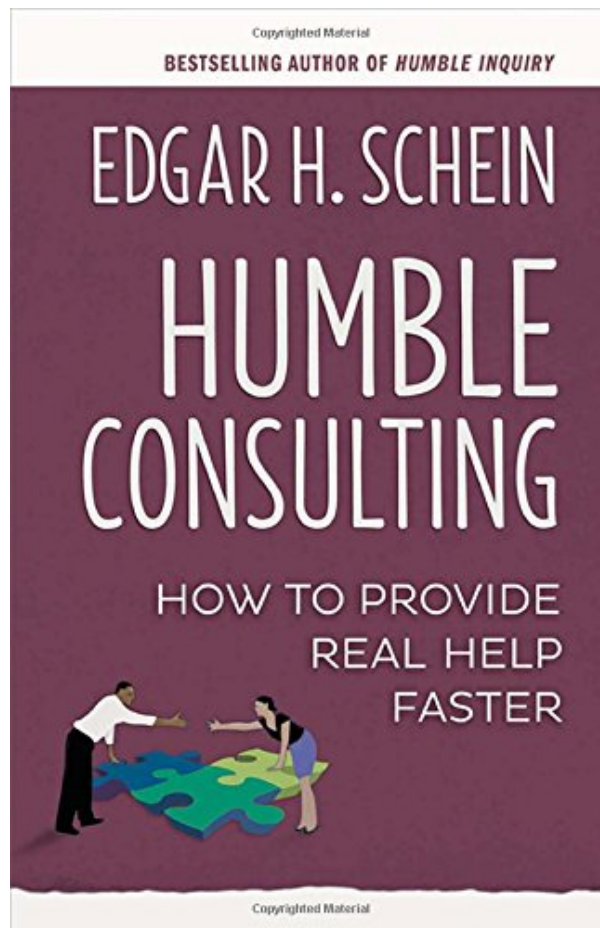


HUMBLE CONSULTING: HOW TO PROVIDE REAL HELP FASTER BY EDGAR H. SCHEIN



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BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *HUMBLE INQUIRY*

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At the same time, the problems that confronted leaders and managers became more complex to diagnose and even more difficult to “fix.” I also learned through several experiences that will be discussed in the cases in this book that sometimes just the earliest questions, comments, and puzzlements that I expressed in the initial contacts with a client proved to be very helpful in enabling the client to perceive and think about the situation. This often led to immediate next moves that the client could think of that were seen by both helper and client as immediately beneficial.

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I think of this as an evolution in my thinking. Many of these ideas may have been implicit in earlier works, but they are only now coming into consciousness both as insights and as new principles of what has to happen if we really want to help on complex, dynamic “messy” problems and if we want to do it fast because, in many cases, clients need to do something adaptive right away.

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Humble Consulting draws on elements of many prior models that deal with complexity, interdependence, diversity, and instability. Almost every theory of helping refers to the concept of relationship, but few of them talk about levels of relationships and what is involved in negotiating them. One exception is Otto Scharmer's *Theory U* (2007), in which he explicitly differentiates levels of conversation in his analysis of how to reach the deepest level within ourselves and in our relationships to find the true sources of innovation.

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Consulting in Complex and Changing Times

Organizations face challenges today that are too messy and complicated for consultants to simply play doctor: run a few tests, offer a neat diagnosis of the “problem,” and recommend a solution. Edgar Schein argues that consultants have to jettison the old idea of professional distance and work with their clients in a more personal way, emphasizing authentic openness, curiosity, and humility. Schein draws deeply on his own decades of experience, offering over two dozen case studies that illuminate each stage of this humble consulting process. Just as he did with Process Consultation nearly fifty years ago, Schein has once again revolutionized the field, enabling consultants to be more genuinely helpful and vastly more effective.

