Do you know that in West Virginia, it is legal for one to take roadkill home for dinner? Actually why would anyone do that? I suppose for the same reason why some consulting firms recruit new associates based on their resumes.

Just as you can’t get good nutrition out of roadkill, you can’t get great performance out of people who get hired based on their resumes.

While this is a normal and acceptable procedure for hiring industrial workers and manual labourers, it can seriously backfire when recruiting associates for consulting firms.

The basic difference is that resumes can show the people's presumed knowledge but not the real understanding of their subject matters.

What is the difference?

We acquire and use knowledge in two distinct ways: Explicit and tacit.

In the explicit method, we acquire and use coded information by memorising the contents of books, workshops or college courses. If we can regurgitate the memorised stuff (a.k.a. teachers’ opinions) with a good enough hit rate, we can even get advanced degrees and then jobs.

The advantage of this approach is that it’s cheap and easily accessible to anyone. The disadvantage is that it’s cheap commodity on the market and only makes for short-term return. It works because many employers have no guts to think long term, and focus on grabbing the low-hanging fruit without investing in the future.

For instance, every year almost 100,000 MBAs graduate in North America. They have some basic explicit knowledge, but in that quantity it can hardly be called unique talent.

In the tacit method we acquire knowledge through unique experiences. This is something that can set us apart from everyone else. The advantage of this approach is that it is not widely available and has long-term shelf life and - once it is recognised - has very high value.

The disadvantage is that it is very expensive and hard to explain, thus hard to sell. Listen to the story of Tony Robbins' teaching the military how to shoot. Tony exposed his tacit skills (belief, self worth and a broad range of experiences) to the soldiers who already had explicit skills (they knew how to shoot) and drastically improved their shooting scores. This is also called niche expertise.

When assessing explicit knowledge, the number 1 proof is the famous/notorious resume. There are so many problems with hiring people based on their resumes, but that’s the conventional wisdom, so it’s worth spending a few minutes to see how recruiter mislead themselves by putting too much weight on what they read in resumes.

Resumes come with many flaws, from which here we discuss 10.

**Flaw #1: There Is Strength In Similarity, So Look For Similar Resumes And Staff Your Shop With Your Clones!**
Reality

Well, for a long time conventional wisdom also recognised the Earth as flat and bloodletting as the ultimate cure for all diseases. After being disgraced by the medical profession, conventional wisdom landed Dr. Ignac Semmelweis in a lunatic asylum, although he was right and the medical profession was wrong. Nevertheless, he was locked up and died at age 47 as a result of the never-ending torture by the infuriated guards.

However, time has changed, and today he is regarded as a hero, and the 50 Euro coin bears his portrait.

Since then, his discovery, as a prelude to Louis Pasteur and Joseph Lister’s germ theory, Seemmelweis’s work has been recognised as one of the biggest contributions to medical science. Conventional wisdom is really nothing more than some of the worst moments of history turned into a dogma. In this case, organisational dogma. Strength in similarity is called incest, and many consulting firms suffer from it.

You learn more and more about less and less, until you know everything about nothing. You may be a genius at fixing telex machines, but telex machines have gone by the way of the dodo, carburettors and disco music.

If there is one institution that demands similarity and unwavering uniformity, it’s definitely the military.

You can’t even fart in a different key or tempo from the others.

Yet, when you look at the elite military units, like the Navy SEALs, the Army Rangers or the SAS in the UK, you find that combat units are made up by soldiers with different skills.

Traditional military units, similarly to industrial organisations, are made up by narrow specialists and narrowly defined silos. And every piece of inter-silo communication must be made through headquarters.

It makes the movie *Total Recall* come to mind, when Cohaagen reprimands to his henchman, Richter...

“I don’t give you enough information to think. I tell you what to do and how to do it, and you just do as I tell you. You’re not here to think. You’re here to follow my orders without thinking.”

Now contrast this approach with the Special Forces units, that are made up of cross-trained generalists.

Unlike main army soldiers, Special Forces units do their own mission planning. Headquarters define the objectives (what to achieve) and it’s up to the team to figure out how to pull it off.

Maybe this is why Special Forces units can achieve many things that bloated regular army units can’t.

And this is why you have to recruit people to consulting firms differently from hiring to industrial organisations.
First, hiring is a head game. “This is the job and this is what we pay you for doing it.”

Hiring is about finding competitive(ly) inexpensive people to perform rigidly pre-defined tasks. By contrast, recruiting is about finding outstanding talents to join your firm to improve its success.

