



Economy & Enterprise
Torfaen ~ inspiring business innovation

Economi a Mentergarwch
Torfaen ~ hybu arloesi mewn busnes



Subscribe to our news
& events!

www.southwalesbusiness.co.uk

Torfaen Business Voice Llais Busnes Torfaen

FEBRUARY 2020

 www.twitter.com/TorfaenBiz

 www.facebook.com/TorfaenBiz

 www.facebook.com/TorfaenBiz



NEXT EVENT | 5:00PM
Thursday 19th March 2020

THE VALUE OF PEOPLE IN BUSINESS



Lee Monroe HR Dept
lee.monroe@hrdept.co.uk
www.hrdept.co.uk/abergavenny-brecon-blaenau-gwent-cwmbran/



BUSINESS DOCTORS
ACHIEVE YOUR VISION
Matt Preece Business Doctor Newport
Matt.preece@businessdoctors.co.uk
www.businessdoctors.co.uk/business-consultant/matthew-preece/



Notes from our Chairman

It's been a very busy start to the year with a very enjoyable networking event and meal at Pages Cwmbran in January and a very well attended "meet your business neighbour" event at Rodney Parade.

The feedback from that event was very positive as we had well over a hundred attenders from a variety of sectors. The club has now been going strong for 19 years and adding these new events into our schedule provides even more opportunity for our members to make new contacts and promote their businesses. We plan to have more joint events with other areas in the future so watch this space.

Our next event is on the **19th March, 5pm at Greenmeadow Golf Club** and is jointly sponsored by the Business Doctors and HR Department who will give a presentation entitled "The value of people in business" before we move on to networking and socialising. Make sure you use your places and remember you can bring a guest with your second ticket.

Finally, can I welcome Andrew Evans of Green and Co accountants onto our committee. I'm sure Andrew will bring some fresh ideas to our committee meetings with his knowledge and experience to fully contribute to our discussions.



Ashley Harkus
Chairman,
Torfaen
Business
Voice

Dates for your Diary

18/06/20 - Torfaen Business Voice - 5:00pm

17/09/20 - Torfaen Business Voice - 5:00pm

03/12/20 - Torfaen Business Voice - 5:00pm

Our Next Event

Our first quarterly meeting of 2020 is on **Thursday 19th March, 5pm Greenmeadow Golf Club**, and we are very pleased to announce that Business Doctors and HR Dept are joint sponsors and hosts for this event, with representatives from both organisations sharing their expertise during the evening.

Matt Preece from Business Doctors is an experienced senior manager, business leader and coach is based in Newport and spends most of his time in South East Wales helping entrepreneurs to improve their business. He prides himself on utilising his passion for business to deliver results, also drawing from time to time on the specialised skills of the business doctor network to help his clients.

Based in Tredegar, The HR Dept provides employment law and human resources support to small and medium sized businesses just like yours across Abergavenny, Brecon, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen. Led locally by Lee Monroe, an HR professional with over 16 years' experience, the HR Dept is different in that it's not a call centre but a small business, passionate about helping SMEs thrive through offering pragmatic and personal advice to you and your business.

During the evening's short presentation, Matt will share experiences that local businesses can develop to enjoy a better 2020 and achieve their own aspirations. 'The very things that could be making your business profitable, could be making your business less valuable.' Lee will also provide useful advice on 'looking after your people' and the costs of getting it wrong! Following this presentation will be a few rounds of facilitated networking.

Members are entitled to 2 free places at this event, so make sure you bring along a colleague, client or business contact so that we can provide each other with valuable connections for our businesses. Members of Torfaen Business Voice can also bring along a Pop Up banner – please indicate if you are bringing yours on the electronic booking form.

Book your Place:

<http://bit.ly/tbv-feb-2020>



All of our quarterly Torfaen Business voice events are held at Greenmeadow Golf and Country Club, Cwmbran.

PAGE 3

Are you dreaming of freedom from your business?

PAGE 5

Is your employee retention strategy in tune with millenials?

PAGE 7

What business issues could lead to an employment tribunal?



