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# **The Common Body of Knowledge**

**Institute of Management Consultants New Zealand (IMCNZ)**

Adapted from the ICMCI, July 2006

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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

The Common Body of Knowledge (CBK) is about knowledge and the associated learning. It is not a framework for determining competency. This is addressed by the competency framework, the description of which is contained in the body of knowledge. Knowledge and learning are the inputs in a process which results in competency, which is the output of outcomes based learning. Competency focuses on behaviour and outcomes; the body of knowledge is used as an input to the process of curriculum development and learning / qualifications.

The ICMCI focuses its certification processes on behaviour / competence and not knowledge alone. This does not imply that knowledge is not embedded in competency. In fact the opposite is true, but the relationship is more complex. Competence implies acquired knowledge and a complex interrelationship between the various components of knowledge and competency, especially those which fall under the title ACT – acting, communicating and thinking like a management consultant. The CBK is not to be used to assess the competency of consultants – that is the purpose of the associated competency framework. The framework draws on the CBK for “embedded knowledge” which is required to demonstrate a particular competency.

## **2 PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS**

### **2.1 Code of Professional Conduct**

As the professional association and certifying body for management consultants in New Zealand, IMCNZ requires adherence to its Code of Professional Conduct as a condition of membership and certification. The key elements of the Code are:

#### **2.1.1 Confidentiality**

A Member will treat client information as confidential and will not take personal advantage of privileged information gained during an assignment, or enable others to do so.

#### **2.1.2 Unrealistic Expectations**

A Member will not encourage unrealistic client expectations or promise clients that benefits are certain from specific management consulting services.

#### **2.1.3 Commissions and Financial Interests**

A Member will not accept commissions, remuneration or any other benefits from a third party in connection with recommendations to a client without the client's knowledge and consent. A Member will disclose any financial interest in goods or services which form part of such recommendations.

#### **2.1.4 Assignments Accepted**

A Member will accept only assignments for which they have the skills and knowledge to perform.

### **2.1.5 Conflicting Assignments**

A Member will avoid acting simultaneously in potentially conflicting situations without informing all parties in advance that this is intended.

### **2.1.6 Conferring With Client**

A Member will ensure that before accepting an assignment, a mutual understanding of the objectives, scope, work-plan and fee arrangements has been established and that any personal, financial or other interests which might influence the conduct of the work have been disclosed

### **2.1.7 Objectivity of Advice**

A Member will provide advice to clients that is objective and independent

### **2.1.8 Timeliness**

A Member will ensure that assignments are undertaken in a timely manner, in accordance with the work-plan agreed with the client.

### **2.1.9 Recruiting**

A Member will refrain from inviting an employee of a client to consider alternative employment without prior discussion with the client.

### **2.1.10 Professional Approach**

A Member will maintain a fully professional approach in all dealings with clients, the public and fellow Members. In support of this Members must not:

- Engage in any activity, which might impair their judgment
- Make false or misleading statements
- Act in any way, which discredits the Institute.

## **2.2 CONSULTANCY - A brief history and evolution**

It is important for CMCs (Certified Management consultants) to have a working appreciation of the development history of the profession. Key aspects include:

- Origins of consultancy and Important factors in its evolution<sup>1</sup>
- Current range and scope of consulting<sup>2</sup>
- Current trends in consulting<sup>3</sup>
- Future prospects for consultants and consultancy<sup>5</sup>

## **2.3 Definitions**

Management Consulting is the provision of independent advice and assistance to clients with management responsibilities. This advice can take several shapes, as consultants can be external, internal and may take on one or more of a whole array of roles, including being an outsourced function for the client organisation.

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<sup>1</sup> Suggested reference: The Worlds Newest Profession by Christopher D McKenna

<sup>2</sup> Suggested reference: Million dollar Consulting by Alan Weiss

<sup>3</sup> Refer [www.Counselant-News.com](http://www.Counselant-News.com)

<sup>5</sup> Refer [www.summitconsulting.com](http://www.summitconsulting.com)

A Management Consultant is an individual who provides independent advice and assistance about the process of management to clients with management responsibilities. The individual can be a generalist or a specialist and may approach an assignment with, for example, a purely financial point of view, as required by the client.

A Certified Management Consultant is a management consultant who views management consulting as a profession and meets certain requirements pertaining to character, qualifications, experience, independence and competence as defined by the professional body issuing certification.

An Accredited Practice is an organisation that, having been evaluated by IMCNZ as providing training at a suitably high standard, can recommend employees for certification by IMCNZ.

