



Passages Consulting Client Survey Report

prepared for

Passages Consulting

Interview Protocol

The following interview protocol was used to guide the conversations:

1. How long did you work / have you worked with Passages?
2. Which consultant is your primary contact in Passages?
3. How did you first learn of Passages Consulting?
4. What was the presenting challenge for which you initially called in Passages?
5. How did Passages help you in meeting this challenge and how are things with regard to that challenge now?
6. What were your first impressions of Passages when you first began working with them?
7. What have you valued most about your relationship with Passages?
8. What has been the most challenging aspect of your relationship with Passages?
9. Comparing Passages with other consulting firms you might have worked with, regardless of the service, what would you say was a distinguishing feature of Passages?
10. Making the same comparison, what would you say was a distinguishing weakness?
11. Would you use Passages again for another project?
12. Would you refer them to colleagues in your field?
13. What would you say was the single greatest difference Passages made in your organization?
14. What one improvement do you feel Passages could make that could make an important difference in the level of the value they offer?
15. If you were advising Passages on planning their future, where do you think they should focus their efforts? Should they do more of the same? What new services should they offer? Are there any offerings they should discontinue?
16. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Summary Headlines

Verbatim comments from interviews follow the summary headlines

Summary Headline	
1	Passages consultants add value by providing advice that is actionable and has real impact on organizations and individual leaders
2	Rather than using an off-the-shelf solution, Passages consultants are able to adapt their approach and style to each client
3	Clients also value Passages' focus on execution and willingness to be hands-on and work at any level within the organization
4	They are seen as real, trusted partners
5	. . . who have a genuine interest in the success of organizations and leaders
6	. . . and whose effectiveness is grounded in a high degree of courage and honesty
7	The ability to accurately assess organizations and individual leaders and the ability to provide valuable insight are key strengths
8	Passages' consultative approach where clients are guided to arrive at the answers rather than being told what to do is also highly valued
9	Passages consultants bring tremendous knowledge and experience to client engagements
10	Passages consultants are very strong at navigating organizations, engaging and aligning people, and productively managing conflict
11	When Passages consultants work together, the team is greater than the sum of its parts
12	Passages consultants make a very positive initial impression on clients, particularly thanks to their confidence, proven track record, willingness to listen, and ability to connect on a personal level

1 Passages consultants add value by providing advice that is actionable and has real impact on organizations and individual leaders

1. Passages consultants have the ability to influence the culture inside out through intentioned action planning. I got full value from the engagement. What they gave us was actionable and we drove it through the organization, including work on a leadership pipeline and generational leaders.
2. The team effectiveness work went well. We had lots of issues – the mix on the team needed to be adjusted, we worked on teamwork, I had to shift to a different level in how I was working with some people. The work they did with us created a strong foundation and we have made a lot of improvements.
3. Passages consultants facilitated us through a period of about 8 weeks, maybe even a whole quarter. The idea was to take advantage of the economic downturn and position us for future growth when the economy recovers. It was a very big change to our organization and I'd give it a 9 out of 10, it's a good design. We're working on implementation now. We're socializing it, doing detailed process work.
4. Passages consultants are out of the box thinkers. What they offered was not your typical thoughts, not what we expected. We needed to figure out how they work individually and together as a coalition. They did organizational assessment on each and presented themes to find common areas. We are still working on it. Passages brought them together. They were tough groups, not sophisticated organizationally. They had a history of not working together well and a lack of trust. They kept the energy up and constructive. We were able to get to another, higher level of working with these groups and we are at that level now. The work was wonderful, exceptional.
5. The turnaround was a big success. In terms of the Passages consultant's coaching me regarding my team, the team had lots of great progress, some set backs, there was some turnover within the team.
6. Even though the economy is down, business results are good. A lot of it is the people we put in to run the organization and also the structure of the organization that Passages helped establish - the management and operations systems work well. It was the combination of Passages' vision for the structure and the people. The work they did also allowed us to take out a lot of expenses, which turned out to be very fortunate given the economic times. There was a lot of change management work and they had to keep control over it and they did. They took responsibility for the vision, they were in charge. They took accountability for progress. They helped us with how to do it and the whole change management around it. It went really well and exceeded expectations.
7. Our Passages consultant helped me to a great extent. She provided detailed actionable feedback, coaching me along the way. The result was a revised HR strategic plan and organizational changes as well. She helped translate lots of

information into key insights so that I was able to come up with a plan and take action. Her work helped move a stagnant situation forward.

