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February 2019

Steer

STEER YOUR BUSINESS | THE MAGAZINE

East Kent College Group

**How are your
Resolutions doing?**

Ash Lawrence

**Stop working
Fridays**

Andy Bounds

Editor's Review

Where is the year going? We are already into February, but it feels as if Christmas is only just over with. Having said that, Valentines and Easter products are already in the shops. There is always something to celebrate so it's as well to plan ahead and make sure you take advantage of whatever is being celebrated and that you can relate to your business. Lots of businesses got involved in Veganuary, including Greggs. Some very clever marketing meant that everyone wanted to try their vegan "sausage" rolls and they were in the news for a few days. What a fantastic way to get noticed and boost sales. What is coming up in the next few months that you can get engaged with?

Engaging is what it's all about. Andy Bounds connected with me on LinkedIn. I sent him a message to say thanks for connecting with me, but I'm intrigued why. I'd looked at his profile and he is based in Liverpool and I'm in Kent so no obvious connection. The result of the conversation was that he agreed to write an article based on one of his Tuesday Tips. So simple, but how effective in creating more time in the day.

Most of the articles in this month's issue have come about as a result of meeting someone at networking. I met James Bulman at the Business Show in London when I went to speak to someone on his stand that I knew. James joined in our conversation and now he's a contributor telling us about the changes in the telecoms industry which affect us all.

We never stop learning and hopefully this month's magazine will inspire you to make changes in your business which move you forward and make a difference.

In the coming months, we have some great articles to look forward to. If you'd like to be a contributor, please get in touch.

Have a fabulous February.

Sally



Sally
Marshall

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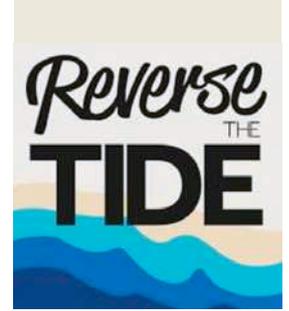
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News From the Beach!

I recently attended a meeting at a local university campus. We have been asked to talk to second year students about soft skills and networking. It seems a bit odd that students don't understand what networking is about but the lecturer said that their perception of networking is to go out and ask for a job! They have no idea about soft skills, building relationships and just getting to know people in the industry that they want to work in.

The result of the conversation is that we are going to talk to them for an hour about networking and our experiences. We will be talking to them about building

relationships, just building their network of people who may be able to connect them to others or just talk to them about the world of work and the different options open to them.

There are lots of stories I can tell about connecting and where it takes you - sometimes quite surprisingly to someone you wouldn't expect to connect with. My favourite story is the one where I was challenged to up my game on social media and I posted a blog on LinkedIn about self-publishing my book. To my surprise someone from one of the High Street banks in London messaged me and said that he was envious of my book and would like to chat to me. He gave me a mobile number and a time slot to call him. It should have rung a few alarm bells but it didn't so I called him and chatted for about 20 minutes or so. After I'd put the phone down, I Googled him. To my shock, he was a very senior member of the bank and I'd just been chatting to him as if he was my best friend! Actually, it was a personal conversation but turned out to be an amazing business contact for me. If I'd tried to connect with him on LinkedIn, he would probably have ignored me but because he wanted to talk to me, we connected and still chat some years on.

The week after our presentation, the University are holding a networking event and inviting students and local business owners so that the students can put it all into practice and make some local connections. Everyone has roughly 250 connections although most don't realise it. When you do the sums, that a lot of potential contacts in the room and I'm sure the students will change their opinion of networking and how it can help them in their future careers.

So, if you aren't networking, why not?



Sally
Marshall



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WORKING HARD BUT NOT MAKING MONEY?

**Are you struggling to find time to do everything? You feel stuck?
Do you work IN your business not ON your business**

Whether you're a start up , in retail, transport, or manufacturing and any of the above sounds familiar, then the **Steer Your Business Programme** is the answer you've been looking for. Here are some key issues we cover...

Vision: The key to success: knowing where you want to be in 5 years' time. Do you know what you want from your business? Are you jumping from one idea to another? Are you following the shiny object time and time again?

Strategy: Have a Plan: How Are You Going To Get To Your Desired Goal? Do you have a plan for your business journey? Do you drift from one thing to another with no real focus on the outcome?

Systems & Processes: Having a Process for Everything Enables Your Business to Run Smoothly Are you offering the same service to every customer? Does everything you do look the same?

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How are your resolutions doing?

So here we are, just over 3 weeks into the New Year, your New Year resolutions, ideas and goals are starting to fall by the wayside and remain incomplete. Maybe they didn't even get off the ground; probably because you are just too busy or just don't have the energy.

