

hokum

rubbish

piffle

balderdash

twaddle

poppycock

hot air

drivel

codswallop

phooey

gobbledygook

baloney

garbage

bosh

bull

the no-nonsense guide to social enterprise success

issue 1, first edition

January - June 2011



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have your say

We aim to make the no-nonsense guide a part of the Social Solutions Academy community.

If you are interested in being a guest editor, featuring or advertising in the next edition, due out in June, please call **0845 468 2126** or email **guide@socialsolutionsacademy.co.uk**

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editor's welcome



Vanessa Augustus,
Founder & Head of Innovation

Hello my name is Vanessa. I am delighted to welcome you to the first issue of our no-nonsense guide to social enterprise success.

If you are not familiar with the work of the Social Solutions Academy (SSA) we are a Manchester based learning and development organisation for social enterprises and public sector commissioners.

Since establishing the SSA in September 2009 my vision for the work we do places relationships and personal and professional development as key ingredients to increase the momentum and impact of social change.

For nearly twenty years the social enterprise sector has become the training ground for my own career. After managing a social enterprise at the age of twenty one, I went on to work with and provide advice and guidance to a diverse range of social entrepreneurs.

In addition, I have worked in Local Authorities and have seen that support is also needed for those working for public services in commissioning roles. The role of the 'Commissioner' is explored further on page 19 in my 'What is commissioning?' article.

Under the new government we are living in the era of the 'Big Society'. Commentators argue that unlike the coalition government the concept is not new. We address this debate further in our own update on the 'Big Society'.

Many of you will agree that from 2011 social entrepreneurs will have to be more prepared to adapt to a working environment where attempts

Our mission is to build positive working relationships between social enterprises and decision makers.

to grow a successful enterprise will involve dealing with a changing public sector.

As an independent organisation our mission is to build positive working relationships between social enterprises and decision makers from the public and private sectors.

We've got a big vision to make the Academy a melting pot for social innovators across the North West.

We are building a good reputation and our no-nonsense guide is the next step to showcasing the support available to social entrepreneurs.

In doing so, we also have an opportunity to highlight the personal journeys of the people behind successful social enterprises.

Find out more about our work and plans on page 20.

a-z of social entrepreneurship

- A** is for **ambition**. Most social entrepreneurs set out to achieve ambitious plans for social or environmental change.
- B** is for **business model**. Well-run social enterprises diversify their revenue streams to reduce the risk of reliance on one or a few large programmes, events or funders.
- C** is for **change maker**. Social entrepreneurs set out to change the world through business.
- D** is for **Development Trusts**; not for profit organisations that actively involve partnerships between the community, voluntary, private and public sectors.
- E** is for the **ethical value system** that is central to the social and environmental entrepreneur's mind set.
- F** is for **Florence Nightingale**; an historic example of social entrepreneurship through the establishment of the first school for nurses she fought to improve hospital conditions.
- G** is for **giving back to the community**; a key driving force of social entrepreneurship.
- H** is for **hybrid non-profit ventures**. The model includes some degree of cost recovery through the sale of goods and services to a cross section of institution - public and private - as well as to target population groups.
- I** is for **innovative solutions** brought to the market by social innovators.
- J** is for **job creation**. Many social enterprises are set up to provide excluded groups such as ex-offenders, the homeless and the disabled, employment and training opportunities.
- K** is for **knowledge economy** that provides the conditions to develop new ideas whose value can be traded, for example, by the design and production of high-value goods and services.
- L** is for **leverage**. Non-profit ventures depend on outside funding for survival. Longer term sustainability is enhanced because of the commitment of a multiplicity of partnerships to the organization's vision and objectives.



- M** is for **micro-finance**; a movement that envisions a world in which low-income households have permanent access to a range of high quality financial services to finance their income-producing activities.
- N** is for **networking**; an essential factor of a social entrepreneurs' marketing strategy.
- O** is for the **opportunities** seized by social and environmental leaders.
- P** is for **profits** which are principally reinvested back into the social enterprise to achieve social aims.
- Q** is for the identification of **quality affordable food** by the pioneers of social enterprise in 1840. The Rochdale workers' co-operative was set up in response to factory conditions that were considered to be exploitative.
- R** is for **revenue generation**; an important factor in building a successful social enterprise.
- S** is for **social networks**; a useful way for social enterprises to build a movement.
- T** is for **training** available for social entrepreneurs to develop business and personal skills.
- U** is for **unincorporated**; a term used to describe an informal group, which has no legal structure and is governed by its own rules.
- V** is for **visionaries**; a word often used to describe social entrepreneurs. Visiting other similar organisations is also useful for a social entrepreneur at any stage of development.
- W** is for **working from home**. Most small businesses start from a home office to keep costs low.
- X** is for the **X factor approach** to a £1.9m fund taken by banks in 2010 where their customers vote on who should get the cash.
- Y** is for the **young social entrepreneurs** inspired to change the world by using business principles.
- Z** is for the **zeal** social entrepreneurs need to show others as they develop and bring their visions to life!

what to expect

written by Vanessa Augustus, SSA



Getting to know you

Communication is important for building relationships in business. If you are reading these words right now this is a good start. We would like to build meaningful relationships with our members and non members to accompany them on their journey of social change.

