



LEADERSHIP

INSIGHT: LEADING FROM THE OUTSIDE

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Leadership is often associated with authority and control, but in consultancy it takes a different form — shaping outcomes without formal power.

Leadership in Consultancy

Consultancy relies on vision, influence, and the ability to empower others. At its best, consultancy is about defining clear objectives, aligning diverse expertise, and creating the conditions for others to succeed. The current scientific and business environment has only increased the demand for this type of leadership. Difficult science, shifting political priorities, and financial pressures have led many organizations to externalize talent. A cautious investment climate, an abundance of entrepreneurial ventures, and a relatively young talent pool have accelerated the use of consultants, CROs, and virtual company models. These approaches reduce infrastructure costs while delivering targeted expertise when needed.

Consultancy as Catalysis

Yet consultancy is more than filling gaps. Done well, it acts as a catalyst — challenging assumptions, sharpening strategy, and connecting groups that might not otherwise align. Consultants build trust, balance competing stakeholder interests, and help teams make decisions under uncertainty. In this way, external leadership expands an organization's capacity to innovate.

Framework for Collaborating

In my own work, I have seen this across several dimensions. Through the Peptide Drug Hunting Consortium, we built a framework for collaboration that unites industry, academia, and entrepreneurs around shared challenges. In venture due diligence, I've balanced the perspectives of investors, biotech founders, and CRO partners to ensure risks are understood without overlooking opportunities. In advisory and fractional leadership roles, continuity has been key: setting up systems and processes that allow progress to continue even when I step back. Perhaps most rewarding has been mentoring younger teams, helping them navigate the complexities of translational science and organizational growth.

Contributing & Enabling

In all these contexts, my role has been twofold: contributing specific scientific and experience-based insights, while also acting as an enabler — aligning people, creating momentum, and ensuring that progress continues. This dual contribution highlights the unique value of external leadership and its lasting impact on organizational success.