

# Bright Business Bulletin

2017  
January



## Welcome to 2017!

After a fairly tumultuous 2016, a year which was surprising and sometimes shocking, what will the new year bring?

### Note from the editor

Welcome to Bright Business Bulletin the newsletter brought to you by Bevan Financial Management Ltd. The aim of the newsletter is to bring you interesting and relevant content on a monthly basis.

**Speaking of (I hope) interesting and relevant content my new book Bright Business Money is now available on Amazon, Kindle and the iBook store. It's all about helping business owners to master their finances so they can achieve the success they deserve.**

Also a reminder that my app is available to download on Apple and Android - just search Fiona Bevan in the store.

### Pooh quote of the month

Each month we look for inspiration from that great business guru, Winnie the Pooh.



Pooh made his mark in the 100 Acre Wood and achieved world domination through his clever partnering of Disney (although my husband thinks he sold out!).

The weather is often disappointing this time of year but Pooh, of course, has an interesting take on it:

"The nicest thing about rain is that it always stops. Eventually."

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**If 2016 has taught** us anything it is that it pays to expect the unexpected!

**In the next** couple of years we will see some big changes - perhaps - in the environment in which we do business - or not! We just don't know.

**But whatever happens** it is likely that any changes will be difficult to predict and to plan for robustly. This is because many of the decisions our suppliers, customers and staff will be making are likely to be based on their gut feelings rather than facts. Surely the EU Referendum has shown us that!

**So what can** we do to make sure we ride any storm?

**Well, of course,** this time of year is the time when many of us make New Year's Resolutions and promises about what we are going to change in the coming year.

**Some of us want** to be fitter and/or more flexible so our bodies are better able to meet our needs as we get older (I myself have a big birthday this year - 21 is a great age!!).

**Some of us want to** lose the excess weight that seems to have crept onto our bodies over the years without us particularly noticing.

**And some of us want** to take control of our finances and to strip out unnecessary spend so we are better able to afford the things that are most important to us.

**All of these goals** are ones we can apply to making our businesses better able to cope with the change which is coming.

**Make your business** fitter and more flexible by reviewing how you and your team work. Ensure everyone is motivated to work effectively as part of a well oiled machine.

**Strip out any** surplus fat. Businesses which have been around for any length of time are likely to have areas which need to be slimmed down or stripped out altogether.

**Take control** of your finances. Look at what you spend your money on and make sure in the future you don't waste your hard earned cash. A great place to start is to look at your bills to see where easy money can be saved - in particular utilities, rates, insurances, and IT costs.

**And, of course,** have a clear contingency plan detailing how you will reduce the risks in your business model. Although you may not know how the business environment will change in 2017 you can fortify your business against failure.



## Michael's Minutes

January can often be a pretty dismal month with many people experiencing a post Christmas excess hangover. So you may need to spend a little extra time motivating staff.



## Ask Jenny



Jenny is our financial agony aunt and is here to answer your questions.

**Gerry asks:** "I have read a number of times in this newsletter that you think having a business plan is essential. However, when I think about starting to plan, I just cannot get started."

**Jenny says:** "I think the reason it is so difficult for many business owners to plan is that they are overawed by the size of the task.

**So, the first thing** to do is to plan how you are going to go about the process of planning.

**Break down the sections** of the plan into manageable chunks. This will make the process far less daunting. Then tackle the easiest bits first to get you on a roll - typically it is easier to review your business as it is currently than to start with a detailed look at market opportunities, for example.

**If the plan is** not being written for the bank you can be as creative as you like in how you present it. I have clients whose plans, at least initially, are entirely pictorial. Others prefer using mind maps to brainstorm their ideas for their business.

**The key is** to tap into your enthusiasm for your business and make planning an invigorating activity, and not a painful, one.

**Also, make sure that** at each point in the process you align your plan with your goals - both business and personal. This will keep the plan relevant and meaningful.

**To find out more** about planning you can download free written and audio guides from [fionabevanfinancialmanagement.co.uk/guides.php](http://fionabevanfinancialmanagement.co.uk/guides.php)."

## Dates for your diary

### Curious Conversations

Each month Curious Conversations is on the 2nd Monday of the month starting at 5.30pm. It is generally at Bordeaux Quay, Bristol although in certain months the venue changes - for example in August it is often in Julian's field! If you want to meet some excellent peeps who are genuinely interested in helping each other Curious Conversations is for you.

## Back issues

**If you have missed any prior issues** of Bright Business Bulletin and wish to download a copy you can now do so from my website: [www.fionabevanfinancialmanagement.co.uk](http://www.fionabevanfinancialmanagement.co.uk) Just click on the Bright Business Bulletin button.

# Our community

## Featured guide ... business planning

**As I am such a** fan of business planning I have written a free guide to help business owners plan for their business success. As with all the guides I have written it is free to download from my website.

**I have provided** the guide not only in written format but you can also download the audio guide so you can listen to it on the go.

### So how might you find it useful?

**Well, I know that** planning is difficult and the worst part is simply getting started. So having a helping hand to get in the right mind set can be really helpful.



**I have also provided** some tips on how you can prepare a plan with the minimum head ache and maximum impact.

**This means** that you have no excuse for procrastinating and every reason to start the new year in the manner you may wish to continue - with a robust plan you can use to measure your success against.

**Remember piss poor** planning precedes pathetic performance - as an old colleague of mine at Siemens regularly told us!

## Partner of the month - Jayne Douch, GoodCall

Jayne and her team provide the PA service every small business should have - but in a virtual and great value way. They answer calls in a professional and friendly manner so that your business is always represented as you would wish and no client or potential client is left having to talk to a computer. I have used their services since I started Bevan Financial Management and I am positive my business has grown as a result. [office@agoodcall.co.uk](mailto:office@agoodcall.co.uk)

## A special thanks (again) to... Beah and my Billy No Mates

**As publicised in this newsletter** 16th December 2016 saw the regular Billy No Mates Christmas Bash take place at Beah, Wells.

**As usual I** had a great time eating an excellent meal, drinking more than a couple of glasses of delicious wine and spending time with a great group of people.

**My thanks this month** go to Nicola at Beah for being such a superb hostess. She always goes that extra mile and does everything she can to make sure the event goes without a hitch.

**But it is the people,** my fellow No Mates, who make all the difference to the success of the party.

**Because** we are all in the same boat the Billy No Mates bash is genuinely a laid back lunch with friends. Networking is not on the menu (although I did notice a couple of business cards pass under the table).

**So, huge thanks** to my fellow one man bands who tread a solitary path through the world of business and then really let their hair down at Christmas.

**My 'office party'** would certainly not be the same without you guys!