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Articles in this issue;

DON'T BE SCARED - GO FOR IT This month Sheffield Tiler, Linda Atkin will receive her prize for winning the Micro Business Category in the Grafta 2004 Awards. Her advice to prospective entrepreneurs is 'Don't be Scared'.

PROFESSIONAL WOMEN TAKE ON OLD BOY'S NETWORK A new report finds that men rely on informal networking to help them to operate inside organisational hierarchies from which women are often excluded, all women's networks turn the tables.

EMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE UK - TWO NEW REPORTS The campaign to increase female entrepreneurship in the UK continues, and according to the findings of two recent reports progress is being made, but there is still a long way to go.

WHO TRAINS THE BOSS? Research by QED Consulting confirms that while most entrepreneurs and senior managers recognise that they need to train and develop their own staff, they spend very little time in developing themselves.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

What's on in the area, when and where. We had a fantastic response to this section this month, please keep it coming. women@betatechnology.co.uk

INFORMATION EXCHANGE Your opportunity to pass on snippets of information that may be of use or interest to other SYFEN members. Please send contributions to us at women@betatechnology.co.uk

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Editors foreword;

ISSUE 7 JUNE 2004

*Dear Entrepreneur,
Welcome to the June issue of the SYFEN newsletter. This month we hear from an award winning local business woman, Linda Atkin.*

We take a look at the results of some recent surveys relating to female entrepreneurship in the UK. And take note that according to their findings SYFEN are on the right track in providing access to women's networking facilities and role models.

Next month we are considering the introduction of a section on business items for sale, so if you have any goods that you would like to include please contact us at the usual email address, women@betatechnology.co.uk

Another feature planned for the July issue is 'outsourcing'. Is it more cost effective to do certain tasks yourself, or is it better to employ an expert allowing your time to be used more wisely in another area of both business and domestic life?

So if you outsource your ironing and shop on-line to free up more work time, or if you are a supplier of support services such as administration, cleaning, delivery, gardening, accountancy, dog walking or sales lead generation, we would like to hear from you.

Many thanks to our sponsors Talking Heads. If you would like to write a feature, or send in details of forthcoming events please send them to women@betatechnology.co.uk. The deadline for contributions to next month's issue is July 7th.

Hope you have a productive month,

*Christina King
Beta Technology*



DON'T BE SCARED - GO FOR IT!

This month Sheffield Tiler, Linda Atkin will receive the keys to a brand new Mercedes-Benz Vito Dualiner - her prize for winning the Micro Business Category in the Grafta 2004 Awards. To other women thinking of going into business Linda has the following message 'Don't be scared. It can be a bit daunting especially if you are leaving a full-time job, but it's worth it'

The competition which was run by The Sun newspaper and backed by the DTI required entrants to write in less than 200 words why they deserved to win the new van. More than 8,000 people entered the award scheme, and designed to recognise the importance of small businesses to the national economy. Despite being in a male dominated industry, Linda has found that it is an advantage to be female with many clients appreciating her feminine touch along with her well established tiling expertise. 'My female customers find it quite a novelty to have another woman working in their home and they usually feel more at ease with the situation'

The inspired tiler wrote a poem about her life as a self-employed lady with a home and family to run, which won her a place in the final. The finalists were invited to London to the DTI headquarters where they met the Minister for Small Businesses, Nigel Griffiths. Linda has been self employed for two years and her company Apex Tiling has proved to be very successful. She not only tiles floors and walls to the clients concept, but can also create individual designs for the spaces she works in.

Linda Atkin - Apex Tiling
Tel 0114 237 6955
email linda.jimmy@tiscali.co.uk

The next day she received a phone call telling her that she had won, and was soon on her way to the NEC to select a vehicle of her choice.

PROFESSIONAL WOMEN TAKE ON OLD BOY'S NETWORK

New research from Demos – which is backed by five government departments – shows how men rely on informal networking to help them to operate inside organisational hierarchies from which women are often effectively excluded.

Women's professional networks counter gender inequality by connecting their members. Of the members of women's professional networks surveyed in the report, 87% said that the fact they were women-only made them attractive.

However the report argues that the growth in women's professional networks is helping women to 'have it all': personal career development while acting together to tackle workplace inequality.