Does this sound familiar?

You are not alone. I see it all of the time and in the past I've experienced some of it myself.

We're passionate about our businesses and our ideas. We believe we can manage it all. And we certainly have the drive and desire to succeed, don't we? So with all of this going for most small business owners, why do they fall into the frustrating and disappointing habit of letting themselves down?

Working alone has many benefits, however, just as many pitfalls. Entrepreneurial-minded people typically love the magic moment when an idea is born. They also enjoy creating the strategy.

However, the implementation? Well, that's another story altogether, isn't it? Structure, accountability, routine; these words tend not to be your vocabulary if you are a creative, right-brained person. I'm not saying that hard-working business owners are incapable in these areas, but I do believe that implementing things from beginning to end and fine-tuning the process is often much more challenging – and yes, sometimes impossible for the entrepreneur.

And if you are a small business owner without a team to complete the details and some of the implementation, you might get very frustrated. It's like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole when you try to engage your brain in activities that just don't feel natural to you.

While lack of resources is often a problem, there is another obvious drawback to being a small business owner – the lack of accountability.

Successful business owners most often engage a coach/mentor and/or participate in Mastermind or results groups. There are so many benefits to these relationships that I can't even go into them

ons



all, but one that seems to be a common denominator for many entrepreneurs is what I call the results factor. When the stumbling blocks have been worked out and a plan has been put in place, they feel more inspired to follow their tasks through to completion results group meeting.

One small success after the other leads to larger success and increased profits, the payoff really becomes obvious. This accountability seems critical to their success.

Making a commitment to yourself is a great start, the trouble is, sometimes it feels OK to let ourselves down. You might find yourself making excuses, and yes, they are excuses! and we allow things to elevate in urgency and get out of control until you have so many fires to put out that the well just runs dry.

Instead of exhausting yourself like this, why not join a results driven group of fellow entrepreneurs?

A results driven Mastermind group may raise the bar for you as you challenge and support one another. Our small groups of small business owners simply commit to completing several tasks prior to the next month's meeting. As a group of stubborn, like-minded entrepreneurs, no one is going to come to the meeting having failed at their commitments!

Think about what motivates you to do the detail work and follow through on your ideas. Blocking out just one day per month can make a huge difference if you block not only the time, but the interruptions as well. Turn off the phone, close your computer and focus on your 'to do' list.

Who do you know who will hold your feet to the fire? Someone who will encourage you and offer up the occasional 'atta boy' when you've stretched beyond your comfort zone? Success is a beautiful thing – even the small successes – and accountability could be the key!

If you want to lift your business to the next level this year and not let your New Year goals slip then join our Entrepreneurs Business Club!

Do It Now!



Ash
Lawrence



Email **Ash Lawrence** on
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<https://ashlawrence.co.uk>

East Kent College Group

Throughout Kent, businesses can collaborate with one large educational provider, the EKC Group. When East Kent College and Canterbury College merged in 2018, they created the EKC Group.



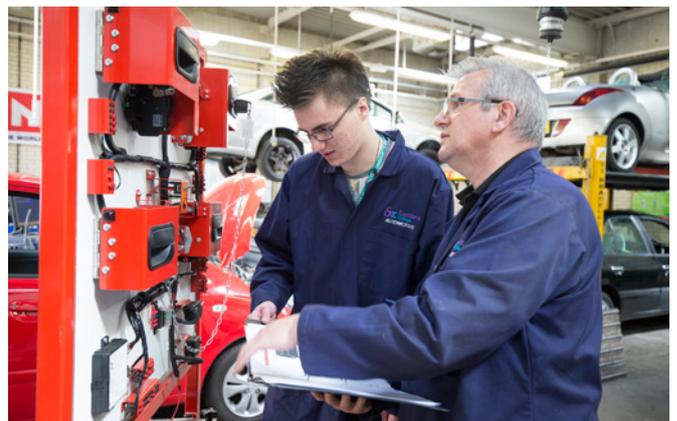
The Group is a family of five colleges in Broadstairs, Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone and Sheppey. The Group also provides apprenticeship, professional training and higher education.

In 2019 the EKC Group will build on their successful relationships with businesses.

Successful businesses recognise the importance of developing the next generation of its workforce with good training. Traditional apprenticeships ensured proper tradecraft was instilled in young workers. In the 21st century, collaborations with technical and vocational colleges, build links between industries. Education remains key to continued growth and prosperity.

The Group ties its curriculum to business needs. If a construction company is looking for new bricklayers, the group will advance the right skills and ensure students are 'work ready'.

