



Management Consultancy Network Coffee Chat **Wednesday 27 April, 08:30-09:30 on Zoom**

Chair: Jim Johnston

Topic: What distinguishes management consulting from other activities?

Emerging themes:

- Mentoring with expertise
- Bringing in an external view that the business doesn't have
- Bringing distance and different perspective to help the organisation
- Ability to make a positive difference - not necessarily making improvements - avoiding judgment
- Manpower augmentation, effectively part of the team, with specialist knowledge
- Coinventing their IP + consultant's brain & helping hand
- Coach, mentor, trusted advisor
- Mitigation of risk
- Solving problems or teaching people how to solve problems?
- Creation of value from a knowledge asset
- What makes it management consulting rather than organisational development or other forms of consulting (finance, marketing, strategy etc) - interconnection with senior managers
- Handholding/co-inventing something - the business' IP and your brain
- Problem-orientated
- Not afraid to ask the stupid questions
- Knowledge arbitrage - knowledge now readily available so consultant's job is supporting application of knowledge
- Management consultancy - verb or noun?
- Ket de Vries talks about "lifting the rug" to look at the snake underneath which I always think is a good image for consultancy! I talk about consultancy as being like archaeology - digging through the dirt.
- Important to use appropriate resource - more than hammer & nail

Jim's references:

Schein's work Humble Consulting and Humble Inquiry

Bulldoze the Business School: <https://www.theguardian.com/profile/martin-parker>