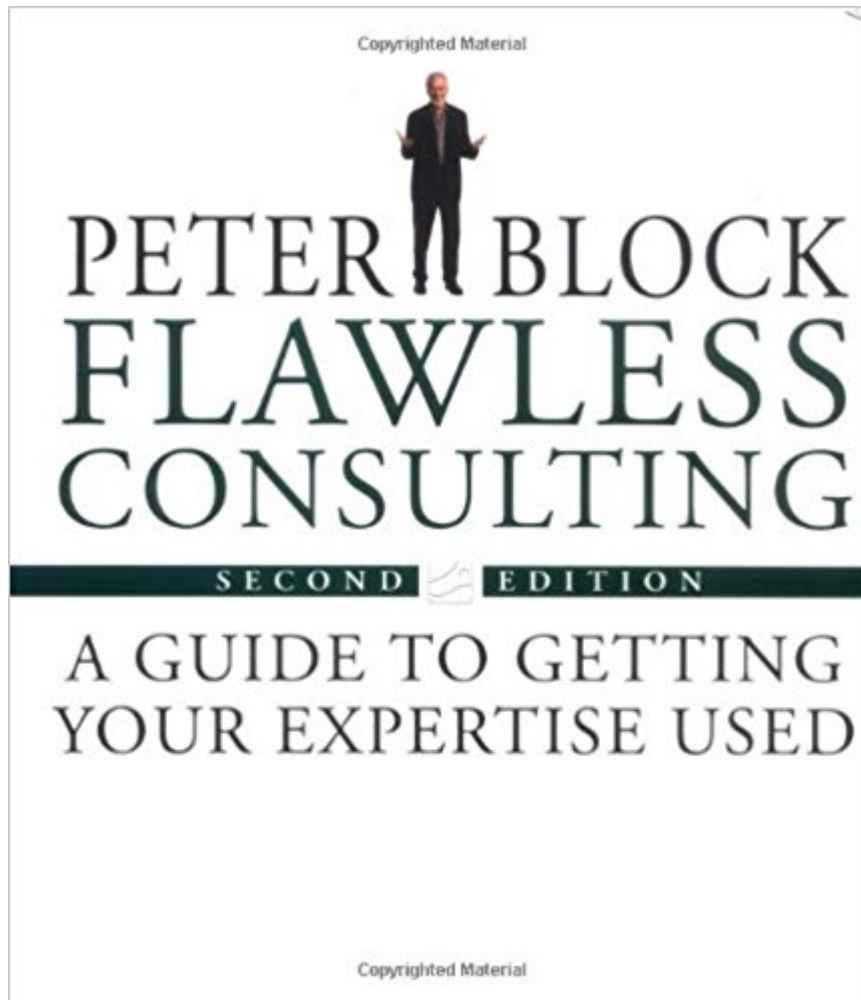




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# Flawless Consulting: A Guide To Getting Your Expertise Used



## Synopsis

The second edition of the "consultant's bible" is here! For over fifteen years, consultants--both internal and external--have relied on Peter Block's landmark bestseller, *Flawless Consulting*, to learn how to deal effectively with clients, peers, and others. Using illustrative examples, case studies, and exercises, the author, one of the most important and well known in his field, offers his legendary warmth and insight throughout this much-awaited second edition. Anyone who must communicate in a professional context--and who doesn't?--will use the lessons taught in this book for years to come! "Who would have thought the 'consultant's bible' could be improved upon? Count on Peter Block--the consulting profession's very own revolutionary--to push us to confront and struggle with the paradoxes inherent in our work." --Candace Thompson, organization development consultant, First Chicago NBD--A Bank One Company "Block has distilled years of experience into a wise, down-to-earth, and eminently practical guide to excellence in consulting. If you are new to the practice, *Flawless Consulting* will chop years off your learning cycle. And even if you're an old pro, Block's insights will elevate you to new levels of effectiveness. *Flawless Consulting* is not simply about becoming a better consultant; it is about using consulting as a path toward becoming a better person." --Barry Oshry, president, Power & Systems, Inc.; author of *Seeing Systems and Leading Systems*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The second edition of Peter Block's *Flawless Consulting* gracefully updates what many consider the

best resource of its kind. New chapters on implementation, "whole-system" strategies, and ethics are included, but in general it simply fine-tunes Block's proven advice to match the transformations that business and society have undergone since initial publication two decades ago. "The days of long studies and expert-driven answers are passing," the author proclaims in his new preface. "The task of the consultant is increasingly to build the capacity of clients to make their own assessments and answer their own questions." He then subtly modifies his established recommendations accordingly for every step, from the initial client meeting and problem diagnosis through data collection and the execution of solutions. In the section on "Conducting a Group Feedback Meeting," for example, he advises: "Treat the group as a collection of individuals.... Ask each person what he or she wants from the meeting. This will surface differences and force the group to take responsibility for some of the difficulties that may arise." --Howard Rothman

"Who would have thought the 'consultant's bible' could be improved upon? Count on Peter Block -the consulting profession's very own revolutionary-to push us to confront and struggle with the paradoxes inherent in our work." (Candace Thompson, organization development consultant, First Chicago NBD - A Bank One Company) "The first question to ask any consultants: Have you read Peter Block's *Flawless Consulting*? If they say no, don't hire them. Peter Block's advice is flawless!" (Barry Z. Posner, dean and professor of leadership, Leavell School of Business, co-author of *The Leadership Challenge* and *Encouraging the Heart*) "Block has distilled years of experience into a wise, down-to-earth, and eminently practical guide to excellence in consulting. If you are new to the practice, *Flawless Consulting* will chop years off your learning cycle. And even if you're an old pro, Block's insights will elevate you to new levels of effectiveness. *Flawless Consulting* is not simply about becoming a better consultant; it is about using consulting as a path toward becoming a better person." (Barry Oshry, president, Power & Systems, Inc., author of *Seeing Systems and Leading Systems*) "For external and internal consultants alike, Peter Block provides the roadmap to travel what always seems like uncharted terrain. The power behind Peter's work lies not only in the compass he provides but in helping us see how truly a forceful and powerful influence one person can be." (Jack Lerner, vice-president of organization development & learning, The CIT Group)

The one thing I love about this book is easy and flowy language. It doesn't look like a text book, however it's used in that purpose. It's the ultimate book for consulting.