Are you Dreaming of Freedom from your Business?

What's your Business for?

What's the ultimate outcome for your business? Is it scale, sell, step back or pass down?

You Love your Business, but...

Yes, we all love our businesses, but there are times when you'd REALLY like a bit of a break from it, if only for a week or so, to go on that luxurious holiday you dreamt about when you first started your business and imagined you'd then be rich enough to afford.

No Time?

Running a business is rewarding and satisfying, but it's also hard work, time consuming and stressful. You imagined at some point you'd be able to take more time off because you'd have trusted employees to run it and could spend time with the family, go on holiday, pursue your passions and hobbies...the list goes on.

But, no...you find yourself spending most of your waking hours shackled to the business to keep it running.

Freedom from your Business

The ability to step away from your business (or possibly sell it), and it carry on without you, while still providing you with plenty of income/cash is priceless.

If you are looking to maximise the return from your business, as well as spending less time in the day to day running of it, then our free seminar is for you.

We will spend time running through the 8 focus areas that will both increase the value of your business as well as improve its efficiency and effectiveness, helping improve its scalability and attractiveness to prospective investors and buyers. The session will give you practical tools and ideas that you can put into practice straight after the event, helping you work on your business rather than in your business!

Investing in your Employees is Investing in your Business

Training and development for employees can often be seen as expensive or time consuming, but if done well it can provide a significant return on investment.

You may ask – “But what happens if I train them and they leave?” Whilst this is a genuine concern, you’d also want to ask yourself – “What if I don’t train them and they stay?” Research* revealed last year found that unproductive employees are costing British businesses around £22 billion annually. Boredom was listed as a top five distraction.

Sir Richard Branson summarised this nicely when he famously said, “Train people well enough so they can leave, treat them well enough so they don’t want to”.

Define Learning Needs

It’s quite possible you will encounter an eager employee who is asking you to send them on a course to better their abilities. Whilst their enthusiasm should be well received, you’ll want to retain control over the types of training and development that you provide and that your business will benefit from.

Identifying the skills gap within your organisation can be drawn up as part of the annual appraisal process.

Protect your Investment

Whilst it’s the individual or team who receive the training, the ultimate goal is to retain this knowledge within your business so that you can measure the ROI. You do not want to pay out, only for the employee to take the new qualifications to a competitor six months later.

Having a study assistance clause in an employee contract and a signed agreement in place will protect your investment should an employee leave sooner than expected. These set out that the financial assistance covering the course, for example, if the employee leaves within a year then 50% will be repayable. A study assistance policy can set out your expectations regarding time off for study days, examinations and what will happen should they fail.

Talk to us about Training & Development Plans

Aligning a training and development plan with your business objectives can seem like a laborious task. Let us bring to life the benefits and make it enjoyable for you and your employees.

***Totaljobs cost of the UK productivity crisis.**



Is your Employee Retention Strategy in Tune with Millennials?

Irrespective of the ongoing Brexit saga, the UK has record levels of employment. This sounds great on the news, but in practice makes it harder to find and keep good staff. Companies must be innovative to stand out from the competition. And a good way to do that is to look at the overall package you are offering.

This year, a third of the workforce will be millennials. As with generations before them, they bring new ideas along with new needs from their prospective employers. Quick to adopt conveniences that make day-to-day life easier, they tend to be good with efficiencies, but can come across as impatient when pursuing change or climbing the career ladder.

Meeting the Needs of your Future Workers

Often referred to as the “giving generation”, millennials are attracted to companies that demonstrate shared values. Encouraging and facilitating volunteering in the community will be hugely attractive. As will flexible working and the promise of a good work life balance. This can benefit both parties when planned properly.

Although they can be accustomed to job hopping whilst seeking their perfect match, this generation is also mindful of a rising retirement age. It is expected to strike a chord with many employees who are already thinking about, and planning for, their future. It will also raise important questions for employers.

Does your approach to retirement planning and auto-enrolment strengthen your remuneration package? With millennials making up a third of your future workforce, it could be helpful to make positive pension planning a key benefit of your retention strategy.

