TAKE THE

RIGHT TURN

SHOULD YOU ACTUALLY CONSULT?

An honest readiness assessment

for women thinking about leaving corporate.

BY TARA SANDHU

THE RIGHT TURN

BEFORE WE BEGIN

This isn't a sales pitch.

Most free consulting guides try to convince you that consulting is the right move. They sell you the dream - the freedom, the income, the laptop-on-a-beach version of work, and conveniently skip past the part where you have to figure out if it's actually right for YOU.

This one is different.

I'm not here to convince you of anything. I'm here to help you get an honest answer to a question most women in corporate roles are asking themselves:

> **"*Could* I actually do this? And if so, *should* I?"**

By the end of this guide, you'll have a real answer. Not a vibe, but a score, three honest paths, and clarity on which one is yours.

But first, you should know who's asking.

MY STORY

From F1 visa to $2M in two and a half years.

I came to the United States from India on an F1 visa, chasing education and a dream that felt both exciting and impossible. After graduating, I stayed on an H1B and started in risk, but I knew I wanted to do more.

My real journey began at Gusto, back when it was still called ZenPayroll and was only about 150 people. I helped build the risk systems that supported its explosive growth.

From there, I became the first regulatory compliance hire at Plaid, shaping the foundation for a company that went on to change an entire industry.

Then Stripe, where I started as a senior PgM and within ten months had relocated to Seattle and hired and trained a team of 16. Eventually I was leading multiple global teams.

On paper, my career looked like a dream. But life had different plans.

After Stripe, I joined FigureHR as VP of Operations during the most painful season of my life, fertility struggles, miscarriages, and finally a pregnancy that landed me in the hospital three times a week on IV drips with hyperemesis gravidarum. Then gestational diabetes on top of it. It was humbling, but it gave me my son, who is pure magic.

When I returned to work, I joined Mercury to lead risk program management and eventually financial crimes, managing a team of over 40. And after pouring so much of myself into bringing my son into the world, I couldn't ignore the truth anymore:

> **I had built the reputation, the title, the paycheck. But I didn't want to spend all my time working. I wanted freedom and I wanted to live on my own terms.**

So I walked away from the stability, the status, the safety net, all of it.

In two years, I built a consulting business that generated $2M in revenue (cash + equity in growing startups). I moved my family across the world to Lisbon. Today I work around 25 hours most weeks. I choose my clients, and I decide when I sprint and when I rest.

I'm telling you this not to impress you, but because what I'm about to share is what I wish someone had handed me before I made the leap.

THE REFRAME

Most women don't lack the skills needed.

They fail because they confuse three things.

And those three confusions are why so many smart, accomplished women hover at the edge of consulting for years without ever making the leap, or worse, leap badly and burn out within six months.

Confusion #1: Skills vs. judgment.

You think clients pay you for what you know how to do. They don't. They pay you for what you know how to see, the problems you've learned to recognize and solve faster than most other people. Your consulting value isn't your resume. It's the pattern recognition you've earned along the way.

Confusion #2: Hours vs. outcomes.

You think you'll sell your time. Most new consultants default to hourly because it feels safe and familiar. But hourly creates scope creep, anxiety, and resentment on both sides. Clients aren't buying hours. They're buying a result they can't get without you.

Confusion #3: Permission vs. decision.

You're waiting to feel ready, to feel confident, to have one more year of experience, one more credential, one more sign from the universe. But readiness isn't a feeling, it's a structure. And what you actually need isn't permission, it's a clear-eyed look at whether the structure is in place.

This guide gives you that look.

THE SHIFT

Before you can decide if consulting is right for you, you need to understand what you're actually selling.

Because if you get this wrong, and most women do at first, every other decision downstream gets harder. Pricing feels arbitrary, pitching feels gross, offers feel small and clients feel hard to find.

And it all comes back to one misunderstanding.

• • •

You think you're selling your skills.

So you look at your resume, you count your years of experience, you list your credentials, you stack up your titles. And then you feel some version of the same thing every woman I've ever talked to about this feels:

> **“Is that really enough? Would anyone actually pay me for this?”**

The answer is no. They wouldn't.

Not because you're not enough. But because that's not what they buy.

• • •

What they actually buy is your judgment.

Let me tell you when I learned this.

When I joined Plaid, the company was about 50 people. I was their first risk hire. There was no playbook, no team, no process, no one to ask. Just me, a laptop, and a company that was about to scale very fast in a heavily regulated industry.

At first I thought: what am I doing here? I'm not a compliance lawyer. I'm not a regulatory expert. I'm just a person who's seen this before.

And then I realized, that was the whole point.

> **They didn't hire me for what I knew how to do. They hired me for what I'd already learned how to see.**

The patterns, the shortcuts, the decisions I'd watched go wrong at other companies, the traps I knew to avoid because I'd watched someone else fall into them. The instinct, built over years, for which problems were actually urgent and which ones were noise.

That's judgment. And it turns out, that's what people pay real money for.

Here's the test.

