

Bright Business Bulletin

2019
December



Education, Education, Education

What are our youngsters learning that is practical help when it comes to looking for jobs?

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 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.

The fab and knowledgeable Trevor Lever and I have just published a sales and marketing book for consultants called Catfood which is also on Amazon.

Pooh quote of the month



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

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!).

This is a lovely excerpt for this time of year and is about friendship:

As the two friends wandered through the snow on their way home, Piglet grinned to himself, thinking how lucky he was to have a best friend like Pooh.

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I had the privilege of spending the day with business and engineering students at Strode College in Street as part of their Employer Ready Event.

The idea of the day was to, firstly, introduce students to the world of employment in a very practical way by spending time with business people and, secondly, to get feedback on what business people thought was important to cover in the new T level qualifications.

In case you are not aware of the T level qualifications, they are designed to run parallel to A levels but offer a more 'technical' and practical form of qualification - generally with some form of placement built in.

Companies have often complained that youngsters do not have the skills they need to be productive employees from the outset. So the T levels are a proposed answer to this complaint.

Strode is also very involved in offering apprenticeships - which as we all know are a great way of offering on the job training.

The first part of the day was working with 16-17 year old business and engineering students on a project exploring how they might go about making Strode a carbon neutral college. What were the things that needed to be considered and where would they start?

Although there were some students who were more engaged than others - by the

end of the session everyone was taking part in presenting the solutions they had come up with.

The afternoon was spent talking to the degree level students (I had no idea that Strode was linked with Plymouth university and offering degrees) and these more mature students were very focussed and clear on what they wanted from their future careers.

We then had a discussion on the T level business qualifications and what we felt were the modules that would be most important to businesses.

All in all I found the day to be a very positive experience and I was glad to be able to offer some insight into the business perspective.

If you have the opportunity to be involved in something similar I would urge you to take it!



Michael's Minutes

Do take a couple of minutes to individually thank each member of your team, face to face, for their hard work this year - don't just rely on saying it in a Christmas card. It will mean more to them.



Our community



Ask Jenny

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

Mandy asks: "I am a professional service provider and generally I love what I do. However, I have a client that I am finding increasingly hard to work with. The fees are ok but not in line with the amount of work I am increasingly being asked to do. But the client won't pay any more. They make my life difficult and I don't feel they value my work. What should I do?"

Jenny says: "This is a very difficult question to answer. My instinctive response is to say 'sack' this customer immediately and spend the time working for someone who knows your worth."

Clients who won't pay the appropriate fee for what you do, are demonstrating that they don't value your contribution.

Over time this can dent your confidence in pricing effectively for new work and lead you to undervalue yourself.

However, this response is based on you being able to afford to just ditch this client now. If finances are tight you may have to wait a little until you are financially able to take the short term hit in income.

In the medium to long term your business will only grow if you let go of clients who moan about your bills, or pay very slowly, or waste your time, or who undermine your confidence by refusing to pay what you know you are worth.

Letting a client go is a difficult thing to do the first time you do it. However, the relief you feel once its done, because you don't have to work with them, can be wonderful!"

Dates for your diary

Metwalking

This relatively new form of networking with walking is a great way to meet new people whilst getting some exercise. The groups are informal (with even dogs joining in) but professional and meet each month - and FREE. You can choose to join the Bristol or Somerset Metwalkers - or both! - generally on a Wednesday morning. For exact dates and more information go to:
www.metwalking.co.uk

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
Just click on the Bright Business Bulletin button.

Special Feature... Billy No Mates Christmas

Yes, it's that time of year again when Christmas partys beckon. But what do you do if you are a sole trader or work with just one other person?

The answer, if you live in the Wells area, is the Billy No Mates Christmas Bash at Courtyard Restaurant off Sadler Street. Last year was the first year at this new venue and they looked after us well (and it was very good value which is always good news on the build up to Christmas),

Starting at 12pm it goes on until we have all had enough eating and drinking - for that day anyway! This year it is on 20th December.



If you don't live in Somerset but fancy having a Billy No Mates Bash of your own - what is stopping you? Just get together with some of your business mates, find a venue you like and away you go!

If you are interested in joining us in Wells just ping me an email ASAP at fiona@fionabevanfinancialmanagement.co.uk

Partner of the month - John Beynon, Lightside Financial

Rarely, but unfortunately less so in these challenging times, a business finds itself in a position where the owner fears that they may need to shut up shop. There is no one better to go to, to discuss options and to help make any outcome as stress-free as possible, than John. It may be that the situation is not so dark as the owner thinks and they have more options than they thought, or it may be that they have reached the end of the road, in which case John will hold their hand throughout the process. www.lightsidefinancial.com

Special thank you to... Strode College

As I said in the editorial I was lucky enough to spend the day at Strode College in Street a couple of weeks ago.

They ran an Employer Ready Event for Business and Engineering, where students could meet business people and find out what businesses are looking for in future employees.

Although my business is small and I don't need any more employees, I have a lot of insight into what employers need through the work I do with my clients.



It was great to spend the day with the workforce of the future - and it looks like we are in good hands!

They were a very enthusiastic bunch and I was grateful to Strode for the opportunity to spend some time with their students.

www.strode-college.ac.uk