The shortage of occupations list details which professions have a skills shortage. It has recently been expanded so now is a better time than ever to revisit your strategy for attracting and retaining skilled workers. A good range of benefits, which need not cost a fortune, can make all the difference when advertising a role.

Finally, millennials often have a preference for a career path that includes plenty of mentoring alongside planned professional development. Both of which can be achieved through scheduled 121's and flexible learning.

Planning for the Future

Whilst employees are thinking about their future, you will also be thinking about the future of your business and who you need in place to drive success. We have plenty of ideas on people planning and can advise on organisational structure, employee retention and much more. If you're thinking ahead and could do with a second opinion before making important changes, give us a call today.

03301 344842 or email lee.monroe@hrdept.co.uk.





Major Employment Law Changes are Heading our Way

Whilst the Government seems likely to be preoccupied by Brexit, until we have all long reached state retirement age there are still some major changes planned for 2020 to try to improve the working conditions of workers in the gig economy or on Zero hours contracts. It's long been a concern that the estimated 2.8% of workers who work in the less regulated gig economy or up to 1.8 million people on zero hours contracts do not have the same rights and protections enjoyed by the majority of other employees.

The "Good Work Plan" attempts to shift the balance towards the employee and a number of measures are due to be implemented in the spring of 2020. The most eye catching being:

- Workers will have the right to request a stable and predictable contract after 26 weeks. It's anticipated employers will have to consider requests in the same way that they have to consider flexible working requests and will have to show a pressing business need to refuse.

- The gap in time that prevents continuity of service will be widened from 1 to 4 weeks to deter from laying off staff to prevent them accumulating the 26 weeks' service.
- Agency workers will be entitled to equal pay after 12 weeks.
- All workers will be entitled to a statement of key terms and benefits from day 1 of starting.

It's been suggested that these changes may be followed by a return to Employment Tribunal fees to make it more difficult for employees to enforce their rights although given the shambolic way these were introduced and then overturned as unlawful in the recent past it may be that government (whatever the flavour) would find that difficult to do or unpalatable and that these changes improving workers rights will be implemented without any counterbalance. Either way it's important for employers to be aware of their responsibilities to avoid falling foul of the legislation.

What Business Issues Could Lead to an Employment Tribunal?

Working hours, working environment, performance and discriminatory conduct by other employees are just a few of many issues that may occur in the workplace. If you're not careful, and mishandle these problems, you may make matters much worse and potentially cause unhappy employees to take a case to an employment tribunal.

To help you manage employee relations well and limit the risk of disputes escalating into legal action, we have highlighted below some useful points and best practice measures.

No Contract or an Unclear One

Not having a contract of employment or having one which is unclear may lead to confusion regarding expectations of how the employment relationship between the employer and employee should develop and prosper. From the outset of any working relationship, it's good practice to treat the employment contract as an essential document that you can fall back on, one which provides clear details of what your expectations are for the role which has been offered and what you will provide to the employee in return. With that in mind your contracts should be clear, well-written and unambiguous, stating the rules your staff should follow, so that nothing is open to interpretation.

Outdated Contracts

In addition, to your employment contracts being clear, you should also make sure they are all up to date. For instance, you might decide to extend your operating hours, but one member of your staff decides to stick to their original working times because that's what's in their contract. For reasons like this, you should ensure that any changes you make to the business operation which impact on working terms should be reflected in the contract of employment. Remember at all times to take staff through an appropriate period of consultation before introducing the change and amendment to the contract.

Acting Slowly or Late

If an employee makes a complaint, such as an accusation of discrimination, it's important to act immediately and carry out an investigation, to ensure that you know all the facts as soon as possible and can then take the right course of action quickly. Not acting quickly enough may lead to the complainant taking further action.

