
8 Best Boutique Consulting Firms (& One to Avoid) | 2018 Ranking

RANKING & REVIEWS BEST BOUTIQUE CONSULTING FIRMS

Intro: Kickstarting Your Business by Using Boutique Consulting Firms

No business is perfect, and everybody needs advice once in a while. Whether you are a small business owner or the head of a large corporation, you may be in need of services offered by boutique consulting firms.



Award Emblem: Top 8 Best Boutique Consulting Firms

Finding boutique consulting firms that align with your business goals and needs can be challenging. The best boutique firm will easily integrate their services and products with your management style—not butt heads with you over every little detail.

It’s also important to find a boutique consulting firm that offers the specific services that will best benefit your business.

With an endless array of boutique consultancy firms to choose from, we have compiled a comprehensive list of the best boutique consulting firms to make your search easy, efficient, and productive.

Top 8 Best Boutique Strategy Consulting Firms | Brief Comparison & Ranking

| Best Boutique Consulting Firms | Highlighted Features | Ratings |
|--------------------------------|---|---------|
| Clarkston Consulting | Wide range of industry partnerships and alliances | 5 |
| Eagle Hill | Family-run, woman-owned firm | 5 |
| Point B | Award-winning work environment & company culture | 5 |
| Putnam Associates | Small team with an impressive range of qualifications | 5 |
| The Brattle Group | Wide range of global and governmental experience | 5 |
| The Bridgespan Group | Exclusive focus on driving social change | 5 |
| Excella Consulting | Offers software & IT certification sessions | 3 |
| Jabian Consulting | Strong emphasis on community ties & employee satisfaction | 3 |
| Novantas, Inc. | Lack of transparency & rewarding company culture | 1 |

Table: Top 8 Best Boutique Management Consulting Firms | Above list is sorted by rating

Why Choose a Boutique Consulting Firm?

Generally speaking, a boutique firm is defined as such by either their size or their focus. Some boutique consulting firms have a small, localized staff, others keep a tight focus on specific services or industries, and a handful of boutique firms will do both.

Our list of the best boutique consulting firms includes firms that can be considered boutique by either their size, their range of focus, or a combination of both.

No matter how each firm fits the criteria, boutique consulting firms are great resources for companies that need skilled, focused advice in a specific industry or area of business.

Compared to larger firms, a boutique consulting firm often provides unique advantages because it:

Offers Specific Services

The best boutique consulting firms specialize in a handful of specific industries or services. These services can come in the form of offering environmental advice, IT support, legal advice, help with human resources, etc.

Due to a keen focus on serving a specific set of clients, a boutique consulting firm will be more knowledgeable on the subject matter you need assistance with.

Charges Less Money for its Services

With some exceptions, a boutique consulting firm typically has fewer offices and a smaller staff. This means that the overhead costs associated with a boutique firm will be much lower than that of giant consulting firms.

Ultimately, a boutique consulting firm is more likely to charge you less for its services because it does not have the expenses that a big consulting firm has.

Focus on Company & Client Culture

A common thread between the best boutique consulting firms is a strong emphasis on creating a positive, welcoming, and productive culture. Not only does this benefit consultants, but it also puts clients in a great position to succeed.

Happy, satisfied consultants are more relaxed and empowered to provide top-notch services, improving the client experience along the way.

This also means that many boutique strategy consulting firms are community-oriented, participating in local events and contributing to the overall success of their city.

AdvisoryHQ's Selection Methodology

What methodology does AdvisoryHQ use in selecting and finalizing the credit cards, financial products, firms, services, and products that are ranked on its various top-rated lists?

Please click here "[AdvisoryHQ's Ranking Methodologies](#)" for a detailed review of AdvisoryHQ's selection methodologies for ranking top-rated credit cards, financial accounts, firms, products, and services.

Detailed Review – Top 8 Best Boutique Consulting Firms

Below, please find the detailed review of each firm on our list of top boutique consulting firms. We have highlighted some of the factors that allowed these boutique management consulting firms to score so high in our selection ranking.

Click on any of the names below to go directly to the detailed review for that firm.