## **2.4 Multiple roles of management consultants**

Management Consultants play multiple roles in typical assignments, these include:

- Generalist
- Specialist
- Process provider
- Content provider
- Diagnostician
- Implementer
- Coach / mentor
- Facilitator
- Change Manager/facilitator
- Programme manager

## **2.5 National and international structure of the profession**

Management Consultants in their field of expertise are expected to have:

- knowledge of relevant national and international professional associations
- knowledge of current requirements established by IMCNZ
- important industry statistics

## **2.6 Current and future trends in management consulting**

This requires a knowledge and awareness of trends in management consulting across all the sectors. This would include knowledge of legal changes, professionalism, industry changes (PESTEL) from a consultancy perspective<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Suggested reference: Business Consultancy and Audit Market in New Zealand Industry Report Dec 2011

## **3 THE CONSULTING PROCESS**

### **3.1 Engagement management**

This covers all activities regarding the consulting process and can be seen to be the programme management function in the consulting process. The objective is to ensure that all deliverables are to the required quality and on time.

### **3.2 Prospecting and marketing**

The objective is to identify and engage clients and to convince them of capabilities, professionalism and ethics.

This phase is the initial stage at which the consultant markets his/her services and explores market opportunities. Promotional activity will form an important part of this phase, and include direct methods such as telephone calls, mailing of promotional materials, or targeted e-mail campaigns. This will eventually lead to the identifications of a client and the making of first contact. Currently, and increasingly so, the Internet is a powerful marketing tool that should be carefully considered as it can open many potentially fruitful markets. The consultant should impress the potential client by, among other things, his/her professionalism and track record. Assuming there is a sense of compatibility and vision of success on behalf of both parties, the relationship will continue to develop. Direct methods will be needed less by those organizations with such a reputation that they would be sought out by the client rather than the converse. It is these organizations that typically benefit from a large proportion of repeat-business. Key aspects include:

- Marketing of services
- Exploring opportunities
- Impressing from first contact

### **3.3 Clarifying needs**

The objective is to ensure that the consultant identifies and agrees the need with the client. Following this is agreement that the client requires a proposal based on these needs.

The continuing relationship will serve to explore the client's needs and further define them. The client and the consultant must come to some understanding on what the desired procedure and outcomes will be, although flexibility should be integral to the discussions. The desired outcomes will generally revolve around the concept of a real added value to the bottom line, i.e., a measurable difference. This stage will culminate with a formal proposal from the consultant that delineates some idea of time scope and fees. Equally important will be a demonstrated understanding of the client's political, economic, social, technological, legal, environmental situation as they relate to the projected outcome of the consulting engagement. Key aspects include:

- Understanding the client
- Recognizing a client need
- Clarifying the client need
- Exploring potential for success of project

- Providing estimates and billing strategy

### **3.4 Proposal development**

Objective is to produce a proposal at the required price in order to get the business.

Once an agreement has been reached, the consultant will explore which method of intervention would best fit the situation. Among the choices would be roles ranging from reflector, through collaborator, to advocate. Note that the interpretation of the consultant as a shadow director should be avoided at all times. A modern trend, though, is the utilization of the consultant as an outsourced function, reflecting the implied need for organizations to streamline operations. This phase implies exploring the client's readiness for change. The client may be an individual, but the effects will be felt by the whole organization. It will be important to manage relationships with key individuals and recognizing who the particular dissidents might be. Interviews, fact-finding procedures, diagnostic and analytical methods to assess the company's position will become important at this point. Eventually, this should lead to a clearer delineation of the problem and the task at hand that could formulate the basis for a hypothesis. Benefits will be identified and range from strategic guidance and direction, to greater competitiveness, to the identification of market opportunities. Key aspects include:

- Selecting method of intervention
- Isolating the problem
- Understand scope of problem
- Exploring client's readiness for change
- Hypothecating

### **3.5 Contracting**

Contracting is an optional step which could be completed informally on acceptance of the proposal or formally during a legal process.

### **3.6 Execution/ implementation**

The objective is to bring about beneficial change to the client.

