Selected blog post for your reading:

Employee Performance Consulting

In the last couple of years, performance improvement has become a key focus area for organizations across the world. To maintain a competitive advantage and increase their company's market share, business leaders are increasingly investing in performance consulting. But, what exactly is performance consulting? And why is it so important?

What is performance consulting?

Performance consulting is a process that produces business results by improving the performance of people in an organization. Performance consulting is results-focused and concentrates on the gaps that exist between business and performance results. The aim of a performance consulting process is to study and explain the "how" and the "what" that organization wants to accomplish, to ultimately enhance the organization's overall performance.

Why is performance consulting important?

Performance consulting is important because it helps organizations achieve their business goals. It is a systematic, performance-oriented approach that not only focuses on implementing solutions but also on achieving sustained results. It helps optimize performance in the workplace, thereby supporting company business goals.

Who are performance consultants?

Performance consultants are enablers who specialize in enhancing employees' performance. They are experts in business, human performance technology, partnering and consulting, who collaborate with organizations to diagnose performance problems and recommend solutions.

The main role of a performance consultant is to identify and address the performance needs of employees, but performance consultants are also:

- Agents of Change
- Responsible for establishing and maintaining healthy partnerships with leaders of the organization
- Recorders of training results and non-training actions, to gauge any change in performance and cost benefits
- Consultants who use assessments to study performance gaps and the reasons that cause these gaps

Can performance consulting itself be measured?

Yes! You can measure the results from performance consulting initiatives using the following levels of evaluation (ref: Jack and Patti Phillips — ROI methodology):

- Level 1: Have employees responded favorably to the new initiatives?
- Level 2: Has the capability of employees and the organization enhanced since the initiatives were implemented?
- Level 3: Has the employees' performance improved?
- Level 4: Has there been a positive impact to the business results that were focused on?
- Level 5: What is the return-on-investment of this performance consulting initiative?

Simply put, performance consulting consists of identifying a business need, its cause(s) and the training strategy (if applicable) that can meet that need. Importantly, not all business problems can or should be solved with training; therefore, identifying whether training is a possible or good solution is an important step in the performance consulting process.

For example: The IT department head meets with the L&D leader because there has been an increase of unsafe email practices among employees in multiple departments. She requests organization-wide cybersecurity training from the L&D leader.