8. Comparing Passages consultants to other coaches, she was by far the top coach I've had. The most valuable contribution she made was around learning the value of managing others' perceptions of me. She allowed me to gain self-awareness and also to appreciate the need of the organization, and understand the difference between a leader versus a strong individual contributor. I progressed well. My 360 rating increased. I used to be near the bottom and now I'm near the top. I got a promotion at the end of the coaching.

2 Rather than using an off-the-shelf solution, Passages consultants are able to adapt their approach and style to each client

1. Passages leverage a body of knowledge but are quick to customize it to our needs. They don't overlay a formula or program on a situation. They start with understanding a problem, then they design a customized solution, taking their intellectual capital into account. The work they do is more customized compared to other consulting firms. They don't force an off-the-shelf solution.
2. They are realistic, very grounded, listens and truly adapts to the individual she is working with instead of just using one style across all people.
3. To be adaptable to different people is very important and they can do that.

3 Clients also value Passages' focus on execution and willingness to be hands-on and work at any level within the organization

1. I value the relationship with our Passages consultant. I value him most when he's working at the upper level of the organization. The most important to me is his input on strategy but I value that he can also do the day-to-day; he's good at coaching and navigating the organization.
2. Passages consultants have really high standards, they do their homework, deliver on the execution side, focus on the adding real value.
3. Passages consultants have both confidence and ability. They have a great skill set and can work at any level of the organization. This is not always the case with other consulting companies. Other companies have certain consultants for certain levels in the organization. I'm very comfortable to bring them in to speak with the CEO but they also doesn't shy away from working at lower levels.
4. The confidence from the proposal stage translated immediately into work. Passages were smart enough to get a specific work order and have metrics around that - timetables, responsibilities, etc. - which is also different from other consulting companies. They set very rigid and specific timelines, action plans and responsibilities - who, what and when. They impressed me in how they came in to work on it right away and there was no degree of chasing after them. They took on mundane work like meetings, updates and communications, which is something other consulting firms wouldn't consider to be their responsibility. I always thought it should be their responsibility and Passages did it; others wouldn't. They had a "we own it" attitude. They took accountability of the process and progress. They were hands-on and willing to be measured on progress.

4 They are seen as real, trusted partners

1. Passages consultants get it. They understand what I want to get out of the project, what the challenges are. They didn't underestimate the challenges. They had a very optimistic view of the situation. They thought this is great, powerful and could happen.
2. Working with Passages as a partner went very well. They were very personable and trustworthy and we developed a friendship. They are trusted coaches and valued partners. They provided me with informal coaching alongside working on team dynamics. It was good to have somebody help me understand the situation and get to the next level. We had a connection and trust.
3. I've used different consultants but my experience with Passages is that there is a certain comfort level there. I value their input, there's a sense of trust, integrity and competence.
4. Passages consultants think more like a leader than a consultant and that's good for the leaders they work with. They serve as a real partner with you.
5. I've had some other consultants around but what sets Passages apart is that they are genuine, trustworthy.

5 . . . who have a genuine interest in the success of organizations and leaders

1. Passages did a very good job of being really focused on what I wanted and needed. Their only hope for you is to do better. They want you to achieve what you want to do even if it means leaving the company. This is unique. No one else has that complete dedication, not even the boss who represents the interests of the company.
2. They is personally committed to leader's development and models this in how they lead.
3. What I valued most was the individual coaching, the personal interest they took in my own career and the corresponding insights they provided me with along the way.
4. Passges consultants are very driven. They are not working for themselves, but working for the project. They didn't just consult. They drove us. They pushed us. It was very valuable. Some people, especially some executives, don't want to be pushed.
5. Passages consultants earnestly care for the success of the individual.
6. I had an executive coach before Passages and he was very rigid. If the company paid for four one-hour sessions then that's what he did. He was not truly interested in helping me be more effective. He did his job but nothing above and beyond. Passages really wants to make a difference. They truly want to help people be successful. There's a big difference there. For Passages, that's a huge attribute.

