## CHAPTER EIGHT

# Forms and Modes of Consultancy

Essentially consultancy is a form of private activity which provides consultors with opportunities to explore things openly with impunity in preparation for working with people individually and collectively, in private and in public. Part One is about the ways and means by which consultants and consultors do this consultancy work and the problems they can encounter. Consultancy arrangements and relationships vary enormously as do the nature, duration, frequency and degree of formality of consultations. Here I describe and discuss some modes of consultancy and a representative range of the forms they take in relation to work studies and vocational development. Finally, I consider the place of consultancy in the family of activities of which it is a member.

## I MODES OF CONSULTANCY

There are three basic modes of consultancy. In the first of these the initiative is with consultors. They decide when they wish to consult and what they wish to consult about and make contact with their consultants. They may brief consultants in advance or, as is quite common, brief them when they meet. The contract is an open one. In the second mode, consultors and consultants establish a programme of consultations. Sessions are fixed well in advance to cover a contracted period, say a year. Consultors may brief consultants when they meet. Or, consultors and consultants may confer in advance about the next consultation and decide how best to prepare for it. The third mode is similar to the first or the second except that consultants receive copies of minutes and any other relevant documents.

An advantage of the first is that consultations are restricted to the felt needs of consultors and their initiatives. An advantage of the second and third modes overcomes a limitation of the first, it provides opportunities for consultants to identify issues requiring attention of which consultors are unaware. In the first mode consultants are cast in a responsive, re-active role; in the second and third they can be pro-active. The third mode enables consultants to monitor developments and multiplies their opportunities to take initiatives but it involves them in taking on much more work and responsibility. Most of my work has been done in the first two modes.

## II SOME FORMS OF CONSULTANCY PROVISION

In this section we note some of the many ways in which consultancy services are provided.

### 1. Consultancies With Individuals and Groups

A private arrangement between a consultor and a consultant forms the basic relational unit. Larger units are formed by multiplying the numbers of consultors

and/or consultants. This occurs when groups, teams, councils, organizations and churches are the consultors. Occasionally when consultants are acting for groups such as teams they also act with their permission or knowledge, for individual members of the group. Such an arrangement can be helpful all round, but only when the work of the individual is considered with respect to that of the whole group and when any conflict of interest is managed through the careful maintenance of the boundaries between the group and the individual consultancies (cf p 48).

External contributions to the consultancy relationships modify the dynamics. This occurs when consultants have supervisors and get help from specialists. It also occurs when members or groups of the organization employing consultors are active parties to the consultancy contract. As we have seen, it is of vital importance that all concerned should be clear about the nature of the consultancy contract, the contracting and sub-contracting parties and the respective responsibilities of all participants to each other.

## 2. Co-consultancy Arrangements

A co-consultancy arrangement is one in which two or more people offer each other consultancy help by adopting in turn the roles of consultor and consultant. Practitioners who can offer this service to each other in the work place make vital contributions towards the provision of comprehensive consultancy cover (cf Chapter Ten).

One way of developing effective co-consultancies is through a consultant working with two or more consultors. Consultations focus first on one consultor's work, then on the other and on any work they might be doing together. When they are concentrating exclusively on one of the consultor's work, the other consultor acts as a co-consultant. (Consultancy contributions are enhanced because they draw upon the knowledge and experience of two people acting as consultants. Triads can be much more creative than dyads especially when two people cannot see a way forward or are locked in conflict.) This enables them to develop skills and confidence in providing consultancy services to peers and colleagues, the facility to engage in role reversal and the understanding and experience to offer each other help without the assistance of the consultant. Thoroughgoing co-consultancies between two people and members of groups lead to egalitarian consultancy relationships and avoid the ever present potential for patronage in one person helping another.

A co-consultancy arrangement in which I am currently engaged is proving extremely productive. It is with two co-consultors/consultants and is based on the second mode, viz, a programme of consultations fixed in advance for a period of one year at a time to be reviewed and terminated or re-negotiated at the end of that time.[1]

## 3. Self-consultancy

Practitioners can act as consultors to themselves. I find I can do this by describing to/for myself what I need to consult myself about. Sometimes I do this in the first person but I find that it helps to objectify things and to induce the consultancy dynamic if I use the third person singular: "George said . . ." or "Lovell did . . ." or "The minister/chair/worker felt . . .". The form of address depends upon how good or bad am feeling about myself, things that have happened and what I have done.





Then I submit the situation, subject matter, myself and my actions to appropriate consultancy procedures.[2]

## 4. Consultancy Courses

Work and vocational consultancy courses were developed by Avec (cf p 6 *et al*) and widely used over a period of twenty years. These courses had certain basic elements in common but each was tailored to the particular work consultancy needs of its members. They were generally held in two periods of five days separated by a month or so. Ideally they comprised a group of twelve people with two or three staff members. All participants had to undertake to be present throughout because the sessions were progressively interrelated and they had to promise to treat discussions on work situations as confidential. These conditions were essential to the consultancy process at the heart of these courses.

The subject matter for these courses came from three sources. Beforehand members were required by way of guided preparation to write a paper on their work, either that in which they were currently engaged or that which they were contemplating. These papers, similar to outline one in Appendix I, were circulated to all participants in advance of the course but only after they had presented one and had committed themselves to treat them as confidential. After studying these papers staff members decided the initial input required to prime the co-consultancy and consultancy processes and facilitate collaborative learning. That provided the second subject matter input. The third was the basics of the practice theory upon which the course and the approach to church and community work and to consultancy was based. This material formed the initial syllabus which inaugurated two-way consultancy process between members and staff: members presented their situations for work analysis in relation to the experience of the group in general and the staff's approaches to church and community development work in particular; the staff presented their ideas and approaches for analysis in relation to the members' work and situations. Staff acted as lead consultants whilst members acted as co-consultants to each other and the staff.

