

Foreword

EMBARKING ON A multimillion-dollar consulting engagement is a difficult task for even the most seasoned CEO. Done correctly, it can be a transformative experience that sets an organization on the path to success. If not, it can be a major disruptive experience that leaves a negative impact.

Andy Agwunobi's book is a must-read for both new and seasoned executives who are contemplating whether to bring in consultants. This doctor's advice is spot-on, and it will greatly increase the odds of having a positive consulting outcome.

I have been a healthcare consultant for more than 25 years, working for some of the largest healthcare consulting firms in the world before joining Berkeley Research Group (BRG) to start a healthcare performance improvement (HPI) practice. Andy was a client of mine, and he was one of the best CEOs I worked with.

Our relationship goes back more than 15 years. We met when Andy was a young physician CEO taking over the helm at a financially struggling public hospital. The organization was distressed and needed to cut costs drastically. Realizing the need for outside expert assistance, Andy and his executive team interviewed multiple consulting firms. They selected the firm I was working for at the time, and I was assigned to run the fast-paced engagement. It required difficult decisions to achieve a quick turnaround, and helped set the organization on a stable footing to implement a long-term strategic plan. Andy and I continued to work together as I moved to other consulting firms and he moved to lead other health systems. In

2011, I was thrilled when he joined me on the consulting side to help build the HPI practice at BRG.

Andy's unique experience and insight, both as a CEO who guides consulting engagements and a consultant responsible for selling and leading consulting engagements, is evident in this book. Rarely does a longtime CEO make the transition to consulting—an unglamorous lifestyle of extensive travel, sales goals, and the responsibility (without any direct authority) of convincing clients to implement your recommendations. Andy was extremely effective in the transition, and a key contributor to building BRG's HPI practice from a start-up to one of the largest in the country. He gained perspective from successes on both sides.

With this book, he will help other CEOs make the right decisions about when to hire the best consultants, and then how to negotiate fees, establish communications, build infrastructure, and manage an engagement to achieve the satisfying result of a truly transformational consulting experience.

Paul Osborne
Managing Director, Berkeley Research Group