



OTERO CONSULTING GROUP®

“Empowering Schools One Mind at a Time”

Not All Consultants Are Created Equal

by Dr. Jose Otero, November 9, 2021

In 2020 we observed the shift in conventional approaches to business. While some businesses steered through the murky waters and came out solvent, others met their demise through what could have been an avoidable situation.

Specifically, in the business of education we observed what could possibly be the worst of times. Many schools closed only to realize that it would mean their end. Other got creative and sought resources to help them navigate to success.

The resources sought by the educational institutions varied as some opted for technology while others sought personnel. The latter was then presented with yet another obstacle as many people were seeking employment and were desperate to be hired. This led to fraudulent credentials and fudging some of their experiences. According to Virtual Vocations®, (April 2021), a shocking 78% of applicants lie on their resume. This becomes an important factor when hiring temporary staff or consultants to help you navigate pivotal points in your Institution.

Every year, millions of dollars are lost or not recognized by educational institutions due to their consultants' inexperience in the intricate details of operating a school and maintaining compliance. On an average, most productive consultants in the field of education have post-graduate credentials and at least 20 years of experience. However, not all experiences are created equal. For example, if your consultant held a position of “Chief” or higher it would be much more beneficial. This is because a consultant must be able to anticipate future hurdles and usually that's where the experience comes in. One of the most important credentials is the experience of responsibility for P&L (Profit and Loss accountability). This would allow the consultant to know what it feels like to succeed or fail and have a “pulse” on what drives both.

According to data published by Statista®, Aug. 2021, “The consulting industry provides professional advice to organizations in a variety of specialized fields. In 2020, the global consulting market was estimated to be worth approximately 132 billion U.S. dollars. After experiencing continuous growth between 2015 and 2019, due to the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in 2020, the consulting sector is estimated to have suffered a significant revenue loss across all markets and segments. In the United States the consulting revenue decreased by approximately 12.5 percent.” This data is what tempts potential consultants to take risks. Unfortunately, the only risk they take is with their clients. A risk taking consultant is a dangerous consultant.

While there are many ways to vetting a good consultant, there is a caveat in the process. In the arena of Post-Secondary Education, most independent consultants are not easily verifiable. This is usually important as the stakes are extremely high. Often a school owner can lose everything in one swift decision that could have been

3070 Park Pond Way
Kissimmee, Florida, 34741



OTERO CONSULTING GROUP®

“Empowering Schools One Mind at a Time”

avoidable. The client loses and the consultant gets paid. Most of those losses were avoidable if the consultant had enough experience to advise the client when the situation called for a retraction instead of the “rolling the dice” with their client’s livelihood just to put on a good show. Especially when they clearly knew the client would not be awarded their credentials.

Whenever I meet a client, I ask them to verify my credentials, visit social media and talk to others that we have served. I also explain that our business model is not common and has a “secret sauce” which allows us to manage their institution responsibly and meet deadlines. I often insist they review our corporate credentials and registry with various federal and state organizations. Due diligence is always discussed as a best practice with our clients.

Unfortunately, we often see consultants who clearly do not have the proper credentials to represent clients with disastrous results. When I dissect the issue, it always points to poor client communications or inexperienced consultants. As a result, the consulting industry has taken a dark turn in the matters of reputation and reliability.

Regrettably, we often receive clients that were deceived by their consultant and ran away with their money. Only to see the said consultant with another client a few weeks later and does the same.

By addressing several of the “caveats” I mentioned, I will be advocating for a consultant registration process that will provide an added protection to the client from predatory consulting. In addition, this “due process” will support proper formality and decorum to be exhibited by all consultants.

Key initiatives will include:

- Website listing the consultants verified credentials and experience.
- Indicator of a freelance consultant, corporate consultant, or institution long-term consultant.
- Necessary affiliation disclaimers.

This journey will not be a “Lone Ranger” attempt at change. Instead, I will ensure stakeholders have input to include state agencies, staff, and appointed members. Their direction and input will help to steer the industry to be productive, accountable, and verifiable.

Resources

Consulting services industry in the U.S. - statistics & facts, Published by Statista Research Department, Aug 27, 2021

<https://www.statista.com/topics/2247/consulting-services-industry-in-the-us/#dossierKeyfigures>

Fudging Employment Dates on a Resume, Eric Schad April 2021

<https://www.virtualvocations.com/blog/telecommuting-job-search-help/fudging-employment-dates-on-a-resume/>