Hiring is all about checking some points in candidates’ resumes against the requirements on the spec sheet. Recruiting is the result of extensive discussions between candidates and firm representatives.

Hiring aims at people who need jobs. Recruitment focuses on people who are so good that they already have amazing jobs, and now the question is to allure them away from their current employers to another firm.

Hired workers work for money. Recruited talents work for satisfaction, which includes financial and psychological compensation. Abraham Maslow’s pyramid this is the self-actualisation bit on the top.

When you recruit, your firm has to be excellent to attract great talents away from their current employers.

Hiring is about offering a job. It’s like a one-night stand type connection with someone. Recruiting is about offering a career and a lifestyle. It’s the proverbial “I do” in a professional setting. It’s a long term engagement between the firm and a professional and long-term commitment to the firm’s success.

Although here I’ve used “firm’s success”, it really means two things:

1. Clients are decadently delighted with the firm’s work
2. Associates are euphorically enthusiastic about their careers.

The end result is an obscenely profitable firm and equally obscenely well-paid associates.

**Flaw #2: Letting The Human Resources Department Handle The Resume Assessment!**

**Reality**

First thing first: If there is an HR department in a boutique consulting firm, that firm is already up the shit creek without a paddle. And here I don’t mean the town called Shit Creek in County Clare, Ireland.

Firm leaders who relegate the honourable work of selecting fellow heroes for a great and exciting journey to accomplish a worthwhile vision, that firm has a serious conceptual problem.

The way I see it, good associates are the professional equivalents of good spouses. Would you relegate the search and engagement of a first class spouse for yourself? Probably not.
HR is fine to select and hire labourers based on raw technical skills and brawn power, but if you let HR select the brainpower and personalities you will work with in the future, then you, may have trouble ahead.

I know it can be tiring to review lots of resumes, but it shouldn’t be. Basically, the reason why you have so many resumes is because your career ad was too vague.

The problem is that most career ads specify tactical issues, like...

1. Must be able to type 55 wpm.
2. Must have an MBA
3. Must be proficient in Salesforce and Adobe Acrobat
4. Must be able to make 150-200 cold calls a day.
5. Must be experienced to respond to 8-12 RFPs per week.

Let’s say what’s happening here...

The person disqualifies for the advertised position because...

1. He can’t type faster than 25 wpm, but is an expert at using Dragon Naturally Speaking speech recognition software and can convert speech to text faster than greased lightning. With that skill, she can easily outperform even 150 wpm typists.
2. Being disillusioned in obedience training (a.k.a. schooling), she quit high school, but fell in love in marketing and helped to take her father’s fitness consulting business from $25,000 per month to $125,000 per month in 18 months without recruiting one single person.
3. Instead of Salesforce, she uses Sugar CRM, so she understands the CRM concept. Instead of Adobe Acrobat, she uses Microsoft Word’s built-in PDF converter, so she understands the essence of PDF.
4. She hates the phone, but in her uncle’s plumbing business she designed and built a lead generation machine that keeps 17 full-time plumbers busier than a one-legged man in an arse-kicking contest doing premium-priced project work. And all that without one single salesperson and one single phone call.
5. She’s never responded to an RFPs¹ and would never degrade herself and her employer to do so, but has always found the way of attracting top-drawer clients.

The problem is that she has no chance to present her accomplishments because HR disqualifies her on those five retarded tactical criteria.

It would take some smarts to read between the lines to discover the perfect rainmaker in her. But HR never reads between the lines, and her application lands in the rubbish bin. HR reads only the lines themselves. Maybe this is the reason why many companies don’t even take HR seriously

¹ In general RFPs represent the shittiest clients and the shittiest projects on the planet, usually coming from seriously screwed up organisations, like governments, written by delusional civil servants who expect the proverbial vintage Dom Perignon for their cheap beer budgets.
and keep HR directors only to be politically correct.

You may consider reading Why We Hate HR in Fast Company.

“HR pursues efficiency in lieu of value. Why? Because it's easier -- and easier to measure. Dave Ulrich, a professor at the University of Michigan, recalls meeting with the chairman and top HR people from a big bank. "The training person said that 80% of employees have done at least 40 hours in classes. The chairman said, 'Congratulations.' I said, 'You're talking about the activities you're doing. The question is, What are you delivering?' "

Consulting is hard-core teamwork, so you have to let your team choose the best people to work with.

The reality is that if military teams were assembled with as much care as commercial teams, then there would be a massive carnage after each engagement: Team members would kill each other.

