

Is a Marketing Consultant Right for Your Business?

If you are considering using a marketing consultant, it's important to know whether it's going to work in your business at this time. Not all businesses can effectively use a consultant, and it largely depends on the how the business executive views him or herself, the marketing process and the business. Answer the following questions honestly and then review the key to see if using a marketing consultant is likely to work for you at this time. *Record either a "Yes" or "No" answer to each of the following:*

1. Are you the owner or chief executive of your business or division?
2. Do you think you have a good understanding of how marketing works?
3. Do you believe you have a "knack" for advertising, such as coming up with good ideas and preparing good material for ads?
4. Are you the best sales person in your business?
5. Do you use a formal method of deciding whether a marketing or advertising program is worthwhile (vs. merely relying on your opinion)?
6. Have you ever engaged a consultant to help you in your business?
7. Has your experience with consultants been positive? If you've never hired a consultant, then answer: Do you believe consultants are usually worth the money they charge?
8. Do you make all or nearly all the decisions in your business?
9. Do you function as the chief marketer in your business?
10. Is cost the primary criterion you use to evaluate potential marketing/advertising ideas?
11. Assume you're given advice you don't really agree with, but it's not a subject you know well. Are you likely to take that advice?
12. If you can make \$1 or more of additional profit from a marketing program, would you be inclined to do it?
13. Do you know how to tell if a consultant or a proposal is worth the investment?
14. If you conclude that a proposal is worthwhile, are you likely to change the plan later on?

Key: Use this key only after you've recorded your answers the questions above:

If you answered "No" to 5-6 and 13 and "Yes" to 9-10, your conservative approach is restricting your potential earnings. A consultant could help you make more money provided you are open to their assistance. If 5, 12 and 13 are your only "No" answers, they can be remedied with education, and a consultant may be right for you. If you answered "Yes" to Questions 1-4, 8 and 14, and "No" to 11, you may think you already have the answers, and may not be receptive to new ideas. If you answered "No" to 5-7 and 12-13, then it is questionable that you can work with a consultant.

To engage in a successful relationship with a marketing consultant, you must first find one that you can trust and respect. But if you're not sufficiently convinced they know their subject well enough that you can confidently everything in that area over to them, then don't engage the consultant. It will needlessly cost you money, and waste time for both you and the consultant.

If you are open to using a marketing consultant but unsure how to find a good one, see our free guide, *"How to Evaluate a Marketing Professional: 10 Due Diligence Questions To Make Sure You'll Get Help Worth Paying For."*