

## WAYS TO KEEP CONSULTING COSTS UNDER CONTROL

1. Educate yourself. Use the help screens and the manuals. Re-check the written "procedures" we've provided. I teach in order to make you self-sufficient so you can be ready to expand into new opportunities, whether that be better reports, more efficient customer service, or enhanced software.
2. Have clear goals and know what you want to accomplish. I may have a better overall solution to offer when I know your ultimate goal. Half an hour spent in a planning discussion can save many hours of re-work. A written agenda for the day is a treat.
3. Let me know how much a solution is worth to you. Whether two hours spent creating a report saves you ten person hours a week, or half an hour every six months depends on your particular business. Prioritize your requests. My goal is to make my time valuable to you because it allows you to do more business or more efficient business than in the past.
4. Use my time wisely. Although I love hearing about you and your family, and your last vacation, please keep small talk to a minimum so we can concentrate on your business. Fit in questions or conversations when a process requires some waiting time.
5. Make sure everyone in the office knows we'll be working in the accounting system and there may be periods when they will have to stay out. Give them the opportunity to plan other work so we can be uninterrupted without disrupting your business.
6. Plan for undivided attention during training sessions. Have calls held, re-schedule lunchtime, plan around vacation days, make provision for necessary work to be done outside the training time. I can be flexible in scheduling, but I can't train someone who isn't there, or isn't focused on the training.
7. Keep a file folder of questions that come up between visits. Put in a sample of the report or transaction that brought up the question. You may not remember the whole situation when we talk about it unless you save a reference.
8. When a question needs to be addressed between visits, print the relevant documents and send them by Fax along with your question. Or attach a file to an e-mail message. Seeing the documentation helps me understand your question.
9. If you need an immediate answer (and assuming you have paid for phone support) have your documentation available and be ready at the computer to walk through the solution. Call my cell phone if you do not reach me at the office.
10. If you have to leave me a message, be sure to include your phone number and extension, and tell me the best time to call. I may not remember that you usually go to lunch at 12:30, or that you leave at 3 p.m. on Wednesdays.