So what to do?

Let the team draft the career ad, and then let the team select the most suitable person.

Flaw #3: Seeking Narrow Specialists (Trade Barbarians)!

Reality

I think R. Buckminster Fuller was right in saying...

“Of course, our failures are a consequence of many factors, but possibly one of the most important is the fact that society operates on the theory that specialization is the key to success, not realizing that specialization precludes comprehensive thinking.” ~ Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth, 1963

Robert Anson Heinlein2 expressed the same concept this way...

“A human being should be able to change a diaper, plan an invasion, butcher a hog, con a ship, design a building, write a sonnet, balance accounts, build a wall, set a bone, comfort the dying, take orders, give orders, cooperate, act alone, solve equations, analyse a new problem, pitch manure, program a computer, cook a tasty meal, fight efficiently, die gallantly. Specialization is for insects.”

Consulting is all about to be able to see client’s issues from multiple perspectives, which means associates have to be deep generalists as Andrew Sobel coined it a few years ago in his book, Clients for Life.

And here is one point to consider from a prominent consulting expert (and later an equally prominent convicted criminal – one count of conspiracy and three counts of securities fraud),

2 American author, one of the Big Three (with Isaac Asimov, and Arthur C. Clarke). Winner of the first Grand Master Award given by the Science Fiction Writers of America for lifetime achievement.
Rajat Gupta, former worldwide managing director of McKinsey & Company...

“Some of our best people are those who studied literature or the classics, and who later received business training. These people tend to understand the array of forces at work in organizations, and they approach decisions in a very well-rounded way.”

Specialisation also prevents peripheral vision. Yes, you can see very very deeply into your speciality (content), but miss the surroundings (context). As a deep generalist, your content knowledge may not be as deep as that of a specialist, but you also have pretty deep peripheral vision. They make the most-valuable thus highest-paid consultants.

So, seek deep generalists, folks with deep core skills and other complementary skills which gives a significant breadth to their expertise. When it comes to providing consulting services, the overall success of the person is a blend of intellectual and emotional skills.

No amount of intellectual excellence can replace the ability to make decisions and implementing them in a timely matter.

I know some people say that doctors specialise. They do. But they also have so much general medical knowledge, that they can relate their specialities to the whole human body.

If you faint in the dentist’s chair, she knows that she has to pay attention to the operation of your heart and lungs and put your teeth on the back burner.

Similarly, in a consulting firm, there is no point in acquiring more clients, if ineffective operations eat up all newly generated revenue.

Flaw #4: Good At Analysis!

Reality

Yes, people must be good at analysis, but even better at synthesis.

The truth is that analysts are a dime a dozen. In most consulting firms, they’re falling out of the rafters. But many firms don’t have even one good synthesist. Associates can dissect data and information with the vehemence of the Tasmanian devil, but then get stuck, because no one knows how to put the pieces together.

While having good analytical skills is good enough for trade barbarians, one of professionals' greatest skills is synthesis.

Analysis is about taking things apart at a tactical level.

Synthesis is about putting known bits and bobs together at a strategic level, and creating something totally new. Both telephones and telex machines had been around for a long time before someone put the two together in a rather maverick manner and created the fax machine.

The Wright brothers’ first flight covered a distance equal to half the length of the wingspan of a Boeing 747, while the super educated and hyper intelligent president of the Royal Society, Lord Kelvin, and the American Engineering Society vehemently argued that heavier-than-air creations
can’t fly. And today the world is rejoicing in laughing at his pompous arse Lordship and the analytically correct but practically dumb engineers, realising that schooling, title and breathtaking stupidity sometimes do come together.

You need people who can explain concepts to clients in such a way that inspires clients to take the next required action to achieve what they want to achieve.

**Flaw #5: Gaps In Employment History Is A Danger Signal!**

**Reality**

Gaps in employment history can be the sign of extra skill building. HR people usually hold it against candidates if they have ever had their own businesses. So, although people gain lots of useful experience running their own shows, they will not document it.

Or look at travelling. A one-year African Safari is not employment per se, but for experience-hungry professionals it is a significantly more valuable than working five years for a ho-hum firm lead by a petty tyrant.

Carla, an office manager at a client’s firm, was a recovered drug addict, but the experience never quit her. One day her boss found an oddly shaped spoon and some baking soda in the toilet. It made no sense to him, so started asking other people what they made of it. It made sense to nobody, except Carla. From the baking soda and the shape of the spoon she instantly recognised that someone was making crack on the premises, the so dangerous and highly addictive drug. A few days later a junior partner was unceremoniously fired.

