

Chapter 1 : The Ultimate Consultant : Alan Weiss :

The Ultimate Consultant--the first book in a series written forexperienced practitioners--is filled with helpful interviews and vignettes from an array of successful consultants from around the world, and offers the templates, examples, information, and tools you need to transform your business.

Our firm staffed independent professionals, many of which were alumni from firms like McKinsey, Bain and BCG, but many were experts with experience in specific domains like pharmaceutical manufacturing, leadership training facilitation and six sigma. The consultants I met and talked to seemed energized, fulfilled and pretty damn happy. This despite often not knowing what their work schedule or earnings would be more than three or six months ahead of time. The trade offs in certainty and comfort of full-time employment seemed to be more than offset by increased autonomy and control. From my first exposure to this world, I knew it was a step I might want to take. Five years later, I had the courage to finally take the leap. Setting up a business on your own is still quite confusing -- from taxes, to legal matters to banking to client development -- a lot of the resources are still hard to find or take some time to understand. What follows is the first in a series of many things I learned along the way I will also cover healthcare, finances and legal structure. This covers the existing talent networks available to independent business strategy consultants. Please let me know if there is anything I should add or update based on your own experience! These companies typically have full-time employees that find projects and also recruit top talent to join their network. There is often little or no transparency on the flow of projects that the company has coming in, but all projects tend to be highly vetted and with high-priority clients for these firms. They are based in the US and seem to have one of the strongest project pipelines of the firms in this category. In the US they do most of their work in pharmaceuticals, but also focus on financial services and industrials globally. They are based in Switzerland and have a pretty robust business in that area. The majority of their work is non-US, but they still do have a sizable US presence. Very similar to a-connect and BTG, but based in London. They also have offices in Amsterdam and Zurich. US-based company with offices in New York and London. Started by a former a-connect employee, they appear to do most of their work in the pharmaceutical space in the Northeast and also in Switzerland. I just signed up for the platform, so will add more insight when I have it. GLG has recently moved into the short-term project space. I have heard they are doing a lot of market research and PE due diligence projects and focus on aligning the projects with their core interviewing and research offerings. They are investing a lot in this side of the business, so this will be a key platform for consultants to follow. Right now they have an online profile you can customize, but do not have any transparency into projects and the staffing process is handled behind the scenes. They have a limited one-way technology platform and transparency of current projects. They have offices in LA, Chicago and Miami and are focused on full-time opportunities but also have a decent amount of contract opportunities. Their job Board is completely transparent to members, though it can be a bit hard to find. This company was started a couple years ago in Boston and serves to support existing consulting firms in adding depth to their existing talent. They offer both full-time employment and part-time contract opportunities. They offer clients and independent consultants a way to interact directly. While they give up some control over quality of projects and consultants that can join the platform they make up for in ease of use and scalability -- which will inevitably lead them to have many more opportunities than the relatively un-scalable 1. Formerly HourlyNerd, this company is the most promising one in the entire space. With investors like GE and top-notch projects from companies like Wal-Mart and other Fortune companies, Catalant has a good balance of small, short-term lower budget projects and higher pay long-term strategy projects. Their platform is two-sided, meaning freelance consultants and clients can interact directly. The platform supports proposals, call scheduling, contracting and fee negotiation. It is a two-sided platform, meaning you can interact directly with the clients through a proposal. Most of the projects are Europe-based, but they have had an increasing amount in the US. They do not appear to be growing as fast as Catalant, but should continue to be a player in the market given its technology. They have a strong platform, but it is still one-sided. You cannot see all the project opportunities. They still have internal people that ping you about

potential project opportunities. I have not worked with them yet, so I will update as I learn more. LinkedIn appears to be spending more time on this platform recently, but I do not have much experience with it. The current platform appears more focused on creative and tech talent, but it may emerge as another way to find strategy consulting projects. Right now they are focused on selling premium options, much like their underlying platform, rather than taking a percentage of fees. Much more centered on tech “ data scientists, programmers, online marketing etc” but I signed up anyway just to explore the platform. Within the first day, a potential client reached out looking for someone with strategy consulting experience. Their platform is probably the most user-friendly and has a lot of tools and resources built-in including video chat and phone calls. Given their strong platform, I think its worth signing up and paying attention as they gain more clients. These firms, like Umbrex, are focused on adding value to a community of people working in the same space while also operating as a unit that can unlock more overall opportunities for the collective. This is started by a fellow independent consultant and is a talent-focused network that is focused on strategy consultants typically coming from top firms like McKinsey, Bain or BCG and focused on professional development, camaraderie, and community. As organizations continue to place more value on skills and the number of independents increase, I would not be surprised to see these niche collective community-driven groups increase dramatically. I believe these networks will help the firms improve at the margins, helping them access talent more effectively, but will remain on the sidelines and struggle to be profitable growth areas for the firm. This is a platform run by MBO partners and seems to have a pretty large amount of opportunities in the risk, accounting and technology space for current PwC engagements. Their platform is still in its infancy. I applied for a role and my information went into the cloud, with me never hearing back. Deloitte recently launched an open talent network, which seems very new “ the site does not run very well. I imagine they are taking a similar approach to PwC.

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The Ultimate Consultant Alan Weiss's most sophisticated book on all aspects of consulting, The Ultimate Consultant is the first of a seven-book comprehensive series on consulting for the solo practitioner, small firm principal, and large firm consultant.

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The ultimate consultant. 1 like. Pressure wash lawn care house/boat keeper.

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