During the first week members and staff established their collective objectives and checked the programme presented by the staff against them. Towards the end of the week members and staff together determined the core curriculum for the second week, methods to be used and emphases in the approach. Between weeks, staff members prepared a programme and sessions. Members did the preparation necessary for further sessions on their work situations.

These courses provided consultors with opportunities to experience consultancy processes in four settings. The **first** setting was preparing in private. Before the course they wrote a paper designed to present themselves as practitioners and their work situation so that people who did not know them or their situation could grasp the essentials quickly and engage in constructive discussion with them. Then, after the first week they had to work out the implications of the discussion in preparation for the next round of consultation and action in the second week. Privately they had also to prepare themselves to act as co-consultants to other members by studying their position papers. Guidance was given about approaches to diagnostic reading. Thus the courses presented rich opportunities for learning about the private preparation which helps people to be most effective as consultors and consultants.

The **second** setting was in comparatively short tutorials of twenty to thirty minutes with a member of staff. These sessions were used for preparation for group consultancy sessions and afterwards for discussing how to follow them through. Preparatory discussions dealt with things such as how to introduce the group consultation, how to make the best use of the time, no-go areas and how to cope with their emotions and challenges or criticisms. Follow-through tutorials concentrated on implications of the group consultancy and any feelings consultors were finding difficult to handle. In short these tutorials were consultations about promoting the consultancy process and handling the outcome. They facilitated both the process and the learning about it.

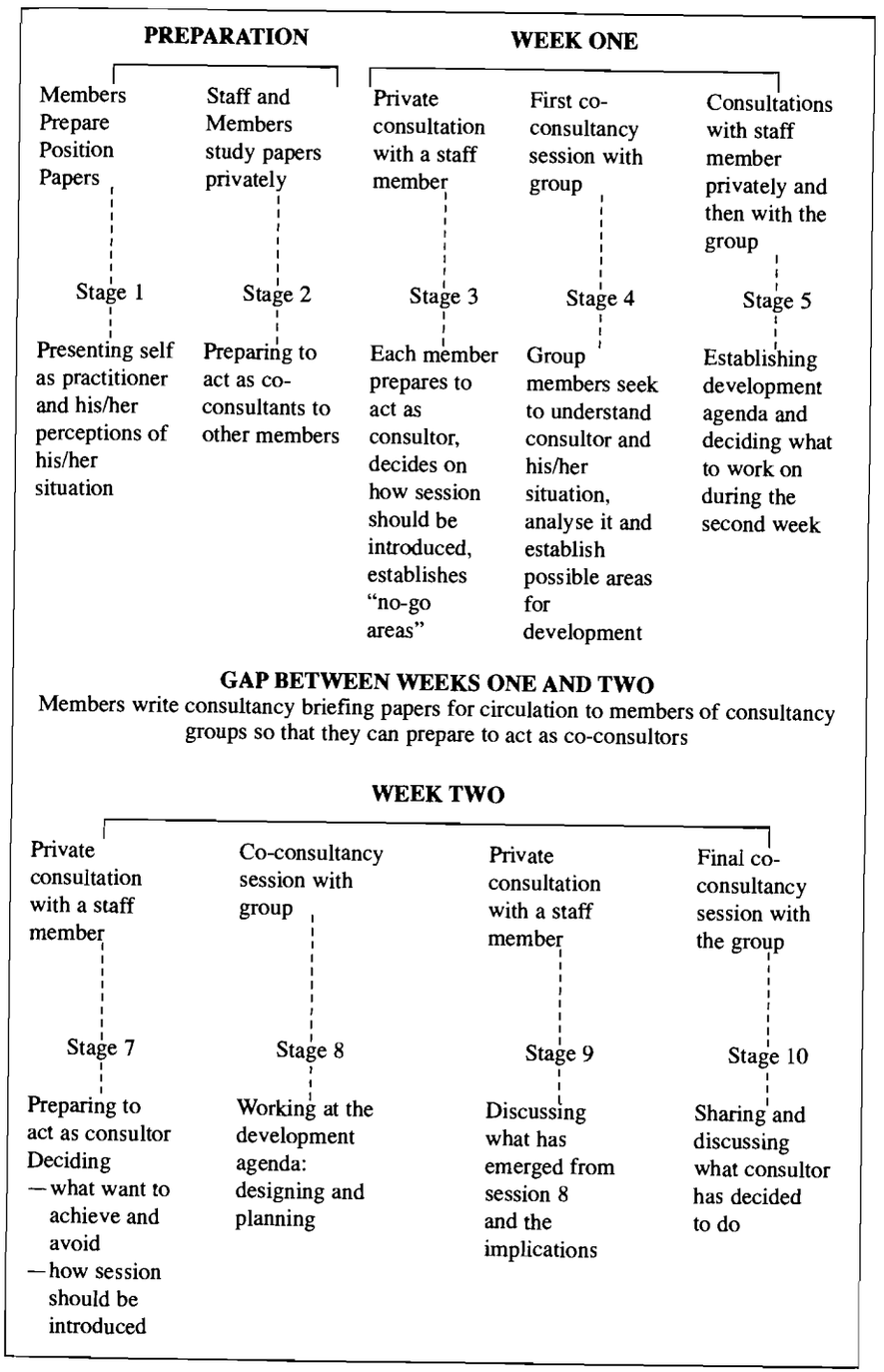
The **third** setting was in a sub-group of six members with one or two staff members. Each member had two consultancy sessions in the first week and two in the second. In both weeks the first was about 90 minutes. The second, about 20-30 minutes two or three days later, enabled consultors and members of the group to share their subsequent thinking. The sessions in the first week were dedicated to analysis and helping the consultor to decide what s/he needed to concentrate on in the second week. Those in the second week were dedicated to designing and planning work programmes and projects. This consultancy sequence for each member is charted in Display 8:1. These became known as "work paper groups".

