

The concept of Live Consulting

In the practice of consulting the norm is that the consultant applies his or her expert point of view to a customer's problem. The consultant will often hold a presentation, giving the customer a perspective on that point of view or his/her conclusions and answer questions on how they should be applied. It usually means that a group is asked to have a meeting with the consultant so that the consultant can explain this point of view.

In a live consulting scenario, the consultant attends a normal business meeting in the normal everyday client setting and during the client's meeting consults to the client. There is no special meeting for the consultant. Instead, it is the consultant who when there is a relevant intervention or proposal to make it is made then and there – live. The proposal can be tried out – then and there. The proposal can be evaluated – then and there to find out if it was helpful or not. The consultant helps the client integrate new ways of working, evaluates these new ways of working together with the client – live.

The concept and application of live consulting is influenced by a number of innovative psychological, pedagogical, and neurobiological theories. Kurt Lewin (1951) his theory of force-fields, change and action research. Argyris and Schön (1978) describe inbuilt limitations within organisations regarding learning and propose action research as a perspective and a way of working with organisations instead. Argyris (1999) describes learning in terms of single-loop or double-loop learning where single-loop learning only considers historic information and double-loop learning adjusts in accordance with new information. Kuhn (1970) describes what we now call disruptive change as opposed to linear developmental change and describes how self-fulfilling paradoxes set the framework for our perspectives framing problem- defining, and as a result, problem- solving. (The difference between thinking “in-the-box” and thinking “outside-the-box”). Agazarian (1997) and her theory of Living Human Systems where general systems theory is integrated with the work of Kurt Lewin, group dynamic theory and operationalises theory into practice. Simon and Agazarian (1969) developed a System for Analyzing Verbal Interaction (SAVI). SAVI is a very powerful tool helping groups recognising patterns of communication that are unhelpful, and developing new communication patterns that support problem-solving. Ekvall (1983) identifies specific factors which together make up what he terms as the climate of creativity in organisations or, alternatively stagnation.

Innovative psychological theories:

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