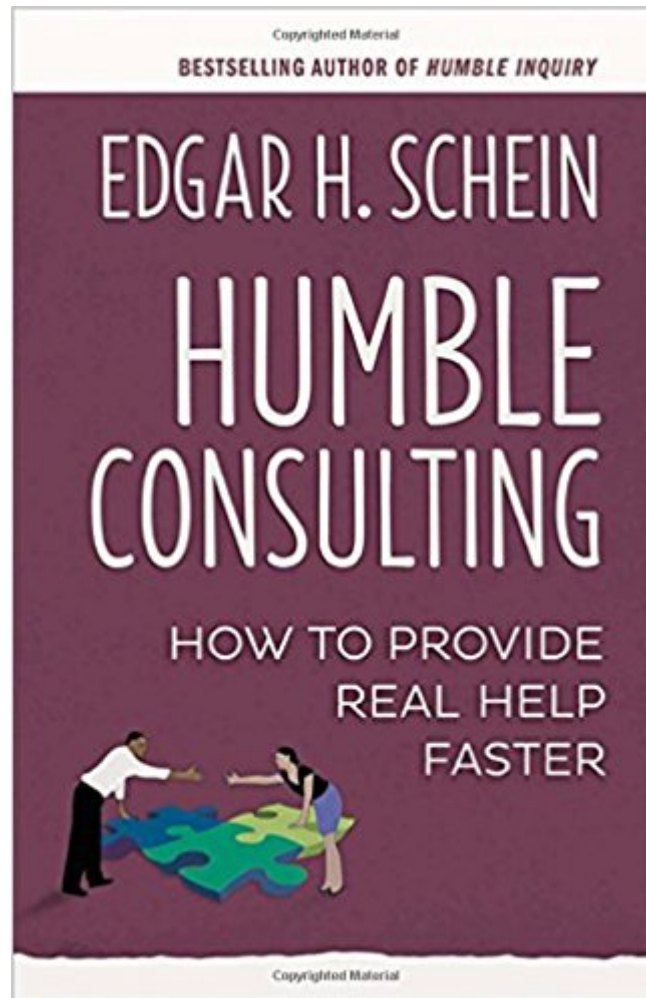




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Humble Consulting: How To Provide Real Help Faster



Synopsis

Consulting in Complex and Changing Times Organizations face challenges today that are too messy and complicated for consultants to simply play doctor: run a few tests, offer a neat diagnosis of the “problem,” and recommend a solution. Edgar Schein argues that consultants have to jettison the old idea of professional distance and work with their clients in a more personal way, emphasizing authentic openness, curiosity, and humility. Schein draws deeply on his own decades of experience, offering over two dozen case studies that illuminate each stage of this humble consulting process. Just as he did with Process Consultation nearly fifty years ago, Schein has once again revolutionized the field, enabling consultants to be more genuinely helpful and vastly more effective.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Humble Consulting is a fine blend of poetic writing and practical methodology. It is an intimate conversation about how service, in this case consulting, works in the real world. All who want a deeper understanding of the way to create relationships that produce outcomes will value this book. To simply recommend it is an understatement.” —Peter Block, author of *Flawless Consulting*, *The Answer to How Is Yes* “What is the most powerful force in consulting’s relational success—where you and the client move beyond the transactional to the deeper transformational? I used to think it was what our amazing OD founders Ed Schein and Warren Bennis saw as the core value of Organization Development: what they called that

special “spirit of inquiry.” Now I see that it’s something far more foundational. In a word, its “humility” and Ed Schein, with this book is modelling it for all of us in the way he, the master, is yet the student, disclosing his innermost doubts and mistakes, revealing his subtle insights and brilliant successes, and up-ending almost all of our assumptions of what really matters most. This is the first book I now recommend to consultants young and old: for without humility—a stance wide-open, a state-of “not knowing” and totally vulnerable and present—you cannot do this work. The message: make humility your greatest strength, and never lose it. David L. Cooperrider, author of *Appreciative Inquiry* and Fairmount Minerals Professor of Social Entrepreneurship, Weatherhead School of Management, Case Western Reserve University “Ed Schein takes the principles of Humble Inquiry and beautifully extends them to the consulting process in this book. He humbly and generously gives us a window into his own life and consulting process by sharing real stories from his years of consulting, including his own inner thoughts and unexpressed feelings. Every consultant should read this for insights into how we should deal with our doubts, questions, and anxieties. This is another major contribution to our work and our field from Dr. Schein.” Matt Minahan, Chair, Board of Trustees, OD Network “In this book Ed Schein has looked back over his long and distinguished consulting experience and come up with an important book. Anyone who is called upon to give help or advice, be they boss, consultant, parent or friend, should start by reading this. I used it to hold up a mirror to my own experience of giving advice and resolved to modify my behavior in future, to be more humble, in the Schein way.” Charles Handy, author of *The Age of Unreason* “Chock-full of useful case examples, *Humble Consulting* is about establishing a relationship with the client that is collaborative, personal, and empathetic rather than prescriptive. Schein has once again contributed significantly and creatively to our field of organization change and development.” W. Warner Burke, PhD, E. L. Thorndike Professor of Psychology and Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, and Editor, *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* “Ed Schein’s books on consulting have always been the most professionally useful things I read. And this book could once again reshape the consulting industry. It shifts the place from which effective consultants operate from the head to the heart and from the heart to the hand. Essential reading!” Otto Scharmer, Senior Lecturer, MIT, cofounder of the U.Lab and author of *Theory U* “Ed Schein has done it again! This book is a must-read for anyone in the helping professions who wants to make meaningful progress on complex challenges. Drawing on his own experience as consultant, scholar, and author, Ed brilliantly makes the case that it is

through real human connections that we have the best shot at making a difference in an increasingly interdependent world.