An internal investigation pinpointed the person, and it turned out that he was also stealing from the company. Carla saved a small fortune for her company, because, as an ex-junkie, only she could recognise the “tools” of the trade. At that moment, Carla’s experience, as a former flotsam and jetsam of society, was more valuable for that firm than all the neatly trained and dressed CGAs and MBAs combined. Did she have gaps in her employment record? I bet she did. Not even gaps, but the proverbial Grand Canyon.

Again, read between the lines when reading employment gaps. The person may have been doing something much more valuable. Gaps between jobs can be as important as silence between notes in a symphony.

Also, let’s look at another reason for gaps in employment.

Let’s take a talented young MBA, with some pre-MBA experience. Now, she’s pretty picky about her would-be employer. She’s not going to join a firm merely to pay the bills, because she knows that being associated with the wrong firm can curse the rest of her career.

So, it can take her even a year to find the right firm.

But how does HR look at this issue?

HR folks may think she was so everlastingly dumb that it took her one year to find a job. And this notion will create a prejudice when it comes to assessing her resume.
Flaw #6: Candidates Have To Tell Us Why We Should Recruit Them!

Reality

I believe, that is bullshit.

When it comes to a firm and a candidate that is worth recruiting, the firm is the seller and the candidate is the buyer. This is why.

If this candidate has client acquisition capabilities, he can easily become an independent consultant.

But, if this candidate has no client acquisition capabilities, there is no point in recruiting him. Why?

Because in a consulting boutique, people without client acquisition capabilities are dead weight. The sad truth is that when you’re about to recruit a kick-arse associate with strong client acquisition capabilities, then you must sell your opportunity to that candidate.

More specifically, is your firm worth making a long-term investment in? Some 96% of businesses go to the wall before hitting their tenth birthdays. Why should anyone invest his career at 4% odds?

Candidates are vulnerable. When they get on board, but due to management's fault, the firm gets downsized and they get laid off, they are the real losers, not the owners and top dogs who made the mess. The – incompetent - top dogs always get their money.

These talented chaps and chapettes invest their talents, times and efforts in some greedy bastards, who make a mess of their businesses and then lay their people off. Who suffered most as a result of the Arthur Andersen scandal? The top dogs, with generous severance payments in their pockets, got re-positioned elsewhere, while thousands of great folks got their careers chopped off at the knee because of their greedy, rotten, power-hungry bosses.

Using military language: No war has ever been lost on privates. Most firms get screwed by their own owners and partners, not by their associates. Owners can pull all their money out of their enterprises and live happily ever after, while all those professionals, who actually created all that wealth, end up searching for new firms.

And one more thing.

When worthwhile associates with client acquisition capabilities professionals get pissed off, they can start their own consulting firms anytime. So, recruiting managers and firm owners ought to show a bit more respect for these people, for without them they are as good as dead.

Flaw #7: Check References, For Past Performance Will Give You A Good Indication Of Future Performance!

Reality
Really! Then how do you explain Moustache Dolfie (Hitler) and Moustache Joseph (Stalin) and other bloodthirsty monsters’ “fun-filled excursions”? They were appointed for more than organising fancy dress parties, and I’m certain their references had been carefully checked and verified before they were put into their positions. What went wrong then?

References are supposed to report on people’s past performance. And, of course, conventional wisdom says that past performance is the best indicator of future performance!

Well, performance depends both on the employee and the employer. Stupid arsehole employers that have created concentration camp-type organisational “cultures” quickly ruin even the best talents.

A used car salesperson may thrive in the typical backstabbing, dog-eat-dog used car industry where the objective is to take as much of customers money as humanly possible, but what do you think happens to him in a collegial, straight shooter culture of a consulting firm. His hucksterism was an ace in the predominantly shyster environment of the car industry, but in an honest environment he’s as out of place and lost as a hooker in a nunnery.

Yes, his reference says he was the number 1 salesperson in three different car dealerships. But what can he do in a consulting firm where he can’t cheat and lie to clients anymore? His whole career is built on deception.

There is also a flip side of references. Requesting them indicates to your candidates that you don’t trust them, and you put more value on a piece of paper written by some strangers than you put on your own abilities to assess new candidates.

The problem is that if firm leaders don’t trust candidates, why should candidates trust firm leaders? It is them who have something unique to offer to the firm, not the other way round.

Let’s remember Peter Drucker...