We hope this guide particularly reaches social enterprises, public commissioners and the private sector that are not yet familiar with our work.

Our first issue features articles written by members of the Social Solutions Academy and quite a few from me, so I hope you like my style of communicating.

Characteristics of the social entrepreneur

If you are new to the world of the social entrepreneur we hope our take on the A-Z of Social Enterprise helps to set the scene.

If you've been in business for some time now have you notice your resilience has grown? Being an entrepreneur is not an easy journey. Read the remarkable story of David Dawes, CEO of Entrenurses to find out what happens when you refuse to take no for an answer.

We also look at leadership qualities exhibited by social entrepreneurs in our interview with Peter Cousins OBE, and Chairman of the award winning social enterprise Brighter Future Workshop. Peter's story demonstrates that innovative ideas are generated by social leaders that are passionate about helping others.

Social Enterprise Action Day

In terms of 'Big Society' here at the SSA we believe social entrepreneurs should not be left to 'go it alone'. Enabling social enterprises to work on developing their own businesses alongside representatives from the public and private sector was central to our first Social Enterprise Action Day.

See the highlights from the Action Day which set out to provide social entrepreneurs with the practical tools to succeed including an inspirational talk about wealth creation.

Break State Solutions continue this conversation with an article which provides an opportunity for us to examine our relationship with money.

Working with the public sector

Assessing the needs of the population is an essential factor for 'Intelligent Commissioning'. Social Entrepreneurs are ideally placed to provide key services but as local demographics change, like other sectors, social enterprises need to be adaptable.

The thought provoking contribution from the Demographic Expert asks readers to consider what will your company's workforce look like in ten years time?

Don't go it alone

The most successful business people have accessed support from external mentors. In their article 'Why every social entrepreneur should have a mentor' Positive Input give us their take on the benefits of accessing this form of objective support.

interview

written by Tamsin Fielden, Proবাদis



David Dawes: Views from a serial social entrepreneur.

David is a nurse and founding member of four social enterprises (including Entrenurses CIC). He was the youngest chief executive in the NHS, the first nurse elected to the Council of the Social Enterprise Coalition and the first social entrepreneur on the Council of the Royal College of Nursing.

What drives you?

I believe that if we can make more social enterprises successful we can affect social change on a greater scale. I know that you don't have to follow a traditional business model but we need to get away from the dependency model and look for ways to be sustainable.

I am inspired by the likes of Mohamad Unis, who re-invented banking by providing micro-loans to India's poor. And Sir Bob Geldof – he doesn't mess around and shows what can be done by just doing it.

What has made you successful?

I am good at new ideas but get frustrated at only being able to implement a few. So I have a place to store them for a later date. I am also aware of my limitations and can teach myself things I need to know to get things done. A mentor is important - someone who you can reflect with, who can give you perspective and guide you. It is the single biggest factor that I associate with success.

How have you overcome obstacles?

In our 4th year of trading we were turned down by 91 Investors and over 204 grant bodies, before getting support to expand. You need to scratch under the surface, do your homework on what investors want and have a robust business model.

You also have to get used to rejection and keep believing in what you are doing. And you need to learn quickly. Try something. If it fails try something else. Work out how long to keep going before taking a different approach.

What would you do differently?

I jumped straight into setting up a business from day one. It was nearly catastrophic. Make sure you have income before you work full time on your business. Start small, understand the market, learn from doing and then scale up. I was also averse to "selling". It became a lot easier when I understood the sales process - research, define the needs of your stakeholders, work out the problem you solve and present a solution. Selling is really building a relationship with people.

What advice would you give others?

Be realistic about your skills and what you can do. Know what your enterprise needs at different stages of growth, what you are not good at and compensate for this. Focus on what's important, be clear about what you want to achieve and keep revisiting your 3-5 year goals.

mentoring expert

written by John Ardern, Positive Input



Why every social entrepreneur should have a mentor.

Being an entrepreneur can be lonely. Being a social entrepreneur can be especially lonely. You are striving to change the world and it can be hard to keep going sometimes.

Where ever you go in life people will give you advice. Some will be good, some not so good. But only a mentor can truly share their wisdom and support when you need it, and in a way that is relevant to you.

'Mentoring' is a powerful process of supporting and encouraging individuals (and teams) to manage their own learning, to develop their skills, improve their performance and become the people they want to be.

