

## Coaching Small Business Owners

Small business owners are often operating with limited emotional margin, are regularly overwhelmed, and do not always see the obvious. A consultant, with fresh eyes, must be able to analyze, summarize, and articulate the broader issues affecting their organization.

When a consultant engages with business owners, their conversation should uncover the organization's journey, their current challenges, and what their hope is for the future.

Small business owners are naturally drawn to their interests and expertise, making it obvious to the consultant to determine what dominates their focus. Are they primarily focused on the future vision of the organization? Is their comfort zone building effective operations? Is their attention dominated by the innovation of their product or service?

By accepting the concept that an owner can only be the master of one or possibly two of these qualities, the consultant must quickly determine where their counsel will deliver the greatest value. As an example:



- The visionary business owner needs to complement this gift by building a management team that can effectively deliver profitable performance, while attracting technical talent to innovate.
- If effective management dominates their interests, they need the consultant to build the organizational vision and attract the technical talent to innovate their products or services that supports the vision?
- Small business owners that built their company by offering a unique value will need counsel in identifying and attracting management talent and crafting the company's future view.

Consultants must convince business owners that focusing on their natural area of expertise is a good thing, however it must be balanced with internal or external talent to address the other qualities that require attention. It is only then that a consultant can influence them in a meaningful way.

Herein lies a tipping-point for consultants. Organizational assessments are a diagnostic tool that can quickly expose the missing link between vision, management, and product value, enabling you to offer solutions to your client and position you as a strategic partner in achieving performance outcomes.