

PERFORMANCE CONSULTING

A STRATEGIC PROCESS TO IMPROVE, MEASURE, AND SUSTAIN ORGANIZATIONAL RESULTS

Below is an excerpt from Dana Gaines Robinson's latest book "Performance Consulting". Dana is a nationally recognized author and subject matter expert on the topic of performance consulting and its importance to HR professionals. She presented to the HR CoP in 2017.

Dana Gaines Robinson:

PERFORMANCE CONSULTING—THE PROCESS:

WHAT'S NEW?

"We are reminded of the statement "Books stand still; knowledge does not" when reflecting on all that has changed since 1995 when the first edition of Performance Consulting was released. One change relates to the very people who use performance consulting techniques in their work. When we first began our journey into the field of human performance improvement, performance consulting was viewed as a role for people in the learning and development field. Now it is a process embraced by individuals, working both internally and externally, in an array of functions including human resources, talent management, and organization development in addition to learning and development. During the last five years of managing our consulting firm, we assisted people in finance, information technology (IT), and quality functions to incorporate performance consulting principles and practices into the partnering processes used with their clients. ***The bottom line: performance consulting is a process that benefits anyone who aspires to achieve organizational change, enhance human performance, and impact the business through influence, not edict.***

In 1995, our knowledge of performance consulting was almost entirely based on what occurs in American corporations. Since then, our books have been translated into multiple languages, and we have assisted functions around the globe to operate strategically, employing performance consulting models and logic. We know, from our work and that of our coauthors, that performance consulting is a process used in countries throughout Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and South America. This global experience has enriched the performance consulting process and this book.

Even our definition of performance consulting has changed. Twenty years ago our focus was on how a client and a consultant partner to achieve optimal human performance. Years ago we emphasized the relationship aspect of performance consulting because so many people operated as either experts or pairs-of-hands, paraphrasing the work of Peter Block (2011). Our focus was also on enhancing human performance that would result in business impact.

Times are different, and so is our definition of performance consulting. We now view performance consulting as a ***strategic process*** that produces business results by maximizing

performance of people and organizations. The partnership of clients and consultants is still an integral part of the process—This relationship matters. But now our emphasis is on the process of performance consulting. This process is strategic because it begins with, and directly addresses, the long-term and mission-critical needs and goals of a business. What also is new is the greater focus we place on the need to enhance performance of both people and the organization if business results are to be achieved”.

There are 3 critical components to Performance Consulting: THE Process, Needs Hierarchy, and GAPS Map. Those are illustrated below.

The Performance Consulting Process consists of 9 critical steps. Each step requires research and analysis of what your customer needs to be successful. Link to the performance consulting process. [Performance Consulting Process](#)

The Performance Need Hierarchy consists of a review of the department’s business needs, employee group and performance needs, organizational capability needs, and individual capability needs. This will enable you to better understand the business needs cause and solutions and results. Link to the performance consulting needs hierarchy. [Performance Consulting Needs Hierarchy](#)

The GAPS Map consists of steps to analyze the needs of the organization and the ability and performance of employees in the organization to achieve those goals. [Performance Consulting GAPS Map](#)

Link to Dana Gaines Robinson’s award winning book: Performance Consulting, Third Edition
[Third Edition of Performance Consulting](#)

What are some powerful performance consulting questions to get the conversation started:

1. What are the most important issues and challenges your school, college, unit, department is facing over the next three to five years?
2. What goal are you trying to achieve?
3. What will success look like?
4. What problem are we trying to solve?
5. How do the metrics support your issue/goal?
6. Do we have all the interested parties involved?
7. Are there other ways to think about this issue?
8. What are some potential implications or consequences to your suggestion?

Case Studies: Identify Strategic Opportunities Reactively

[Performance Consulting Case Studies](#)