And some of the most successful people have had a mentor to support them on their journey. Richard Branson was mentored by veteran British entrepreneur Freddie Laker; Haydn mentored Mozart and Bill Shankly mentored Kevin Keegan.

Mentoring works particularly well for entrepreneurs with a new idea or new business; people who have reached a crossroads in their life or career; need a change or new direction; or are starting a new job or new challenge.

A mentor enables you to view things in a new way and from a new perspective. They can promote changes in you, helping you towards a new vision of what is possible. So, it is essential that you have complete trust, confidence and regard for each other in an open yet confidential relationship.

It doesn't matter whether you meet face-to-face, talk on the telephone or on-line (or any

combination of these), or whether you meet weekly, monthly or ad hoc – as long as you mutually agree how you will work together.

The best mentors are those that have real-life experience and share your interests and passions. This will enable you to share and discuss common or different experiences and situations and enable transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next. So it is important to get the right 'match' for your requirements.

Only a mentor can truly share their wisdom and support when you need it, and in a way that is relevant to you.

Talk to several people. Choose someone who shares your values. Maybe have more than one mentor, as each can help with different aspects of your business or personal life at different times.

Vanessa Augustus says "without my personal mentor to keep me going in tough times, I could not have taken The Social Solutions Academy to the next level".

Positive Input (www.positive-input.org.uk) is a not for profit that helps people on their life and business journey, providing online and offline mentoring. We are on the same journey to suss-out life but are a bit further along the road, and believe that no one should have to do it alone.

wealth creation

written by Paul Lewis, Break State Solutions



How is your relationship with money going?

Meet Jack. He has a purpose and has created a business to make it happen. He has a dream and very little money. He works around the clock to get his vision out to the world through his business. He has comprised many things to make it happen; a salary, relationships and even his own health at times, physical and mental. After a period of hard work, things are happening. His bank account looks healthier and so is his body and mind. Day to day life is more comfortable. Jack no longer lives hand to mouth. However, during this period of comfort things begin to suitably decline. He eventually finds himself poor again. Complacency you may say. Lack of vision. Poor business planning. Bad market conditions. Poorly monitored cash flow. The recession. These are all speculative reasons. There is one thing though that is certain and guaranteed.

People are either motivated by moving away from something or towards something. Some people are a combination of both.

We all have a relationship with money. Some of us are motivated to move away from poverty and some of us are motivated towards wealth. This is deeper than sense, reason and intellect. These values are learned and are stored in our mind and physiology.

The point of motivation is key. If someone is motivated away from poverty, the closer they are to poverty the more motivated they'll become. And as soon as they are far enough from poverty that they cannot relate to it, their unconscious mind will create behaviours to get them closer to the point of motivation; which is poverty. And what if a person was motivated towards wealth? This would mean that the closer they get to wealth, the more motivated they will become.

These values are learned. People are either motivated by moving away from something or towards something. Some people are a combination of both. The good news is these values can be unlearned and replaced with more appropriate values for that individual's life. Would that be useful to you now in your life?

The next time you see Jack, play this game with him; ask him how the relationship with his girlfriend is going? By the way his girlfriend's name is Money. He might say he's worried that she might leave him for someone better soon or mention that he wants to live with her some day.

interview

written by Vanessa Augustus, SSA



Peter Cousin, Chairman,
The Brighter Futures Workshop

Creating a vision and leading a successful team comes easily to some social entrepreneurs.

We caught up with an award winning Lancashire based social entrepreneur Peter Cousins, OBE to hear how his leadership qualities have increased the turnover of his business over the last five years. Following two years of research and applications to a range of potential funders Peter Cousins OBE secured the funding needed to start the Brighter Futures Workshop in 2005.

What inspired you to set up?

After being a marathon runner I was forced to take ill health retirement at age fifty. I was house bound due to the lack of a suitable wheelchair available from the NHS.

I was inspired to set up The Brighter Future Workshop after seeing a young severely disabled volunteer repairing a scooter. His smile and look of pride in his achievement led to my Eureka moment, as the idea for The Brighter Future Workshop was born!

What do you do?

We train young disabled people to work safely alongside skilled technicians, re-cycling mobility equipment, learning a host of new skills including life and community interaction.

What has made you successful?

The recycled mobility equipment we repair is sold back into the community to generate income.

My role as a leader for a team of fifteen is also important. We are overcoming prejudices disabled people face when working with others.

How do you keep focussed?

I set tight targets for our development and growth, and we have smashed all targets set. I have now raised the bar whilst retaining our drive and passion for this project.

Have you had support or training?

We had no direct support until we won a competition five years ago. The prize was to be mentored by John Clarke, CEO of Silent Night Beds.