A plan for resolution will begin to emerge and the consultant may begin to prepare a set of recommendations. These can be derived from brainstorming sessions, linear problem solving or lateral thinking, among other means. This will need to be validated, requiring an understanding of the client's values and objectives, as well as its culture. Rarely will an assignment succeed if it is not supported by, at least, the most senior people. Increasingly, consultants are finding that their recommendations will also require implementation. This latter stage requires many different skills that may force the consulting team to change somewhat by introducing members to the organization who are more experienced and better equipped to manage specific outcomes. It is also during this stage that evaluations will be scheduled to monitor progress of implementation and, if necessary, introduce contingency tactics. Key aspects include:

- Interviewing
- Exercising fact-finding methods

- Applying analytical methods
- Applying diagnostic tools
- Identifying benefits
- Dealing with client managers
- Applying solution development methods
- Validating recommendations
- Implementing
- Applying contingency plans (if necessary)

### **3.7 Disengagement**

The objective is to ensure that the client can continue without the consultant, to ensure satisfaction and to potentially on sell services.

The project will have come to an end. This phase will include specific steps to be taken to achieve, and document, proper closure. Key aspects include:

- Relating back to expectations
- Evaluating
- Closing

### **3.8 Learning from consulting engagements**

The objective is to have processes and systems in place to record and learn from consulting assignments. Consulting is very much a continuous improvement process.

## **4 INTERACTING WITH CLIENTS**

The objective is to establish, build and maintain good relationships with the client. This activity is present in each phase of the consulting process.

Finally, the consultant must never forget that the end of a project does not signify the end of the relationship. It is much less expensive to handle assignments on a repeat business basis than it is to be continually marketing oneself and trying to attract new clients. The maintenance of the relationship is extremely important, both for the consultant and the client. Key aspects include:

### **4.1 Establishing the relationship**

This covers all the processes and activities required to build the relationship with a client. It includes building personal and professional relationships, reputation management, referral marketing, using the client as a reference and ensuring that you relate to the client as an individual and as a client.

### **4.2 Understanding the client**

Understanding the client includes the activities of understanding the client as a person, the organization as a holistic system or organism, analyzing the client internal and external environment and ensuring that consulting interventions are adjusted accordingly.

### **4.3 Recognizing a client need**

Recognition of need includes those aspects of consulting that are listed under ACT (Acting Communicating and Thinking like a consultant). Need recognition is a subtle process of differentiating between needs and wants. It is sometimes as simple as being available to provide counsel to a client with an immediate problem or as subtle as delving beneath the obvious in order to identify underlying problems.

### **4.4 Selecting the method of intervention**

There are many tools and techniques which can be used to establish a framework for a consulting intervention. However, the selection and application of the correct one for the context is the skill required of a competent consultant. The contextualization and adaptation of “standard” approaches or methods is the skill that differentiates a consultant from the “cookie cutter” approach adopted so often in leveraged consultancies. A concept termed “route mapping” is defined where a consultant adapts a standard approach to meet the specific need, in many cases omitting unnecessary steps and changing others to fit the specifics of the client environment.

### **4.5 Dealing with client managers**

In any substantial organization, there are tiers of management who often have differing needs and views. A key requirement is to relate to, understand and meet the needs of the various levels of client management. Approaches need to be modified and levels of detail adjusted according to the strategic or tactical level of the individual being dealt with.

### **4.6 Dealing with client culture**

Client culture arises from the culture of individuals, their shared values, practices and their institutionalization within an organization. Culture plays a major influencing role in deciding on methods of intervention, personal interaction and even maturity in accepting radical or innovative ideas. It is true that culture is one of the most important determinants of success in matching a client to a consultant.

### **4.7 Managing conflict**

Conflict management is a major subject in its own right. Suffice it to say that the competent consultant needs to be assertive and not aggressive and must address conflict head on and not avoid it. The consultant needs to be astute in defusing conflict, without being political in behaviour.

### **4.8 Maintaining the relationship**

It is a known fact that existing and past clients are the most cost effective source of future interventions and thus client relationships are a valuable consulting asset, which is closely allied to the concept of consultancy branding. Maintaining a relationship requires constant and continuous effort and means understanding the client’s preferred means of maintaining contact, be it personal, telephonic, email or a casual lunch or breakfast.

## **5 GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF MANAGEMENT PROCESSES AND FUNCTIONS**

### **5.1 Management Processes**

The following are core managerial processes which consultants should be competent in to varying degrees of depth and breadth depending on the project. They are equally as important for understanding clients' activities as they are for consultants to manage their own teams. Clearly, in the latter case, some of what is outlined below may not apply unless the consultant is acting as a team leader or more senior member of the team.