To picture the group sessions imagine six or seven people sitting at a round table four feet in diameter on which were placed sheets of newsprint for drawing diagrams and writing working notes or lists. It could be a group of ministers or priests of any denomination, equally it could be an ecumenical group—a monk, a nun, two priests, a deaconess and lay workers or a group of Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops, provincials and Methodist chairmen (now known as "chairs'). One member is the consultor. Attention is focused exclusively upon him/her and his/her situation. In order to maximise concentration on the given situation no anecdotes or yarn swapping are allowed. (Initially this was a hard discipline for clergy but one in which they eventually rejoiced.) One of them is taking notes, they do this for each other in turn. (Sometimes note takers were required to write up the session as a service to the consultor, and to enable them to study the consultancy session and the situation in greater depth and to acquire skill in writing up consultancy records. At other times they handed their notes to the consultor to write up the session for himself/herself. They then grappled with whatever had emerged and shaped it in ways most meaningful to them. This meant they got the understanding and insights that come only through doing the structuring and writing for themselves.) One person is acting as an observer. Generally s/he is seated outside the consultancy circle. After the session observers had an opportunity to discuss with the group what they had noted about subject matter and process. Other members acted as co-consultants under the leadership of the staff member/consultant. In this setting consultors had opportunities:

- to examine their work in detail;
- to experience one or two staff members acting as a consultant to the group and the other members acting as co-consultants, observers and note takers;
- to have supervised experiences of acting as a consultor, co-consultant, observer and recorder.








**Display 8:1 Ten-day Consultancy Courses: Consultancy Sequence for Each Member**

The **fourth** setting in which members experienced consultancy processes was in the full group of twelve members and two or three staff members. This group worked at an agenda which had three interrelated aspects:

- the subjects of common interest to them as church and community work practitioners; (Display 8:2 lists the subjects covered *in toto*. Most courses majored on four or five of these which were decided by careful consultation between staff and members towards the end of the first week.)
- the approaches and methods staff considered relevant to the participants as practitioners and to their situations;
- the examination of the experiences during the course of the non-directive approaches to church and community work, to analysis and design and to consultancy.

All this provided opportunities for medium sized group consultancy in which staff and members variously acted as leading consultants, co-consultants and consultors. In these sessions there were opportunities to engage in general and specific discussions of subjects and problems. General discussion allows people to draw upon all their experiences without majoring on any one of them. Specific discussion compels people to concentrate exclusively upon a particular example. Acquiring skills to do both is essential to consultancy.

Clearly these courses constituted variegated intensive experiences of consultancy which helped participants with their work and enabled them to learn experientially about analysis, design and consultancy. In these courses private preparation and full group, sub-group and tutorial consultations were interwoven into a rich consultancy tapestry. I never ceased to be amazed at the rapid development of reflective skills and consultancy expertise which practitioners acquired after participating in this process. A more technical presentation of the structure of these courses is presented in Appendix III.

Subsequently, some course members set up local "work paper groups". One ran for several years.[3]

### 5. Consultancy Projects

Consultancy projects involve consultants working alongside officers and members of churches or agencies or organizations on agreed tasks related to aspects of *their* work. It can involve consultants working with a council or a team or the archdeacons of a diocese or the members of a church.[4] The tasks can vary enormously. It may be to review their work, design new projects or tackle long standing problems. Project work invariably involves consultancy sessions but it is more than a private consultancy service. In project work consultants are actively involved publicly in decision making about the programme and in carrying out what has to be done: they have responsibility, sometimes primary responsibility, for the action as well as the planning. This is not so in straight consultancy work. Consequently, consultancy projects are jointly "owned" by consultants and their agency and the organization which commissioned them. Chapter Three presents a worked example of a consultancy project.

The primary purpose is to provide consultancy help which assists others in their work. Generally speaking those involved gain experience of ways of working new





| | |
|---|---|
| Anger and Aggression | Inducting People into New Ways of Thinking and Working |
| Assimilation | Leadership |
| Authority and Status | Learning from Experience |
| Belief, Purpose, Objectives etc. | Management: Theory and Practice |
| Bible Studies | Ministry: Aspects of |
| Case Study Method and Cases | Mission of the Church |
| Change, Social Conflict and Faction | Models |
| Church and Community Work: Its Overall Context | Motivation and Motivating |
| Church Growth | Personal and Working Relationships |
| Classifying Work | Planning |
| Committees | Practice Theory |
| Communications | Primary Reference Points |
| Communities and their Development | Problem Solving |
| Community Work, Direct Action, Group Work | Promoting Participation |
| Conceptualising | Psychological and Theological Variables |
| Decision Making | Putting Ideas into Practice |
| Devotions | Questions |
| Diagrams | Recording |
| Directive and Non-Directive Approach: The Concepts, Practising them, Training in them | Role and Function |
| | Skills Practice |
| | Stance |
| Disabled People | Structures |
| Educating People for Change | Teams |
| Evaluating | Theological Reflection |
| Evangelism | Theory and Theories |
| General and Specific Discussion | Time: having |
| Groups and Group Work, including affective content (compare communities and their development) | Training |
| | Work Consultancy |

**Display 8:2 Subjects Covered on Ten-Day Courses**

to them especially those related to analysis, design and consultancy. And some projects offer training to those involved. Quite commonly, for instance, people are trained and prepared for sub-group work which is essential to carrying out the project.

The Avec experience proved that consultancy projects were most effective when some of the consultors had attended courses of the kind described in the previous section.[5]

### 6. Consultancy Conferences

Consultancy conferences are similar to consultancy projects. They could be a part of a project. They are noted separately because, generally speaking they do not involve consultants in as much responsibility as do projects. A typical contract is to facilitate a conference and act as a consultant to the members and staff. Their responsibility begins and ends with the preparation for and the conduct of the conference however long or short it might be.