The Group is developing the next generation of construction professionals and also works in tandem with





specialised sectors, for example establishing a marine engineering course.

EKC has a core aim, which is to enable students to progress into the career of their choice. With some 13,000 students across its colleges, there's no doubt that this provides an attractive talent pool for businesses looking for the next generation of skilled employees.

There are commercial reasons to work alongside the EKC Group, it is an economic heavy hitter. The Group has a turnover of £55m with 1,250 staff and is one of the largest employers, and markets, in Kent. The Group works with a variety of suppliers and reiterated its commitment to spending locally.

The Group operates a business wing, known as EKC Commercial Services. A jewel in the crown is its own four-star rated hotel, The Yarrow, in Broadstairs. The Yarrow hotel was originally developed to ensure an inspirational learning environment for students taking hospitality courses. The Yarrow is now a hub for business events, as well as its local community.

The EKC Group welcomes approaches from businesses both with a training need and a commercial offering.

With the significant rises in degree courses, and the new higher apprenticeships, the group offers an alternative to traditional routes to higher education. Students achieve higher learning and career aspirations through the colleges, but without the drawback of significant debt. Students from The Group will have a huge amount of industry experience.

With the Government's first new T-Level pathways set to be introduced by 2020, The Group will also offer students block work placements, adding real strength to an employer's workforce and will ensure the industry can mould students while they're still at college.

The Group offers professional training courses delivered by its experienced and specialist tutors who recently delivered hundreds of free training courses for businesses, offering digital skills training to help ensure employers have the skills required to tackle 21st Century commerce.

If you've ever thought about collaborating with an educational organisation, there's never been a better time to do so. The EKC Group has the scale to operate across Kent.



Contact the **EKC group** at enquiries@ekcgroup.ac.uk to find out more.

How to

Stop

working Fridays

Fed-up with spending too long in pointless face-to-face meetings?

Well, here's a great way to free-up some time, and get your life - and your happiness - back!

My PA Emma is amazing. Brilliant at her job. Our customers all love her. And she saves me hours every week. Here's how...

When people ring, they often want to see me face-to-face (f2f) for an hour. So, if appropriate, Em says 'Andy'd love to meet you. But we don't need to take an hour of your time - he's really quick at things like this. So let's put it in for less. If you and Andy then agree you'd like more time, you can sort that with him then - OK?' And of course, they always agree with this. Because it's better and quicker for them.

She then says 'I want to book it in ASAP for you. But, because you're in different cities, it'll be much quicker for you if I organise a telephone meeting for you - OK?' Again, they agree with this too. So, the caller's delighted. They've got the meeting they wanted. Even better - it's only twenty minutes, taking place soon; not one hour f2f in a few weeks.

And for the few people who've said to Emma "I much prefer face-to-face than phone", she tends to reply "Have you seen his face?! Trust me - phone's better." And for some reason they always agree with this!

Try this

Look at how many hours you spend in one-hour f2f meetings. Wouldn't it be amazing if you could spend less time in them?

Well, you can!

Just shorten them. Or hold them less often. Or make them telephone not f2f. I know that seeing your lovely face is important to everyone. But your time is important to you. And anything you can do to give you more of it is a must-do...



Andy Bounds



Andy Bounds is one of the world's leading authorities on communication and sales. For more of his advice, visit www.andyboundsonline.com.

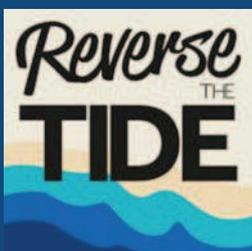
Reverse ^{THE} TIDE

Reverse The Tide aims to make a difference to the local community and environment we live in by increasing awareness amongst businesses and local communities of the impact of products and services we use and where they go when we've finished with them. The Reverse The Tide brand has been heavily adopted within the water sports community and we continue to build on our ethos of reversing the tide in respect of the damage we have done to both the environment (both land and sea) and ourselves as part of the modern way of life.

Help us Reverse the Tide



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Sell your property in Turkey

with no extra cost

Turkey is one of the most preferred countries by foreign nationals to spend a holiday in the summer. Particularly Bodrum, Marmaris, Fethiye, Datca, Dalaman, and Kusadasi are some of the best holiday destinations for the UK residents. Due to its weather and numerous beautiful beaches, the visitors tend to buy summer houses to spend quality time in these locations. In the previous article, the keys to buying a property in Turkey were summarised. Accordingly, it is easy to buy real property and start planning future holidays!

It would be highly advantageous to consider how to sell the property and viewing the challenges before actually buying one for yourself. Therefore, this article will focus on how to sell your property in Turkey, and what you can do to speed up the process.