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- 240 pages

Features

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shows how that relationship has to be built from the moment of first contact with the client by adopting a certain attitude that hinges on maximizing curiosity. Chapter 5 explores the whole concept of personalization as key to the new consulting model. Chapter 6 highlights that the consulting is almost always more helpful on the processes that occur between client and consultant as they explore how to make adaptive moves. Chapter 7 then explores the concept of adaptive moves in more detail and in terms of the innovations that are required to make them helpful. The book closes with some conclusions and challenges for the future.

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which is best read in conjunction with *Humble Inquiry*

By Ian Mann

Edgar Schein's last book, *Humble Inquiry*, reviewed in this column, introduced the value of humility in engaging staff. The humility he is referring to, both in his earlier book and in this one, is not a perception of oneself as unworthy or inferior. On the contrary, it is a clear understanding of what you do in fact know; and even pride in that knowledge. Equally, it is a clear understanding, of what you do not know.

The leader who is humble in this sense, is more likely to get more input from staff in their areas of expertise than the arrogant leader. Arrogance, in this context, is the belief that position confers an overarching expertise that none below this position possesses. When faced with this arrogance, staff learn fast that their opinions are not valued or even wanted, and so they refrain from ever offering them. This inevitably hurts the organization, and limits the effectiveness of the leader. Knowing how to talk so that staff listen, and how to listen so that staff talk, is a necessary leadership skill.

In this book, which is best read in conjunction with *Humble Inquiry*, Professor Schein turns his attention to consulting, and the necessity of humility in this context. It is not only professional consultants who consult, but leaders play the consultant role to their colleagues and staff, more often than many are aware. As such, this book has wide application.

Consulting today is significantly different from what it was in years past. The primary reason is that problems today are "messier", Schein explains. Consider that technical fields have become more complex, and groups that interact are occupationally and culturally more diverse. Everything is faster and more urgent than it was a decade ago (or certainly appears to be!), making the environment in which we operate, more unstable. Add to this that an intervention produces unknown effects, requiring new skills to manage. As such, business problems do not have a technical solution.

Consider coaching an executive and it will be apparent "that what worries her has implications for others in the organization, so that the problem formulation has to be systemic," Schein explains. "Whatever adaptive moves are considered have to take into account the systemic consequences which, paradoxically, may be unknown."

In this changed context, *Humble Consulting* provides a very different way of relating to those who seek your counsel. It is predicated on the belief that you are committed to being helpful, that you have an honest curiosity about the client's issue, and have a genuinely caring attitude. All three are necessary throughout the intervention, but never more so than at the beginning when finding out what is really on the client's mind. *Humble Consulting* provides a better helping relationship for dealing with a complex, messy problem.

Parenthetically, if your primary motivation is earning a fee or scoring political advantage, there is some serious introspection required before the benefits of *Humble Consulting* are possible.

Since requesting help is perceived by many as being in a needy position relative to another, the quality of the relationship will either help or hinder the value you can provide.

For a relationship to work, there must be a feeling of comfort with the other person, best based on knowing that both of you are working toward common goal. A staff member who believes her manager sees her requests for help as a normal part of their common aspiration, will be open to assistance. The alternative is risking failing at her work, in the attempt to protect her self-respect.

‘Relationship’ is an interactive concept, and the consultant can adopt one of these postures.

A Level One relationship, Shein explains, traditionally connotes helping in the role of the expert (such as a doctor,) who provides his expert diagnosis and prescription for the remedy while, above all, keeping a professional distance. “What rarely works, is the recommendation that the consultant has worked out on her own after a period of so-called data gathering,” Shein explains. This is why clients so often have the overwhelming sense that the ‘expert’s’ suggestion is so clearly flawed that someone who claims expertise, should know that.

This type of expert prescription worked well, and probably still does in stable situations, with clear problems and clear solutions. “The first real help is my enabling them to see the true complexity and messiness of the problem situation, and help them to abandon quick fixes and/or knee-jerk reactions,” says Shein.

A Level Two relationship is one that is more personal, more trusting and more open. With this presumption on the part of the consultant, his task is to help work things out together, not to take over the problem and run with it. “I call it Humble Consulting, because I am in awe of the complexity of the problems and of the difficulties that clients face, in trying to move forward,” Shein explains.