- [Clarkston Consulting](#)
- [Eagle Hill Consulting](#)
- [Excella Consulting](#)
- [Jabian Consulting](#)
- [Novantas, Inc.](#)
- [Point B](#)
- [Putnam Associates](#)
- [The Brattle Group](#)
- [The Bridgespan Group](#)

Click below for previous years' rankings:

- 2016 Ranking: [Top 6 Best Boutique Consulting Firms](#)
- 2017 Ranking: [Top 6 Best Boutique Consulting Firms](#)

Clarkston Consulting Review

With a keen focus on providing in-depth business consulting, [Clarkston Consulting](#) is one of the best boutique consulting firms to consider partnering with in 2018.

Their focus is on serving clients within the life sciences and consumer products industries, providing the following services:

- Strategy & Innovation
- Sales & Marketing
- Supply Chain
- Quality & Regulatory
- SAP & Technology
- Organizational Performance

With headquarters in Durham, Clarkston also provides consulting services in Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, and Bridgewater, New Jersey.

Key Factors That Allowed This Firm to Rank as a Best Boutique Consulting Firm

Sector-Specific Expertise

Clarkston Consulting prides itself on providing expert insights and services to clients within the consumer products and life sciences industries.

As part of this expertise, the firm is dedicated to providing sector-specific approaches and consultants with first-hand experience and knowledge.

Key consulting sectors for life sciences include:

- Pharma
- Medical Device
- Biotech
- Generics
- Contract Manufacturing
- Wholesale/Distribution

Key consulting sectors for consumer products include:

- Fast Moving Consumer Goods
- Food & Beverage
- Health & Beauty
- Specialty Retail
- Consumer Healthcare
- Wholesale/Distribution

Strong History of Success

As one of the top boutique consulting firms, Clarkston Consulting has a strong and well-defined history of success in terms of service and clients served.

The firm has a 97 percent client satisfaction rating, marking one of the highest ratings on our list of boutique consultancy firms.

Additionally, this top boutique consulting firm has worked with an impressive array of clients from consumer products and life sciences, including:

- L'Oréal
- Coca-Cola
- Estée Lauder
- Pfizer
- Mylan
- Gilead

Community Stewardship

For this top boutique consulting firm, outreach and participation in the local community is a key part of supporting personal passion and expertise.

The Clarkston Scholars Program awards an annual scholarship of \$10,000 to college sophomores majoring in the life sciences. In 2017, Clarkston Consulting partnered with Girls Who Code, a non-profit organization that seeks to close the gender gap in technology and consulting.

The firm also features employees who exemplify community stewardship, including:

- Brandon Miller, founder of The Black Burdell, Inc.
- Kristine Pettoni, member of the Network of Executive Women
- Jeff Graffeo, board of directors for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society

Rating Summary

With a keen focus on industry-specific expertise, community stewardship, and a proven track record of excellence, Clarkston Consulting has more than earned a rating of 5, putting the firm among the highest-rated boutique consulting firms on our list.



[See Also: The Top Healthcare Consulting Firms This Year \(Ranking and Review\)](#)

Eagle Hill Consulting Review

[Eagle Hill](#) makes the list of the top boutique consulting firms due to its unconventional consulting practices. Eagle Hill is unlike the other boutique consulting firms in this list because it is a family-run, woman-owned company.

This gives Eagle Hill a unique perspective on your business's economic and financial problems.

Prospective clients can find Eagle Hill in Washington, D.C., and Seattle. Although it may be difficult to utilize this firm if you are located outside of the area, Eagle Hill is more than willing to accommodate through web-based services.

Their areas of expertise include:

- Strategy Consulting
- Human Capital
- Change Management
- Process Improvement
- Program Management
- Organizational Design

As one of the best boutique consulting firms, these core services are holistic, collaborative, and catered to best benefit the needs of individual clients.

Key Factors That Allowed This Firm to Rank as a Best Boutique Consulting Firm

High Quality Talent

Eagle Hill strives to employ experienced, highly educated consultants. 70% of their leadership team members have graduate degrees, and many have been awarded multiple degrees.

Experts at this top boutique firm are also experienced in the real world, not just in the classroom. 80% of their leadership have had hands-on experience in working with one of the “Big 4” industries.

