Therefore, leaders need to abandon the plug-and-play view of technology adoption.

This research specifically offers a four-step framework (the 4-I Model) that can help consultants more successfully implement technology and move an enterprise toward becoming a technologically competitive organization. The 4-I model represents features we have observed in leading enterprises. They have intentionality of purpose beyond the mere pursuit of profits (*Intentionality*); full complementarity and amalgamation between machines and humans, structured to provide flatness instead of hierarchy and fluidity instead of rigidity (*Integration*); binding intentionality to the organization's integrated structure through communication, recruiting, and culture (Implementation);

with performance measured by aspirational targets that look toward the future and reward innovation and creativity (*Indication*).

The four layers are not “steps,” which would imply a sequential progression. The four layers of intentionality, integration, implementation, and indication (the 4-I model) must be stacked all together, or else the use of AI will fail to deliver a sustainable competitive advantage. These are layers consultants should follow and keep in mind as they guide their organizations through digital transformation.

The potential or actual impact of the research.

This research has high impact and practicality, as it directs the focus of technology implementation toward people and the organizational culture. The research shows that attaining a competitive advantage in the age of AI is not as much about “the tech” and more about the people and organizational culture. We find too many business leaders still believe that AI is just another ‘plug and play’ incremental technological investment. In reality, our research shows that gaining a competitive advantage through AI requires organizational transformation that is exemplified by companies leading in this era, documented in the form of the “4-I” Model that identifies the elements that need to be incorporated

The appropriateness of the research to the award category.

This research and its findings are precisely about technology, how companies use it, and how they should use it, in order to get the greatest benefits and achieve the greatest success. The findings have a direct impact on the focus of technological implementation, consultancy and what consultants should focus on as they guide companies along their technological journey.

	<p>Nada R. Sanders is Distinguished Professor, Supply Chain Management McKim School of Business at Northeastern University</p>
	<p>John D. Wood is a Partner of Green Klein & Wood where he represents property owners in insurance matters</p>

Finalist in the category The Changing Environment of the Consultant: Management Consultancy Insights and Real Consultancy Projects

Olga Matthias, Graham Manville, Julian Campbell

Published by Aldershot: Gower ISBN 978-1-4724-7929-7

Summary

The field of management consultancy research has grown rapidly in recent years. Fuelled by the drivers of complexity and uncertainty, a growing number of organizations - both profit and third sector alike - look towards management consultancy to assist in their aims for development and change. Consultants have become a common feature in organisational change initiatives, involved in providing advice as well as implementing ideas and solutions. However, despite this growing recognition and influence, management consultancy is still often misunderstood or criticised. In academia the study of management consulting began to gain concerted attention from during the 1990s. Such research tended to be of the 'critical' school, largely because of its lack of theoretical underpinning and the costs associated with consultants and their image as purveyors of dreams, dramaturgy, myths and story-making. Since then it has also become a highly-researched industry, but little still exists that is observational, reflective or participative. More broadly, criticism tends to be manifested by a bad press fuelling suspicion and negativity, especially about consultancy's reach.

The book seeks to address these issues through contributions by recognised experts in their field and who combine original insights with authoritative analysis. The first section of the book goes some way to addressing the theoretical gap and the chapters presented provide a variety of perspectives on consultancy, including applied theoretical insights, that will hopefully encourage consideration of the profession and its practitioners in a new light, or possibly different lights. It offers applied theoretical insights from academics that both teach and practice management consultancy and who also teach Management Consultancy to University students.

The second section consists of real-life consultancy projects written up as cases. The cases demonstrate the breadth of problems consultants are presented with. Consultants tend to use tried and tested methodologies to solve their clients' issues and thus help them gain or maintain competitive advantage. Conducted for organisations representing SMEs, multi-national organisations and the public sector, these case studies encompass international contexts, from Europe, Africa, Asia, Australasia and America, and demonstrate reflective practice in action. Each case presents a different industry, the consulting situation and the difficulties therein and then takes the reader through the reality of day-to-day consulting and how satisfactory solutions are reached in what can best be described as a messy world. Each one seeks to provide a unique perspective on the practice of management consultancy from a variety of contexts while contributing to and drawing from theoretical insights. Moreover, each of these case studies emphasises the strength of the client-consultancy relationship as arguably the most important part of the value proposition of management consultancy. In the seminal Appelbaum and Steed research published in 2005, the critical success factors in these relationships included adapting to the level of 'client readiness' for a consultancy intervention; client-consultant partnerships in terms of working together and joint ownership of results; investment in understanding the client's business and environment; and – critically – clearly communicated expectations and desired outcomes. All these factors are evidenced in the wide range of case studies considered here.