First of all, homeowners should get in touch with an estate agent and a Turkish-Qualified Solicitor. The estate agent would put the property on the market with the right price, while the solicitor prepares the sales contract amongst the other necessary documents. According to the Turkish laws and regulations in force, transfer of ownership of a property is possible only with an official deed and registry, which is signed at the Land Registry Office.

The seller or his/her representative should make a preliminary application to the Land Registry Office. The Land

Registry Office will require the following documents from the seller at the appointment date;

- Title deed of the property;
- Identification document or passport (Together with its translation);
- Property Fair Value Document to be provided from the relevant City Council;
- Mandatory Earthquake Insurance Policy for real estates;
- One photo of the seller (taken within the last six months, 6x4 cm. size);
- If one of the sides cannot speak Turkish, certified interpreter; this will not be necessary if the seller authorises a Turkish-Qualified Solicitor;
- If the transaction will be performed with a power of attorney issued abroad, original or certified copy of the power of attorney and its approved Turkish translation.

The Land Registry Office personnel will require all parties to sign all the sales documents before the



personnel. As it was mentioned in the previous article, it would be beneficial to sign a Preliminary Property Sales Contract at a Turkish Notary Public. However, legal ownership of the property does not transfer with this contract.

OZ Legal Consultancy can offer complete assistance to its clients with regards to the sales procedures, from the beginning to the end. By doing so, the clients would avoid unexpected expenses such as flight tickets, accommodation, translation fees and most importantly he/she would be able to save his/her time. Compared to the British conveyancing system where it takes at least eight weeks to complete the paperwork and transfer of a title deed, the property conveyancing procedures can be finalised around a week in Turkey.

After our clients choose their summer house, land or any other type of property, we, OZ Legal Consultancy, are here to assist our clients to complete the procedures rapidly for them to start enjoying the property at the earliest opportunity.

Next Article: Invest USD 250.000,00 in property and get your Turkish citizenship!



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For more information, please contact:
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Cash flow is critical

Cash flow is critical for a business because it needs money to pay suppliers, employees and overheads such as rent and utilities. Firms must ensure they have enough working capital for these day-to-day operations and often this is tied up in monies owed to the business by customers who have bought goods or services on credit.

Businesses can take steps at the beginning of a relationship with a customer to help protect this position; this is known as better underwriting of credit. Two of the fundamental requirements for a business are i) to determine the true legal identity of the customers i.e. are they a sole trader, partnership or a limited company and ii) to establish and regularly monitor the creditworthiness of the customers i.e. their ability to pay your invoices as and when they fall due.

This will not eradicate all problems of customers who pay late but will enable the business to know who is liable for payment in the event of default. Most of the information required can be obtained by asking a potential customer to complete and sign a carefully designed credit account application form, which should also contain your standard payment terms.

However, it does not stop here as businesses then need to develop and maintain a relationship with customers to ensure payments are received as near to the due date as possible. This will involve understanding your customers'

procedures for approving your invoices for payment and when their payment runs are made. For key customers, a polite telephone call BEFORE a payment is due will often identify if there are any problems which can be rectified in time to minimise any potential shortfall before it is too late.

Procedures should be put in place whereby the debtors' ledger is monitored and all overdue accounts are chased immediately. This does not mean that they must be pursued aggressively as often a polite initial call will either secure the payment or will identify at an early stage if the customer has any financial problems which are impacting the small business being paid on time. Putting off making any phone calls for overdue accounts could otherwise increase the exposure of small businesses especially if they continue to supply further goods to the customer.

Many firms do not have the need to employ a full-time credit controller. This will often mean the monitoring of the outstanding balances is left under the remit of somebody within the firm who has other responsibilities and who might see this aspect as being the one element

of their job they do not like doing - asking for payment. However, this is vital and often a half day training course can improve a person's skills in this area whilst having a significant influence on the cash flow of the small business. A shortage of cash flow could very well lead to the insolvency of the business.

Businesses should never take it for granted that because a customer is a household name that payment will always be received, even if it is a bit late. In this regard, it would be a sensible policy to have an even spread of customers rather than just one or two major accounts.

Timing of large cash movements in a month, comprising of payments from customers and payments to suppliers, is also crucial. Consequently, firms should keep a strict watch on payment due dates and cash flow.

Whilst the business owners need to find the correct balance between the commercial and financial aspects of marketing, selling and being paid for the goods and services they provide it should be understood that any

accounts that are paid late will reduce the profits on those sales. Similarly, any extended credit terms given to customers in order to tempt them away from your competitors should be analysed to ensure the extra profits you hope to make are higher than the additional costs which will be incurred in doing so.

