



Lead by example with Effective Leadership

The first Wealden Business Breakfast for next year is due to take place on Tuesday 17th March 2009. The Business Breakfasts have proved popular over many years as an enjoyable and useful way of networking with other local business people, hearing from experts on topics relevant to business and of course enjoying a full English breakfast!

As a valued member of the business community in Wealden, you are invited to join us for what promises to be an engaging and exciting morning. Our speaker will be Aisling Westerdijk who will be sharing with us some top tips on leadership and how to increase efficiency and motivation in the workplace. Aisling has worked

within the Human Resources and Training & Development fields for the last 15 years. Her key clients include: Ericsson, Elekta Oncology, Mattel Interactive, Weetabix - Ryecroft foods, Posford Duvivier Haskoening, First Choice Holidays and Centrica.

The breakfast will be held at Barnsgate Manor Vineyard on 17th March 2009 from 7.30am until 10.30am. The cost per delegate is £6, including a choice of full English or continental breakfast.

If you would like to attend please contact the Economic Development & Tourism Team on 01892 602886 or email regeneration@wealden.gov.uk by no later than Monday 9th March 2009.

Gaining new business in a downturn

In these difficult trading conditions businesses need a clear 'new business' strategy more than ever, if they are to survive.

Often, heads of small businesses are so involved with the production elements of their job that other elements are ignored. The time when you need to focus on new business is when you are busy.

It is vital that every company has a clear sales strategy and knows who is going to deliver it.

Business owners often start businesses because they enjoy what they do and then find themselves becoming embroiled in activities which are the less enjoyable elements of running a business. These could well be jobs that they are not best placed to do themselves.

Many of the companies that contact us in need of more sales fall into this category. Business owners only focus on getting new business when they realize that their existing business is 'drying up'. It is a spiral - busy at first, then a void of business, then busy if you have done enough business development and have been lucky enough to land a sale.

An alternative is to outsource but this demands commitment and trust to know that whoever you are outsourcing to has an ability to get you the opportunities that you search for. That is where Need More Sales comes in. Although only a small company, they are

helping SME companies around Wealden to develop their opportunities by identifying their target market and then getting them in to see the buyer at a time when they want to buy.

Telephone appointment making is often perceived as one of the less enjoyable roles of a business, and yet if you do not accurately predict your target market and make direct contact with them your business will suffer. In marketing there are various ways to make contact including direct mail, sales promotion, advertising and PR. However, all of these need a human interface to achieve a sale of any consequence. You can either spend the time doing it yourself or call in the professionals. Either way you should not expect immediate results - so best to look for new business whilst you are still busy!

Article written by Nigel Woods of Need More Sales - we put the marketing into telemarketing.
www.needmoresales.co.uk or phone 01444 454546

www.wealdenbusinesshelp.org.uk

The first step for
small businesses

[wealdenbusinesshelp](http://wealdenbusinesshelp.org.uk) 

Business Essentials for Retailers

Discover the secrets of business success

Some tips to help you: manage your cash flow; promote your business; make your customers happy; stay legal; keep informed

With pressure on consumer spending and changing customer expectations, it's not an easy time for independent retailers to compete with the larger chains. Increasing wages, utility prices, rent and business rates are squeezing profit margins more every year.

When the economic climate becomes this challenging, the businesses most likely to survive are those who understand how to control costs and manage cash flow. Knowing how to market your business, getting the most from your customers, and staying on the right side of the law is equally vital.

To help you avoid the common pitfalls and make the most of market opportunities, Business Links Sussex compiled a series of quick and easy tips in these four key areas. You'll also find a handy list of organisations and websites, offering further information should you need it.

Simple steps to effective cost management

Turnover is vanity, profit is sanity, but cash flow is king. How you manage your finances could mean the difference between success and failure.

Easy ways to promote your business

Customers are the lifeblood of your business. Learn how to attract the right ones.

Improve your customer experience

Providing the best service you can encourages repeat business and purchasing loyalty.

Top tips to understand your legal position

Keep up-to-date with the ever-changing legal issues facing your business.



For the full article visit www.businesslink.gov.uk/southeast or call 0845 600 9 006.