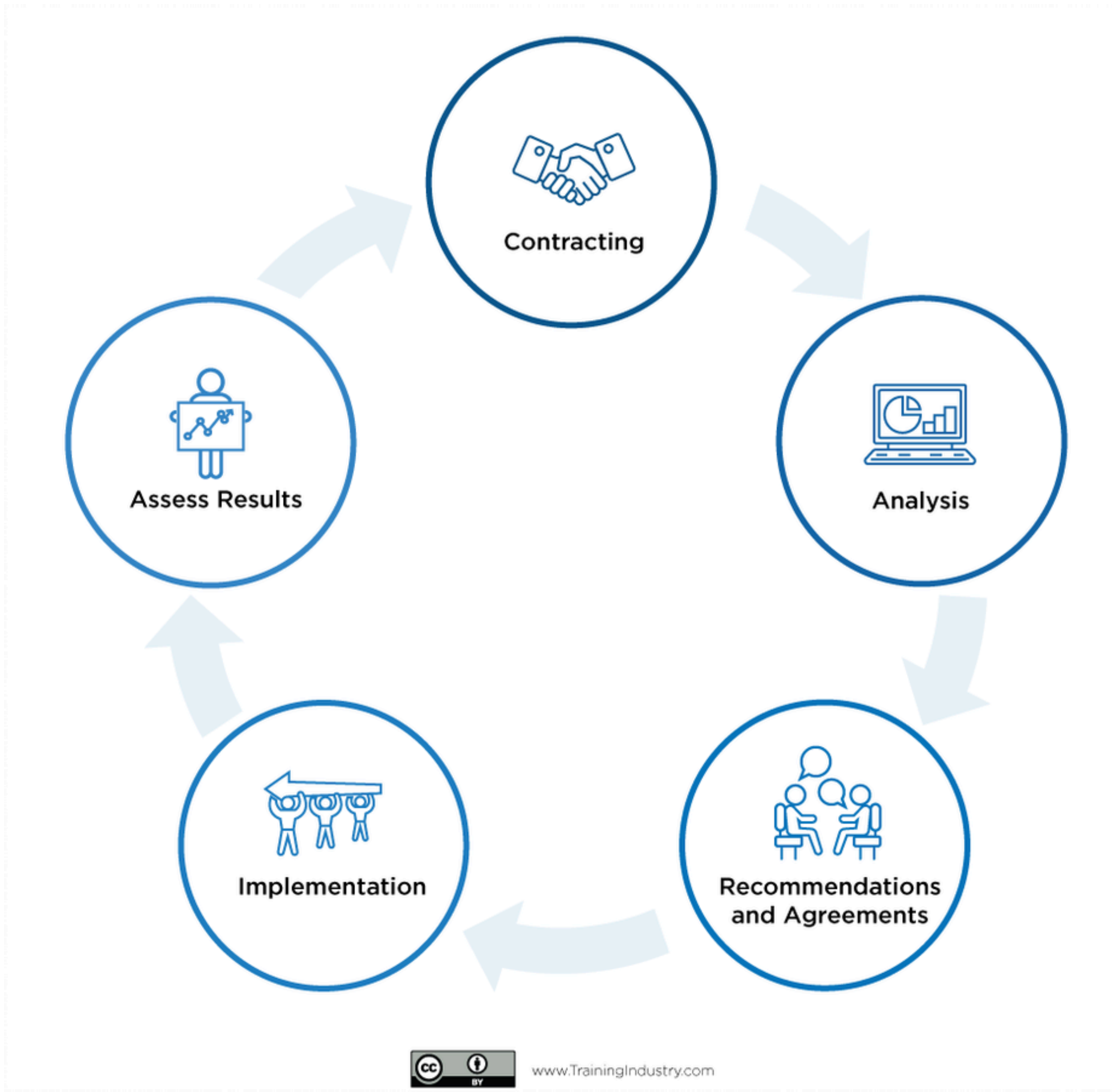
As a performance consultant, the L&D leader's first step is to determine what is causing employees to use unsafe email practices, so he can decide if training will change the behavior. He can find out by conducting a needs analysis, perhaps talking to some of the employees affected by the problem, asking them questions and actively listening to their answers.

He may find that employees are aware of the importance of cybersecurity, but they simply need a reminder of what steps to take to protect their data. In that case, a job aid containing red flags to look out for and password tips might be all that is needed. On the other hand, if employees are completely unaware of the danger of cybercrime and email phishing, they may need some training to improve their awareness and teach them how to protect themselves and the company.

If the business problem doesn't require training, performance consulting can keep the organization from spending valuable time and money developing and implementing training that isn't needed. On the other hand, if the problem's solution does require training, taking a different step can keep the business from being as successful as it can be.

The Five Phases of Performance Consulting

The Training Industry has identified five phases of performance consulting, which create a continuous cycle of activity: contracting, analysis, recommendations and agreements, implementation, and assessing results.



Tips for Effective Performance Consulting

Learning leaders can follow these recommendations to be good performance consultants in their organizations.

- *Avoid being an order-taker*. Never assume training is the solution to a problem. Instead, collect data to identify the true need.

- *Develop your consulting skills, including* the ability to identify issues, define roles, communicate solutions and obstacles, negotiate solutions, define and measure success, and provide and receive feedback. Being a good performance consultant also requires strong business acumen.
- *Manage relationships*. Depending on the circumstances, you may be working with a stakeholder or with a person who reports to a stakeholder. The ability to work well with both roles is essential to good performance consulting.
- *Be an active listener*. Listen to learners and business partners. Listen for information and to develop a better understanding of needs. Listen both to what they're saying and how they're saying it. Show that you're listening with your body language, ask follow-up questions and don't make quick judgments.
- *Measure and report results*. Data informs more productive conversations with stakeholders and helps you make decisions on learning strategy now and in the future.

Source:- https://www.infoprolearning.com/learning-effectiveness-evaluation/