The client and the consultant need to engage in a dialogue to identify a feasible move, knowing that this may not solve the problem, but will provide some comfort. This will also reveal new information on the basis of which they are able to identify next move. It is a joint effort in an iterative process.

This requires two levels of empathy. The first is listening curiously to identify the actual situation or problem that the client is describing. The second level of empathy is listening curiously to what is bothering the client.

The example Shein uses is a client who says: “I am concerned about the level of engagement of my employees. Could you help me build a culture of engagement?” Empathy at level one, must explore what he means by “engagement” and “culture” by asking for examples. Empathy at level two is to ask, “What is it that is concerning you; why are you worried about this?”

Humble Consulting is the appreciation that you can only know what you know, and do not know what you do not know. ‘Arrogant consulting’ in contrast is believing that you know all, and you understand the subtle but powerful nuances of the culture within which the client operates. You also understand what is troubling the client after only a cursory explanation.

This humble position starts and ends with constant questions and prompts for clarification. So often these questions point to the answer the client requires. To be really helpful, is to do something for your clients that they cannot do by themselves.

Both books on humility are essential reading for all managers and management consultants.

Readability Light --+--- Serious

Insights High -+--- Low

Practical High -+--- Low

Ian Mann of Gateways consults internationally on leadership and strategy

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Great book

By Fred

Humble Consulting the author has adapted his research from his other book Helping and Humble Inquiry and made adaptive moves to refine the work with real life examples and the lessons learned. This book is a great resource for helping to develop an organizational culture that thrives in an atmosphere of mutual trust and teamwork. The techniques are based on the spirit of inquiry and dialog that actual designs better ways of working cohesively. In short I love this book and Edgar Schein's other books as well.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Must read for anyone who works with clients (consultants and other service providers, why not!)

By Clare Gibson Giraud

If you have any pretensions whatsoever to deliver high-quality consulting, you absolutely have to read this. Both a conceptual framework and a practical guide, this will improve your client work exponentially (unless of course you already apply his precepts - but I haven't met many over the years, alas.)

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HUMBLE CONSULTING: HOW TO PROVIDE REAL HELP FASTER BY EDGAR H. SCHEIN PDF

Based on some experiences of lots of people, it is in truth that reading this **Humble Consulting: How To Provide Real Help Faster By Edgar H. Schein** can help them to make better selection and also provide more encounter. If you want to be among them, allow's purchase this book Humble Consulting: How To Provide Real Help Faster By Edgar H. Schein by downloading the book on web link download in this site. You can obtain the soft file of this publication Humble Consulting: How To Provide Real Help Faster By Edgar H. Schein to download and put aside in your available digital devices. What are you awaiting? Let get this publication Humble Consulting: How To Provide Real Help Faster By Edgar H. Schein online and read them in at any time and any sort of area you will check out. It will certainly not encumber you to bring hefty book Humble Consulting: How To Provide Real Help Faster By Edgar H. Schein within your bag.

Review

“Humble Consulting is a fine blend of poetic writing and practical methodology. It is an intimate conversation about how service, in this case consulting, works in the real world. All who want a deeper understanding of the way to create relationships that produce outcomes will value this book. To simply recommend it is an understatement.”

—Peter Block, author of *Flawless Consulting*, *The Answer to How Is Yes*

“What is the most powerful force in consulting's relational success—where you and the client move beyond the transactional to the deeper transformational? I used to think it was what our amazing OD founders Ed Schein and Warren Bennis saw as the core value of Organization Development: what they called that special “spirit of inquiry.” Now I see that it's something far more foundational. In a word, its “humility” and Ed Schein, with this book is modelling it for all of us in the way he, the master, is yet the student, disclosing his innermost doubts and mistakes, revealing his subtle insights and brilliant successes, and up-ending almost all of our assumptions of what really matters most. This is the first book I now recommend to consultants young and old: for without humility—a stance wide-open, a state-of “not knowing” and totally vulnerable and present-- you cannot do this work. The message: make humility your greatest strength, and never lose it.”