Not Following Governmental Codes of Practice

The Advisory, Conciliation, Arbitration Service (ACAS) is a statutory body which provides free, impartial information and advice to employees and employers on how to manage workplace relations well in regards to handling redundancies and other employee relation matters. When dealing with disciplinary and grievance issues you should follow its codes of practice to ensure you're taking the right measures to avoid a dispute being taken to a tribunal. The codes of practice are also referred to by employment tribunals, as the benchmark for the minimum procedure that an employer should adopt to ensure that a fair procedure has been followed when dealing with either a disciplinary or grievance issue. On this basis if a dispute ends up before an employment tribunal it is more than likely to reflect badly on any employer who chooses to follow a process which falls short of the minimum best practices measures set down in the ACAS Code.

Poor Handling of Inadequate Performance

When tackling poor employee performance issues, it's important to identify the areas where the employing is failing to achieve expected standards, set out what success in the role resembles and what measures you will put in place to help the employee achieve your expected standards. Dealing with performance problems early on, and holding meetings with the employee, can often turn around under performance and get the employee back on track to adding value to the business operation. If you do decide to dismiss an employee, you should be able to prove that you have done all you can to avoid their contract being terminated.

Not Having Professional Help

If a dispute takes place or a grievance is raised in your business, it's wise to seek professional help. Having qualified and experienced assistance can ensure you get the right advice to make the right decisions quickly and effectively. This can help resolve a dispute in a calm, fast and dignified way, preventing it from developing into a bigger problem.

Supporting you through Staff Disputes

Employment law is a large and complex area, and it can be difficult to keep all your employees happy – even when you sit on the right side of the law. **Make sure you seek professional advice.**

Not a Member? Make 2020 the Year to Join!

Membership is affordable with just a *one off* payment of:

- £48 for a new business member and /or the year for a business under one year old
- £60 for a businesses with fewer than 10 employees
- £80 for businesses with 10+ employees

There are no hidden charges and membership gives you two free places per meeting.

Call: 01633 648644

Email: info@southwalesbusiness.co.uk

Click on the following link:

<http://bit.ly/tbv-business-club>

Meet the Member



So, Jess left her job 8 years ago because she was done with the stuffy corporate environments and wanted to build something different. We all, in business need to be focusing more on making connections with each other, building genuine, authentic relationships instead of selling, selling, selling with people, not clients or customers, people! Jess is SO passionate about it in fact that she built a business around it! She wanted to build an agency with personality and enthusiasm and that's exactly what she did.

So here we are (Jess, Dave, Lauren, Gareth and Loren) the Jessica Draws team a team of 5 (but 6 if you count our dog concierge Ruby). We are based in the heart of Abergavenny, working with people and teams all over the world to help them make connections with the people they want to be working with! We practice what we preach, so we help them communicate their brand values, personalities and culture through video, brand development, print marketing, illustration, animation and creative messaging! Our vision is to get our creative paws on the World's information and redesign it so that everyone (even your nan) can understand what the devil is going on.

We would like to thank our contributors:



We are passionate about making sure that we get to know everyone we're working with, and their businesses inside out, so that we can do the best job we can to help them make an impact and build their own relationships with their potential new customers.

On a final note, we have some exciting news... we are rebranding and are proud to announce our new name Tiny Wizard Studio! so watch this space for an exciting 2020.

Contact:

E: info@jessicadraws.com

T: 01873 739278

W: jessicadraws.com



New Members

AshOak Construction

www.ashoakconstruction.co.uk

Betterclean

www.bettercleanservices.co.uk

CAO Selection Ltd

carole-anne.owen@caoselectionlimited.co.uk

Charlotte Alexander Bridal

www.charlottealexander.co.uk

Coles Electrics

www.coleselectrics.co.uk

Easi Ear

www.easi-ear.com

FI Real Estate

www.fi-rem.com

Folly Contractors

www.follycontractors.co.uk

Hypnotherapy by Eleanor Gladwyn

www.interaliacm.co.uk

Jessica Draws Media

www.jessicadraws.com

Llew Financial Services

www.facebook.com/shaun.chris.advisors

See No Bounds

www.seenobounds.co.uk

Tim Huckle

www.linkedin.com/in/timhuckle

University of South Wales - Research & Business Engagement

www.southwales.ac.uk/exchange

Utility Warehouse Discount Club

www.jointheclub.org.uk/N64717