What keeps you going?

BFW is growing month by month; we have almost doubled our turnover in the last financial year. We are now a dynamic, successful Social Enterprise and Charity that has been recognised by our peers for the outstanding services we undertake for the disabled and disadvantaged community.

What advice would you give to others?

Do your market research before you start. Work with relevant support agents and mentors.

Where do you see yourself in ten years?

Following the publicity gained from national acclaim, we have been contacted frequently from other social enterprises wanting to use our social & business model. We are investigating the concept of offering them licences to operate in their areas under the Brighter Future name operating under our ethos, ethics, whilst complying with our quality procedures.

leadership

written by Sonia Thompson,
Transformations Consulting



Leadership values to create leaders, not followers.

Setting up and running a social enterprise no matter what its size can be one of the most exhilarating, confusing, empowering and disconcerting periods in your life. You have to successfully manage doing the business (aka working in the business) whilst leading the business (aka working on the business) at the same time. Becoming and remaining the successful leader that your company needs is a key business developmental activity and cannot simply be left to chance. Leadership development which is experiential, action learning, observational etc helps SME's reap a range of benefits, from producing sustainable networks, to improved profits, alongside organisational and individual professional development.

Becoming and remaining the successful leader in your company is a key business development activity and cannot simply be left to chance.

Leadership is the "process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task – in this creating a successful company".

Like Ralph Nader we "start with the premise that the function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers." This belief coincides with wider social enterprise values such as Co-operation and Mutual support; Progressive work practices and Innovative Entrepreneurial solutions to social and environmental problems - and can support your right to delegate effectively thus freeing you up to work on the business wherever possible.

Delegation to an effective team benefit employees whilst empowering them to continuously transform the company's ability to meet the pressures facing a 21st century business. Leadership in this instance is no longer rigid and owned by one person, instead it is diffused within a team and across a business so that individuals are skilled up and better able to problem solve. In the long term leading to increased business sustainability.

social enterprise action day 2010

Following ten months of intensive planning the first successful Social Enterprise Action Day (SEAD) was delivered in Manchester on the 18th November 2010.

The day started with an interactive session on how to effectively network. Delegates were inspired to think about their social business in BIGGER terms after hearing a talk by Marie Claire Carlyle.

The interactive workshops left social entrepreneurs and public sector commissioners with new ideas and the confidence to make things happen!

Go to www.socialenterpriseactionday.co.uk to find out more.

I learnt how to...

...understand what is required for my business and how to work in a focused way.



Inspirational talk from Marie-Claire Carlyle

...implement useful facts I found out. Networking opportunities were also really useful.



Networking training with Sue Tonks

...tell people about the problem my social enterprise is solving rather than how the business works from a technical perspective.



focused

One word to describe SEAD...



fun

insightful



Perspectives from the Social Innovation Panel

intense



inspiring

big society

written by Vanessa Augustus



After meeting Lord Nat Wei, the chief advisor to the Government on the 'Big Society' in July 2010 my interest in this debate has grown.

The 'Big Idea' is the Coalition Government's vision to make society stronger by getting more people working together to run their own affairs locally.

Ian Birrell who worked with David Cameron to introduce the concept of 'Big Society' describes it as a way of "social action, to encourage more people to play a role in society. Not just charities, but neighbourhood groups, workers' co-operatives, social enterprises and, yes, businesses."

For some the 'Big Society' does not "recognise that the current structure of the UK economy selectively restricts the ability of citizens to participate". The work of the Social Solutions Academy has enabled the private sector and people that would not normally participate in voluntary and community activities to attend events to meet like minded people.

We are not describing our work as 'Big Society' but we know that the idea of working with others with shared values and goals based on social and environmental principles is of interest to a range of people we've engaged over the last year.

My vision for the SSA always included academics, private firms, established social entrepreneurs and individuals with bright ideas and aspirations.

Identifying local needs, setting the agenda and creating opportunities for others to follow seemed to be a successful formula for successful social entrepreneur Lord Andrew Mawson.

After hearing his thoughts first hand in September and then meeting this remarkable social entrepreneur, Lord Mawson left me inspired. As an energetic speaker working at the heart of bringing local people together to make a difference in the area they live, Lord Mawson led by example well before the term 'Big Society'.

My vision for the SSA always included academics, private firms, established social entrepreneurs and individuals with bright ideas and aspirations.

During his seminar to the National Housing Federation Lord Mawson critiqued the range of public servants he has dealt with over the last twenty years. During the present economic environment he encouraged the public sector to "do more in these hard times to support social entrepreneurs, not less".

Big Society is about radical social reform and an attempt to connect the civic institution to the individual. As a new organisation working with social enterprises and helping individuals excel as they build success we will be interested to see our public sector work enable social leaders to shape society.