- David L. Cooperrider, author of *Appreciative Inquiry* and Fairmount Minerals Professor of Social Entrepreneurship, Weatherhead School of Management, Case Western Reserve University

“Ed Schein takes the principles of Humble Inquiry and beautifully extends them to the consulting process in this book. He humbly and generously gives us a window into his own life and consulting process by sharing real stories from his years of consulting, including his own inner thoughts and unexpressed feelings. Every consultant should read this for insights into how we should deal with our doubts, questions, and anxieties. This is another major contribution to our work and our field from Dr. Schein.”

—Matt Minahan, Chair, Board of Trustees, OD Network

"In this book Ed Schein has looked back over his long and distinguished consulting experience and come up with an important book. Anyone who is called upon to give help or advice, be they boss, consultant, parent or friend, should start by reading this. I used it to hold up a mirror to my own experience of giving advice and resolved to modify my behavior in future, to be more humble, in the Schein way."

—Charles Handy, author of *The Age of Unreason*

“Chock-full of useful case examples, *Humble Consulting* is about establishing a relationship with the client that is collaborative, personal, and empathetic rather than prescriptive. Schein has once again contributed significantly and creatively to our field of organization change and development.”

—W. Warner Burke, PhD, E. L. Thorndike Professor of Psychology and Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, and Editor, *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*

“Ed Schein's books on consulting have always been the most professionally useful things I read. And this book could once again reshape the consulting industry. It shifts the place from which effective consultants operate from the head to the heart and from the heart to the hand. Essential reading!”

—Otto Scharmer, Senior Lecturer, MIT, cofounder of the U.Lab and author of *Theory U*

“Ed Schein has done it again! This book is a must-read for anyone in the helping professions who wants to make meaningful progress on complex challenges. Drawing on his own experience as consultant, scholar, and author, Ed brilliantly makes the case that it is through real human connections that we have the best shot at making a difference in an increasingly interdependent world.”

—Diane Rawlins, *InsideOut Consulting*

“*Humble Consulting* pulls the curtain back on the pretense that the vast majority of consultants and consulting organizations put forward—that they have ‘the answer.’ I plan on keeping a copy in my office to hand out to consultants as they continue to show up and ask that I tell them what keeps me up at night and they respond with the solution that they uniquely have to address it.”

—James Hereford, Chief Operating Officer, Stanford Health Care

“Long a critic of OD's overreliance on process, I've always admired Ed Schein's insistence that process consultation be relevant. Now, in his new book, *Humble Consulting*, he shows us how. In his usual and clear style, he calls OD practitioners to account and to help in powerful and integrated ways.”

—Chris Worley, Professor and Strategy Director, NEOMA Business School Center for Leadership and Effective Organizations

“As someone who always strives to be a more effective consultant, I find Ed Schein's reflections and insights hugely reassuring. In *Humble Consulting*, with great care and sensitivity, Ed Schein shares years of wisdom and encourages his readers to reflect on and experiment with their own practice. I believe anyone working in a helping role will benefit from reading this wonderful book.”

—Philip Mix, organization development consultant and member of the NTL Institute

“In *Humble Consulting*, master consultant Edgar Schein shows us how to escape the limitations of a traditional consulting practice to vastly improve both the impact and the meaning of our work. This book is at once brilliant and incredibly practical.”

—Anthony L. Suchman, MD, MA, consultant, Relationship Centered Health Care

“*Humble Consulting* is a book every leader and every consultant should read. Using numerous cases from his own experience, Schein describes the specific components of a true helping relationship and shows the powerful impact when consulting rests on curious questioning that honors and unlocks the knowledge held by the other.”