Complimentary Small Business Review – help your business grow and prosper

Business Link Sussex is offering Sussex businesses a complimentary Business Review providing invaluable advice to help small businesses grow. Your business review will be carried out by an experienced professional who understands your industry; someone who brings you inside knowledge on businesses that have faced problems and opportunities just like the ones you're facing now.

To be eligible for the Small Business Review you need to be:

1. Sussex based
2. Employing one-to-five people
3. Trading for two or more years

Call Business Link Sussex on 0845 600 9 006 to book your complimentary Small Business Review or visit www.businesslink.gov.uk for more information

Embrace a great opportunity - and get a Green Advantage

This course will enable you to take advantage of the surge of interest and concern about green issues, and reveals how you can make significant savings to your bottom line through smarter use of energy, water and materials. It is aimed at those working in all sectors of the tourism, leisure and hospitality industry, including hotels and other guest accommodation, country pubs, restaurants, conference venues and visitor attractions. The course will cover how to: save money; buy local; create customer advantage; develop an environmental policy; communicate your green credentials; stay ahead.

The course is taking place at venues across Sussex in the new year. The Wealden based session is at the Ashdown Forest Llama Park, Wych Cross on 22nd January 2008. To book your free place call 0845 600 9 006 or visit www.ruralbookings.co.uk for more information.

This programme of courses is being run in partnership with Business Link and Tourism South East.

Help on hand for busy entrepreneurs

New and small business owners are often torn between the need to keep administrative tasks up to date and the desire to press on with building up the business itself.

Now it is possible to do both with help from Virtual Assistant Sussex, an Uckfield-based firm run by Sue Edwards. Sue offers a wide range of office administration and secretarial services and her aim is to lighten the load when an extra pair of hands is needed on a one-off, temporary or long-term basis. For example she types up minutes of monthly meetings, invoices, reports, letters and Christmas labels for one of her clients. Most of the work is returned via email but sometimes the finished documents are posted on, saving the client more time and hassle.

Sue's clients include a director of a plant nursery, a small business consultant, club committee officer and members of the general public.

Sue is also a partner in Weald Business Solutions, which is run by husband Phil. Together the two businesses offer an all-round service to benefit fellow entrepreneurs. "We both specialise in offering help at the times when it is most needed by small businesses and would be pleased to talk to anybody who feels in need of support," said Phil.

At Weald Business Solutions Phil's expertise lies in helping cut costs and improve efficiency. He analyses the way a business is run then finds ways of making it more efficient and improving customer service.

wealdbusiness
solutions
creating healthy business

Learn more about Phil and Sue's businesses by visiting their websites at:

www.weald-business-solutions.co.uk and:
www.virtualassistantsussex.co.uk
or phone 01825 761890.

Advertise your business free of charge

Over 1000 local business have registered on the Wealden Online Business Directory. If your company is not listed, log onto www.wealden.gov.uk/business and click on **online business directory**. Using the online form you can add information on products & services, contact details and a link to your website. Reach hundreds of local suppliers and customers by making sure your business is listed. If your business is already listed, please take a moment to check your listing is accurate and up-to-date. By submitting a new online form we can ensure that your entry is updated.

For more information please contact the Economic Development & Tourism Team – details on the back page.

Can I get assistance with my business rates by qualifying for Small Business Rates Relief (SBRR)?

From 1 April 2005 the Government introduced a scheme to help small businesses.

Small businesses with a rateable value of up to £14,999 may qualify for a reduction. There are two multipliers, for 2008/2009 the standard rating multiplier is 46.2p and the small business multiplier is 45.8p. Properties will be charged using the higher multiplier unless SBRR is applied for and granted.

Properties with a rateable value of up to £9,999 will be granted a further percentage of relief. Up to a rateable value of £4,999 the additional relief will be 50%, tapering down to zero for businesses with a rateable value of £10,000.

The relief only applies to occupied properties and does not apply where the ratepayer would be entitled to mandatory rural rate relief or mandatory charity relief.

The relief only applies where the ratepayer occupies a single property in England, although any other property with a rateable value of less than £2,200 can be ignored, provided the total rateable value of all the properties is below £15,000.

For an application form or for further details, please contact the Business Rates team on 01323 443387 or email businessrates@wealden.gov.uk

Management Tip from Inom Ltd

Are you getting people to commit to their actions?