Responding to the challenge of tomorrow's workforce

demographic expert

www.demographicexpert.com



Fact: Our population is changing

People live longer and fewer babies are born. The consequence of this is that less young people enter the labour market so less tax income is generated to support its ageing population.

Demographic Expert provides innovative solutions to the changing demands of tomorrow's workforce. We seek to help your business make the most of its most valuable commodity – it's people.

What will your workforce look like in ten years time and how will the skills and experience you have invested in be maintained and passed on to future generations?

We offer specialist diagnostic services to enable you to plan for the future and ensure the seamless transit of skills from one generation to the next. Working with both employers and staff we will tailor a blueprint for the future, exploring all the pathways open to them such as, retaining older members of staff through flexible working and re-skilling.

People aged 45+ carry with them a wealth of skills and experience formed from a lifetime of employment and ongoing formal and informal education. The waste of these skills and experience cannot continue in the light of demographic change.

Demographic Expert can support you and your staff in retirement planning processes, integrating self-employment as a viable option. During the current economic climate, our specialist support will add value to your redundancy consultations.

Enterprising Future.

We live in turbulent times. Our research shows that if you are made redundant aged 45 + and do not find another job within 6 months, there is only a 1 in 10 chance of regaining employment, and 1 in 3 people aged 50 - 65 is no longer in work.

Self-employment provides the solution to this problem. Whether full-time or part-time, starting your own business gives you freedom to earn as much or as little as you need, sustaining you and your family into retirement. It can act as a supplement to a pension or as our experience shows, 37% of over 50's go on to start and run high growth companies.

Most new businesses set up by people aged 50 and over have a social aim, providing valuable support in local communities and changing lives. Society is built on the contribution made by older people. Local authorities should harness the potential of this powerful group of the population and work with them to build the Big Society.

Bid writing & consultancy

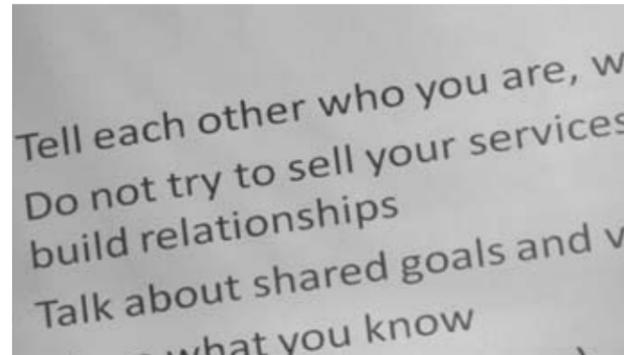
We conduct original research and have access to a wealth of demographic data such as what impact does 50+ worklessness have on health and social care. We can add strength to your bid by compiling this data for you as well as offering service provision once a project has been awarded.

Take a look at the services we offer and feel free to get in touch for more information.

written by Christina O'Connor, Media Guru

social media

written by Stephanie Dawson, SSA



The way we communicate is changing, and change can be scary.

According to Moore's law, the capacity of technology doubles every eighteen months, and for entrepreneurs, this provides a perfect opportunity for business development.

Most businesses these days have a web presence. From a blog to a twitter account, to a Facebook group or all-singing, all dancing website loaded with funky features and complex scripting. But a web presence is not a guarantee of attracting or retaining interest in your business, this is where most entrepreneurs would look to develop a multimedia strategy which includes how they intend to use social media.

The benefits are undeniable. Marketing costs money; even if we just calculate time spent updating. And for any business, money matters. Social media provides an ideal opportunity for no cost / low cost marketing with a positive impact with a variety of free tools to support your business growth and development. Of course, not everyone needs an online, or social media presence.

Everyone is now a potential publisher. It is estimated that 40,000 new bloggers come on line each day. How many do you read? The truth is, not everyone needs to use social media, so get to know your audience. Why spend precious time working on a strategy that doesn't meet your needs? A little time spent on environment scanning is time well-spent. Also consider appropriate forums, make your communications purposeful for your audience. The idea of social media for business is return on engagement. If it's not worth saying, or is just about the now, is it really worth saying at all?

The next focus is on what, and who to update. Whether tweeting, podcasting or blogging, ensure your communications are timely. Why let the first announcement be about an occurrence weeks ago? Maintenance is crucial to using social media successfully.

Social media leaves a legacy. Be positive, consistent and be human.

Be consistent and be human. Think about using the same or similar profiles and branding for all of your communications. Visual media such as photography, branding and video offer insights beyond that which text can offer. Remember to keep business and personal very separate. If you have a Facebook account, do you want to use your personal profiles for business related posts? How would clients feel about those holiday snaps...? It's easy to corrupt your branding as your audience will see results, not causes.