The report suggests we could be entering a new era of work-based 'networked feminism' which is better suited to today's complex gender politics where women have to juggle many different personal and professional identities.

The offer of flexible working hours – which has been welcomed by large numbers of women who can combine work and family life more easily – may have had an unintended effect. Women, who are far more likely to work flexible working hours than men, find they often miss out on after-hours socialising and are further excluded from informal networks.

"With networks, you can be sure that no-one's checking your feminist credentials on the door," says Helen McCarthy. "It's OK to want to get ahead and be successful. But equally, women want to help each other and they want a fairer deal as a group. Networked feminists recognise that 'having it all' means acting to advance women collectively as well as realising their own personal goals."

"Women's caring responsibilities are part of the explanation, but it's also about everyday 'male bonding' activities and the sexual politics of the workplace that exclude women," says author Helen McCarthy. "Flexible working has helped a lot of women juggle their busy lives, but may have unintentionally put them at a disadvantage by taking them further out of the loop at work."

Girlfriends in High Places: How women's networks are changing the workplace was published by Demos on Thursday 29 April 2004. Helen McCarthy is a researcher at Demos. www.demos.co.uk

The report provides growing evidence that women's professional networks have the potential to change work place culture in a way that benefits women.

The research was funded by Norman Broadbent, a recruitment consultancy, and five UK government departments: the Cabinet Office, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Ministry of Defence, the Home Office and the Department of Health.

FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE UK - TWO NEW REPORTS

The campaign to increase female entrepreneurship in the UK continues, and according to the findings of two recent reports progress is being made, but there is still a long way to go.

A second report produced by Aurora, the International organisation working for the economic advancement of women, was commissioned by the DTI's Small Business Service. The survey of 30 women set out to identify the true barriers to women entrepreneurs in Britain and to deliver recommendations to the Government.

The British Chambers of Commerce this month released a joint report with the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, sponsored by the Learning & Skills Council, which looks at drivers and barriers to greater female entrepreneurship.

80% of the women cited personal reward as the most beneficial aspect of entrepreneurship along with freedom and limitless possibilities. Many see it as a way forward in balancing work and home life commitments.

The GEM survey of 22,000 working age adults revealed that the number of female entrepreneurs in the UK has increased in the last three years. However we are ranked 7th behind other countries including the US, Canada, Greece and Spain. For every ten male entrepreneurs in the UK there are four female entrepreneurs.

The majority of women surveyed placed a lack of credibility as the top barrier to their success, with many stating that they found it a constant challenge to be taken seriously as a business. Barriers relating to self confidence were most common and a strong correlation was found between lower confidence and lower turnover.

Isabella Moore, President of the British Chambers of Commerce, said, "We need to combat the low perceptions that women have of their own capabilities to set up a business which is partly responsible for the lower levels of female entrepreneurship. This picture, however, is improving: the survey shows that levels of female entrepreneurship are increasing and female entrepreneurs are more innovative, collaborative, networked (particularly with universities) and increasingly export orientated."

The top ten needs of the entrepreneurs are as follows;

In 2003 there was an increase of 27% in the number of women who felt they had the skills to start a business compared with 2001. Click [here](#) to Download the full report.

1. Knowledge about revenue models and finance.
2. Women-owned business networks and online/offline businesswomen communities.
3. Successful women business-owner role models.
4. Women-owned business incubator, community and related support services.
5. Business knowledge (starting, running, growing, managing, compliance etc).
6. Business growth and exit strategy knowledge.
7. Supported loans (subsidised, structured, loan guaranteed etc).
8. Online platform for bidding for government tenders.
9. Industry standard comparative data (benchmarking data).
10. Technology knowledge and training.

Mark Haysom, Chief Executive of the Learning & Skills Council, said, "Entrepreneurial spirit is one of the hallmarks of a successful nation. It is essential that we understand the issues that act as barriers to entrepreneurship, especially among women."

To read the full report click [here](#) to download.

WHO TRAINS THE BOSS?

Research by QED Consulting confirms that while most entrepreneurs and senior managers recognise that they need to train and develop their own staff, they spend very little time in developing themselves.

