

BUSINESS DIRECTION SERVICE

THE PURPOSE OF THIS SERVICE IS TO HELP COMPANIES DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES THAT WILL DIFFERENTIATE THEM FROM THEIR COMPETITORS.

Service Provider Background

The Centre for Competitiveness (CforC) has over 18-years experience of working with Northern Ireland businesses, helping them to grow and develop in local and external markets. Our services are based on ensuring that local companies become more effective and efficient through improvements to their productivity, quality, new value creation and their working relationship with others.

With a dedicated core team and a network of specialist associates, Centre for Competitiveness offers tailored practical solutions that deliver against individual company requirements. This approach allows us to offer a broader range and depth of experience while retaining a co-ordinated personalised service. We are committed to working with companies to help them develop and embed solutions within their own staff, structures and operating processes, to ensure ongoing impacts well beyond the life of our intervention with them.

Individual Backgrounds

Deliverer	Background
Adrian Gundy	Adrian is a Chartered Marketer who has been working in Sales and Marketing for over 20 years, in Business Improvement for over 10 years and in Innovation for over 7 years. Adrian has worked with around 300 companies from the Private and Voluntary sectors during the last 10 years.
Derek Johnston	Derek has 12 years of experience in Collaborative Working, Business Improvement, and Project Management, nationally and internationally.
Michael Fitch	Michael is a Chartered Accountant who specialises in helping small businesses in Strategic Planning and Financial Management.
Rodney McAdam	Rodney is Head of the 'School of Marketing, Entrepreneurship and Strategy'. Professor of Innovation Management at the University of Ulster and is a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute. Rodney's areas of expertise include: Innovation Management, Operations, Knowledge, Quality Management, and Business Improvement.
Ken O'Neill	Ken's background is in Textiles, Engineering Management and Consultancy. Ken now focuses on Management and Business Development in small businesses.
Adele Dunn	Adele has 13 years experience in the Food Sector and lectures in Marketing Management.
Michael Brennan	Michael has over 25 years experience working in Small Business Development, Entrepreneurship and Innovation.
Neil Mitchell	Neil's recent focus has been in improving Innovation within SMEs.
Mark Faulkner	Mark is a trained NLP Practitioner and has over 14 years experience Facilitating, Training, Consulting and helping small businesses in Change and Project Management.
Jim Perry	Jim is a Chartered Accountant and has held a number of Senior Management positions in NIE/Viridian and the NITB. His responsibilities have included the Development of Strategy and the Implementation of Balanced Scorecards and Performance Management Systems.

Description of approach taken

The Centre for Competitiveness will work with the company management to determine the issues, priorities, preferred approach and timescales for implementation. This entails four steps:

- 1 Defining and understanding the issue(s);
- 2 Agreeing the approach;
- 3 Delivering and reviewing;
- 4 Embedding and going forward.

Contact Us

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Examples of client engagements (within last 2 years)

Service Type	Company	Sector	Project Summary
Customer Relationship Management	Alpha Environmental Systems	Environmental Services	The project was launched to help the company successfully bid for a large contract. It involved defining the customers needs, mapping processes, designing procedures, setting customer satisfaction feedback mechanisms and key performance indicators.
New value creation	Gallahers R&D	Tobacco	The task was to help the R&D team come up with more useful and value adding ideas. Team working and new opportunity identification techniques were developed.
	SME Group	Various	Working with a group of SMEs to help them improve their innovation capability in creating new products & services.
	Collaboration	Multiple	Working with companies with complementary skills and needs to help them develop new opportunities that they would not be able to do by working on their own.
	Networking	Multiple	Developing networks and cultivating new routes to market.
'Project Management' and 'Management of Change'	Royal Mail	Services	Project Management training.
	Xenosense	Manufacture	Project Management training for all the staff as it was seen as an essential skill for the work they do.
	Core Systems	IT	Aligning people to strategic change and improving their productivity and effectiveness, ensuring on-time and within costs projects delivery.
New Product Development	Irwin's Bakery	Food	Mentoring in new product development and marketing
'Entrepreneurship' and 'Small Business Support'	Various	Various	MBA Programme delivered by UU in association with the Centre for Competitiveness.
	Middleton Seafoods	Food	Business mentoring and financial planning.
Business Improvement	WIN Fledgling Innovator	Various	Mentoring in Innovation and Business Improvement with 216 small companies less than 3 years old.

Tangible benefits delivered

Company	Examples of Tangible Benefits
Alpha Environmental Systems	Successful award of £1.5m contract.
Gallahers R&D	£100k / year saving in NPD process. Documented Innovation Strategy endorsed by Corporate Headquarters.
Irwin's Bakery	Business plan resulted in the receipt of ICBAN Bursary support.
Core Systems	Increased profits from projects with associated improvements in customer and staff satisfaction levels.

What our customers say

"This project was instrumental in our winning and delivering a £1.5m contract"
Stephen Chestnutt - Managing Director, Alpha Environmental Systems

"Thank you CforC - organisation is critical in achieving your objectives - on or ahead of time and on or below budget. The Practical Project Management course, does exactly what it says on the tin by applying a simple approach to any organisation" Robert Adams - Dairy Produce Packers Ltd

"This was very well structured and extremely participative and I would recommend it to companies who wish to develop project management skills among their managers"
David Peden - Area Programme Manager, Royal Mail

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