Projects may be highly specific requiring a specialist's perspective, but it may also be highly strategic in nature, in which case broader knowledge of these items would be beneficial. Some may even apply to the management of consulting work specifically:

#### **5.1.1 Planning**

This is the initial stage in a process that will eventually achieve an objective. It is the stage at which assessments of needs and demands must be made. In relation to these factors, the planner must understand the future state desired by the client and, thus, visualize the structure of the team and the project to meet that objective. This will be set out in a plan that will also define how the components will be organized, led, controlled and directed in order to achieve maximum benefit to the client and the consulting organization. Communication is therefore imperative, regardless of whether the planning is strategic, tactical, operational or project in nature. Key points include:

- Assessments of demands and needs
- Setting corporate (or consulting) objectives and targets
- Communicating
- Setting business controls
- Using management information systems
- Human resource planning

#### **5.1.2 Organising**

This step normally follows the planning phase. The consultant systematically allocates resources against specific tasks or activities. These will be in accordance with clearly identified objectives and targets. Success of this process, therefore, relies on crucial time management. Organizing requires clear delegation skills and, at times, the ability to influence others, in order to ensure accomplishment of a common goal. Key points include:

- Setting objectives and targets
- Human resource organizing
- Delegating
- Influencing
- Time management

### **5.1.3 Leading**

Leadership is necessary for the successful accomplishment of any group-driven task. This ability provides the impetus for the rest to strive for the common goal. It requires a great deal self-awareness and certainty to enable the leader to motivate, persuade, communicate and direct according to his/her convictions. Just as important, the leader must be able to match the “person to the task” to maximize effectiveness of the team. There are different styles that range from the ‘light hand on the wheel’ to the more directive approach. It is important to know when to employ which. A wise man once noted that “...there are no limits to what a man might achieve, if he does not care whose gets the credit...”. Key points include:

- Styles: directive vs. ‘light hand on the wheel’
- Influencing
- Inter-personal skills
- Intra-personal skills
- Communicating
- Motivating
- Directing

### **5.1.4 Controlling**

Continual monitoring of progress is vital to ensure that the engagement direction continues to be appropriate. The establishment of clearly defined metrics provides the consultant with tools to measure the progress of the engagement. The consultant uses these metrics to ensure the client’s needs are being met by the project team. (The use of Management Information Systems (MIS) is particularly effective for this, as statistics are a powerful tool for the measurement of performance.) Regularly scheduled review sessions provide a useful mechanism to communicate progress with the team and client, and to redirect activities, if required. Key points include:

- Regulating objectives
- Monitoring plans, policies and procedures
- Delegating responsibilities
- Measuring and reviewing performance
- Taking corrective action
- Using Management Information Systems

### **5.1.5 Directing**

Seeing the “Big Picture” requires the consultant thoroughly incorporate the client’s desired end state in every step of the engagement process. It involves the adoption of a strategic point of view. The consultant must ensure that each activity supports the corporate values, to avoid disruptive behavior or events that would detract from achieving the overall goal. Bear in mind that a client expects the consultant to solve problems, rather than initiate them. The consultant should act with the best interests of his/her client in mind. Key points include:

- Defining corporate (or project) vision
- Defining corporate/strategic values
- Determining strategic (or tactical) choices

## **5.2 Management Functions**

The following are managerial functions consultants should be aware of, to varying degrees of depth and breadth depending on the project. Projects may be highly specific requiring a specialist's perspective, but it may also be highly strategic in nature, in which case broader knowledge of these items would be beneficial. Some may even apply, specifically, to the management of consulting work:

### **5.2.1 Organizational Analysis and Behaviour**

This is a process of management that aims at understanding what the organization's structure is, as well as how the measurement of its performance is accomplished. Clear definition of the goals of the organization and how it is structured to achieve those goals must be considered to ensure mutual agreement on the "deliverables" of the engagement. In some cases, it may be necessary to utilize alternate metrics to ensure objective review of organizational performance. Outcomes should be compared to the mission statement of the organization and rated according to appropriateness. Key points include:

- Understanding organizational structures
- Measuring organization performance
- Evaluating the mission statement and comparing with core values and purposes

### **5.2.2 Organizational Development**

Given a completed Organizational Analysis process, the organization either carries forward the current strategy or implements a more appropriate one according to need. The Development process incorporates the desired vision, current cultural and environmental constructs, defined midpoints towards the vision and external modifiers to produce a clearly understood path forward. This is a perpetual process that occurs due to the dynamic nature of markets, technologies and, therefore, challenges to achieving success as an organization. It may, or may not, involve a paradigm shift in the organization and the consultant must avoid personalizing the process to integrate themselves as part of the long-term organizational change. Key points include:

- Establishing need for change
- Team building
- Task groups
- Force-field analysis