—David L. Bradford, PhD, Eugene D. O'Kelly Senior Lecturer in Leadership, Emeritus, Stanford University Graduate School of Business, and coauthor of the bestselling books *Influence without Authority* and *Power Up*

“Finally, a consulting process that demonstrates and emulates the type of culture toward which organizations and their leaders aspire.”

—Robert Cooke, author of *Human Synergetics' Organizational Culture Inventory*

“Ed Schein once again moves the needle in refining the essence of consulting. Schein invokes a shift from considering clients as objects to considering clients as living, dynamic beings. The artistry of balancing formality and intimacy, dancing with the dynamic client system, paying attention to the environment, and engaging in endless reflective learning makes for a potent model and process. Read the wisdom and be open to transformation.”

—Sarita Chawla, President, Metalens Consulting; Senior Faculty, New Ventures West; and Diamond Approach teacher

“In *Humble Consulting*, Ed Schein weaves the cultural and process consulting threads of his life's work into a masterpiece of emotional, cultural, and methodological insight. Read this book and be prepared to change your mind, heart, and practice.”

—David E. Goldberg, author of *The Design of Innovation* and coauthor of *A Whole New Engineer*

“This senior icon in the field continues to make meaningful and significant contributions which could only be realized through years of experience and reflection. I have been reading Edgar Schein's work for almost 50 years now, and I have learned from each of his works. But somehow, this his latest, is special.”

—Peter F. Sorensen, PhD, director, Master of Science in Management and Organizational Behavior program, Benedictine University

About the Author

Edgar H. Schein is the Society of Sloan Fellows Professor of Management Emeritus at the MIT Sloan School of Management. He is the author of numerous bestselling books including the recent *Humble Inquiry*.

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Preface

This book brings together various insights and ideas I have acquired over fifty years of research, teaching, and consulting and, at the same time, reflects how the kinds of problems that organizations face in our rapidly changing world have forced the evolution of those ideas.

As I began my career as a human relations trainer and part-time consultant in the 1960s, I evolved the model of Process Consultation (introduced in my books *Process Consultation*, 1969; and *Process Consultation Revisited*, 1999), which emphasizes the need to involve the client in the process of figuring out what is wrong and what can be done about it. After several decades of working with this model and updating the book, I began to realize that the model we were using for organization and management consulting really had broader applications to all kinds of helping relationships, resulting in the 2009 book *Helping*. Analyzing the helping process from a sociological point of view also revealed how much our cultural norms influenced what we thought should be both the client's role and the consultant's role in the helping process.

In my own experience as a helper, it seemed crucial that the client really be able to tell what is bothering him or her and be able to be open and trusting in doing so. I then discovered that the major inhibiting factor to clients' being open and trusting is the cultural force in the United States toward telling as being the heroic

model, which led helping and consulting models to be structured in terms of the formal professional stages of diagnose and then tell as recommendations. My management consulting friends told me that “this is required if you are really doing your job,” which, to my dismay, I found many clients passively believed.

I recognized that the obsession with telling was a broader characteristic of the US managerial culture, which led me to write the book *Humble Inquiry* (2013) to point out how much potential harm was done in making subordinates feel psychologically unsafe in upward reporting if they saw safety or quality issues in how work was getting done.

In my own consulting efforts, I found that telling did not work and, furthermore, that the clients who called me in for consultation often had previously experienced the formal approach with other consultants and did not find the diagnose and then recommend approach terribly helpful. The formal process often missed the real problem or recommended things that could not be implemented for a variety of reasons that the consultant evidently had not considered.

At the same time, the problems that confronted leaders and managers became more complex to diagnose and even more difficult to “fix.” I also learned through several experiences that will be discussed in the cases in this book that sometimes just the earliest questions, comments, and puzzlements that I expressed in the initial contacts with a client proved to be very helpful in enabling the client to perceive and think about the situation. This often led to immediate next moves that the client could think of that were seen by both helper and client as immediately beneficial.