Social media leaves a legacy. Your posts from a year ago will probably still have a presence, so be positive, and think twice before posting, or linking or giving away information. The information superhighway is just that, so be careful with where you are going, and who you hitch a ride with.

working in partnership

written by Vanessa Augustus, SSA



'Working collaboratively' or in 'partnership' describes the process when two or more organisations (or individuals) come together for a joint venture or project.

We've recently experienced the reality of partnership working through the coordination of our first Social Enterprise Action Day.

Getting started

Before you begin a clear vision is required. Working collaboratively is a great opportunity to fulfil a shared purpose and remain independent at the same time. The benefits of the partnership need to be understood by each organisation from the outset.

It is advisable to discuss each other's expectations to validate the rationale for working together. Avoiding this conversation may lead to power struggles as the activity develops. This is likely to occur if one partner is in a stronger financial position or has the reputation for delivery in the area you are working in. If you manage expectations effectively at the start, leadership opportunities will emerge from people operating at all levels.

Consider a consortium

We are entering a period of reduction in local government spending. Social entrepreneurs seeking to sell services to public organisations recognise collaborative arrangements are one way to safeguard against the cuts.

Over the last decade there have been a number of government policies supporting partnership arrangements with the view to improving aspects of service delivery. Social enterprises have

opportunities to compliment each other's services and communicate the social outcomes they seek to address.

The consortia approach can be beneficial to small and large businesses. Social entrepreneurs may also gain from including private sector organisations within the arrangement. The starting point should be shared values to achieve the success each partner hopes to gain. Working with others is beneficial in many ways as resources are pooled and the capacity of knowledge is immediately increased.

Being effective

Partnership arrangements based on a range of reasons such as income generation and resource sharing requires strong leadership. Open and honest communication will increase effectiveness and develop trust.

Get your brand noticed

Raising your public profile is another way to benefit from working with others. When we promoted the Social Enterprise Action Day showcasing the range of our partnerships was a big deal for us. Our partners had already achieved the credibility we are building within the sector. Brand alliance therefore helped us to communicate a positive message. Partnership working is good for improving public relations and getting your brand noticed.

love, seduction and getting yourself heard

written by Tamsin Fielden, Provadis



Communicating is easy. After all, we've done it all our lives and do it every day. Yet there is a big difference in saying something and actually being heard.

When it comes to marketing communication we can sometimes forget there is a real live human being on the other end. We tend to focus on we want, not what they want.

Engaging with your stakeholders is a seduction. It's about making yourself irresistible to them. Making them choose you over someone else every time. It's about creating lasting relationships.

Work out whose heart you want to win.

You can only seduce someone who wants to be seduced. So don't try to win everyone. Seek out the people whose attitudes, behaviours and world view would be responsive to your message.

Engaging with your stakeholders is a seduction. It's about making yourself irresistible to them.

Listen to them. What are they doing, seeing, saying, when and with whom? Spend some time in their shoes – so that you really understand what keeps them awake at night, their needs and dreams. When you really listen you will connect with insights that make all the difference.

You have to love yourself before someone else will. Place a value on what you actually deliver.

Be clear about what it is you do best - your unique selling point – and make sure you are delivering what your stakeholders value.

Create desire. Focus on what your customer gets not what you do. If you are running workshops with young people - you are not selling a workshop – you are selling hope, inspiration, life choices. When you focus on the “what's in it for me” you will make more powerful connections.

Be passionate. Your communication needs to engage both the rational and the emotional. We remember things that cause an emotional reaction so seek to provoke a response in your audience.

Actions speak louder than words.

Demonstrate your message whenever possible.

Don't put fluff in their ears. Ask yourself whether what you are saying is important and meaningful and if it isn't - say nothing at all.

Close the deal. Have a call to action of some sort. Whether that's to download something, make a next appointment, get more information, subscribe – think about what you want people to think, feel or do as a result of your communication.

You can write so your audience hears you. You can present your message in a place and in a manner that entices people to want to listen. But the starting point is not you. It's your customers and the relationship you want to build with them.

what is commissioning?

written by Vanessa Augustus, SSA



Commissioning is a term becoming more widely used in public services. Social entrepreneurs seeking to sell services or products to the public sector will need to familiarise themselves with the commissioning process.

A simple definition

The word 'commissioning' is used to describe the process by which public organisations (health authorities and local councils for example) seek to purchase services from suitable external providers.

The selection of providers stimulates competition within the market to enable the 'Commissioner' to contract the identified outsourced services.

Why commission?

The administration of public funds at a national and local level is an important task. The management of services is not just about how much things cost. The needs of a population are also put into the equation.

Previously, the voluntary and social enterprise sectors had the opportunity to propose appropriate non statutory services for local people.

By identifying initiatives that could potentially benefit local people service providers have traditionally developed relationships with public departments through a grant-giving arrangement.