### **5.2.3 Project/Process Management**

There should always be a strong client focus in an engagement. Setting milestones and using time management techniques will be of utmost importance. The use of Gantt charts and similar applications are recommended, especially in complex assignments, when more advanced techniques such as the Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT) or Critical Path Method (CPM) might be useful tools. Teams can also be complex and it is necessary for the individual members to have reached a uniform understanding of purpose and objective. MIS tools will benefit any project, as an aid in the meaningful selection and representation of data: financial, performance, or otherwise. Other important

aspects to consider are the timing and format of reporting procedures and the management of the project's closure. If possible, the client is best served if the consultant can employ tools that mirror the client's reporting mechanisms. The consultant should avoid confusing the client with tools that require a paradigm shift in the client's analysis of critical performance data. Key points include:

- Client focus
- Simple vs. complex teams
- Identifying intended outcomes
- Identifying expected outcomes
- Time management
- Scheduling techniques
- Setting milestones
- Maintaining documentation
- Reporting
- Managing the end of the project: Closure
- Management Information Systems
- Budgeting and financial control

#### **5.2.4 Change Management**

All consulting assignments, to some degree involve the management of change. The nature of change lies in nature itself; it is the most basic function of any kind of development. What has augmented the rate of and nature of the complicated change is basically attributable to technology. Organizational change occurs because it is either reactive or proactive to the surrounding forces that can be summed up by the umbrella term 'environment'. The management of change requires accurate appraisal of what change is required, who and what will be involved, and the presence of effective leaders who can innovate and experiment with full use of communication skills and open approaches. People must identify with and internalize the meaning of a change if it is to succeed in the long run. It is crucial for the consultant to actively identify, engage and – if necessary – convert internal supporters for the change. The consultant must know who, in the organization, will carry on the change after the consultant is gone. Key points include:

- Understanding the nature of change
- Identifying change
- Internalizing change
- Application of different approaches
- Leadership
- Innovation
- Experimentation
- Openness
- The change agent
- Communicating

#### **5.2.5 Strategy**

Strategy as a process of management is the continuous eye on the future opportunities and threats to what an organization is to achieve. Strategy is about innovating, directing and moving an organization forward: 're-inventing the wheel'. Consultants aid with strategic focus because they are lateral thinkers and are often

more capable of interpreting the future by careful observation of the client, competitors and markets at present. One of the crucial benefits a consultant can bring is the ability to translate successful previous engagements from seemingly unrelated situations into meaningful advice to a new client. Key points include:

- Innovation
- Regeneration
- Directing
- Leading
- 'Re-inventing the future'

## **6 UNDERLYING UNDERSTANDING OF PESTLE**

Knowledge of the political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental situation is imperative for a successful consulting intervention. These macro-forces act upon an organization and shape its strategic and operational approaches in order to be successful. This implies that these forces will also shape how the consultant will have to intervene to help the client-organization achieve its success.

### **6.1 Political**

When considering political structures and forces, the consultant must be aware of national and organizational politics, to mirror the growth in international consulting. Nations have different forms of politics, different agendas, much in the same way as individuals struggle for control, power, promotion, etc within an organization. Understanding how their client "fits" into its political environment is crucial in enabling the consultant to provide meaningful and actionable advice. Key points include:

- National
- Organizational
- Industrial relations
- Influencing and lobbying

### **6.2 Economic (Macro and Micro)**

Macro factors affect inflation, unemployment, exchange rates, trade balances, etc. Micro factors affect supply and demand, competition, the labor market and wages, amongst many others. Market wealth is an important consideration, as it will determine the possibility for growth. Being able to integrate a cogent engagement plan with those factors, including allocation of scarce resources, is key to the consultant's credibility and performance. Key points include:

- Macroeconomic factors
- Microeconomic factors
- Market wealth
- Resource allocation

### **6.3 Social**

It is under this heading that national as well as organizational culture fits. Failure to recognize that culture is the core of who people are, will lead to inaccurate understanding of the problem, its scope and the best consulting approach. High levels of interpersonal as well as intrapersonal skills are called upon to understand and best handle social differences. Culture encompasses all that is intangible in the form of people's values, beliefs, tradition, language and taboos, as well as organizational ethics. It is important for a consultant to gain exposure to different cultures and thus become conscious at one level and tolerant at another. Key points include:

- National culture
- Organizational culture
- Ethical culture
- Business ethics
- Inter-personal and
- Intra-personal capabilities