Was recommended by a co-worker. It was ok, some great information, however, it is more for

someone just starting out and unfamiliar with consulting.

If you are not interested in authenticity and are not the patient sort, this book isn't for you. If wealth creation is your primary driver, this book isn't for you either. The focus of this book is on how authenticity can help you do a better job, and win the respect as well as loyalty of your clients. The consulting process recommended by Peter requires patience (consulting is a process and not an overnight solution, the consultant is not the doctor but a partner, and the client is not an observer but a participant), and require that consultants have the courage to not only educate the client, but to turn down clients. It may seem a bit idealistic in the real world and not always applicable - I know this because not every consulting company is going to be authentic. Consultants may be coerced to meet sales targets, make quick profits, or they may be oversold (or undersold) by the sales team (in some consulting firms, the principals do not do the sales & contracting - they deliver after the contract is signed. The sales and contracting is done by a different team). Nevertheless, the principles and values, espoused by Peter is something I personally share. The content is presented in an easy to read delivery. Templates can be downloaded through the author's website.

Bought the first edition shortly after Mr. Block spoke at my local ASTD dinner meeting in the mid-80's and have been smitten by his wisdom and clear, simple guides ever since. The latest edition is just as brilliant as the prior two but updated to address current and emerging aspects of organizational culture that can and will affect how consultants need to conduct themselves during contracting and then once embedded in a client system. Should be mandatory reading for every one whose job entails influencing others to learn and/or do anything new.

A number of years ago, I found myself without a job for the first time in my adult life. At 40, this was scary until I woke up one morning, created a subchapter-S corporation and became a consultant. This book, along with others by Peter Block, was a significant help in getting started and having the confidence to persevere for two years independently. Now I'm a consultant in a big four firm and the things I learned from this book still ring true.

This came to my notice as a consulting class e-book; I purchased a hardcopy after reading the first chapter. I highly recommend it to ANYONE especially if you are looking to learn how to communicate better in ANY situation; but especially when you are communicating from a lesser status position (such as at work; with superiors or customers). As for consulting itself; this is by far

the best advice you could ever get; not just for yourself but for anyone you may consult for and their organization.

Its a good book and was our text book for the class on psychoeducation consultation for our counseling program.

Probably the single best consulting, or management (yes...management), book I've ever read. I've read many, many books on project management, consulting, problem solving etc, all of which are rearrangements of the same material, but this one is unique. It has the best information, it is very well written, and it is a pleasure to read. There are a million books that can give you the good and necessary technical information about consulting, management and problem solving, but very few that give you the information you get here. This is not a book for beginners and college students as some have said because this information would only be of value to active consultants who have experienced some ups, and downs, in their career, i.e. people who can actually relate firsthand to the topics being discussed. This book is not aimed at consulting in a specific industry, so it may seem a little general to an inexperienced reader, but this is definitely the highest order of consulting knowledge. A beginner would likely try to impress the client with their "brilliance", a pro would handle it like Block describes. This book takes you on the inside of the client-consultant relationship, he shows you what is going on "behind the scenes" of your clients mind, whether spoken or unspoken, and how to address it. This is where ultimate success or failure is decided. This is the stuff you won't learn in college or find in most project management books, which emphasize "scheduling, monitoring and control" and other elementary stuff. Block makes a clear and proper distinction between consultant and manager, but I have worn both hats and can say without hesitation that an astute "manager" would find this book as valuable as a consultant. Block gets at the heart of the matter. He deals with reality (people, politics, fear, resistance, etc.), not a make-believe situation where the brilliant consultant diagnoses the problem with the insight of Sherlock Holmes, and proposes an ingenious plan that amazes the thankful client. Keep dreaming. He tells you what to watch for, what it means, what is happening, how to respond. Some of his insights were truly eye opening even though I have been a consultant for 20 years. I have seen perfectly capable and hard working professionals of various sorts go by the wayside because they were too aloof or did not understand their clients on the "affective" level. They thought their expertise alone would insure acceptance of their ideas and secure their position with the client...it didn't. I've seen this many times. If you're a capable professional that is losing clients, read this book. It's all about people. No

matter how educated they are, how expensive the suit, or how ornate the office, they are only human and are driven by pride, fear, greed, jealousy and the full range of human emotions, and to be ignorant of this during the consulting process is very harmful. Don't let my review mislead you...this is not just a book on the psychology of consulting. He covers that area well, but this book is packed with useful and insightful tips and techniques for diagnosing and solving real problems. Flawless Consulting is not only full of excellent information, it is also extremely well written and enjoyable to read. This is rare for many business and management books which are either too boring or unrealistic. He has an amazing way of getting to the root of every issue and expressing it in a most concise manner. I read things I have experienced many times explained to me in this book, and I could see where I went wrong at times, and where I got it right at times (even if by accident). Edit: (7-14-14) I bought and perused the shorter, updated 2011 version, but would recommend any interested reader get the 1999 Second Edition. You can buy it for a few dollars and it is better formatted and includes all the checklists.

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