"Knowledge workers are volunteers who own the means of their performance, and whether or not they remain with any one company is totally volitional. Just like most investors, they will go where they can earn a fair economic return—measured in wages, fringe benefits, and other pecuniary rewards—as well as where they are well treated and respected, the psychological return. In the knowledge society, the most probable assumption for organisations—and certainly the assumption on which they have to conduct their affairs—is that they need knowledge workers far more than knowledge workers need them."

Checking references is the equivalent of going to the doctor for a second opinion, but before he examines you, he wants to see the first doctor's diagnosis. And that bias is likely to falsify his own diagnosis.

Let’s forget about crutches like references.

Many years ago Albert Einstein said...

"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."
Sadly, many people judge others based on things they are not supposed to know. When I write direct mail copy, my most vehement critics are marketing nincompoops (people – usually junior partners – who believe they understand marketing because of their positions or the alphabet soup behind their names.).

Firm leaders should be able to stand on their own feet, look candidates in the eye, and form their decisions. They would gain more respect and attract better people.

And if you like the person, put him on an annual contract for one year for a fair try. After one year, you can decide whether or not you want to put him on the payroll.

One more word about references...

I’ve just seen in the news that three women who disappeared in 2003 were kidnapped by a school bus driver. I can never be sure, but I bet that to become a school bus driver one needs probably even more references than teachers.

Or think of white collar criminal, Bernie Madoff. He must have had glowing references to become the chairman of NASDAQ stock market. And while he was chairman, he was also busy operating of a Ponzi scheme that is regarded as the largest financial fraud in U.S. history. He started that scam in the 70s and successfully operated it for almost 40 years.

Nuff said.

**Flaw #8: Do Not Call Us. If We Want You, We Will Call You!**

**Reality**

Writing this into an ad that seeks ditch diggers is just disrespectful.

Writing it into an ad that seeks highly skilled professionals is plain retarded.

This sends a loud and clear message to candidates.

“We treat you like shit right from the first moment, and make sure you regret the day when you first contacted us.”

Here is the problem?

If you don’t want them, do you expect them to wait forever to find out where they stand? If you treat people like shit as candidates, there is a good chance you will treat them the same way as associates too.

In consulting, you and your people must be peers, and treat each other accordingly. If you have the right to call them, they too must have the right to call you and ask you about your decision. Can you imagine proposing marriage and your spouse says: “I will only call you if I am interested in you.” How long would you wait? What would you think about that person? You are looking for partners for a professional journey. So, treat people as potential partners, be honest and upfront with them. It is your integrity on the line, not theirs.

There is no doubt, talent attrition in consulting firms is pretty high.

According to a 2011 study by Kenexa, the top five reasons for talent attrition are...
• Lack of opportunities for professional development (30%)
• Inadequate compensation (28%)
• Boredom/lack of challenge (27%)
• Poor work/life balance (20%)
• Job stress and unfair treatment (20%)

And I also believe that unfair treatment starts even before associates are recruited. Yes, it’s the bottom reason, but it is still a good reason for the best talents to withdraw their candidacy.

Nowadays, with kick-arse technology being available, firms could easily set up a recruitment blog or forum to stay in touch job applicants. Firms can easily notify applicants about what’s happening, what’s happened and what to expect. But they are too busy and/or lazy doing even that. The application process is a great opportunity to demonstrate to candidates how well the firm is run, and how effectively it can communicate with the outside world.

**Flaw #9: Be Careful With Job Hoppers!**

**Reality**

Welcome job hoppers. They know what they want and keep seeking it. Only a select few consulting firms can offer opportunities for top professionals in which it is worth investing in the long-term. When we look at talent turnover rates, we can see that not many firms have the ability to retain good folks.

Why is that? Most firms have managers who are merely great trade barbarians, and have got promoted due to clever political manoeuvring. But they are woefully short on managerial and leadership abilities. You know, when best salespeople become sales managers or the best geek becomes the IT director.

They usually fail miserably. They just don’t know how to treat people well. Good people keep searching. And they are not searching for more money. They are searching for worthy missions. Unfortunately, the mission of merely fattening the owner’s bank account - the most common mission - is not really inspiring.

Some 80% of consulting firms are not worth working for. This is not an accusation, but Pareto’s evergreen 80/20 rule.

So, when a young consultant starts at a firm at, let’s say, age 23, it will take him just a few months to realise that the highly glorified position is really proverbial latrine duty, with almost constant travelling and living out of a suitcase. And the prestigious consulting firm is really a gulag-type labour camp.