•Diane Rawlins, InsideOut Consulting

“Humble Consulting pulls the curtain back on the pretense that the vast majority of consultants and consulting organizations put forward that they have the answer.’ I plan on keeping a copy in my office to hand out to consultants as they continue to show up and ask that I tell them what keeps me up at night and they respond with the solution that they uniquely have to address it.

•James Hereford, Chief Operating Officer, Stanford Health Care

“Long a critic of OD’s overreliance on process, I’ve always admired Ed Schein’s insistence that process consultation be relevant. Now, in his new book, Humble Consulting, he shows us how. In his usual and clear style, he calls OD practitioners to account and to help in powerful and integrated ways.

•Chris Worley, Professor and Strategy Director, NEOMA Business School Center for Leadership and Effective Organizations

“As someone who always strives to be a more effective consultant, I find Ed Schein’s reflections and insights hugely reassuring. In Humble Consulting, with great care and sensitivity, Ed Schein shares years of wisdom and encourages his readers to reflect on and experiment with their own practice. I believe anyone working in a helping role will benefit from reading this wonderful book.

•Philip Mix, organization development consultant and member of the NTL Institute

“In Humble Consulting, master consultant Edgar Schein shows us how to escape the limitations of a traditional consulting practice to vastly improve both the impact and the meaning of our work. This book is at once brilliant and incredibly practical.

•Anthony L. Suchman, MD, MA, consultant, Relationship Centered Health Care

“Humble Consulting is a book every leader and every consultant should read. Using numerous cases from his own experience, Schein describes the specific components of a true helping relationship and shows the powerful impact when consulting rests on curious questioning that honors and unlocks the knowledge held by the other.

•David L. Bradford, PhD, Eugene D. O’Kelly Senior Lecturer in Leadership, Emeritus, Stanford University Graduate School of Business, and coauthor of the bestselling books Influence without Authority and Power Up

“Finally, a consulting process that demonstrates and emulates the type of culture toward which organizations and their leaders aspire.

•Robert Cooke, author of Human Synergistics’ Organizational Culture Inventory

“Ed Schein once again moves the needle in refining the essence of consulting. Schein invokes a shift from considering clients as objects to considering clients as living, dynamic beings. The artistry of balancing formality and intimacy, dancing with the dynamic client system, paying attention to the environment, and engaging in endless reflective learning makes for

a potent model and process. Read the wisdom and be open to

transformation. — Sarita Chawla, President, Metalens Consulting; Senior Faculty, New Ventures West; and Diamond Approach teacher — “In Humble Consulting, Ed Schein weaves the cultural and process consulting threads of his life’s work into a masterpiece of emotional, cultural, and methodological insight. Read this book and be prepared to change your mind, heart, and practice. — David E. Goldberg, author of The Design of Innovation and coauthor of A Whole New Engineer — “This senior icon in the field continues to make meaningful and significant contributions which could only be realized through years of experience and reflection. I have been reading Edgar Schein’s work for almost 50 years now, and I have learned from each of his works. But somehow, this his latest, is special. — Peter F. Sorensen, PhD, director, Master of Science in Management and Organizational Behavior program, Benedictine University

Nowhere else in the business world is communication more important than to consultants, moving between hundreds of communities every year. In an increasingly complex world, a new level of skill is required, but begins with a seemingly paradoxical skill for a consultant: how to ask rather than tell.

Humble Consulting the author has adapted his research from his other book Helping and Humble Inquiry and made adaptive moves to refine the work with real life examples and the lessons learned. This book is a great resource for helping to develop an organizational culture that thrives in an atmosphere of mutual trust and teamwork. The techniques are based on the spirit of inquiry and dialog that actual designs better ways of working cohesively. In short I love this book and Edgar Schein’s other books as well.

If you have any pretensions whatsoever to deliver high-quality consulting, you absolutely have to read this. Both a conceptual framework and a practical guide, this will improve your client work exponentially (unless of course you already apply his precepts - but I haven’t met many over the years, alas.)

Dr. Schein is a true guru of the organization behavior and development profession. In this latest compilation of insights, he reveals adaptive leadership and dialogic practices as wholly legitimate and perhaps not so new. Great read for anyone looking to be more helpful in work and life.

Excellent book

Book arrived much earlier than indicated. Dr. Schein is a scholar in the consulting, OD and IO fields.

Good examples and insights I can apply to several areas of life not just the workplace. I will be using these strategies.

Real help to reflect on the importance of trust, open communication @ early stage to develop a committed organization and grow it to the next level.

I appreciate the ease of use

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