Pecunia
See the credit in your business



Kevin Artlett



Contact **Kevin Artlett FCICM ACII** Director Pecunia (2016) Limited on kevin@pecunia2016.co.uk or <https://pecunia2016.co.uk>



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Self-development tools to benefit from change

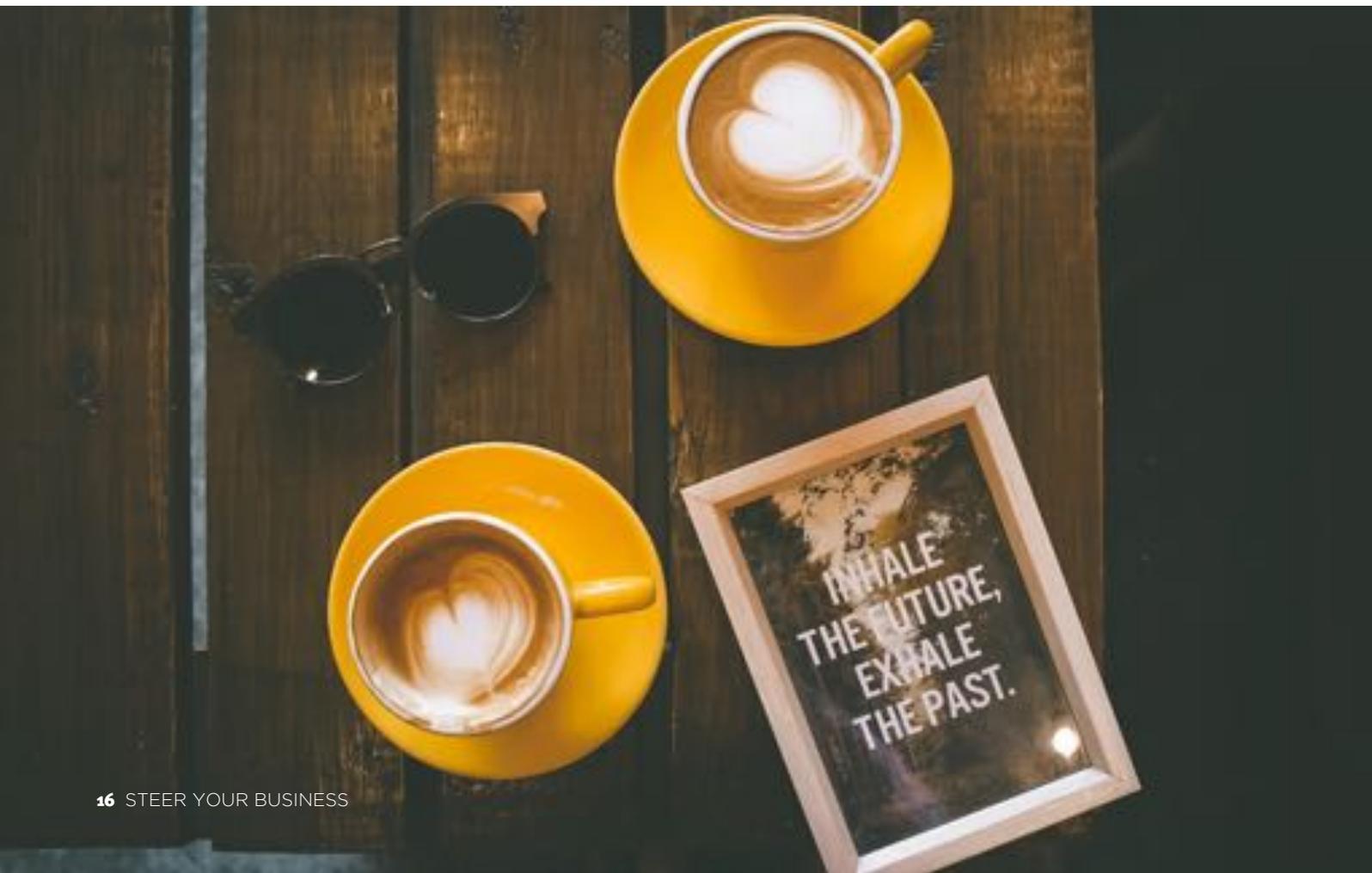
Having previously considered using some practical aids to start making effective changes in your life, there are a number of tools that will help to embed the changes and make sure you continue to move forward.

Making meaningful choices

Making choices can be really exciting. It presents you with the opportunity to tailor your life and to express yourself in a distinctive way. Important factors in making great choices include the ability to: question and reason; to reflect and learn; to read, write and listen; to feel pain and

joy; to record and memorise; to believe, wonder, dream and hope and to know what is best for yourself.