A grant is a gift. A public organisation cannot ask the supplier to evidence the difference their service has made. The commissioning process lawfully enables the public agent to withdraw funding if the contract has not been implemented to an agreed standard.

Hidden costs of commissioning

Identifying needs is always a good place to start when money is being spent. The commissioning process now relies on the public organisation to identify and buy in services to meet local demand.

The collection of local data is not just a review of statistics. Thoughts, feelings and user led ideas are also required. If the commissioning process is led by the public sector what is the most cost effective method of gathering qualitative information?

Commissioners have competing priorities and will be required to save time and money. There is a lot of work to be done, and resources to be spent, before a Commissioner is ready to buy.

Public organisations cannot buy from a provider until they are satisfied the market has the ability to supply, often specialist and bespoke services.

Intelligent Commissioning

The public sector commissioner is now working in an environment where radical reform is needed. 'Intelligent Commissioning' is required to improve social and environmental outcomes and reduce the national debt.

It is important to understand the impact of strong commissioning to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities.

events 2011

Forthcoming Master Classes and learning programmes designed to provide you with practical tools and advice to build your enterprise.

Thursday
13th Jan

Social Media

Steph Dawson, Lead for Policy & Technology, SSA

Social media provides an ideal opportunity for no cost / low marketing with a positive impact with a variety of free tools to support your business growth and development. This interactive session will help you to improve your social media presence.

Thursday
27th Jan

Working in Partnership

Vanessa Augustus, Head of Innovation & Partnerships, SSA

This interactive session will teach you the essence of building effective partnerships. Includes a talk from the Intellectual Property Office to give tips on what your initial working agreement should cover.

Tuesday
8th Feb

Innovators' Action Learning Sets

This is the start of our annual Innovator's Leadership Programme designed to take your learning and development needs to the next level.

Thursday
10th Feb

The Marketing Plan

Tamsin Fielden, Director, Proবাদis

An interactive session to help social leaders get the right message to the right customers in the right channel. Attendees will leave the session with a developed marketing plan.

Thursday
17th Feb

Ready for Business

Chris Smail, Chartered Accountant, Langers

Industry experts and local commissioners discussion on funding and finance for the social enterprise sector. You can also experience the 'Cash Flow' game and learn how to get out of the rat race with Postive Input.

Thursday
24th Feb

From Absolute Average to Absolutely Extraordinary

Guest Speaker Tony Brammer talks about what it takes to sustain yourself in adversity. He completed the 4 Deserts Challenge in Antarctica in December 2008, became one of only 41 people in the world, and the only UK resident to complete this notorious endurance event.

Thursday
3rd March

Working in Partnership

Vanessa Augustus, Head of Innovation & Partnerships, SSA

Thursday
17th March

The Health of your Wealth

Paul Lewis, Certified Trainer of NLP, Break State Solutions Ltd

What we believe about wealth and money is a powerful force that drives the scope of our businesses. This interactive workshop will enable you to gain insight into what your relationship is like with money and how to channel it in a way that will benefit yourself and others.

Are you a young social enterprise and want help in getting started? Are you looking for start-up office space for your organisation?

Innospace
helping your new business to succeed

Innospace, Manchester Metropolitan University's business incubator, is a new hub for social enterprises, offering a superb package of space, support and community in the heart of Central Manchester.

We've teamed up with **Social Solutions Academy** to offer social enterprises the ideal 'accelerator' environment.

Now, social enterprises can benefit from Social Solutions Academy's unique support package of business support, mentoring and networking, as well as Innospace's facilities and services.

All this for unbeatable rate, only for Social Solutions Academy members - for details see

www.innospace.co.uk/socialsolutions

*** 40% off events and training for Members. Go to www.socialsolutionsacademy.co.uk or call 0845 468 2126 for further information.**

Key:

master class

learning and development event

personal development evening

Thursday
14th April

Understand the future

Christina O'Connor, Director, Demographic Expert

Explore the issues surrounding population change and work to identify the changing needs of your team. Demonstrate the social return for your community.

Wednesday
18th-Friday
20th May

Social Enterprise Leadership Boot Camp (Limited places)

The Social Solutions Academy is creating three extraordinary days for a small assembly of social leaders to come together. Be one of the first to benefit from our Leadership Boot Camp:

- Learn sales techniques aimed at non sales people;
- Reflect on a range of vital personal skills that will help you to lead a motivated and thriving team or enterprise;
- Undertake practical leadership challenges;
- Experience group and coaching and action learning;
- Discuss and assess your own people management skills and plan for your development as an inspiring leader.

