

Tool: Trust and Relationships

Use this tool to assess client-consultant relationships and consider opportunities to cultivate personalized, interdependent relationships.

Transactional Personalized Interdependent

Client - Consultant Perspectives	
Consultant sees client as a project, client sees consultant as a role.	Consultant and client see each other as people.
Client's uniqueness as a person may be overlooked.	Client feels seen, heard, and accepted.
Consultant and client invest just enough time and effort to solve the problem at hand.	Consultant and client invest in building a strong relationship to tackle current and future challenges.
Consultant withholds him or herself in the interest of impartiality.	Consultant is fully involved in the relationship.
Dynamics of Power and Influence	
One party in the relationship has more power than the other.	All parties are intentional about balancing power.
Consultant has power OVER the client.	Consultant has power WITH the client.
Consultant seeks to influence the client.	Consultant and client mutually influence one another.
Client trusts the consultant as an expert.	Client trusts the consultant as a partner.
Consultant cannot be vulnerable with client– must maintain expert status.	Consultant can be open and vulnerable with the client (i.e., asks process-oriented questions-How is this meeting going? Am I being helpful?).
Client is hesitant to be vulnerable with the consultant.	Client understands that without sharing openly, the consultant cannot fully understand the challenges.
Problem Solving and Definition of Success	
Consultant comes in with a specific purpose and role.	Client and consultant collaborate to negotiate the purpose and role of the consultant.
Starts with the client and consultant getting to know the problem to be solved.	Starts with client and consultant getting to know each other.
Success is defined by accomplishing an outcome or task.	Success is defined by accomplishing something important while deepening the relationship.
Consultant proposes solutions based on a diagnosis of the system.	Consultant and client collaborate to identify problems and develop solutions.
Consultant is accountable to deliver on agreed-upon work.	Consultant and client are accountable to each other and collaborate on the agreed-upon work.
Both parties may walk away when roadblocks are encountered.	Both parties commit to overcoming roadblocks together.