Look at the last three jobs you've held, or the last three big projects you've delivered. Now ignore the skills you used. Ignore the tools. Ignore the deliverables.

Ask yourself instead:

- **What did I learn to spot** that other people in my role missed?
- **What decisions did I get right** that someone less experienced would have gotten wrong?
- **What problems did I solve** that kept showing up at every company I joined?
- **What do people already come to me for?** not because of my title, but because they trust my read on it?

That last one is especially important. Pay attention to what people already ask you about, at work, at parties, in DMs. Those are the patterns you've earned the right to charge for.

• • •

Three examples of the shift.

Corporate skill: “I ran customer support operations.”

Judgment: “I know how to spot the operational gaps that bleed startups dry before they realize it, and I know how to fix them before they become founder problems.”

Corporate skill: “I managed marketing for a B2B SaaS company.”

Judgment: “I can tell within two weeks of looking at a founder's funnel whether their problem is positioning, channel, or message, and I know which one to fix first.”

Corporate skill: “I was a senior PM at a fintech.”

Judgment: “I've watched three companies make the same hiring mistake in their first 20 people. I know what it costs them and I know how to help founders avoid it.”

• • •

> **Skills sound like a resume. Judgment sounds like a person you'd hire. This is the single biggest shift you have to make before consulting will work.**

TRY IT BEFORE YOU TURN THE PAGE

What's your judgment?

Don't construct a full offer. Don't try to be clever. Just answer one prompt, in your own messy words:

WHAT DO PEOPLE ALREADY COME TO ME FOR - NOT BECAUSE OF MY TITLE, BUT BECAUSE THEY TRUST MY READ ON IT?

Whatever you wrote, that's the seed. It might be vague right now. It might feel too small, or too obvious, or too “well, doesn't everyone know how to do that?”

They don't.

That's the whole point of judgment. The things you've internalized so deeply that they feel obvious to you, those are the things that are most valuable to the people who haven't lived them yet.

Hold onto that answer. Bring it with you into the assessment.

The full course shows you how to take this seed and package it into something specific people will actually pay for. But before any of that can work, you have to be able to see it yourself first.

THE READINESS ASSESSMENT

Are you actually ready to consult?

Most readiness checks lie to you. They ask vague questions like “are you passionate?” and “do you believe in yourself?” and let you score yourself a 10 across the board because of course you do.

This one is different. It scores four real dimensions of readiness, the ones that actually determine whether consulting works for you in the first six months, or falls apart.

> **Your goal is not to score high. Your goal is to score honestly.**

A low score is information. It tells you exactly what would need to change for this to work, and that's worth far more than a flattering number.

How it works

- **Four sections.** Capacity. Risk Tolerance. Leverage. Motivation.
- **Twenty questions, scored 0–2 each.** 0 = no, 1 = somewhat, 2 = yes.
- **Total possible: 35 points.** Your score maps to one of three honest paths.

Be honest, nobody is judging you. The only person who reads your answers is the person who has to live with the decision.

SECTION A

Capacity

Can you actually protect the time and focus consulting requires?

Score each statement 0, 1, or 2.

CAPACITY	1. I have 5–10 hours per week I can realistically protect for this.	___ / 2
	2. My schedule is predictable enough to commit to client work.	___ / 2
	3. I can do focused work without constant interruption.	___ / 2
	4. I could sustain this level of effort for 3–6 months.	___ / 2
	5. I can say no to other commitments if I need to.	___ / 2

Section A total: ___ / 10

> **If you scored below 5: this isn't about whether you have the skill. It's about whether you have the runway. That's a different conversation, and one we have inside the course.**

SECTION B

Risk & Income

Can you handle unpredictable income and rejection without it derailing you?

Score each statement 0, 1, or 2.

RISK & INCOME	1. I can emotionally handle unpredictable income.	**___ / 2**
	2. I don't need consulting income to start immediately.	**___ / 2**
	3. I have at least 4 months of financial buffer.	**___ / 2**
	4. I can pitch myself without needing external validation.	**___ / 2**
	5. Rejection wouldn't derail me - it would inform me.	**___ / 2**

Section B total: ___ / 10

> **The first time someone told me “that's too expensive,” I almost folded. The version of me that built a $2M business is the one who learned that “no” is data, not damage.**

SECTION C

Leverage

Do you have earned insight that someone would actually pay for?

Score each statement 0, 1, or 2.

LEVERAGE	1. I've solved a specific problem that other people actively have.	___ / 2
	2. People already come to me for advice in this area.	___ / 2
	3. I can name a specific type of buyer who would pay for this.	___ / 2
	4. My experience here is recent (within the last 3–5 years).	___ / 2
	5. I can explain my value in one or two sentences.	___ / 2

Section C total: ___ / 10

> **This is the section most women under-score themselves on, and they're almost always wrong. Your leverage is bigger than you think. The course shows you how to find it.**

SECTION D

Motivation

Is your why strong enough to carry you through the hard weeks?