And to all this, add the lots of unpaid hours of work.
So our hero, especially the Gen Y generation, quits after six months. And now, from HR’s perspective, he’s a job hopper. He is the rotten apple who should be kept away from firms and shouldn’t be touched with a 10-foot pole.

But is he really a job hopper?

No. He has merely realised that he was conned into a shitty job, and left. Should he be penalised for being smart and having enough self-esteem not to tolerate abuse from his employer?

I keep telling my clients to hire associates who can push back respectfully when the situation requires it. No one should ever hire subservient yes-people, because they can be dangerous for their firms.

**Flaw #10: Typos And Misspellings Are The Sign Of Sloppiness!**

**Reality**

Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar, and a typo is just a typo. You aren’t perfect either, are you? So, give the folks some credit.

Decent professionals wouldn’t apply for positions for which they aren’t suitable. You can find typos and misspellings even in commercially printed books which usually go through a basketful of proofreaders.

Among others, I’ve found typos in several commercially published books, the Wall Street Journal and the Encyclopaedia Britannica. I guess to err is human.

And I bet you can find typos in your own correspondence. So, just move on and get a life.

I bet there are better criteria to evaluate candidates on.

Yes, you don’t want to hire an illiterate, but a typo here and there is not the end of the world.

The funny thing is that typo thing is really blown out of proportion by companies that are looking for low-level typists for minimum wage.

Just look at some job ads on Craigslist. The requirement section has 20 plus idiotically diverse skills, and a few lines down the wage is revealed as just over legal minimum wage. Oh, and the ad starts by stating that this world-class industry leader company is looking for a highly skilled office manager.

**Summary**

If you start your recruiting process with looking at resumes, you are walking down in dead alley. You also create preconceived notions about your candidates which will influence your decision-making. Make sure you interview people first and then they can give you a customised resume that answers your specific questions.

Yes, this is a different approach, but it brings you the best possible people for the advertised position and drastically reduces your talent turnover rates. Your clients will have time to become
familiar with all the faces at your firm, which in turn will increase trust and your profits.

**About The Author**

Since 1998, using battle-tested military principles and strategies, Organisational Provocateur, Tom “Bald Dog” Varjan has been working with boutique consultancies and solo consultants, both locally and globally, to improve personal and firm-wide performance, by helping them to sell their expertise for what it’s truly worth.

For a selection of consulting resources, including his practice management black paper, “The Dark Side Of Firm Management: Ten Deadly Management (Mal)Practices That Often Bring Consulting Firms to Incalculable Suffering or Even Agonising Death”, you can visit Tom’s website at [http://www.di-squad.com](http://www.di-squad.com).

**Additional Knowledge Products to Build Your Consulting Firm**

Here are some knowledge products on a broad range of areas as they apply to running a boutique consulting firms or solo consultancies. These products are sort of workbooks. They explain what is what, then walk you through the “how to...” part of the process. As you read the books, you do the exercises, and by the time you finish reading, all the relevant bits and bobs are in front of you on paper applied to your own unique situation.

I hope you find them valuable.

**Consulting Retainer Engagement Toolkit**: A comprehensive home study programme on the ins and outs of setting up consulting retainer engagements in which your clients receive great value and you are compensated for the value you bring to your clients' tables by making your brainpower available to your clients. For details see [Consulting Retainer Engagement Toolkit](http://www.di-squad.com).

**It's All About Your Value: Consultants' Guide to Setting, Raising and Safeguarding Fees**: How to price consulting engagements based on buyers' perception of the value the consultant brings to the table regardless of time, materials and other retarded but commonly used factors. This booklet covers a step-by-step process of establishing the value of your contribution and how to get paid for that value. For details see [It's All About Your Value](http://www.di-squad.com).

**Mastering the Consulting Proposal Process**: For many consultants proposal writing is a “hope-and-pray” game. They sit down with prospects, chat for a while and then volunteer to “submit a proposal” without knowing the full specifications of the intended project. But some, usually
false, buyers are just collecting free information for in-house implementation. A proposal, just like a marriage certificate, is a short document, but it is silly to offer it unless the other party has already made a commitment to go ahead. This e-book walks you through the maze of developing your proposal and presenting it to buyers. Mastering the Proposal Process

**Dynamic Duo Mentor Programme:** If you're a solo consultant, my Dynamic Duo Mentor Programme may be a solution for you to have access to a second opinion on both strategic and tactical issues you’re about to put into action. For details see Dynamic Duo Mentor Programme.