### **6.4 Technological**

This is undoubtedly one of the greatest drivers of the future, as it has enabled cultures to merge business and communications to become more powerful, efficient and global. For the organization, this has meant being able to locate anywhere in the world; transfer funds from any one place to any other in real-time; restructure to focus on core tasks and outsource the rest. Telecommunications are now practically real-time. The Internet allows instant access to a low-cost wealth of information. E-mailing is commonplace and much quicker than standard mail. These are just a few of the social and economic benefits that have affected nations and organizations through technology. The trend will continue as organizations handle ever more complexity and volume... The consultant provides value by keeping the client abreast of new developments, applications and potential new opportunities available, using the new technologies. Key points include:

- Awareness
- Needs, wants and possibilities
- Infrastructure
- Communications
- Awareness
- Needs, wants and possibilities
- Infrastructure
- Communications

### **6.5 Legal**

Laws are formal rules and procedures that define the appropriate behavior of a particular society or organization. There are many laws at national level that play an important part for businesses such as anti-trust legislation and corporate taxation, incentive grants and allowances. Similarly, there are very specific rules that are applied to certain types of organizations. For example, non-profit making institutions function within very specific and very different legal parameters than

those of “for-profit” organizations. It is important for the consultant to be aware of legal environmental nuances between nations and sectors in industry when engaging a particular assignment to ensure sound advice is given. The consultant must scrupulously avoid providing inappropriate or inaccurate advice to their client. In most instances, the consultant should provide documentation of what is known as E&O (Errors and Omission) Insurance, to protect both the consultant and the client in the event of unforeseen problems. Key points include:

- National laws
- Organizational rules
- Industrial relations
- Influencing and lobbying

## **6.6 Environmental Sustainability**

There are environmental considerations for the consultant to bear in mind when engaging in an assignment. There are strict rules that organizations need abide by in order to protect the environment from damage and these may prevent the implementation of a potential solution. Organizations and consultants have a responsibility to safeguard the environment, which falls within social and business ethics. Key points include:

- National
- International
- Organizational
- Industrial relations
- Influencing and lobbying

## **7 DEPTH IN SPECIALIST TECHNICAL/PROFESSIONAL SKILLS**

Most consultants enter the professional practice of consultancy through the route of functional specialism such as marketing, finance, HR, or production. Some remain deep specialists, either in an organizational function or process; or in the methodologies and applications of a particular proprietary philosophy or approach. Others rely more on greater management breadth in organizational competency, but all must be able to relate their deep technical professional expertise to the client organization. As a tertiary level qualification, the CMC does not test for expertise in functional specialisms, although it does require evidence of having obtained the necessary level of competency, frequently through the qualifications and CPD of a recognised professional body, such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants, Marketers and HR in the member countries.

Specialist competencies are important because they reflect the fragmented consulting market that exists today. Specialist competencies are a consultant’s entry point upon which they can build professional depth. Consultants range from the stereotypical “McKinseyite”, with a general management approach, to the specialist IT consultant or senior executive facilitator and coach. They all require core competencies that form a part of every consultant worth his/her salt, but a specialist approaches require special knowledge without which the client will remain unimpressed or underserved. They expect the firm to do training, as would be the case when engaging a consulting team with several junior associates. The specialisation can be broadly categorized as either functional or sectorial.

## **Functional**

- IT
- HR
- Management communication
- Strategic planning
- Production
- Marketing

## **Sectorial**

- Financial
- Governmental
- Charitable
- Public
- Private
- Internal

## **8 PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL ATTRIBUTES OF A MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT.**

Acting, communicating and thinking are inherent personal abilities, or competencies, that we have at our disposal, but that a consultant must strive to refine through experience.

### **8.1 Acting**

There exist multitudes of ways in which a consultant may act: objective observer, fact finder, coach, technical expert, etc. They should all be according to professional and ethical norms of attitude and behavior. It is important for a consultant not to over-stretch and try to be all things to all people. There are certain criteria to consider when selecting which guise to adopt: the client culture; the consultant's knowledge, experience and personality; the nature of the problem that the consultant has been called in to deal with. Facilitating, mentoring and coaching are three distinct options available to the consultant in order to motivate and develop people, but there are many more – and within each of these exist types of (e.g.) facilitating. It is important to consider that although different forms of acting are at a person's disposal quite naturally, the consultant should aim at refining them through experience and conscious efforts. The management of conflict is a good example of when different approaches may be validated in different circumstances by either stimulating or resolving the conflict to achieve a desired result. Key points include:

- Professional attitude/behavior
- Professional conduct/ethics
- Dealing with client culture
- Managing conflict
- Motivating and developing people
- Leading
- Facilitating
- Mentoring
- Coaching
- Selecting appropriate role

### **8.2 Communicating**

There are two main ways of communicating: oral and written. It should be noted however that listening is another form of communication, as is body language. Each of these is an important element to the overall impression that a consultant will give. The tie with culture is inextricable as in some countries even a hand-

gesture could be misinterpreted. Many clients may prefer regular oral communications rather than written reports, or conversely, might prefer to receive updates by email. These aspects of the relationship should be defined from the outset to minimize inconveniences. Nonetheless, consultants will need to know appropriate proposal and report-writing techniques and demonstrate good oral presentation techniques. Each should be properly adapted to the respective audience. Key points include:

- Written communications
- Oral communications
- Using available technology
- Preparing proposals
- Appropriate reporting
- Enhanced presentations

### **8.3 Thinking**

It may seem obvious, but thinking is the single most important and fundamental competence that a consultant must be extremely good at. The consultant's mind should be capable of nurturing thoughts and ideas on several different planes simultaneously to enable flexible and contingent thinking. Lateral thinking and the ability to look into the future, 'to view the end from the beginning' are also important. Key points include:

- Empathising
- Lateral thinking
- "Seeing the end from the beginning"
- Contingency planning
- Flexible approaches
- Metacognition – "thinking about thinking"

## **9 IMCNZ CERTIFIED MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT (CMC) CORE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK**

A Certified Management Consultant (CMC) is defined as a management consultant who demonstrates three core competency components:

- Values and behaviour;
- Technical skills; and
- Business acumen.

Each component, with its associated sub components, high-level elements and the required standard of performance for each element is shown in the following table. Applicants should self-assess their level of competency against these standards using a scale of:

- E – Exceed Standard
- M – Meet Standard
- D – Development Required to Meet Standard

| <b>Component</b>     | <b>Sub Component</b>                | <b>High Level Elements</b>       | <b>Required Performance Standard</b>   |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Values and Behaviour | Beliefs                             | Values, ethics & professionalism | Adheres to code of conduct and ethical guidelines.<br>Demonstrates professional integrity, consistency, transparency, accountability and reliability.                                  |
|                      |                                     | Analytical skills                | Observations & analysis  |
|                      | Conceptualizing and problem solving |                                  | Employs structured approaches to generate ideas, evaluate and select options.  |
|                      | Relationships                       | Complexity, change & diversity   | Understands complexity of operating environment and impact of selected course of actions on others.  |
|                      |                                     | Communication & presentation     | Uses a range of techniques and approaches to convey thoughts and ideas in a range of situations  |
|                      |                                     | Responsibility & accountability  | Responsible for own actions, demonstrating resilience, drive and commitment to results.  |
|                      |                                     | Influencing                      | Presents ideas convincingly to produce specific outcomes   |
|                      | Personal Development                | Focus and time management        | Delivers timely solutions, balancing priorities and managing time effectively  |
|                      |                                     | Self Development                 | Proven track record of self development and personal growth  |
|                      | Technical Skills                    | Specialisation                   | Knowledge and skill  |
| Consultative         |                                     | Client focus                     | Scopes client requirements, presenting clear comprehensive proposals   |
|                      |                                     | Project management               | Manages client projects effectively- setting objectives, deadlines and budgets, using appropriate project management tools and methodologies and ensuring seamless withdrawal process. |
|                      |                                     | Consultative process             | Uses a range of techniques, including facilitation, to deliver solutions of mutual benefit.  |
|                      |                                     | Knowledge management             | Captures, shares and applies knowledge in a structured way, relevant to the engagement needs   |
|                      |                                     | Partnering and networking        | Uses networks effectively to engage expertise of others, developing others as appropriate  |
|                      |                                     | Tools and methodologies          | Selects and uses an appropriate range of tools and methodologies   |
|                      |                                     | Risk and quality management      | Defines quality standards, ensuring quality of delivery and client satisfaction.<br>Defines risk criteria, identifying, mitigating and managing risks and outcomes.                    |

| Component       | Sub Component         | High Level Elements              | Required Performance Standard  |
|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Business Acumen | Consultant's Business | Consultancy environment          | Understands the nature of the management consultancy market, competitors and capabilities.   |
|                 |                       | Commercial aspects of assignment | Demonstrates understanding of commercial aspects of project including scope, risk, terms and conditions and pricing.                         |
|                 | Client's Business     | External awareness               | Demonstrates understanding of political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental factors (PESTLE) impacting on area of work |
|                 |                       | Business knowledge               | Understands business structures, processes, management and disciplines and impact on own area of work  |
|                 |                       | Understanding the client         | Has researched and understood client business operations and agenda  |
|                 |                       | Client's project imperative      | Identifies and articulates project drivers, strategic fit and commercial benefits with client in respect of one or more individual projects. |

## 10 CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The numerous factors that lead to potential effectiveness in consulting can be enhanced as much as they can decay. It is assumed that a good education is the basic building block of much that the consultant will be capable of. Also of great importance will be the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) undertaken by the individual.