Score each statement 0, 1, or 2.

MOTIVA TION	1. I'm running toward something, not just away from corporate.	___ / 1
	2. I'm willing to be visible and imperfect.	___ / 1
	3. I want autonomy, not just more money.	___ / 1
	4. I'm okay being a beginner again at something.	___ / 1
	5. This is a deliberate choice, not a reaction to burnout.	___ / 1

Section D total: ___ / 5

> **A clear “why” is the single most important ingredient in this entire process. Without it, every other section eventually collapses. With it, you can weather almost anything.**

YOUR SCORE

Add it up.

Section A: Capacity	___ / 10
Section B: Risk & Income	___ / 10
Section C: Leverage	___ / 10
Section D: Motivation	___ / 5
TOTAL	**___ / 35**

28–35: Proceed.

You're ready. The structure is in place – capacity, risk tolerance, leverage, and a clear-eyed why. What you need now isn't more validation. It's a plan.

20–27: Proceed with constraints.

You're close, but something specific is holding you back. Look at your lowest-scoring section, that's the constraint you need to address before the rest will hold.

Below 20: Pause intentionally.

Pausing is not the same as quitting. It means you've looked at this honestly and decided now isn't the time. That's a real answer, and a far better one than leaping badly. You can return to this when something specific has changed.

ONE MORE STEP

Name your primary constraint.

Look at your four section scores. Whichever is lowest is your primary constraint, the thing that needs to shift first for everything else to work.

Write it down. Be specific.

MY PRIMARY CONSTRAINT IS:

• • •

Now, write your decision. Check one:

- ☐ **I am proceeding now.**
- ☐ **I am proceeding cautiously, after addressing my primary constraint.**
- ☐ **I am pausing – on purpose.**

> **All three are real answers. The wrong answer is the one you avoid making.**

BEFORE YOU GO

Four things I wish someone had told me when I started.

Whether you scored Proceed, Proceed with Constraints, or Pause, these are the four truths I would have given the version of me sitting at her kitchen table in 2023, wondering if she was crazy for walking away.

• • •

1. Your first client won't come from a website.

Mine came from a Slack message to a former colleague. “Hey, I'm starting my own consulting practice – if you know any early-stage companies who need risk/compliance help, I'd love an intro.” That message turned into $10,000 wired into my account a few weeks later. No website, no logo, no pitch deck. Just clarity on what I could offer, and the courage to ask.

2. The price you set is a mirror, not a number.

The first time someone asked me “what do you charge?” I froze. I had no framework. I picked a number that felt safe and closed three clients in two months. That told me I'd priced too low. The real number is the one that makes you slightly uncomfortable to say out loud. If your rate feels comfortable, you're undercharging the woman you're becoming.

3. You're not selling skills. You're selling judgment.

Clients don't pay for what you know how to do. They pay for what you've learned to see, the patterns, the shortcuts, the things you can solve in two weeks that would take their team six months. Your resume is not your offer - your earned insight is your offer. Most women drastically underprice this because they don't know how to name it yet.

4. The dream life isn't the end goal. It's the design constraint.

Last year I was offered $5 million to sell my consulting business.

> **On paper, it looked like a dream deal. But the deeper we got into the logistics, the clearer it became: there was no price for what I already had.**

No dollar amount replaces my 3–4 day work weeks. No dollar amount replaces nightly dinners and bath time with my son. No dollar amount replaces choosing how I spend my days.

So I turned it down.

One week later, I started building the course you're about to hear about. Because the real lesson isn't that I built a $2M business. It's that I built it around a life I actually wanted to live, and that's the part nobody teaches you.

IF YOU SCORED PROCEED

Knowing you should consult is not the same as knowing what to sell.

This guide answered one question: are you ready?

It doesn't answer the next seven.

- **What exactly do you sell?** Your skills aren't your offer. Your judgment is. How do you package it?
- **Who do you sell it to?** Vague targeting kills deals before they start. The buyer has to be specific.
- **How do you price it?** Not what it's "worth", what someone will actually pay, and how you say the number without flinching.
- **How do you land the first one?** It's not what you think. (Hint: not LinkedIn cold outreach.)
- **How do you set up the business to collect payment?** Seven steps. Most people overcomplicate this and waste months.
- **How do you scale without burning out?** The path from $100K to $1M is not "work more hours." It's something else entirely.
- **How do you protect the life you're building?** Because the whole point of this isn't the income. It's what the income makes possible.

• • •

This is what I built the course for.

It's the playbook I wish I'd had, the one that took me from leaving Mercury to $2M in revenue in two years. Seven modules, full worksheets, and the exact frameworks I used to build a business around the life I actually wanted to live.

You won't get more motivation. You'll get a plan.

And by the end of it, you won't just know whether to consult. You'll know exactly what you're selling, who's buying, what you're charging, how you're landing them, and how the whole thing fits inside the life you want to live.

Ready when you are.

→

[**DEEPDIVE COURSE**]

• • •

With love,

Tara

THE RIGHT TURN