There are times in life when we have no choice, however, we do have a choice in how we respond and react to given circumstances. To be a confident choice maker, you need to be in a receptive state to enable you to make the best possible decisions. You can get significant help in making effective choices from the book "A Matter of Choice" by Denna Michelli and Julie Simpson (Marshall Cavendish, ISBN - 978-981-4328-07-4). I found Chapter 12 (A Matter of Application) and the Three Circles of Questions particularly helpful.



Using mindfulness

As a form of therapy, mindfulness has recently been in the news a great deal. It is recommended by the Department of Health and is seen as a skill that can prevent us from becoming ill if we incorporate it into our daily lives.

People who regularly implement mindfulness strategies may find lasting physical and psychological benefits such as:

- Increased experience of calm and relaxation
- Higher levels of energy and enthusiasm for living
- Increased self-confidence and self-acceptance
- Less danger of experiencing stress, depression, anxiety, chronic pain, addiction or low immune efficiency
- More self-compassion and compassion for others

Remind yourself to take notice of your thoughts, feelings, body sensations and the world around you. Pick a regular time when you decide to be aware of the sensations created by the world around you. Try new things, such as sitting in a different seat in meetings or going somewhere new for lunch. Mindfulness isn't about making worrying thoughts go away, but about seeing them as events. It can be especially helpful to take a mindful approach if you realise that you have been "trapped" in reliving past problems or "pre-living" future worries.

Networking

Developing your network is easy because you know more people than you think you know. Consider: family, friends, roommates, significant others, school faculty and staff, fellow students, alumni past and present, co-workers, neighbours and many more. These people are all part of your current network, professional and personal. Keep an on-going list of the names and contact information of the people in your network. Ask your contacts to introduce you to their contacts and keep your list growing (don't forget to offer to reciprocate!). Never underestimate an opportunity to make a connection.

There are a number of social networking sites where you can make great professional contacts you can also use discussion groups such as blogs, newsgroups, and forums to network on the internet. This will help you discover the hot issues in your field of interest, post questions, and find out about specific job openings that are not otherwise posted to the general public.

Some benefits of networking include:

- Gaining information for yourself and sharing information with others.

- Expanding your knowledge about where you want to grow and being able to help others.
- Networking allows you to gain new ideas and new approaches that you didn't think of before.
- The more you network, the better you do and the more chances there are that you will grow.
- You will get a reputation for being a person people want to talk to and get to know.
- Making friends and getting people to like us leads to higher self-esteem.

Mentoring

Mentoring is a powerful personal development and empowerment tool. It is an effective way of helping people to progress in their careers and is becoming increasingly popular. It is a partnership between two people (mentor and mentee), normally working in a similar field or sharing similar experiences, based upon mutual trust and respect.

Mentoring includes training, support, encouragement, advice and guidance from people who have both 'done it before' and are usually independent of the mentee's current team, department or organisation. Mentees see a different perspective and gain insights into the best business practices.

Many organisations have established mentor programmes which can be accessed through the HR department. If there is no formal mentoring programme in your organisation consider business and other professional contacts who are successful workers in the field you hope to crack into and can offer you some tricks of the trade. Think about who does what you want to do better than you do, it including: Colleagues and business acquaintances, former bosses and workers with a great reputation.

The fourth article will cover your options for support for benefitting from change including: Motivational profiling; Strengths based coaching and Career coaching.



Phil Auden



Contact **Phil Auden** on Email:
philauden@btconnect.com
www.gainfromchange.co.uk

SUCCESS

Speciality Breads – Kent Success

Speciality Breads in Margate are continuing to prosper. Managing Director Simon Cannell reports a 30% increase on trading since last year.

The success of Speciality Breads can be attributed to several factors including Vegan Society approval

and Nut Free production areas. Part of the success is Speciality Breads supplying frozen bakery products to wholesalers who in turn supply discerning retailers and hospitality providers. Speciality Bread's other brand is Baker's Bicycle which sells a smaller range of frozen breads into delicatessens, farm shops and specialised outlets.

Simon is especially proud of the success of the Vegan range of products and explained how his original research showed most of his products were suitable for people who follow a vegan diet. However, Simon realised that for many of his customers following the vegan diet, it was a very significant choice. Simon wanted to ensure the end customer could be certain of the vegan credentials, so he sought Vegan Society advice and finally recognition.

Speciality Breads were ahead of the recent focus on the environment as they are committed to reducing single use plastic by 50%, all packaging is recyclable or recycled and all of their company cars are hybrid or electric.