Time of sessions: All master class sessions will be held 13.00 until 16.00 (includes lunch) unless otherwise stated

Venue: All Master classes will be delivered from our training centre - Innospace, Minshull House, Chorlton Street, Manchester, M1 3FY unless otherwise stated

Time of sessions: Our personal development events will be held 17.45 until 20.00 (includes refreshments) unless otherwise stated

Venue: Please check the events page on our website for confirmation of venues here (link not working)

Personal Development Evenings organised to stimulate your mind and energise motivation

**For more information on our events or for booking go to:
www.socialsolutionsacademy.co.uk
or you can call 0845 468 2126 for further information.**

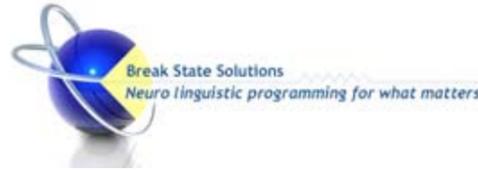
Break State Solutions

Break State Solutions is a training company that specialises in NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming).

0845 880 2539
www.breakstatesolutions.co.uk

Paul Lewis, Director
paul@breakstatesolutions.co.uk

91 Clyde Road,
Manchester, M20 2WW



Positive Input

Positive Input is a not for profit that provides online and offline mentoring across a variety of areas, from personal relationships through to financial wealth, money, business and life success.

07808 144 748
www.positive-input.org.uk

John Donaldson, Chief Executive Officer
johnd@positive-input.org

28 Huxley Drive, Bramhall
Stockport, SK7 2PH



Demographic Expert

Demographic Expert is a pro-active company providing responsive solutions to population change.

07939 722806
www.demographicexpert.com

Christina O'Connor, Director
info@demographicexpert.com

123 Hale Road, Hale,
Cheshire, WA15 9HQ



Transformations Ltd

High growth business coach. Specialist in social enterprise business support.

07854 020 495 / 01332 412592

Sonia Thompson, Director

iD Centre, RTC Business park,
London Road, Derby, DE248UP



business... it's survival of the fittest

social
enterprise
leadership

boot camp

Wednesday 6th April – Friday 8th April 2011

Join us at Storrs Hall Hotel, Cumbria for **Social Enterprise Leadership Boot Camp** with Sonia Thompson (Director, Transformations), Vanessa Augustus (SSA) and dinner guest. Limited places so get a march on.
Tel: 0845 468 2126 or Email: info@socialsolutionsacademy.co.uk



Helping you to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities

The Development Hub provides commissioners with an innovative platform to work alongside peers across the North West.

Our annual membership package is designed for commissioners working at all levels. You should expect the following benefits:

- Revision of commissioning and contracting strategies
- Development of an internal and regional strategic commissioning framework
- Build on knowledge of the market (particularly social enterprise providers)
- Increase the commissioner's access to a robust consultation framework – improving user participation in shaping services
- Disseminate and share emerging learning to encourage wider improvement
- Efficient use of resources and more effective and economic delivery systems

Our cost effective package includes:

- Bespoke 'Intelligent Commissioning' events
- Training Days
- Practical learning tools
- Shadowing opportunities

For more information please call to arrange an appointment to meet our Commissioners' Connection Manager on **0845 468 2126** or email info@socialsolutionsacademy.co.uk

If you've
got the
ideas,

we've
got the
know how.

We can help your social enterprise with

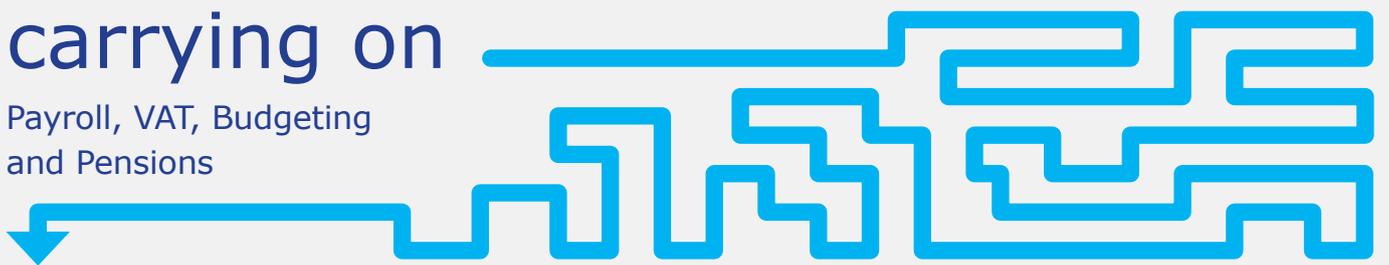
setting off

Companies, CiCs, Charities
and Partnerships



carrying on

Payroll, VAT, Budgeting
and Pensions



reporting

Companies House,
Regulators and HMRC



For more information,
please visit www.langer.co.uk
or call **0161 491 3788**



Langers