

So You Want to Be a Computer Consultant?

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Audience Poll

- How many consultants are in your company
a) 1 b) 2-3 c) 4-9 d) 10+
- What type of clients do you service mostly?
a) Home users b) small business c) Med. Bus
d) Enterprise e) Galactic Empire
- Where do your clients come from?
a) Referrals b) Online ads c) Direct sales

Mike's Tech Shop aka Volchok Consulting

- Started in 1993, just me and my rollerblades
- Goal: Run a large business, print money
- Means: Always work in client's best interest, grow business through good referrals
- End: 31 employees, nice little Apple Store

Initial Contact

- Find out the basics
 - What's broken?
 - What are they looking for you to do?
 - Can you do it well?
 - Document your conversation
- Look them up on the web

Is This Your Target Client?

- Are they the right client for you?
- Are you the right consultant for them?
- Will this relationship result in a positive outcome that results in referrals for you?
- You are not a retailer, choose your clients

Always Act Like a CTO



- Remain calm - always
- Retain the illusion of control
- Always act in the client's best interest
- You are the technology expert

Setting Expectations

- Ascertain from client their needs
- Explain clearly what you are going to do
- Do it
- Document it
- Follow up afterwards for CSAT purposes

Managing Your Clients

- Your job is to guide their technology
- Your job is not to say “yes” to everything
- Find out their business requirements
- Convert them into technology solutions

Proposals

- Determine needs
- Write out scope of work
- Make sure you allocate enough time
- Set expectations properly

Rates

- Hourly
- Pre-paid hours
- Project
- Retainer
- Managed Services

Red Alert!



- Alert client to problems immediately
- Procedural problems
- Technical problems
- Personnel problems

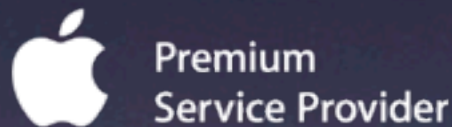
Communicate Clearly

- Tech speak = bad customer service
- Speak in terms the client can understand
- Summarize conversations in emails
- Talk succinctly, listen verbosely

Documentation

- Client documentation
- Internal documentation
- Documentation is for Pros only
Amateurs need not document

Q & A



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Mike's Tech Shop

Friendly, Neighborhood Mac Shop

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