

The Business Connection

Meeting Format

Meetings take place in the evening. Soft drinks and coffee are usually served from 7.00pm with light refreshments. Our standard meeting cost is £12 but only £7 for members. The formal part of the meeting begins around 7.30 and membership information, new member introductions and the speaker for the evening last until 9.15pm when we break for more refreshments. There will be time for networking before, during and after the serious business so bring your business cards. See individual meeting announcements for changes to these times.

Annual Club Membership costs just £35 and includes free links to your web site from ours, a free self-creation members' directory, and reduced entrance charge to our meetings.

Our Next Meetings

Business Connection – How to get your message across in print, on radio or on TV

Tuesday 20th March 2007,
7pm, at Northwick Park Playgolf

Women's Connection

Friday 23rd March 2007,
12 noon - 2 pm at Northwick Park Playgolf

Contact Rhona Denness
(020) 8427 6188 for more details.

Future Meetings

Business Connection -
Tuesday 17th April 2007

Women's Connection -
Monday 16th April 2007

Visit Future Events on our
web site:

www.businessconnection.org.uk
for full, up-to-date details.

Our next meeting - Alan Stevens: How to get your message across in print, on radio or on TV



**How to get asked to appear.
How to become a "media expert"
How to think like a journalist.
How to get "Free Publicity"**

Tuesday 20th March 2007 7pm,
at Northwick Park Playgolf.

Watford Road, Middlesex. HA1 3TZ. www.northwickpark.com

Alan Stevens is a Fellow of the Professional Speakers Association, speaking regularly at conferences, seminars and events worldwide.

He is the only professional speaker in Europe who is also a qualified public relations professional, being a member of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations.

In a 21-year career with Consumers' Association, Alan appeared regularly on BBC TV News, Sky News, Radio 4 and Radio 5 Live as well as in every ITV region, dozens of local radio stations, and has been quoted in every national newspaper. He still appears frequently on radio and television.

Alan is Director of MediaCoach and Media Director of WaringWell, and has been both a TV presenter and expert interviewee. In the latter capacity, he has notched up over 1,000 radio and TV interviews, so is uniquely placed to give insights about how the media works, and how companies can improve their image.

He set up and ran Which? Online - one of the few profitable European Internet Service Providers, and has been providing valuable advice to consumers and companies for over 20 years.

During the networking session Harrow Council staff will be on hand to collect members views on the new strategy - Enterprising Harrow which recognises the importance of the SME sector. In addition a short questionnaire enables you to submit your views on line and to look at the full strategy www.harrow.gov.uk/business

Last months meeting - Human resourcing and the small business

Our two speakers on 20th February covered very relevant topics for everyone – particularly for those running small businesses.

Mike Woolnough from Peninsular Business Services Ltd. explained how an outsourced HR service could help small and large businesses alike. He outlined the many rights now available to employees and how starting with the correct procedures was a significant investment. Mike also emphasised the responsibilities of organisations with five or more staff on health and safety matters.

Nadia Geller of St. James' Place Partnership gave a clear and concise overview of ISAs, Capital Gains Tax (CGT), Pensions and Inheritance Tax (IHT). Now was the time to plan for the future, but in a "holistic way".

Allen Pluck, our Chairman, thanked the speakers and concluded this excellent evening by inviting everyone to enjoy pancakes as it was Shrove Tuesday!

The Women's Connection monthly networking meeting

Friday 23rd March from 12.00 – 2.00pm

Venue: Playgolf – Northwick Park, Watford Road, Harrow, Middlesex. HA1 3TZ

www.northwickpark.com

Do you have a question about entrepreneurship that needs a quick answer?

Woman to Woman - Ask the Business Advisory Panel

Consisting of academics, banks, entrepreneurs, marketing gurus, mentors & business advisors.

Pre-payment / booking required through Rhona Denness at Harrow in Business.

T: 020 8427 6188 Rhona.Denness@hib.org.uk or online at www.eggmeg.co.uk

The Entrepreneurs Experience

Celebrating and supporting female entrepreneurship

Saturday 31st March, from 12.00 – 4.00 pm

Venue: Harrow Civic Centre, 1st Floor.

Harrow in Business in partnership with The Women's Connection

Featuring a showcase of local female entrepreneurs, motivational speakers, ask the panel, business support sessions, pampering for the busy entrepreneur, your corner, and specialist 1:1 support.

Fun and games, prizes / raffle for all the family

Pre-payment / booking recommended through Rhona Denness at Harrow in Business.

T: 020 8427 6188 Rhona.Denness@hib.org.uk or online at www.eggmeg.co.uk

Harrow Observer opportunity

Recently, I had two half page editorials in the Harrow Observer and The Leader papers. How? Eggmeg sponsored the Editor in Chief, Lindsay Coulson, on her planned 84 mile sponsored walk, in aid of St Luke's Hospice. The walk is planned for the end of May - plenty of time to sponsor Lindsay and get publicity for your business (minimum £100). I will warn you, Lindsay is very persuasive - she's convinced me to do the walk, too! If you are interested call The Harrow Observer Newsdesk on **020 8956 8195** (Wednesday afternoon is a good time). From Angela Connor, www.eggmeg.co.uk

Cutting next year's tax bill

Whether you file your own tax returns or have an accountant do it for you, it pays to keep an eye on every possible deduction and allowance that can help you keep your tax bill down.

For example, while most businesses are good at keeping a careful record of the allowable expenses that they can offset against their profits, most businesses don't claim what they're entitled to when it comes to capital allowance.

Where expenses apply to day-to-day running costs, capital allowances permit you to claim a proportion of your bigger purchases, such as computers, vehicles and other equipment.

Rather than claim the whole cost of these assets back, you usually get to claim a proportion of the value back each year. Normally, this proportion is 25 per cent. However, small businesses can claim up to 50 per cent in the first year after the asset is purchased.

There are also categories of capital spending that attract a 100 per cent first year allowance. These include environmentally friendly equipment as well as assets bought for any research-and-development activities you carry out.

Get ahead of the game by considering filing returns online and always pay attention to key filing dates. For further information visit www.hmrc.gov.uk



Web Watch

For free guidance and materials on business issues visit:

www.businessballs.com

For information on management of people visit: www.cipd.co.uk

Leading from the front for success

No business can expect to achieve its full potential if it doesn't have someone confidently driving things forward. There's no real magic to it – to a large extent it's just a matter of being clear about where you want your business to go.

The most important attribute you'll need to lead your team is a sense of vision. This doesn't have to be a grand plan for strategic change. It might just be a target to improve sales or profitability by a certain amount in the coming year. The key thing is to identify an objective you believe in 100 per cent – only then can you expect others to buy into it, too.

The next thing any prospective management leader needs to get right is communication. Once you know what you want from your business, you have to convey that to your employees – perhaps just to the managers that report to you, maybe to your entire workforce.

A pitfall to watch out for when trying to develop your leadership skills is over-confidence. Great business leaders tend to be great listeners, too. Be decisive and strong-willed, by all means, but don't forget that there are usually people around you with a lot of experience and expertise that you can draw on in leading your business forward.

Welcome New Members

Ms Teresa Mack

Craftconscious (Goldsmith)

Mrs Maxine Rattray

Maximize Training & Assessment Ltd
(Training)