A spin on this is acting as a consultant to those who are running a conference. This involves assisting them to establish objectives, consider difficulties they might foresee, assess different ways of running the conference, tease out the one which best suits the situation and people and which they feel able to manage, deciding who is going to do what and plotting out the critical path from the preparation through the conference to the follow-through.

Consultancies of this kind have been effective in helping people to put on good conferences for themselves, in developing their own resources, in building up their self-confidence, extending their autonomy and in saving them from outside ineffectual and destructive facilitators and the costs they incur. Apprehension about these latter possibilities is often present when churches seek external help.

I provided this kind of consultancy service to a church with a very mixed racial congregation in an inner city area. I spent an evening with the stewards. They used the work we did to design an exciting, novel and very creative consultative conference which fitted the people. Had I remained a member of the planning group I fear that that creative approach might not have emerged because it was not something which I would have been comfortable in implementing. On the other hand, without the work I did with them it would not have emerged, at least so they said!

Consequently, whenever I am approached to facilitate a consultative conference I ask them to consider which is best for them in the long run, to do it themselves with consultative help or to share in the design and leadership with a facilitator or to get someone to design and facilitate it for them. Getting people to think of these and other options is an important consultative service whatever the outcome might be.[6]

### 7. Consultancy Combined With Training

Consultancy helps consultors to learn how to do things differently and to acquire new insights and skills. Some of this is through processes of osmosis. However, some of the abilities required by consultors to do their work effectively can only be acquired through training programmes of one kind or another. Consultancy of itself is helpful but insufficient. Some of the most effective consultancy work done through Avec was achieved through working out arrangements and contracts based on realistic assessments of the kind of consultancy services and training programmes and, in some cases, the research, which were required in order to help





people do their jobs more effectively. Consultancy plus training proved to be a powerful formula.

Display 8:3 is a chart which helps to sort out training requirements and consultancy agendas. It is an adaptation of one which T. R. Batten devised.[7] Frequently the consultancy help required is to help practitioners to work through this chart in order that they can establish their own training, study and research programmes. The ability to do this as required by practitioners in the course of their work is part of the basic equipment they require.

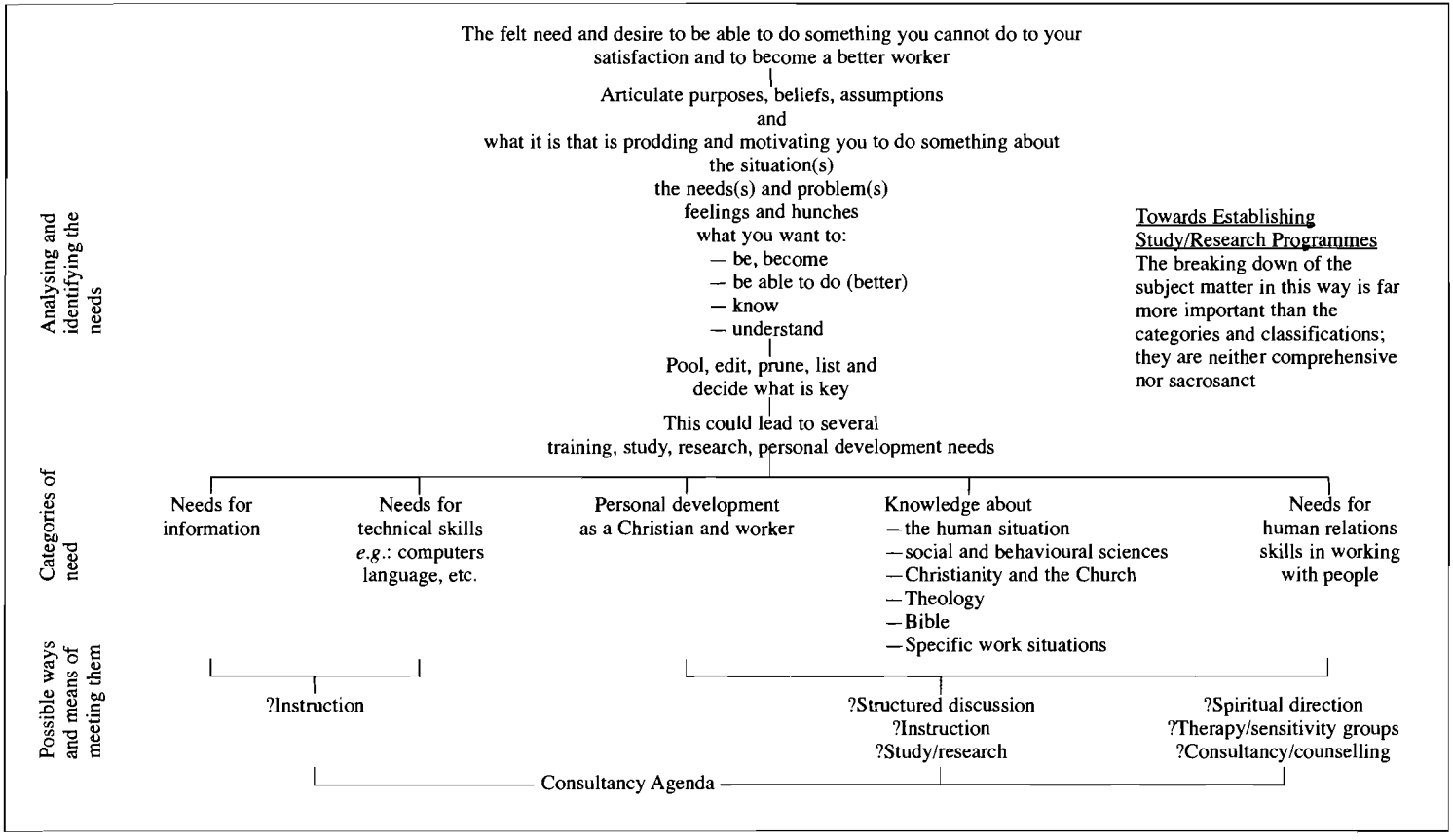
## III CONSULTATIONS ON WORK AND VOCATION