As an additional benefit, 91% of Eagle Hill consultants have human capital consulting experience, while an additional third have training or teaching backgrounds.

Solid Track Record

Eagle Hill has over [12 years of working with various businesses](#) and a 100 percent satisfaction rate.

With a perfect track record, Eagle Hill is proving to be well-versed in its field of expertise as a boutique consulting firm.

Their performance is further validated by the long list of awards from local and national publications, including Forbes, The Washington Post, Vault, and Washington Business Journal.

Rating Summary

We gave Eagle Hill a 5 rating for its dedication to hiring niche experts, focus on customer satisfaction, and outstanding growth.

Although Eagle Hill is a smaller boutique consulting firm, they have experienced an average revenue growth of [74%](#) since 2010, marking this firm as one of the best boutique consulting firms to consider partnering with.

Don't Miss: [Top HR Consulting Firms This Year \(Ranking and Review\)](#)

Excella Consulting Review

[Excella Consulting](#) is one of the top consulting firms in the Washington, D.C. area, helping local businesses develop and implement technology in new and exciting ways.

With 15 years in business and a team of 200 consultants, Excella Consulting is committed to helping organizations deliver meaningful changes and obtain the best possible results.

Services offered at this top boutique consulting firm include:

- Software Development
- Data & Analytics
- DevOps
- Program Management
- Agile
- Business Analysis

Key Factors That Enabled Us to Rank This Firm as a Best Boutique Consulting Firm

Focus on Education & Training

While many of the best boutique consulting firms offer educational materials through their blog or a quarterly journal, it's rare to find a firm that holds regular education and training sessions for the public.

Excella Consulting provides in-depth training on Scrum and Agile, offering two-day courses and certification for Certified ScrumMaster® (CSM) and Certified Scrum Product Owner® (CSPO).

Both classes are open and available to the public for a fee, helping boost the abilities of project managers, executives, analysts, testers, and more. Additional classes include:

- Agile Engineering
- Agile Business Analyst
- User Story Workshop
- Agile and Scrum in a Day

Clients can also choose to schedule private training sessions with Excella Consulting, allowing the firm to hold classes at a location of their choosing.

Personality & Approachability

Just as with educational materials, Excella Consulting exhibits a unique ability to fill in the gaps left by other boutique consulting firms.

By nature, consulting firms tend to be somewhat stuffy and unapproachable, though this is certainly not the case with Excella Consulting.

With a brightly colored website, engaging copy, and a call-to-action with open jobs and upcoming events, this boutique firm manages to communicate a sense of personality.

In an industry that traditionally forgets to advertise through personality, this attention to detail stands out and makes Excella Consulting one of the top boutique consulting firms on our list.

Rating Summary

Despite their commitment to making education accessible and creating a welcoming website, some key information is either difficult to find or non-existent.

For example, potential clients may find that accessing a consultant list is challenging without a clearly marked tab. Additionally, while potential clients can access contact information for each consultant, there are no professional background or qualifications listed.

The firm's service offerings and areas of specialization are very strong, which means that providing a quick background for each employee and increasing the visibility of the page could easily improve the firm's 3 rating.

Read More: [List of Top Rated Advisors and Wealth Managers \(US & UK\)](#)

Jabian Consulting Review

Ranked as an Inc 500's Fastest Growing Company for the past four years, [Jabian Consulting](#) continues to outperform competing boutique consulting firms in terms of service, quality, and commitment.

Located in Atlanta, Dallas, and Charlotte, consultants at this top boutique consulting firm take pride in being a part of the community and having strong ties to local organizations.

Consulting strategies available through Jabian Consulting include:

- Human Capital Management
- Business Strategy
- Operational Excellence
- Customer Interaction
- Technology Optimization
- Technology Execution

Key Factors That Enabled Us to Rank This Firm as a Best Boutique Consulting Firm

Professional Accolades

As a top boutique firm, Jabian Consulting has earned a wide array of professional accolades and acknowledgements—to date, the firm has over 50 local and national awards.

Many of these awards recognize the firm for community involvement, company culture, work-life balance, and overall performance.

