

## Roles for Consultants

As Partners In Education work with local churches to help them with ministries of teaching and learning it is most helpful to be in a **collaborative consulting role** with the church.

### Collaborative Consulting Role

In a collaborative consulting situation:

- ! The consultant and the church work to become interdependent.
- ! Decision making is characterized by mutual exchange and respect for the responsibilities and expertise of both the consultant and the church community.
- ! Data collection and analysis are joint efforts.
- ! Collaboration is considered essential.
- ! Communication is two-way.
- ! Implementation and responsibilities are determined by discussion and agreement.
- ! The consultant's goal is to allow the church community to gain abilities for the future.
- ! Ownership of the results are most likely to be claimed by the church.

There are two other consulting roles which you may be invited to perform in local church settings.

**Neither of these is as desirable as the collaborative consulting role.**

### Expert Consulting Role

Sometimes a consultant is asked to be the "expert" and to make a recommendation for action to a local church. In an expert consulting situation:

- ! The consultant and the church interact, but the church holds the consultant responsible for the results.
- ! Decisions about how to proceed are made by the consultant.
- ! Information needed is gathered by the consultant.
- ! Collaboration is not required because the decision about what to do rests with the expertise of the consultant.
- ! Two-way communication is limited.
- ! The consultant plans and implements the main events.
- ! The consultant's goal is to make a recommendation.
- ! Ownership of the results will depend on the church's response to the recommendations.

### Pair-of-Hands Consulting Role

Sometimes a consultant is asked to do the work in a local church to accomplish a task, almost as if the church is employing a temporary employee to do the task. In a pair-of-hands consulting situation:

- ! The consultant takes a passive role; the church defines the task to be done.
- ! Decisions about how to proceed are made by the church.
- ! The church selects methods for data collection and analysis.
- ! Collaboration is not really necessary because the church specifies goals and procedures. The consultant can ask questions of clarification.
- ! Two-way communication is limited. The church initiates; the consultant responds.
- ! The church specifies change procedures for the consultant to implement.
- ! The consultant's goal is to complete the task at hand using specialized knowledge.
- ! The church receives the result of a task accomplished, but not the ability to deal with similar tasks in the future.