Consultations generally focus on work issues with which consultors are preoccupied because action is required in the immediate or near future. Often they are urgent. Some, however, as we have noted, are about longer term concerns related to work or the development of a practitioner's skills and/or vocation. This comes out clearly in the overview of need and usage of consultancy services in the next chapter. These two consultancy tracks are illustrated in Display 8:4 which is based on Display 8:3, an aid to establishing development programmes and consultancy agendas. Both consultancy tracks emerge from an analysis of a consultor's felt needs. Each consists of three strands, theology, praxis and theory. One moves inexorably towards what consultors can and need to do now with the skills and resources that they have in order to make progress in relation to their purposes in the given situation. The other explores what consultors can and need to do in the longer term to equip themselves to be more effective practitioners and to develop their capacity to pursue their vocations. The tracks can feed each other: analysing particular pressing issues can indicate the kinds of development which would help consultors to equip themselves more adequately for such circumstances; identifying and pursuing programmes of development can have a positive effect on current work praxis and programmes. So, for instance, through consultancy help on specific concerns on an ad hoc basis, consultors can find that their understanding of the work (cf Chapter Six) and the attributes required to do it (cf Chapter Seven) is growing and that they are better resourced practitioners.

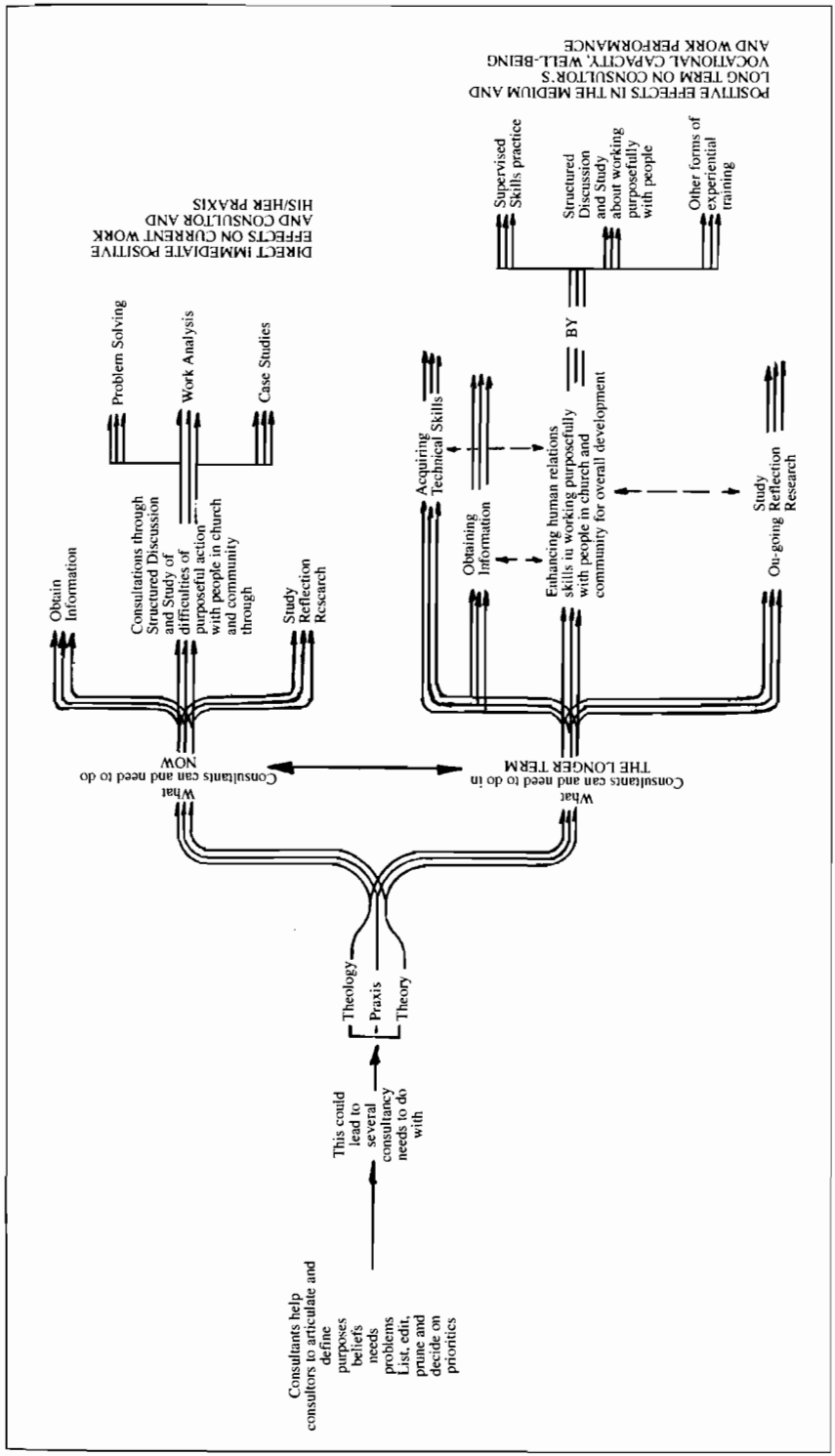
## IV CONSULTANCY AND ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES

So far, apart from a short section in Chapter One on other consultancy models, we have been considering a particular approach to consultancy by describing, discussing and defining it in relation to itself and the nature of the work upon which it operates. This approach to consultancy is a compatible member of a family of associated activities. Significant members of this family are described briefly here under the following headings:

enabling and facilitating;
undertaking work reviews and assessments;
mentoring;
proffering spiritual direction;
pastoral counselling;
facilitating spiritual exercises.