Some of the firm's most recent awards include:

- Named in the Vault Consulting 50 for 2018 by Vault
- Named as a Best Boutique Consulting Firm for 2018 by Vault
- Named as a Best Firm to Work for (Work/Life Balance) for 2018 by Vault
- Named as one of the Best Workplaces for 2017 by Inc. Magazine

The Jabian Way

Jabian is one of few firms to guarantee success for each and every client, which certainly makes them stand out among the best boutique consulting firms.

This guarantee is closely related to how the firm represents itself. Along with a results guarantee, the Jabian defines itself through the following values:

- Develop loyal advocates
- Give back locally
- Love what you do
- Success is the only option
- Brilliance matters
- Business before technology
- People before everything



Rating Summary

Although Jabian has a wide range of accolades and a strong history of success, our review must consider the way that this is communicated.

The firm's website is somewhat difficult to navigate, and with a homepage defined by white space, the superiority of the firm is not well represented.

Improving the structural and visual aspects of the website could easily change Jabian's rating from a 3 to a 5.

Related: [Best Consulting Firms \(Review: Best Management Consulting Firms\)](#)

Novantas Review

With a sole industry focus on financial services, [Novantas](#) is the largest boutique consulting firm in the financial sector.

Over the past fifteen years, their specialists have worked closely with 80 percent of the largest banks, payment networks, wealth managers, and other financial institutions.

Although the firm has been rated highly by financial publications, in comparison to the other firms on our list, Novantas falls short in a few significant ways.

See below for an in-depth overview of why Novantas has earned a 1 rating, and what the boutique firm can do to improve for next year's rankings.

What Novantas Can Do to Improve Their Ranking

Improve Transparency

There are many ways to promote transparency as a boutique firm, but Novantas is missing a few key ones.

First, our review could not find any published case studies on their website. For potential and current clients, seeing examples of proven success is a great way to validate the value of a boutique consulting firm.

Case studies also promote transparency by providing clients an in-depth, detailed look into the firm's process and methods of success. Unfortunately, this is an area in which Novantas appears to be lacking.

Second, there is no mention of the core values or philosophies that drive Novantas as a boutique consulting firm. Partnering with a firm that operates on a clearly stated set of ethics is important, particularly when using boutique consulting services for the first time.

Publishing case studies and clearly stating an ethical foundation for the firm could drastically improve transparency.

Improve the Employee Experience

Many of the firms on our list of the best boutique consulting firms place a strong emphasis on employee satisfaction as a means to increase client satisfaction.

While Novantas does encourage a supportive and enjoyable work environment, direct responses from employees paint a much different picture. [Glassdoor](#) shows a rating of 3.5, with only 46 percent of employees approving of the CEO.

Although this is not an entirely terrible rating, it is significantly lower than Glassdoor ratings from the top boutique consulting firms on our list. This suggests a drastic difference in corporate culture—and potentially in the overall client experience, as well.

A rewarding company culture for employees will increase a consultant's effectiveness, and it appears that Novantas is falling short in this area.

By focusing on transparency and improving the company culture, Novantas could increase trust, showcase their unique value, and improve the overall consulting experience for both employees and clients.

Popular Article: [Top Management Consulting Firms \(Ranking\)](#)

Point B Review

[Point B](#) is one of the top boutique consulting firms because it offers a series of specialized services. Point B is known for its management consulting, venture investment, advisory, and property development.

This boutique consulting firm leads its clients through the process of developing strategic ideas and transcribing these ideas down on paper.

Point B is one of the smaller, more localized boutique consulting firms. Their office locations span from one end of the country to the other, including Boston, Chicago, Austin, and Los Angeles.

Areas of expertise at this boutique firm include:

- Data & Analytics
- Employee Engagement
- Cloud Transformation
- Customer Experience & Loyalty
- Regulatory Compliance

Key Factors That Enabled Us to Rank This Firm as a Best Boutique Consulting Firm

Exceptional Work Place

Point B is 100% employee-owned and placed as the [#2 "Best Firms to Work For" in the United States](#) by *Consulting* magazine.

Many of its employees say that they are honored to work for this company because it has one of the best work environments.