The contributing consultants are from an invited selection of senior consultants from boutique, mid-size and global consultancy practices and provides rich empirical case study evidence to show the reader how management consultancy projects are implemented.

The objective of this book is to bridge the divide between the airport book, offering quick-fix tool kits and no empirical evidence of implementation of the models and consultancy techniques, the process book which tends to provide a comprehensive analysis of the process of managing a generic consulting project and the academic book, which leans towards a rather dry academic discourse which caters for an academic market with limited practical application.

Aimed at a practitioner and pracademic (applied academic) market, the book is written for graduate level managers or those that have sufficient practical leadership experience to have an understanding of the models but have not necessarily applied them out of a classroom context. The insights and shared practice by all the contributors provide both a critical discourse about the industry today, a narrative considering practical implementation, and the challenges and responses to that.

	<p>Olga Matthias is visiting professor in operations management at Leeds Beckett University Business School</p>
	<p>Dr Graham Manville is Associate Professor in Business and Management at Norwich Business School in the University of East Anglia</p>
	<p>Julian Campbell is Associate Professor in Management Consultancy Norwich Business School in the University of East Anglia</p>

The Urwick Cup



The Urwick Cup commemorates the life and work of the distinguished management consultant, writer and educator Colonel Lyndall Fownes Urwick, and is presented annually by the Worshipful Company of Management Consultants.

Colonel Urwick was one of the British pioneers of scientific management prior to the Second World War. In 1934 he set up a management consultancy practice, Urwick, Orr & Partners and in 1969 a foundation was originated in his name for the purposes of furthering management education. In 1999 the foundation endowed the Company with its residual funds and the Cup was donated in by Sir Alan Urwick, son of Lyndall Urwick.

The Cup is presented for an outstanding piece of research or thought leadership, published in the last two years, relevant to management consultancy. Recent winners have been:

2016 Professor Andrew Sturdy, University of Bristol, Professor Christopher Wright, University of Sydney, and Dr Nick Wylie of Oxford Brookes University for their book *Management as Consultancy: Neo-bureaucracy and the Consultant Manager*

2017 Professor William Harvey, Exeter Business School, Professor Timothy Morris, Saïd Business School, University of Oxford, and Dr Milena Mueller Santos, Kellogg College, University of Oxford, for their paper *Reputation and identity conflict in management consulting*

2018 Professor Gerry McGivern, Warwick Business School, Professor Sue Dopson, Saïd Business School and Professor Ewan Ferlie, King's Business School for their paper *The Silent Politics of Temporal Work: A Case Study of a Management Consultancy Project to Redesign Public Health Care*

In **2019**, the Urwick Cup was presented to the best winning entry in the Consulting Research Awards which was this year to Karl S.R. Warner, Maximilian Wäger for their paper *Building dynamic capabilities for digital transformation: An ongoing process of strategic renewal*

For 2020 the Urwick Cup was awarded to the best example of support by a management consulting organisation to the UK response to Covid-19.

The Judging Panel comprised four experienced practitioners drawn from the Company. The announcement of the finalists and the winner was made at the CMCE Consulting Research Conference on 24 November and the Urwick Cup (see photo) was awarded to Accenture for their assignment:

COVID-19: Coordinating production of medical ventilators for the UK

Chair of the Company's Education Committee Malcolm McCaig said: "This assignment demonstrated an extraordinary achievement in helping to tackle the critical shortage of medical ventilators in the UK, with the prospect in the early days of the pandemic of NHS patients dying because of the lack of equipment. Working with a consortium of leading aerospace and engineering businesses, Accenture had within 10 days designed the supply chain processes and established protocols for the flow of information, product and payments across more than 100 organisations globally to produce medical ventilators. The first ventilator was built within 47 days and a total of over 1500 had been produced by early summer".

Accenture managing director James Slessor replied: "Thank you so much for this fantastic news. Thank you for running this competition and highlighting the efforts of the Management Consulting industry in helping in the wider COVID response".

Two further finalists also provided excellent examples of how the management consulting industry has helped to deliver effective solutions quickly in the context of the biggest challenge that society has faced in recent times. The runners-up were:

Cadence Innova - for their work with the University of Exeter. A joint team rolled out Microsoft Teams to over 29,000 users in eight days. This enabled academics to live stream and record lectures, and now incorporates on-line assessments and examinations.

Accenture – for their work with the NHS to keep all staff connected. Within seven days a joint Accenture/NHS team built and tested a Microsoft Teams integration platform, and this was rolled out to all 1.2million NHS mail users across 16,000 NHS organisations.