**Display 8:3 An Aid to Establishing Study, Research and Development Programmes and Consultancy Agendas**




**Display 8:4 A Consultancy Flow Chart**

### *a) Enabling and Facilitating*

Enabling activities include those through which people "facilitate" large and small groups or act as "catalysts" to them. They help members of such groups to think through complicated and sometimes potentially divisive issues. The number of facilitators (that is the title most commonly used) is growing fast but there are not sufficient of them to meet the growing demand particularly amongst Roman Catholic religious.[8]

A basic difference between facilitating and consulting is that consultants have technical knowledge of the subject matter under discussion which facilitators may or may not have. I acted as a facilitator when I helped a group of Benedictines to examine critically their monastic life and the theology and praxis on which it is based. My expertise was in the process, not in the subject matter. I would have acted as a consultant if I had helped the same group to design a church and community development project, because that is a field in which I have some expertise. This distinction helped a recent consultation of facilitators and consultants to see that sometimes with the same group they find themselves changing from one role to the other and that it is essential to be clear about this and to negotiate role changes as necessary.[9] The overlap of these roles can obscure differences of considerable importance between them.

Both consultants and facilitators have knowledge of group processes. Their style, approach and methods are dependent upon the various and different theories of groups to which they are committed. Those which focus on personal interaction have a high risk factor for task groups such as teams. I have experienced incidents where they have rendered relationships seemingly irreparable. Work consultants and most facilitators use a task group approach which takes serious account of interpersonal factors and feelings but is not a sensitivity or group dynamics approach.

### *(b) Undertaking Work Reviews and Assessments*

Work reviews take many different forms and are variously described as "appraisals", "assessments", "audits", and "evaluations". As Michael Jacobs[10] shows, the terminology is not used in a consistent way. "Assessment" is widely used to indicate schemes formally structured into the organisation by which people with the help of second parties (sometimes their immediate superiors) assess their performance at set intervals, say annually, and record the outcome in the worker's file. "Appraisal", whilst it is sometimes used as a synonym for assessment, is generally used to indicate the appraisal of self by the self as a private activity even when helped to do so by others. There is overlap between these activities and work consultancy. Work consultancy does involve helping people to evaluate their work; evaluative schemes and audits are of themselves discussions about work. Whether or not the parties proceed from assessment to work consultancy will depend upon whether or not they are able to analyse situations and design action programmes in ways similar to those described in this book.

The potential of institutionalised evaluative schemes and of work consultancy sessions can be seen by considering their principal features. Both aim for better and more satisfying work and for better workers and have considerable potential to





achieve these things. However the activities must not be confused. They have different focuses: the one focuses on evaluation and the other on work development. Workers are required to participate in the first whereas they normally participate freely in the other. Information about the one is recorded and can affect job prospects positively or negatively; the other is entirely confidential and is normally serviced by people without ascribed power over consultors. A reasonable inference is that participants in work consultancy sessions are much more likely to be open and undefensive than in evaluative assessments when they will naturally and prudently have in mind the effects of the exchanges upon their working relationships, their current work and their future careers. Therefore those with power, or those who are likely to acquire power over practitioners can be handicapped when attempting to act as work consultants. If they are thoroughly competent consultants and trusted as people of integrity they will, of course, be able to act in that capacity with the most confident, secure and committed workers. They are less likely to be able to do so with those who are insecure and those who are unhealthily ambitious. Clearly one of the advantages of assessments is that they provide opportunities to attempt to discuss work critically with people who would not do so if it were not required of them by their organisation. It follows that, for assessment and consultancy schemes to be complementary, they need to be seen to be so separated that there cannot be leaks or links between them apart, that is, from those made voluntarily by those being assessed and those acting as consultors.

### *(c) Mentoring*

The third kind of activity is training people as they do the job through a process known as mentoring: non-directive help offered by an experienced expert to a novice working in the same field of work but independent of the mentor. These relationships are established so that some people can help others to learn their job. Mentoring is quite different from being supervised or being an apprentice. In these relationships those who instruct and teach have some control over their student workers, they observe them at work and intervene quite freely and directly. There are significant differences between working relationships associated with consulting and mentoring partners although the aims are similar, to help practitioners to learn how to do their job better.[11]

### *(d) Proffering Spiritual Direction*

Kenneth Leech introduces an amazing study of the many schools of spiritual direction in the Christian tradition and the relationships between spiritual direction, counselling and therapy in this way:

> The term "spiritual direction" is usually applied to the cure of souls when it involves the specific needs of one individual. Max Thurian's definition is a useful starting point. "Spiritual direction, or the cure of souls, is seeking after the leading of the Holy Spirit in a given psychological and spiritual situation". Here the stress is on seeking and the seeking is mutual. The director, and he *(sic)* who is being directed, are both seekers; they are both parts of a spiritual relationship. "Spirituality" and "spiritual life" are not religious departments, walled-off areas of life. Rather the spiritual life is the life of the whole person directed towards God.[12]

Spiritual direction understood in this way is anything but a form of religious authoritarianism[13]. The stress on seeking resonates positively with the approach to consultancy discussed in this book. Spiritual directors, according to Leech, are helping people to direct or redirect their whole being towards God. Earlier we saw that the Ignatian method of spiritual direction aims to facilitate coloquys with the Lord (see pp 87 and 128). The method is different from that of consultancy but the colloquys with the Lord properly complement the dialogues between consultors and consultants.

### *(e) Pastoral Counselling*

Counselling has to be distinguished from guiding, advising and directing. It is a positive way of helping people to tackle problems and difficulties. Counsellors work with people, individually and in groups, to create environments in which they can tackle their problems, grow, develop and become more effective and satisfied human beings. Paul Halmos identifies three main values of the "counselling ideology": a non-judgemental and non-condemnatory attitude, humble and accepting; a mutually honest and intimate I-thou relationship; an opposition to all forms of self-deception, dishonesty, false righteousness and anger. Carl Rogers' stress on the non-directive approach and the unqualified acceptance that goes with it have become widely accepted aspects of the counselling relationship.[14] Halmos says, "to some extent all counselling procedures share a method: they are all "talking cures", semantic exercises, they all attempt treatment through clarification of subjective experiences and meanings".[15] Large numbers of clergy have looked to counselling as a way of finding help with their ministries.