As a result, the experts at this boutique consulting firm can become truly invested in the quality of their work, improving the overall client experience.

In addition to the award mentioned above, Point B has also been recognized as the #1 Best Medium Workplace in the Nation, a Best Workplace for Women, and a Best Workplace for Millennials by *Fortune*, among many others.

Culture & Values

Point B has a series of values that it holds to heart, including communication, transparency, and a strong ownership mentality. Ultimately, this boutique firm believes in building lasting relationships and always acting with the highest integrity.

For businesses that want a boutique consulting firm that values honesty and excellence, Point B is a great fit.

Rating Summary

Point B makes the top boutique consulting firms with a 5 rating because not only do they take care of their employees, but also their clients in the process.

The best boutique consulting firms know that great client care starts at the employee level, and Point B demonstrates a keen awareness of this relationship.

[Related: Top Ranked Independent Financial Advisers in the UK \(Top IFAs\)](#)

Putnam Associates Review

[Putnam Associates](#) maintains an exclusive focus on clients in the life sciences industry, narrowing their expertise to those who can benefit from their services the most.

Founded in 1988, Putnam Associates has over 25 years of experience in maximizing the value of pharmaceutical, biotechnology, diagnostic, and device products.

With headquarters in Boston, this top boutique consulting firm also serves clients in Los Angeles. Their core areas of expertise include:

- Corporate Strategy
- Portfolio, Licensing, & Development Strategy
- New Product Strategy
- Established Product & Franchise Strategy

- Pricing, Reimbursement, & Market Access

Key Factors That Enabled Us to Rank This Firm as a Best Boutique Consulting Firm

Client-Facing Approach

For Putnam Associates, client success and satisfaction come first. This is reflected in their comprehensive approach, which includes:

- Insight—Focusing solely on clients within the life sciences provides consultants with unparalleled depth, experience, and knowledge
- Clarity—The firm listens to client needs and custom-fits each strategy to best suit their individual needs
- Strategy—Consultants provide customized, actionable, and strategic recommendations for each client

Providing a detailed explanation of their consulting strategy supports transparency and instills trust between consultants and clients, making Putnam Associates a top-rated boutique firm.

Impressive Qualifications

As one of the best boutique consulting firms, the consultants behind Putnam Associates and the firm itself all come highly qualified.

Putnam Associates serves 17 of the top 20 global biopharmaceutical companies, marking an impressive validation of their services.

Additionally, 77 percent of their projects come from clients that have stayed with the firm for over five years, speaking to their level of client satisfaction.

On the consultant level, Putnam Associates maintains an impressive array of talented team members. The average industry experience is 15 years—and uniquely, the team collectively speaks 22 languages.

Rating Summary

With a small, talented team to provide in-depth expertise on the life sciences, Putnam Associates has earned a 5 rating among the best boutique consulting firms.



[Don't Miss: The Top Strategy Consulting Firms | Ranking | Business, Strategy, Technology](#)

The Brattle Group Review

As the largest firm on our list, [The Brattle Group](#) is one of the best boutique consulting firms with expert answers to your economic, regulatory, and financial questions.

This top performing firm offers its expertise to corporations, law firms, and government agencies around the globe, including the US, Europe, and Australia.

Despite their global outreach and wide range of services, The Brattle Group is often referred to as a boutique consulting firm for its proven expertise in economic, regulatory, and financial issues.

While there are many sub-categories of services beneath these, The Brattle Group specializes in:

- Energy & Utilities
- Litigation

- Industries

Key Factors That Enabled Us to Rank This Firm as a Best Boutique Consulting Firm

Leading Industry Specialists

While it may seem as though all boutique consulting firms hire leading industry experts, The Brattle Group has been in business long enough to snatch up some of the best.

The experts employed by the Brattle Group have advanced (usually PhD) degrees in the fields of economics, finance, management, and engineering.

Not only do these experts have relevant degrees, but they have all worked diligently within private companies, academic universities or government agencies, allowing The Brattle Group to become one of the best boutique strategy consulting firms.

Consultants at The Brattle Group regularly publish academic articles, books, papers, and reports, fostering an environment of lifelong learning.