Speciality Breads is a Kent success story in a highly competitive market. Currently employing over 60 people with a turnover of around £8 million they have proven that quality food products are in demand. If you want to know more about Speciality Breads, they can be contacted

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Speciality Breads can be contact on
email: info@specialitybreads.co.uk
<https://www.specialitybreads.co.uk>



Simon
Cannell

The Online Teacher

A Kent based Education business had a very successful 2018 and anticipates further expansion in 2019. The Online Teacher recruits and trains Teachers to offer online English lessons to Chinese and Japanese students on a 1-2-1 basis.

The Online Teacher also actively recruits and places the best EFL Teachers to work in schools across China. This includes international, state and private schools. The Online Teacher was formed in 2016 as a dual venture between ADM Computing, one of Kent's longest established technology companies and Enlai Education of China.

James Kitch, Head of Talent Acquisition at The Online Teacher said, "We place great emphasis on ensuring the schools we work with have an excellent management structure. It is imperative that our Teachers are provided with the best environments and support. A Teacher can typically expect to work for between 12 and 24 months on a contract in China. During this time the Teacher will provide a valuable service to Chinese people who have undoubted enthusiasm for English. But also, the Teacher will learn and develop. The Online Teacher will support them all the way.

In addition to English Teachers, The Online Teacher are sometimes asked to source other specialisations; for example, they recently placed a Physics Lecturer who had previously served at the Hadron Collider in Cern, Switzerland.

All recruitment is conducted in the UK before candidates are referred to the offices in China. The Teachers can speak to representatives of the Schools via Skype before travelling to China.



James Kitch



If you are, or know of, any potential Teachers who may be interested, The Online Teacher can be reached via e-mail:

james.kitch@the-online-teacher.co.uk



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Telecoms Part 2

What the changes mean

Last month we looked at numbers and overall provision or, if you like, the “big picture”. In this issue we will look at what the changes mean to end users.

For decades users have used the ubiquitous handset. Aside from changing from rotary dialling to keypads, there has effectively been little if any visible change overall. True we now see displays showing details of numbers or users and the technology behind delivering the voices to our ears has changed enormously but visually? Not so much. However the migration to IP and other changes means we no longer need to have a desk phone at all. Today’s users can use apps or software to receive calls upon pretty much any smart device with an internet connection. iPhones or Android smart phones, tablets, Windows Linux or MAC computers/laptops.

With apps and soft phones (software products that deliver a telephone function) available for a fraction of the cost of handsets – indeed in some cases for no cost whatsoever – this inevitably has a significant impact upon the capital required for a telephone

solution with the one caveat that a decent headset which is required for a computer and some tablets etc can be comparable to a handset. However the big change reflects the move to “cloud computing” which – predictably enough – can be referred to as “cloud telecom”. This model removes the local phone system or PBX (Private Branch Exchange) which has several impacts. A phone system easily costs several thousand pounds so obviously not having one saves a lot of money. A PBX is also a point of failure which, if absent, is not going to present those failures. The traditional sales model also sees feature-sets of PBX’s split between standard and additional. Things such as call recording, auto attendant and so on attract additional fees. Many cloud solutions include all these as standard as they are defined as call flow rather than profit opportunities. So far so rosy. Or is it? Naturally there is a flip side.

The cloud telecom model is generally based upon a per user monthly fee between £7.00 and £25.00. That gets steep if you have a lot of extensions. Some providers will offer alternative pricing for those users

but the vast majority of companies selling telecom are reselling someone else's product and as such operate under strict pricing regimes. The secret therefore is to check how far up the "food chain" your prospective provider is. If you are talking to the owner of the exchanges, a tier one carrier or equivalent, then there will be someone who can create a package that suits. On the subject of packages, it is as well to avoid being tied in to anything more than a three year term and to fixed pricing. Costs are generally coming down as we move towards a capacity model rather than price per minute and voice technology/hardware changes every fifteen months or so, so why stick with today's costs or devices?

Back to the user experience! The big technical change is that the telephone handsets (or equivalent app/software) now use a client server model as seen in IT for decades. This means that as long as there is a data connection, it will register with its target PBX or exchange wherever it is worldwide. Yes, worldwide, the first "w" in www. So - plug in a handset to the internet and you have free calls between it and your exchange wherever your handset is - at home or overseas. This has enormous implications for office space and the use of flexible working and indeed flexible staff sizes.