Approaches and processes in counselling and consultancy have much in common.[16] They differ in focus and subject matter: the one focuses on a person and his/her life, the other on the person as a practitioner and his/her work and vocation. Effective counselling and effective consultancy affect every aspect of a person's life. Changes for the better in any one aspect, the person or their work, reverberate through the whole system of their being, doing and relating. They can both be therapeutic and enhance vocational satisfaction and performance. They complement each other and they do so most powerfully when they remain within the boundaries of their respective disciplines and hold to their orientation (person and life/ practitioner and work). (See pp 68-69 about consultants acting as first aid counsellors.)

### *(f) Facilitating Spiritual Exercises*

Other members of the family of activities are those modes of prayer, meditation, liturgy and preaching which combine with the guiding and prompting of the Holy Spirit to stimulate self-awareness and self-examination and the reconsideration of vocation and stewardship. In this sense they should not be seen as disparate from consultancy. Each member of the family of activities we are considering seeks to promote creative inner dialogue about any and every aspect of Christian life and work. Robin Green, for instance, in a remarkable book which claims that liturgy is a mode of pastoral care says:

> *Liturgy, which is the vehicle through which worship is expressed creates an environment in which human beings confront those sides of themselves which under normal circumstances they dare not face.* (Italics are Green's.)[17]





Worship and prayer gives the environment and support which hold people in loving care as they face and work through something of importance in deep privacy with themselves and God. Every aspect of the act of worship and the setting in which it occurs can contribute to such experiences. Sermons are one of the elements that can play a part.

Willem Berger, a Roman Catholic priest who was at one-time professor of pastoral psychology at Nymegen University in Holland, identified a clear parallel between preaching and counselling.[18] Through his researches into the psychological processes induced by listening to sermons he discovered that when preachers were in "true communication" with their own "personal spiritual experiences" members of their congregation invariably had a conversation with themselves: sermons set in motion personal interior dialogues. Berger does not speculate about whether these inner dialogues involve communicating with God: he rigorously restricts himself to that for which he can produce evidence. Counsellors and consultants also aim to stimulate critical inner dialogues. There is much evidence that, like preachers, they help people to be in deep and honest communication with themselves—their feelings, thoughts and beliefs—and possibly to have colloquy with the Lord and encounters with the Triune God. Such inner experiences are the source of the most profound change and development.

A common trait of this family of activities stands out from these basic notes about their nature. Each member's activity seeks to stimulate and facilitate within people themselves creative engagement with their inner selves about things to do with their being and personal and vocational doing which at the time is of critical importance to their well-being, effectiveness and destiny. They all concentrate on this. Those who practice the various associated disciplines stimulate people to move inwards and outwards. They promote contextual introspection. The interface between the inside and outside worlds of human and spiritual experience is charged with creative potential: it is a fulcrum for development. Overall effectiveness is closely related to getting human and spiritual dynamics working well in relation to the inner and outer worlds of people and the interaction between them. This kind of existential engagement is of the essence of creative Christian living. This book explores in some detail just what is involved in achieving engagements of this kind through working *with* practitioners on their work and vocation. Similar explorations have been made of the other disciplines and the relationships between them. Kenneth Leech, for example, has done a superb job on the relation between spiritual direction, counselling and therapy.[19] Studying these different disciplines reveals much about the nature form, mechanics and dynamics of inner human activities in relation to various aspects of life and work and about what is involved in engaging with them from within and influencing them from without.

This brief excursion into allied and complementary disciplines illustrates the potential of such exercises. To do a comparative analysis of the different disciplines is beyond the scope of this book as it is beyond most practitioners. However, readers may find it useful to set work consultancy in the context of allied disciplines known to and valued by them.

Formalised processes of reflection do not operate in an analytical and evaluative vacuum. They actually emerge from, and the results of them return to, continuous

processes of thought and action. Practitioners and those with whom they work are mulling over their experience in their own ways and time—formally and informally, systematically and discursively, seriously and casually—and trying to make sense of it in relation to their beliefs and theories about how things work. Best overall effects are obtained when people are able to gather up and integrate the insights and understandings emerging from these different activities. Practitioners of each reflective discipline and process need to be respectfully cognizant of those of others and open to their influence and findings.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES: Chapter Eight

1. There is a reflective article by Copley, David, Lovell, George and New, Charles entitled "Take Three Presbyters . . . The Role of Co-Consultancy " in the *Epworth Review*, July 2000, Vol 27 Number 3.

2. This is illustrated in relation to using the case study method in self- and co-consultancy see *Analysis and Design: A Handbook for Practitioners and Consultants in Church and Community Work*, (Burns & Oates) p 44.

3. Stories about the effects of these courses are to be found in *Telling Experiences*, see particularly Section II: I, 2 and 4; III: 4; IV: 1, 3 and 4.

4. Examples of consultancy projects are to be found in many books including the following: Bradford, Leland P. (1976) *Making Meetings Work: A Guide for Leaders and Group Members* (University Associates); Checkland, Peter and Scholes, Jim (1990) *Soft Systems Methodology in Action* (John Wiley and Sons); Kubr, Milan (ed) (1996) *Management Consulting* (International Labour Office Geneva); Lovell, George and Widdicombe, Catherine (1978) *Churches and Communities: An Approach to Development in the Local Church* (Search Press); Lovell, George, (1994) *Analysis and Design*; Lovell, George (1996) *Avec: Agency and Approach*, gives a list of all the project work undertaken, cf pp 151-153; (1996) *Telling Experiences* (Chester House Publications) pp 103-137; Palazzoli, Mara Selvini *et al*, (1986) *The Hidden Games of Organizations* (Pantheon Books); Schein, Edgar H. (1988) *Process Consultations Vol.I—Its Role in Organization Development* (Addison Wesley Publishing Co.); Schein, Edgar H (1987) *Process Consultations Vol II—Lessons for Managers and Consultants* (Addison Wesley); Widdicombe, Catherine (2000) *Small Communities in Religious Life* (Lutterworth Press).