This isn't because bosses think they are already perfect! A massive 83% of MDs surveyed had the insight to say they could be even better leaders with further training.

But they also reported: "I couldn't find anything suitable for me", (92%); "I don't have time for courses", (69%) and "A lot of training is wasted effort or irrelevant. I need something tailored to my specific needs, hands-on and practical", (63%).

Almost all also reported privately: "I'd rather network and learn from those who have already faced the same issues as me, and will share their experience and solutions with me", and "I don't want my staff to think I don't already know all the answers!"

A proven way through all these concerns can be a 'facilitated Peer Review Group', where like-minded leaders from completely different organisations and sectors meet to learn from each other, share common problems and explore solutions together, in a confidential and supportive environment. This can also be reinforced by more private, one-to-one, Senior Executive Coaching.

So QED are establishing a small 'South Yorkshire Leadership Forum' (SELF) of senior managers to provide just such an opportunity. This group will meet just ten times a year at member's premises by rotation, with external speakers on topics of shared interest as appropriate, supported by 2 hours of private 1:1 coaching between meetings as an option.

The inaugural SELF meeting will be early in July, with the next in September after the holidays.

For more information, contact the Chairman of QED, Jeremy Thorn, at Jeremy@qedconsulting.co.uk Tel 01302 761222.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

University of Hull Business School - EMPATHY-EDGE: E-mentoring for Professional Women - Leading Edge Development

ESF-funded national project investigating women's disadvantage in the labour market and developing solutions to counteract discrimination. The university are researching the potential of E-mentoring as a tool for women's career and management development and a means of overcoming the barriers presented by the 'glass ceiling'. They are currently identifying women mentees and mentors, both in employment and on a career break, who would like to participate in this exciting project.

- The Mentoring Programme will run from 22 November 2004 to 26 June 2005.
- A Briefing Seminar will be held in your area during the week commencing 15 November 2004.
- On completion of the Mentoring Programme, all participants will be paid £100 to cover expenses.

Contact Jenny Headlam-Wells, Project Director 01482 465730 j.headlam-wells@hull.ac.uk

HM Customs & Excise Business Liaison Team Free Business Advice Open Day Thursday, July 15 Brooklands Hotel, Barnsley. Exhibition 9.30am-4.30pm. Seminars 10.00am-5.00pm. Organised by and sponsored by Yorkshire Forward, the Business Advice Open Day is a unique opportunity for you to obtain all the quality advice and information you need to run your business successfully. For further details and to book, visit www.businessadviceopen.co.uk, tel 0121 697 4065, fax 0121 697 4066 or email open.days@hmce.gsi.gov.uk

Sheffield Chamber of Commerce - White Tie and Tiara Ball 9th July 7.30pm - 1.00am Aston Hall Hotel. Annual Charity Ball raising money for 'The Children's Appeal', sponsored by International Innovation Services and Harratts Volvo £40+Vat (table of 10 £350) Tel 0114 201 8930/38 or email carol.haselden@scci.org.uk

Barnsley Chamber of Commerce - Breakfast Business Improvement Seminar - 8.00am Wednesday 30th June Barnsley Football Club. The invitation is to all Barnsley businesses employing between 5 and 49 staff. Speakers at the seminar will include Peter Ridsdale, Chairman of Barnsley FC and Cllr Steve Houghton CBE Leader of Barnsley MBC and a presentation by Talent Services on how Barnsley businesses can access support and funding to help improve their performance. At the seminar all delegates will also be given details of and be able to sign up to 4 certificated in-depth Business Development Seminars worth over £1000 and receive free membership or next years membership for free from Barnsley Chamber of Commerce. This event is being supported by Business Link South Yorkshire, Barnsley Chamber of Commerce and Talent Services Ltd. For further details ring free on 0800 034 4444 or contact BCC on 01226 217770. info@barnsleychamber.co.uk

Sheffield Business Club - One Man's Waste Is Another Man's Millions Tuesday 6th July 7:30 for 7:45am Howard Suite, Sheffield Hallam University. Speaker: Amber O'Malley, Envirofutures Do you know that waste can cost your business money? Do you know what the law is for business waste? Various ways to reduce, re-use and recycle your waste will be discussed. Tickets are £9.00. www.sheffieldbc.co.uk 0845 166 2107