6 . . . and whose effectiveness is grounded in a high degree of courage and honesty

1. Passages consultants do coaching in real time. They are courageous and share their opinions in a receivable way.
2. Our Passages consultant was honest. He told me which of the organizations that were assessed were the stars, the potentials and the questionables. He told me what I could expect and said things I didn't want to hear. And I think his assessment was accurate. I valued his candidness. His ability to describe the strengths and weaknesses of the players - the analysis he provided. He could read people well, could predict how they'd behave. He gave an accurate analysis of the organizations and the leaders.
3. Passages consultants ask provocative questions. They have major courage and will tell it like it is. They don't politic. They have a lot of integrity.
4. They have a lot of courage, and are straightforward. They are different from some other consultants in how they can put more on the table. They don't stay within the safe zone. They respect confidentiality but really pushe on to get to the real issues.
5. They have good ability with industrial companies. They pushed us when we didn't want to be pushed. People always think they have the answer. This is a very complicated business and there are many ways to structure it. They made us look at all different peer models.
6. Passages are really open and generous with their ideas. They have no other agenda except you as an individual.

7 The ability to accurately assess organizations and individual leaders and the ability to provide valuable insight are key strengths

1. Passages has strong diagnostic skills. They understand what goes on in an organization and how it relates to the individuals involved. In their coaching of me, they provided accurate diagnosis, showed what needed to change, what I could do differently. I took full advantage of this. I would not have made as much progress if I had worked with someone else instead of Passages. It was primarily their knowledge of the business and their diagnostic skills that made the difference.
2. Passages does lots of listening. They first want to understand the dynamics and the different styles people have. Only then do they start working on an assessment and a plan.
3. I had a very good experience with my Passages consultant. Good style, good listener, smart, gets things done in a constructive way. He is engaging. He has the capability and capacity to quickly understand what the customer needs. He can synthesize the problem quickly and articulate a plan. He gets it, I love that about him.
4. They did outstanding work on the organizational assessments. They lifted up the hood and gave me a good sense about these organizations that I normally wouldn't get. They were able to get to a deeper level with the interviews. I loved their approach to organizational assessments. They spend a couple of hours talking to people and they get a real feel for the situation. They are really good at the assessment work.
5. Passages has the ability to take an extraordinary amount of data and zero in on key drivers of change. They are very strong in culture assessment. They can size up an organization quickly. They use one-on-one interviews and surveys but the interviews are more of a strength. Knowing their story-telling ability, insight into culture and organizational design, they were the right fit. We are an introverted, feeling community, led by an extrovert. They were able to draw insights from the data and have it received well by the organization.
6. I was struck by their ability to provide accurate insight.

8 Passages' consultative approach where clients are guided to arrive at the answers rather than being told what to do is also highly valued

1. They gave us the belief that we could be successful. They allowed us to see the future in a way that was not threatening. They were a safety net. They allowed us to make our own decisions and mistakes but they were always only two steps away the whole time.
2. They are a very quick study on the problems of the business. They allow us to find the answer for ourselves and own it. Sometimes, consultants know the answer and drive it. They know the answer too but are smart enough to know that we have to own it and that it's got to be right for us.
3. Their style is about asking questions and helping people through a dialogue. They enable people to draw their own conclusions.
4. They help you define the issue by asking questions. Their approach is that you'll get there on your own.
5. My Passages consultant compares very well to other coaches I've worked with. He was my informal coach but he was a good coach in the true sense of the word. He enables teams and individuals to reach the solution rather than telling them what to do. He has an opinion if you ask but he wants to enable you to draw your own conclusions.

9 Passages consultants bring tremendous knowledge and experience to client engagements

1. Passages consultants are off the charts in strategic agility. They have hard skills, and are super smart.
2. He understands things at the cultural level not just the process level. He's really good.
3. The most valuable thing about Passages was that they had real life experiences that mirrored what I was going through.
4. What sets them apart is that they have the ability to be accurate in their assessment but at the same time be efficient about how they arrived at that assessment. They have a good sense, a solid footing underneath. I've seen them in a number of different situations now.
5. Their most important contribution was the ability to see the big picture, and help transform the situation for the future.
6. I got lots out of my interactions with Passages. They are not only strong story tellers, but are really smart and bring tremendous knowledge to bear.