5. cf *Avec: Agency and Approach* p 62.

6. Catherine Widdicombe's books can greatly help people to run consultancy conferences: (2000) *Meetings That Work: a practical guide to team working in groups* (Lutterworth Press); (2000) *Small Communities in Religious Life op cit.*

7. The original was presented to members of the "Community Development and Extension Work" courses in the University of London, Institute of Education in the 1960s.

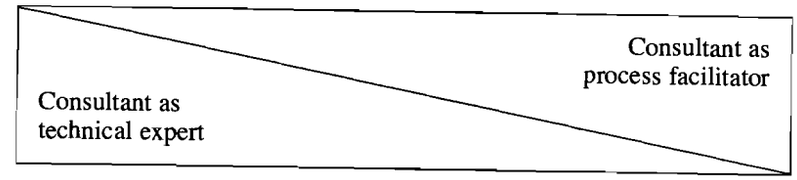
8. This need was fully explored in a series of consultations and conferences between Religious and Avec staff and documented in the following reports: *Religious Orders and the Need for Work Consultancy: A Report of a Seminar in January 1985; Consultants and Facilitators for Religious: A Brief Report of a Consultation Jointly Organised by the CMRS (Conference of Major Religious Superiors) and Avec on the 26th and 27th November 1991; Facilitator's Conference, Ireland 8th and 9th September, 1992.*

9. cf the first Report quoted in reference 8, *Consultants and Facilitators for Religious.* The relationships between consulting and facilitating was a major concern of this consultation. See also Lippit, Gordon and Lippit, Ronald (1986) *The Consulting Process in Action* (University Associates, Inc.) p 59. The distinction they make between the consultant as process facilitator and as technical expert is helpful although I have some hesitation about the following diagram for two reasons. First, it reads as though the consultants give up their facilitator role to take up their technical expert role. If they do this they become advisers. Consultants are responsible for facilitating critical considerations of their technical input or for seeing that such consideration is facilitated. Second, the diagram gives the impression of a





graduation between the roles when in fact there is disjunction between them.




10. Jacobs, Michael (1989) *Holding in Trust: The Appraisal of Ministry* (SPCK) See pp 19 and 21. At the request of the Methodist Executive a Working Party produced a comparative analysis and review of nine schemes of review and appraisal variously used in the Methodist Church. Their findings were presented in a Report to the Methodist Council at its October 1995 meeting.

11. Although it is not described as such, an interesting and early programme of mentoring is reported by David E. Richards in a chapter entitled "Peer Consultation Among Clergy: A Resource for Professional Development" in Caplan. Gerald and Killilea, Marie (1981) *Support Systems and Mutual Help: Multidisciplinary Explorations* (Grune and Stratton) pp 263-271. Richards reports that over a period of 5 years 70 bishop dyads have been formed to engage in peer consultation (p 264). Dyadic consultation he describes as "a process of borrowing and lending" (p 270) It has the following characteristics:

> *The important point is that for the first year or two of a new bishop's career he has an experienced colleague outside his own immediate system to whom he can turn in complete confidence for help, guidance, support, and the opportunity to explore the broadest possible range of options with regard to any problem or dilemma he may face. This makes available to him a reservoir of professional experience and is a major step toward reducing the professional and social isolation that sometimes besets persons who are promoted to positions of greatly increased responsibility and prestige* (p 264).

Richards notes ten qualities of these consultations:

1. They are free of judgementalism.
2. Problems can be dealt with at the time they are pressing.
3. The learned disciplined form of interaction keeps the focus on the problems not the feelings.
4. The style of consultation can be used with others.
5. Dyadic consultation does not open up issues that cannot be dealt with.
6. Systematic reflection dissipates worry.
7. Regular peer consultation helps to overcome professional and personal isolation.
8. Options increased.
9. It affirms that consultees are not helpless, simply temporarily stuck.
10. Peer consultation places high value on mutuality and thus reduces the importance of personal status (pp 266-270).

I question the accuracy of point 5.

12. Leech, Kenneth (1977, seventh impression 1985) *Soul Friend: A Study of Spirituality* (Sheldon Press) p 34.

13. N. W. Goodacre in an entry entitled "Direction, Spiritual" in Wakefield, Gordon (ed) (1983) *A Dictionary of Christian Spirituality* (SCM Press) claims:

> There is no authoritarianism in spiritual direction. It should not be followed blindly; guidance of every kind should be checked against conscience, holy scripture, church teaching, the dictates of common sense, and relevant circumstances. It is a sign of deterioration in spiritual direction if force of any kind is used (pp 114f).

14. I owe these references to Paul Halmos and Carl Rogers to Leech Kenneth *op cit* p 94f.

15. Halmos, Paul (1965, second revised edition 1978) *The Faith of the Counsellors* p 3.

16. I considered some of the similarities and differences in *The Youth Worker as First-Aid Counsellor in Impromptu Situations* (Chester House Publications, 1971 revised in 1975 and reprinted in 1979).

17. Green, Robin (1987) *Only Connect: Worship and Liturgy from the Perspective of Pastoral Care* (Darton, Longman, Todd) p 8.

18. The Revd Dr W Berger wrote a brief article on his research entitled, "Preaching and Counselling" in *Tydschrift voor Pastorale Psychologie*, June 1972 Vol IV No 2. It was made available to me through a private translation I believe by members of The Grail.

19. cf Kenneth Leech's book quoted in reference 8 above.