South Yorkshire Chambers Breakfast 13th July 7.30am - 10am Castle Park Conference & Function Centre, Doncaster This popular networking event draws together members from across our region to meet in a relaxed atmosphere, giving everyone the opportunity to make mutually beneficial business contacts. There will also be an opportunity to make a short presentation to the floor and a literature exchange table available. £17.95+VAT Tel 0114 201 8930/38 or email carol.haselden@scci.org.uk

If you know of any events that should be listed in our forthcoming events section please contact us by July 7th for inclusion in the next edition.
women@betatechnology.co.uk

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

The Sheffield Business Awards 2004 were launched on 28th May. Businesses can now officially start registering their company - or recommending a fellow company. Registration Deadline August 13th, Application Deadline 10th September.

The full list of awards and sponsors is as follows;

- Customer Service - HSBC
- Information and Communication Technologies - Business Link South Yorkshire
- Export Excellence - Irwin Mitchell
- Business Investment - Sheffield First For Investment
- Training - Learning and Skills Council
- Manufacturing MAS Yorkshire and Humber
- Innovation - Inspiral
- Businesswoman of the Year - Sheffield Hallam University
- Community Impact - Business in the Community
- Retail - Meadowhall
- Environmental - Onyx
- Business Start-Up Business Link South Yorkshire
- Overall Winner - Yorkshire Forward.

More awards, more categories, more guests and an on-line makeover are all new additions to the glittering event – the leading business awards in South Yorkshire and one of the most popular dates on the Sheffield business calendar. Now in their third year, the awards – run by Sheffield Chamber of Commerce in association with The Sheffield Telegraph - promise to be even better than before.

For further information see the official website or contact Chamber events manager Carol Haselden Tel 0114 201 8938 e-mail carol.haselden@scci.org.uk.

Stepping out of my comfort zone - Liz Beighton
One of our SYFEN members had a chance to appear on the weakest link. 'I faced Annie Robinson & was voted off in the 5th Round. I had a fantastic day and would recommend anybody to go for it - just for the experience'. The show is scheduled for The Weakest Link series 6 - they will be contacting liz about a fortnight before it is aired, we'll keep you posted.

Creativity Works! Creative Networks! Wednesday 30th June, Cooper Gallery, Barnsley from 4.00pm. A programme which offers support to businesses within the creative sector (both established and new start-ups) across the boroughs of Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham. The support is free of charge, funded by SRB (Coalfields Partnership), Objective 1 and Arts Council England, and is delivered via one to one business mentoring, seminars and workshops, R&D incentives, grants for growth, creative apprenticeships and creative networks. The project aims to increase business awareness and sales, increase employment, retain creative talent within the borough and encourage involvement in new and established networks.

The launch event will include speeches by key members of the creative sector, information points, free business diagnostics from CIDA and a grants presentation. Buffet and drinks provided. For further information contact Richard Lukey, Business Adviser (Creative and Digital Industries) by tel 0114 201 2530 email rlukey@blsy.com

'The Apprentice' is a major BBC2 series to be filmed in 2004 in the UK. They are looking for fourteen intelligent, business-minded individuals to take part in the series for which the reward is a six-figure salaried job, working in one of Sir Alan Sugar's multi-million pound corporations. These applicants will undergo weekly business orientated tasks. There are no set qualifications or experience required...the main attributes sought are drive, ambition and the ability to impress one of the toughest ever interviewers Sir Alan Sugar. Deadline for applications is Friday 18th June. For more information go to www.bbc.co.uk/apprentice/

"Women: Up from the Dust" is a joint documentary and book project I am working on to introduce some of the most extraordinary women entrepreneurs, from around the world, who have succeeded against innumerable odds. The stories will highlight women who own successful businesses today, but started with absolute nothing except a desire for a better life for their families, as well as determination and a bit of ingenuity. Initially, I am targeting five women for the documentary and 10 stories for the book. contact: Mary Schnack www.prworks.ms
(928) 204-9834/800-529-7599 SBA Women Business Advocate of the Year, State of Arizona and Region IX

If you know of any organisations or information that would be of benefit or interest to other SYFEN members please let us know for the next issue. women@betatechnology.co.uk

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