10 Passages consultants are very strong at navigating organizations, engaging and aligning people, and productively managing conflict

- 1 Passages are masterful facilitators. They handle emotionally hot moments well and are able to manage the energy of the room. When things come to a head, they are able to diffuse and be productive with that energy. They had candid moments with the group. They acknowledged openly when someone disagreed with them. They took it on “head on.” They kept the energy in a day-long meeting high.
- 2 Passages is high on the relationship development side, they are very strong there.
- 3 Passages was very good at connecting with a broad range of people. I had a very broad range of personalities on the team. They found a way to connect with each of them. They liked and respected some of them more than others but found a way to work with all of them.
- 4 The difference between Passages and other consultants is that they have more of the human element. They bring it to life for others intellectually and engage the heart and mind better than other consultants. It’s not rocket science but it’s about the people, how to engage them, and they do this better than others.
- 5 In working in the organization, they will hear individual perspectives and will see things and opportunities that aren’t aligned. They have a really effective way to reshape the thinking of individuals and align different people and departments. They do this without telling people what to do. They provide guidance. Dealing with people can be tricky and they do it well. They are also politically savvy.
- 6 Passages had to push executives and they handled it well. People just wanted to get to the answer on how to be organized but they pushed us to the boundary. They managed conflict well because they’ve been there, done that. They are very professional that way. Everyone was fine working with them.
- 7 They brought passion and made me excited about what we were working on.
- 8 They became members of the team. They immersed themselves into the organization, navigated the different personalities. There were a lot of personalities and it took a while to see through people’s motives and actions. I think there were times when people painted an inaccurate picture of the situation to have things go their way and it took a while to figure some of this out but that’s normal, human nature. Overall, I’m very pleased with the results that we achieved.

11 When Passages consultants work together, the team is greater than the sum of its parts

1. Each consultant had different skill sets. One has specific tools, a great process person. The other is too but he has the cultural side, which the other has in a different way, but together they make a great team. Either one of them could have done this work on their own but having both of them together was great.
2. Both are more thoughtful and generous with their insight, asking provocative questions, and engaging very genuinely. They make a nice team and together offer something that neither could on their own.
3. They each have have such different personalities, they complement each other. One is excitable, high energy. The other is soothing, calming, and steady. Together, they have a good rhythm. They have good synergy and rapport with one another.

12 Passages consultants make a very positive initial impression on clients, particularly thanks to their confidence, proven track record, willingness to listen, and ability to connect on a personal level

1. They had a great deal of confidence, experience and evidence from their own work and consulting background that they took on challenges like this before and had success. The track records that the other consulting companies showed were not as strong plus Passages also had a stronger internal recommendation. Passages don't sell themselves as general practitioners. They market themselves as being able to help specifically with certain areas. Comparing them broadly to consulting firms from any area, I would again say it is their confidence that sets them apart. It's not an overdone confidence. It's cool, calm, we've been there, done that, we can show results and a track record.
2. I liked Passages immediately. We're all different and look for different things but for me, it was important that she understands the business side. They have a pragmatic, no-nonsense approach.
3. When I first spoke to Passages, I was pleasantly surprised. They were very open, engaging, and honest. We had an instant relationship. I felt I could trust them. They were very knowledgeable regarding leadership and our company and knew what things to work on. They understood the politics and the context within which I was working.
4. Passages was very positive, very open, warm, easy to connect with, responsive, supportive. I had no concerns about their involvement.
5. My first impressions were positive. We felt like we were kindred spirits. He had good energy, good people insights, he had the ability to transcend the organization and work both at the strategy level but also on the day-to-day.
6. My first impressions were very good. They were down to earth, straight shooters, had the right balance between challenging where you are versus where you need to go but in a productive, inspiring, constructive way.
7. My first impressions were really good. Passages was high energy, very engaged, thoughtful, and showed rapid fire thinking and a bias to act.