Many large management consulting practices have their own training programs that serve this very purpose. Some consultants also 'swing back and forth' between consulting and industry and thus continue to learn. But, it is of paramount importance for a sole practitioner to invest in CPD for his/her own benefit, as well as that of the client.

IMCNZ members are required to plan and record their professional development activities undertaken to keep their skills relevant.

| Preparation  | Execution   | Notification  |
|--|---|---|
| Annual self-assessment of career direction and current professional competences.<br>Self-identification of knowledge and skills required to advance career and enlarge skill base.<br>Identifies from information available the PD activities needed - courses, seminars and other training. | Prepares annual plan of PD activities.<br>Completes PD activities<br>Records actual PD activities in PD log | Compiles and submits annual PD report to IMCNZ National Secretary |

A range of professional development activities are considered appropriate and it is expected that a CMC will carry out a minimum of 30 hours per annum of these.

| <b>PD Activity</b>  | <b>Time Limits</b>                              | <b>Description</b>   |
|---|---|--|
| Conventions & Conferences   | No limit  | Full details of conference sessions and PD hours must be kept for audit purposes.  |
| Courses, seminars, workshops and lectures   | No limit  | Courses that cover the broad range of topics of management consulting interests and specialty areas. This activity can include class, distance learning or self-study. Number of hours relate to session times only.   |
| IMCNZ Regional Meetings   | No limit  | Participation in IMCNZ regional group sessions for the exchange of management consulting information of common interest. Covers breakfast, lunch or after work sessions with speakers and discussion / question time.  |
| Tertiary Studies  | No limit<br>10 hours per paper sat & passed     | These include formal courses conducted by tertiary education organisations leading to degrees, diplomas or certificates.   |
| In-house training activities  | No limit  | These include in house courses, schools and residential courses. They may be presented by company staff or individuals and organisations engaged by the employer. Participants in house training need to obtain approval to credit the PD hours before completing the training.  |
| Research and writing of articles for recognised publications                              | No limit  | Research and writing time for articles for recognised publications including the IMCNZ website and promotional activities. Excludes time for layout, artwork and design.   |
| Research, writing and presentation of speeches.   | No limit  | Research, writing and preparation time for speeches and presentations to recognised organisations, including IMCNZ Regional meetings and promotional activities. Excludes time for layout, artwork and design. As a guide, 3 hours preparation for every hour presenting. This does vary with degree of complexity of subject and experience of presenter. |
| Reading of technical and management consulting literature and viewing of electronic media | Maximum of 10 hours pa                          | Members should maintain a reading log to support time in this category.  |
| Participation in IMCMZ Council and sub committees   | Maximum of 10 hours pa                          | Attendance at Council / sub committee meetings and work arising.   |
| Research carried out in preparation for consulting assignments                            | Maximum of 10 hours pa                          | Includes tailoring and development of methodologies and researching the client sector and business environment.  |
| Other Activities  | Must be submitted and approved by PD Councillor | All activities considered.   |

## **11 STAGES OF EXCELLENCE**

A consultant goes through four primary stages of growth from novice to expert. This can be broadly equated to associate, consultant, CMC and master or expert CMC. He/she also performs in different roles such as follower, leader, coach and manager.

The point reached in each stage hinges very much on the experience gained over time. This recognizes that consultancies recruit at varying levels: from recently graduated students, to managers with years of experience moving into consultancy.

What the stage of excellence model is not saying is that the list of competencies is exhaustive, or for that matter, that a given consultant should be competent in all the areas outlined. What it does is delineate the competency territory within which consultants can develop in a myriad of ways. In the same way, the CMC designation is only a stage in the professional development for the accredited consultant.

A move to Fellow CMC (or expert CMC) would thus require further evidence of competencies asked for at the time of CMC evaluation. The body of knowledge outlined here encompasses all these levels at a basic degree and it is up to the individual's curiosity and experience to take any aspect further through professional development.