

## CONSULTATION

**DEFINITION:** *Consultation is fundamentally about assisting an individual or an organization to move from one point to another. A consultant is the person who assists the individual or organization using a variety of tools and techniques relevant to the desired outcome. Consultants may exert influence but have no direct power to determine or implement decisions.*

**GOAL OF CONSULTATION:** *The goal of consultation is always change. The specific focus of the desired outcome is negotiated with the client at the contracting phase.*

**TYPES OF CONSULTATION:** *A consultant may be used for: expert knowledge in the field; process or organizational development skills; as an extension of the work force of the organization for the development of particular projects or programs.*

**WHERE TO FIND A POTENTIAL CONSULTANT:** *Personal referrals from others with knowledge of your organization; Denominational offices often have a referral list; Internet searches (but use discretion and always ask for references); Professional Networks in the field of desired assistance*

### QUESTIONS TO ASK A POTENTIAL CONSULTANT:

*Please provide three references from individuals or organizations with whom you have worked in areas similar to our presenting agenda*

*What is your anticipated timeframe for this consultation?*

*What are your expectations from our organization beyond your fee? (ex: leadership, office support, etc.)*

*What is your fee for services? How would we handle the financial agreement should the timeframe negotiated extend beyond the original contract?*

*What is your billing process?*

*How will we evaluate the effectiveness of the consulting relationship?*

*Should the consulting relationship not serve our needs, how would we terminate the relationship and what financial responsibility would we assume for early termination?*

*May we see a copy of your standard consulting contract?*

*It is within the clients right to request a proposal for the consulting process at no fee prior to contracting.*

### A TYPICAL CONSULTATION PROCESS:

*Inquiry – What is the need? Clarifying the client and consulting goals*

*Negotiating a contract – goals, time, fee, expenses, etc.*

*Data Gathering*

*Developing a plan*

*Implementing the plan/decision*

*Building strategy to support the change*

*Evaluation of consultation*

*Closure with the consultant*