IDENTIFYING CLIENTS vs. STAKEHOLDERS

As performance consultants to our organization, it is imperative that we clearly identify who our client is before proceeding through the performance improvement process.

Not identifying our client can cause many downfalls including, but not limited to:

- Support pulled
- Work stopped
- Funding/resources withdrawn
- Reallocation of people
- Duplication of effort
- Shifting direction/project creep
- Poorly aligned goals

Stakeholders are often mistaken for the client. Here's the difference:

Stakeholder: A person who has a vested interest in the project. A stakeholder provides some support and may work alongside you. They could also introduce you to key players and often serve as a subject matter expert to help you better navigate the project.

Client: A person who may do all of the above *but* who also has complete control over the project. A client can start or stop a project and provide or withdraw funding, resources, and support.

In some cases, you may have regular direct access to the client. If not, ensure that the client is kept in the loop via emails, voicemails, etc. Don't rely on the client's proxy to relay all of the information.

Also if you do not meet regularly, request your client's presence at update meetings, especially at the critical milestone or pivotal points in the process.

Value your stakeholders and what they bring to the table. At the end of the day, just ensure you're sitting at the client's table!

For more information on identifying and working with *your* client, click ***HERE*** and check out our ***Certified Performance Consultant*** program.

Now go get that seat!

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