



Eenie Meenie Miney Moe!

We've all been there.

Deadlines for design or delivery of training are coming up FAST!

AND, there are not enough resources, time, and/or expertise to meet them.

Time to bring in someone from the outside.

But a consultant? YIKES! *Such* risky business.

Bringing an outsider into your organization should not be taken lightly. After all, their performance will be seen as YOUR performance. You've worked so very hard to establish relationships and credibility. The last thing you want to do is destroy this hard work.

Even though we are speaking from the *other side* of the table, both of us have been on the inside, too, so we can offer a wider perspective of advice.

The first thing to do is to set up a time to meet (virtually or in person) and develop some criteria for your selection process.

Here are some examples of criteria we have found to be helpful over the years:

1. What is my initial reaction to the consultant as a person? How easy/difficult will it be to work with this person? Are they likable?

Trust your gut on this one! Also, is this the person you will be working with or a sales or marketing rep?

2. What is their "niche" in the marketplace? What is their expertise?

Be careful of firms that can do everything! Chances are they may not be good at anything.

3. Would this consultant be accepted as credible by the target population group and/or by your executive team?

It's always good to have your "client" or stakeholders present at some point during the

selection process to ensure the fit is right.

4. After the initial explanation of your need, does the consultant ask questions or immediately begin to provide all the answers?

*You're seeing them at their best at this point. If they don't show good investigative/consulting skills now, chances are you won't see them later. Pay attention to their ability to ask insightful questions and **listen** to your answers.*

5. Will the consultant customize the program to suit your needs? Is there a cost to customize the materials?

Watch out for customizing as well as other hidden costs. Probe on this one to ensure you know all the costs involved in your project.

6. Is the consultant willing to give you a written proposal at no charge?

This is a no-brainer. A good consultant never charges for a proposal and should be able to turn it around in less than 48 hours.

7. Can they provide a list of references?

RUN if they can't! If you do get a list, make sure to call them and ask specific questions about their experience with the consultant and if they would use them again.

Bottom line is you want someone who is going to complement your efforts, not adversely affect them; someone who you can partner and be candid with and learn from.

With a well thought out set of criteria, there is no need to freak out, only to remain cautious.

For more information on criteria and how to select the right consultant, click [HERE](#) and check out our **Certified Training Coordinator** program.

Here's to good choices!

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