All this led me to go beyond the previous models and write about what I experienced—real help can be fast, but it requires an open, trusting relationship with the client that the helper Preface xiii has to build from the very beginning. Because of the difficulty and complexity of the problems, and because the client's own view of what is going on is so important in the relationship, this also requires a great deal of humility in the consultant. So in this book I will describe the new kinds of problems, the new consultant–client relationship that will have to be built, and the new kinds of attitudes and behaviors that consultants will have to learn in order to be really helpful.

I think of this as an evolution in my thinking. Many of these ideas may have been implicit in earlier works, but they are only now coming into consciousness both as insights and as new principles of what has to happen if we really want to help on complex, dynamic “messy” problems and if we want to do it fast because, in many cases, clients need to do something adaptive right away.

Where Does This Fit into a Larger Historical Context?

Humble Consulting draws on elements of many prior models that deal with complexity, interdependence, diversity, and instability. Almost every theory of helping refers to the concept of relationship, but few of them talk about levels of relationships and what is involved in negotiating them. One exception is Otto Scharmer's Theory U (2007), in which he explicitly differentiates levels of conversation in his analysis of how to reach the deepest level within ourselves and in our relationships to find the true sources of innovation.

The theories and models that are most relevant to understanding these kinds of problems and developing workable next moves were initially best articulated in the study of highly reliable organizations by Karl Weick with his concepts of “loose coupling,” “sense making,” “embracing errors,” and “resilience” (Weick and Sutcliffe, 2007). On the sociological side, I have always found Erving Goffman's analysis of interaction and “situational proprieties” to be an essential model for understanding how relationships are formed,

maintained, and repaired when damaged (Goffman, 1959, 1963, 1967).

Closely related are the systemic models of “organizational learning” (e.g., Senge, 1990) and family therapy (e.g., Madanes, 1981). The work on “mindfulness” (Langer, 1997) is crucial in what I see to be the new skills that will be needed. The change programs that rely on so-called lean methods, based on the work of Deming and Juran that evolved into the Toyota Production System, are relevant if they are well executed and involve the employees who actually do the work (Plsek, 2014). Open sociotechnical systems approaches to problem identification and solution as evolved by the Tavistock Clinic have provided much more helpful ideas than standardized methods of measurement, analysis, and problem solving.

Perhaps most relevant of all is what Bushe and Marshak (2015) have identified in the last decade as “dialogic organization development,” as contrasted with “diagnostic organization development,” in highlighting what leadership theorists like Heifetz (1994) also emphasize—that the complex problems of today are not technical ones that can be solved with specific tools. The best we can do is to find workable responses or what I am calling here “adaptive moves.” This will involve new kinds of conversations of a more dialogic, open-ended variety. The emphasis on the concept of “moves” is important in this context because it implies action without necessarily having a plan or solution in mind.

In the end I fall back on much of my learning in running sensitivity training groups in human relations labs for the National Training Labs in Bethel, Maine, where the key operational concept was “spirit of inquiry” and accepting Preface xv that we did not always know where our learning process would take us (Schein and Bennis, 1965). Building a relationship that enables the client to “learn how to learn” was then and becomes now more than ever one of the crucial goals of Humble Consulting.

The spirit of inquiry is best exemplified nowadays in the concept of “dialogue” as propounded by Bill Isaacs (1999) and in Barrett’s hugely insightful book *Yes to the Mess* (2012), which shows us brilliantly how the skills of improvisation as exhibited in the jazz combo provide some of the most important clues as to what helpers and leaders will have to be able to do in the future.

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When you are hurried of job target date and have no concept to obtain inspiration, **Humble Consulting: How To Provide Real Help Faster By Edgar H. Schein** publication is one of your remedies to take. Book *Humble Consulting: How To Provide Real Help Faster By Edgar H. Schein* will certainly provide you the right source and also point to get motivations. It is not only concerning the works for politic business, administration, economics, and various other. Some got jobs to make some fiction jobs likewise need motivations to get rid of the job. As just what you require, this *Humble Consulting: How To Provide Real Help Faster By Edgar H. Schein* will most likely be your selection.