

# I Want to Start a New Consulting Business, What Should I Do?

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# Some Helpful Considerations Before Jumping In

***Before you make the decision to consult, please consider:***

- What are your reasons for wanting to become a consultant?
- Do you have experience that is marketable?
  - Hot jobs for consultants are bioassay development, formulation, regulatory, quality
  - In what fields do you consider yourself an expert?
  - In what fields do others consider you an expert?
- Do you have the personality to be a consultant?
  - You will need to work your network to find your own clients
  - Do you have a strong network that can support you from the outset?
  - Do you have a 30-60-90 second “elevator speech” ready to explain how you can add value to a project?
  - Are you comfortable communicating what you know and admitting when you don’t?
  - Don’t jump until you know what you’re jumping into!



# Are you prepared to jump in?

## ***Before you make the decision to consult, please consider:***

- Can you financially handle being self employed?
  - Income comes in waves, and depends on your invoicing schedule and client payment cycles. You may have nothing one month and double the next month.
  - Recommend at least a year of expected salary in savings or another source of income that can help you through the dry spells
  - You need to cover your own health insurance
- Do you have a quiet place to work from home? Are you willing to travel if needed?
  - Most consulting work is done from home, limit distractions.
  - Some work can only be done on-site. Examples: process monitoring, observing operations, personnel training. Consider this as you think about the kind of consulting you want to do. Be open to travel.



# How Do I Get Started? - Preparing your Office

- Make sure you have appropriate computer and business equipment: computers, monitors, camera/lighting, microphone, speaker, printer, etc.
  - Don't skimp on technology, these expenses are tax deductible!
- **You must have reliable internet!!**
- Get a business phone or simply always answer your phone professionally (for unknown callers)
- Set aside a room or special space in your house as your office
  - This is needed for tax purposes
  - Make sure the space is sacred and kids and pets cannot distract
  - Consider your camera background
- Consider having an office you can rent if you need to meet with clients in person
- Be aware when you log in through Microsoft office that you are not under another client's office365 account.
- Always prepare for work - dress appropriately



# How Do I Get Started? – Defining Your Company



- Who is your Target Client?
- Define your brand – What is the expertise that you bring to your client?
- Advertise appropriately according to your target audience
- Will you be a sole consultant, or hire others as needed?
- Branch out from your strength – learn new areas!!
- Determine your hourly rate or job rate
  - Think about your annual salary target
  - Think about the number of hours a month you want to dedicate to work



# How Do I Get Started - Paperwork

- Pick the name of your company
- Form an LLC
  - Different states offer different advantages to LLC formation
  - Usually the best option is your home state
- Register the Fictitious name or DBA (Doing Business As) in your state
- Get insurance, you don't want to be left unprotected
- Get a Domain name, preferably something with your company name
  - Get a professional email address!!
  - Design a website, it can be simple
- Open a business bank account
- Identify trustworthy accountants (tax preparation, deductions, etc.) and lawyers (LLC Incorporation, CDAs/NDAs, etc.)



# How Do I Get Started - Contracts

- Keep an up-to-date resume/CV (generally you don't talk about past clients, but can mention accomplishments).
- Confidentiality agreements are usually the first step.
- Have a draft contract, including how to handle travel – are you willing to travel? How will you handle travel expenses?
- Statement of work
  - Define the project
  - Consider how much you need to make per hour or per job
  - Develop an understanding of what your value is, so you don't over- or under-charge
  - Consider charging hourly with a per-project limit so that the client knows how much it will cost
  - If you charge by job
    - You need to define the scope job well
    - You need to limit the job (don't let more creep in)



# Some Helpful Considerations After

Once you have made the decision to consult:

- Network!! 95% of my work has come through people I know!!
  - Call or email key contacts and let them know you are consulting
  - Make friends with other consultants, we can share work when we get overwhelmed or another expertise is needed
- Linked In
  - Get on LinkedIn
  - Let all your connections know that you are now consulting
  - Post often in your area of expertise
- Get involved in industry groups such as CASSS, PDA, RAPS, etc.
  - Volunteer to lead sessions and teach classes as appropriate. It builds your resume and network!
  - Also volunteer for community-oriented events so people can get to know you better personally, which enhances networking, recommendations and referrals.
  - Attend professional conferences and training to increase your network.
- Consider working with a subcontracting consulting group such as Black Diamond, Veristat, Turner, etc. They know of opportunities that you do not.
- Check Chlora and other biotech consultant job boards

