

A brief guide to becoming a Consultant and how the Institute of Consulting can help

Many people are considering becoming consultants due to recent events or personal circumstances. Becoming a consultant can be a great way to maintain income whilst also providing more autonomy, flexibility and freedom that is unachievable within the traditional working environment. There are many reasons people choose to become consultants, there are also many challenges to starting your own consultancy no matter how small or grand your ambitions are. Here at the Institute of Consulting, we aim to provide you with the guidance you need to when taking the most difficult step of starting your own consulting business and supporting you along the way.

Becoming a consultant.

1. Where to start?
 - Setting up a consultancy / company
 - What do you need to do and when? This all will depend on the type of work you will be doing and how you want to set yourself up. Key things to consider include:
 - Registering your company with Companies House
 - Becoming VAT registered or not?
 - Accounting / Bank accounts / tools such as Xero, Receiptbank and using an accountant to handle your books and other advice?
 - Insurance - Professional Indemnity and Liability insurance
 - IT / tech / security (cyber etc.) general infrastructure
 - Website, domain name, email addresses, email signature
 - Data Privacy / GDPR compliance policy
 - Location / office / registered address rather than home etc?
 - Some of these might be second nature but other might mean stepping into the unknown. Across each step, support is out there and asking questions is important. When setting up your own consultancy there are no stupid questions.
 - Getting the word out there?
 - Where to start and how to market yourself.
 - LinkedIn and social media - developing your LinkedIn profile and presence
 - Activating your network: your own personal network, former colleagues, clients, competitors etc.
 - What is the message? What do you need marketing wise?

- Professional Bodies and Trade Organisations to be aware of and associated with
- Attending events? Webinars etc.
- Winning business:
 - How to find business?
 - How to price yourself and your business?
 - What do I need to do to be a consultant?

2. Where the Institute of Consulting comes in?

- Code of Conduct and Ethics
- Support and community
- Education and CPD
- Leading professional body within the industry
- Qualifications and memberships
- The value of CMI consultancy courses
- Mentoring scheme

Here at the Institute of Consulting we aim to help guide you through any questions you may have no matter how big or small.