Always get people to agree that they will do XYZ – don't just assume they will do it.

Research has shown that people who commit to doing something are much more likely to do it than those who are just asked to do it. This has an impact on the way we should be managing our staff.

In an example of this principle a restaurant reduced the number of "no shows" from 30% to 10% by just changing the statement "Please call if you have to cancel" into a question "You will call if you have to cancel?" and getting the customers to commit.

So when giving work to your staff, rather than just saying "I need this by Friday" also ask "Will you get that done by Friday?" and get them to commit.

Be very wary of deadlines set at meetings, often people have not personally committed to them!

If you have any managers who would benefit from improving how they manage their staff contact Mark Greasley at Inom Limited. Email: mark.greasley@inom.co.uk or call 01892 669775

Uckfield Business Networking International (BNI)

Uckfield BNI has recently moved to a new venue - The East Sussex National Golf Resort and Spa, Little Horsted.

The Uckfield BNI had outgrown its current venue. The move will support the East Sussex National whilst supporting BNIs growth aspirations. The Resort manager Derek Howe of East Sussex National said: "It is important to support the BNI in their networking. The concept also gives us the opportunity of exposing our complex to a wider audience."

Membership co-ordinator Mark Hallett of Uckfield-based BWN Telecom said his business had gone from strength to strength since his move to the town earlier this year. He joined the Uckfield BNI chapter, having previously been a member at Southampton, and referrals from fellow members meant he didn't have to start afresh in the town by resorting to cold-calling potential customers. Alan Jackson, principal of Jackson Wealth Management, Lewes, joined the BNI in 1998. "Twenty-two per cent of my new business in 2007 came through BNI referrals and a further 16 per cent came from previous referrals", said Mr Jackson.

Anybody interested in finding out more about Uckfield BNI please contact membership secretary Mark Hallett on 0845 6744997 or email sales@bwntelecom.com.



Welcoming members of the Uckfield BNI to the East Sussex National Golf Resort and Spa are from the left manager Derek Howe, events manager Collette Hay, chapter director Pete Parker, secretary/treasurer Mike Smith and membership co-ordinator Mark Hallett.

Sussex Business Awards – success for Wealden businesses

Winners of the annual Sussex Business Awards were announced at an award ceremony on the 20th November 2008. Amongst the winners and finalists were:

Ian Fletcher-Price

of Berwick based Posturite (UK) Ltd who won the title of Sussex Business Person of the Year.

John Packer Associates

of Uckfield were finalists for the University Enterprise Award.

Ian Fletcher-Price impressed the judges with his home-grown business, Posturite, which is now the UK market leader in posture-improving furniture and office equipment. Malcolm Diamond, chairman of the judges, said: "Demonstrating immense passion and innovation in a diverse range of industries, our winners are the future ambassadors of local business.

They are making an impact locally, nationally and internationally in areas including customer service, employee welfare, technology and marketing."

For all Economic Development / Business Enquiries contact

Business Rates

Tel: 01323 443387

Email: businessrates@wealden.gov.uk

Business Regulation Adviser

Tel: 01323 443276

Email: businesshelp@wealden.gov.uk

Economic Development & Tourism

Tel: 01892 602887

Email: regeneration@wealden.gov.uk

Environmental Health

Tel: 01323 443302

Email: env.health@wealden.gov.uk

Procurement

Tel: 01323 443350

Email: procurement@wealden.gov.uk

LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORT:

Business Link Sussex

0845 600 9 006

Eastbourne & District

Enterprise Agency

01323 413500

Sussex Enterprise

0845 678 8 867

Wealden Business Focus is published four times a year. If you would like to feature an article or raise a particular business issue for discussion, please submit details by **Friday 20th February 2009**. Please email information if possible to: regeneration@wealden.gov.uk, otherwise post to the Economic Development & Tourism Section, Wealden District Council, The Council Offices, Pine Grove, Crowborough, East Sussex, TN6 1DH.

Wealden District Council aims to provide accurate, up-to-date information, however, it does not endorse any company featured in this publication.

"You get a great deal with Wealden"

www.wealdenbusinesshelp.org.uk

www.wealden.gov.uk

www.enjoysussex.info



Please recycle after use

If you have any questions about this newsletter or comments on our service, please contact us.

This newsletter is available in large print on request