

American College of Healthcare Executives Healthcare Consultants Forum Online Newsletter–Q2 2018

FEATURED ARTICLE

Reinventing the Role of the Healthcare Consultant



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There are many dynamics in play when defining the role of today's healthcare consultant; including industry transformation, changing reimbursements, politics, system consolidation, technology advancements and the multigenerational workforce.

This continuum of today's healthcare consultancies has grown to include large, international, brand name consultancies; small boutique firms; sole proprietors; and interim role career practitioners. Each category has its own value proposition and fit in the healthcare field, whether it be high-level mergers and acquisitions, strategy, product-line development or an interim CFO role.

One of the fastest growing categories of talent in healthcare today is the executive leader-turned-consultant. These seasoned practitioners have lived most of their professional lives behind the client side of the desk. They remain highly committed to staying contemporary with industry challenges and solutions and represent what labor experts refer to as the gig economy. This is a new category of experienced professionals who seek short-term interim contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs.

Regardless of their origins or current work model, these consultants have a strong desire to leverage the best of their robust careers to benefit their clients. They are repackaging their expertise, bringing relevant experiences and mentoring and developing client teams. They focus on solving contemporary problems of and contributing to the healthcare industry. They impart knowledge and use their relevant industry experiences and credentials for the betterment of

health organizations in need of a solution, whether as an interim leader, project leader, adviser, mentor, coach or industry thought leader.

With so many new and expanded work models available, healthcare consultants may find the following steps helpful.

Define Goals

Consider your answers to the following questions to help define what type of consulting role you want to pursue: Where and how do you want to work? Is domestic or international travel an exciting option for you? What kinds of work model are you seeking? Are you seeking an interim role until you find your next permanent employed home? Are you open to interim and project-based roles? Is mentoring, advising or coaching attractive? Money aside, if you could choose anything to do, what would it be?

Leverage Knowledge

Experience has no substitute. Know who you are and what you know. Take inventory of career accomplishments and talents. Build on the reputation of results and credibility that you already have. Be truthful. Your reputation and ethical foundation is gold; never compromise that.

Position Your Best Skills

Who are you? Of all the work you've done throughout your career, what have you been most passionate about? What are your most relevant skills? When answering these questions, take an aerial view of your entire career. Your life and work experiences are cumulative. They have made you who you are today.

Think Differently

The merger aftermarket has displaced seasoned executives who have hired consultants and experts their entire careers. Former provider health executives now find themselves on the other side of that transaction. Remember what was important to you when you were hiring. Seek first to understand, then to be understood. Being a great consultant requires exceptional communication and relationship skills. Find a supportive mentor or coach who can help you with the transition. Take a targeted class. Connect with ACHE's Healthcare Consultants Forum. Commit to learning how to refine your approach, intellect and skills.

Seek Out Association Connections

Professional networking and ongoing education is critical. Maximize your investment in ACHE. Be a contributor. The FACHE credential, signifying board certification in healthcare management, is a critical differentiator. ACHE's national membership comprises nearly 50,000 members. The ACHE network and associated dialogue are must-haves throughout your career in healthcare.

Find Strategic Partners

Employment experts recognize a new category of executive talent worker who operate independently. These executives are experienced professionals who use their rich skills, relevant experiences and talents to help solve client problems. A study by Intuit validates the fast-moving

trend toward independent workers and short-term engagements, predicting that by 2020, 40 percent of American workers will be independent contractors.

There is a new value proposition in healthcare talent management. Adding to the broad continuum of traditional consultancy models, healthcare executives are creating new and diverse work models that leverage best skills and proven abilities. Healthcare organizations now can access an expanded portfolio of talent individually, through professional service firms or large consultancies that manage a curated talent registry of experts. What a great win for the industry!

Georgia Casciato, FACHE, has twice served as president of Chicago Health Executive's Forum, an ACHE chapter. She also is a managing director in the Healthcare Practice of Patina Solutions, a professional talent solutions firm. She can be reached at georgiacasciato@patinasolutions.com or (630) 248-2484.

2018–2019 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We would like to welcome new members to the committee and thank our 2017–2018 outgoing members.*

Lee Tapia, EdD, FACHE, Chairman
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Robin W. Singleton, FACHE

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