The availability of software and apps has also seen a resurgence of screen popping and dial from screen. This is effectively applying the same facilities as we enjoy on

our mobiles with knowledge of who is calling us and the ability to dial by selecting a name. Beyond that, users can now dial by clicking on numbers displayed on web pages and CRM's and databases. This is important as the time actually spent in manual dialling is staggering, so a huge improvement in productivity and time is money. So is knowledge and if the contact's record is presented when they call, you are more likely to record information about the call which will be useful at a later date.

To summarise then, users can be located anywhere, choose to use a variety of devices, save money and handle calls far better and more flexibly than at any time in history. So find an experienced and capable provider and make their lives difficult! Think about how you would handle calls if only it were possible then go demand it of your provider because odds are whatever you dream can be provided and for way less than you think!



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Events February

Company	Name	Date	Time	Location	Cost	To book your place
ABC Networks	ABC Upon Medway	1st Feb	7:30am - 9am	St. George Hotel 7-8 New Road Avenue Rochester, ME4 6BB	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
ABC Networks	ABC Maidstone	5th Feb	7:30am - 9am	K Sports, Cobdown, Station Rd, Ditton Aylesford ME20 6AU	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce	After Hours Club	5th Feb	6pm-7:30pm	The Conningbrook Hotel, Canterbury Road, Ashford, TN24 9QR	Free	https://www.kentinvictachamber.co.uk/events/after-hours-club-374/
ABC Networks	ABC Gillingham	6th Feb	7am - 9am	Gillingham Golf Club, Woodlands Road, Gillingham, ME7 2AP	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce	After Hours Club	7th Feb	6pm-7:30pm	Bridgewood Manor Hotel, Nr Blue Bell Hill, Walderslade Woods, Chatham/Medway ME5 9AX	Free	https://www.kentinvictachamber.co.uk/events/after-hours-club-386/
Dragon Coworking and Clockwork Moggy	Branding your Business for 2019	7th Feb	12:00pm - 1:30pm	St George Hotel, New Road Avenue, Rochester, ME4 6BB	Free	https://www.eventbrite.com/e/branding-your-business-for-2019-tickets-54343957239
ABC Networks	ABC Sittingbourne	8th Feb	7am - 9am	Sittingbourne and Milton Regis Golf Club, Wormdale Hill, Sittingbourne ME9 7PX	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
ABC Networks	ABC Ashford	14th Feb	7am - 9am	The Flying Horse, Wye Road, Boughton Aluph TN25 4HH	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
ABC Networks	ABC Upon Medway	15th Feb	7:30am - 9am	St George Hotel, New Road Avenue, Rochester, ME4 6BB	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Make It Your Business	Make It Your Business Rochester - for women starting or running a business	15th Feb	4.30pm - 6.30pm	St George Hotel, New Road Avenue, Rochester, ME4 6BB	£10.26	https://www.eventbrite.com/e/make-it-your-business-rochester-for-women-starting-or-running-a-business-tickets-52096824003
ABC Networks	ABC Maidstone	19th Feb	7:30am - 9am	K Sports, Cobdown, Station Rd, Ditton Aylesford ME20 6AU	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce	After Hours Club	19th Feb	6pm-7:30pm	Firmin Express Unit 10 Kemsley Fields Business Park, Sittingbourne, ME10 2FE	Free	https://www.kentinvictachamber.co.uk/events/after-hours-club-362/
Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce	After Hours Club	20th Feb	6pm-7:30pm	Abbotts Barton Hotel 36 New Dover Road, Canterbury, CT1 3DU	Free	https://www.kentinvictachamber.co.uk/events/after-hours-club-314/
ABC Networks	ABC Gillingham	20th Feb	7am - 9am	Gillingham Golf Club, Woodlands Road, Gillingham, ME7 2AP	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Ladies Who Latte	LWL Ashford	21st Feb	10am - 12pm	The Farriers Arms, Church Road, Ashford TN25 6NU	Free	https://www.facebook.com/groups/383353965115057/
ABC Networks	ABC Sittingbourne	22nd Feb	7am - 9am	Sittingbourne and Milton Regis Golf Club, Wormdale Hill, Sittingbourne ME9 7PX	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Sally Marshall Group	Networking with a Difference	27th Feb	10am - 12 noon	Broome Park, Canterbury Road, Canterbury, Kent CT4 6QX	£15	sally@steeryourbusiness.com
ABC Networks	ABC Ashford	28th Feb	7am - 9am	The Flying Horse, Wye Road, Boughton Aluph TN25 4HH	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Metro Bank	Business to Business network	27th Feb	6pm - 7:30pm	Metro Bank, Maidstone	Free	

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Inside Back Cover	£350	£320	£300
Outside Back Cover	£450	£420	£400
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