Top Clients

The Brattle Group has done business with many of the world's leading companies, law firms, and nonprofit organizations. It also has had the pleasure of working with the United States government and many regulatory government agencies.

It has corresponded with over 20 governments from around the world and has done business with over 40 companies across the globe.

The Brattle Group's broad geographic range has allowed it to build their expertise in all manners of financial cases. This boutique firm then uses its expertise to best serve you and your business.

Boutique Experience & Wide Range of Resources

It's worth noting that, despite having nine offices around the world, The Brattle Group had only 359 employees in 2017.

With an average of 40 consultants per office, clients can receive a true boutique firm experience along with the resources of a large, multi-national firm.

This combination is incredibly rare, providing clients with a unique advantage and allowing The Brattle Group to be ranked among the best boutique consulting firms.

Rating Summary

Based on their commitment to academia, expert consultancy, and impressive list of clients, The Brattle Group has earned a 5 rating on our list of the top boutique consulting firms.

Popular Article: [Best Outsourcing Companies | Ranking | Global Outsourcing](#)

The Bridgespan Group Review

Perhaps the most unique boutique consulting firm on our list, [The Bridgespan Group](#) is a non-profit organization with a social mission to break cycles of poverty and improve the quality of life for those that need it most.

Working side-by-side with non-profits, foundations, investors, and philanthropists, this boutique firm focuses on providing services in four key areas:

- Education
- Children, youth, & families
- Public health
- Global development

With a team that is experienced, knowledgeable, and committed, The Bridgespan Group exhibits a unique passion towards helping organizations and individuals implement social change.

This boutique consulting firm has offices in Boston, New York, San Francisco, and Mumbai, India.

Key Factors That Allowed This Firm to Rank as a Best Boutique Consulting Firm

Unique Initiatives

As a boutique firm serving a unique set of clients, it makes sense that The Bridgespan Group would have an equally unique set of initiatives. In order to meet the needs of their clients, this top boutique consulting firm focuses on:

- Big Bets—Partnership, risk-taking, and innovation in philanthropy
- Leadership Development—Attract, develop, and retain skilled talent
- Pay-What-It-Takes Philanthropy—Breaking the starvation cycle

- Transformative Scale—Serving isn't enough—let's start solving

For philanthropists, non-profits, and organizations looking to truly make a difference, attract top talent, and maximize the impact of social programs, The Bridgespan Group is a fantastic boutique consulting firm to partner with.

Developing & Sharing Insights

Not only does The Bridgespan Group provide valuable consulting services, this boutique firm is diligently committed to conducting relevant, impactful social research.

Some of their recent research findings include:

- Identifying and defining “[field catalysts](#)” (events that spark change) within marriage equality, teen smoking rates, and teen pregnancies
- Creating a framework for modern philanthropists to support change on a larger scale

As a top non-profit boutique consulting firm, they also focus on issues that are specific to non-profits, like estimating overhead for grantees, developing effective media messaging, and improving financial health.

Their research findings are regularly published and referenced to in journalistic and scholarly articles, increasing the authority that The Bridgespan Group holds within the industry.

Rating Summary

Not only does The Bridgespan Group exist to serve a unique subset of consulting clients, but they also have the passion and sincere dedication to improve the world around them.

Combined with impactful research, mission-driven values, and expertly-crafted initiatives, The Bridgespan Group receives an overall ranking of 5 on our list of top boutique consulting firms.

Conclusion – Top 8 Best Boutique Consulting Firms

Boutique consulting firms can be a dime a dozen. Many of these companies spring up overnight, take your money, and run without giving you what you paid for.

Using one of the best boutique management consulting firms listed in this article will give you and your company peace of mind. With top rated policies, values, and boutique consulting specializations, these boutique consultancy firms can be counted on to deliver quality services.

All the firms on our boutique management consulting firms list have been around for decades and will continue to practice for decades to come. They are the leading industry experts in a wide variety of fields.

No matter what challenges you and your business are facing, you can turn to one of these boutique consulting firms for expert assistance.

Rate Table Disclaimer

Click here to read AdvisoryHQ's [disclaimer on the rate table\(s\) displayed](#) on this page.

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