



CONSULTANT GUIDELINES: “HELPING” MAY NOT BE HELPFUL

1. Initially we are forming expectations, responsibilities and defining roles as we consult with the teacher.
2. Too sudden an interest in the details of the immediate solutions can leave the consultee feeling unnecessary or forgotten (particularly if there is much discouragement).
3. A question and answer format utilized too soon in the process can convey the impression that the consultation is willing to assume responsibility for the problem and it's solution. This is a trap to avoid.
4. How we act, what we say, our “nonverbal” communication may tell more about what people will expect of us than our interventions or what we recommend.
5. We behave the way we have been taught and our attempts to “help” others reflect this. To be an effective consultant may mean using a whole new approach which may seem unfamiliar or stilted initially.
6. “Helping” others is so admired, so valued and so common, that frequently it is not beneficial. The consultee may not feel empowered, nor believe that the helping gesture was offered in good faith.
7. Helping can be a difficult task especially if the consultee is not aware of the need for help, or hasn't chosen to ask for it. This is particularly so if the person is one's peer or colleague.
8. Providing consultation means helping those who have responsibility for another person, to become more effective in their roles. For a teacher, this means our assistance is specifically given to address improving teacher effectiveness with the particular student question.
9. We usually fall back on all of the informal helping experiences we have had in growing up and in our interaction with adults.
10. From this pool of recollections and knowledge we typically utilize an **ineffective** style of responding from one of our general areas:
 - a. Giving advice
 - b. Being an expert
 - c. Accentuating the positive
 - d. Sharing one's success