

## Spirit of Enterprise Programme

Transitions vision is to capture and exploit the spirit of enterprise within organisations. The roots of our philosophy lie in the recognition that every business strategy needs to be combined with a top management team that believes in a coherent vision shared understanding and shared values.

### Introduction

The Spirit of Enterprise Programme is a series of highly interactive workshops aimed at business leaders who have taken the decision to take a leap forward in the way they think, plan and act.

The workshops are led by internationally recognised experts, who are willing to share their experiences of running successful businesses – through both good and bad times.



These topics do not get covered in Business Schools in the way that entrepreneurs see them. What is missing is the 'voice over' of experience – from those who have the scar tissue from their attempts at implementing these tools and techniques in starting and growing their own ventures. Most people have now been "work shopped", done the SWOT analysis, been consulted on strategy, marketing,

breakeven analysis and operational effectiveness. We all know this stuff - practically commodity knowledge now days - even if not fully practiced.

By taking part in the Spirit of Enterprise programme, you too can break through 'glass ceilings' and enjoy even greater business success.

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### The Key Objectives of the Programme

- To provide the opportunity for 'lonely' MD's to share experiences and insights, and to learn with others in a similar position.
- To enable participants to stand back from the day to day demands of running the business and to see things from a different perspective.
- Drawing on the lessons from the experience and expertise of the presenters to direct your energies towards the actions that will lead you to your chosen goals.
- To provide the opportunity to discuss your ideas and challenges with the presenters and others involved in the programme, in a supportive environment.
- On completion of the programme you will be refreshed and invigorated from the knowledge and confidence and understanding that the issues you have decided to focus on in the coming months are correct.

### Programme Structure and Content

The Spirit of Enterprise Programme draws on the expertise of established industry leaders, and is designed to inspire directors and senior managers of ambitious businesses. The Programme is led by Professor Shai Vyakarnam, the founder of Transitions and Director of the University of Cambridge Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning.

*The current series of workshops are described here:*

#### 1. The role of the entrepreneurial director

How to retain and sustain the spark that enabled the company to form while at the same time managing growth. The detailed aspects of operating a company and finding that the Director has to be less of a maverick and more of a manager. How to build a top team, find non-executive directors, sustain a vision, manage relationships with banks, shareholders, and others with an interest in the business.

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### 2. Your vision for the future

Having thought about the levers of growth, through top teams, financial and growth issues, you now need to decide where to next and how best to articulate your vision. Most firms are driven by the values of their owners; few are actually driven by a sense of vision. How to distinguish between the two; how to communicate it and get buy-in from your team.

### 3. When the £\$%^ hits the fan

From a personal point of view what should be the strategies for coping with difficulty? When a firm has problems this seems to bring out the worst in some people. How does one tell the reality from the fiction in difficult times? How should you protect yourself and your business?

Both have experiences and have thought extensively about the issues. They are willing to share these experiences and help people discuss them in confidential conditions.

### 4. Making the big investment decision

When should you go for radical change and when for incremental shift? This is a hard call where an error can be very expensive for the business. On the one hand the error may lead to a missed opportunity, on the other it may be terminal (Marconi). There are lessons to be learned from some of the great technology stories that can be applied to making big decisions.

### 5. Growing through strategic alliances

A firm can try and grow organically and do well. To achieve rapid growth will call for bold moves by forming strategic alliances with other companies. How does one do this, without losing to competition and wasting time on fruitless quests? What are the gains and how best should one try to achieve such a strategy? When is it right and when will it not be appropriate?

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### 6. Letting go to grow

How, as a founder of a business, can and do you let go to managers? What role should your family have in this succession plan? Can you alter the ownership structure for mutual gain? What are the best ways of focusing those to whom you delegate – profit share, bonuses, or ownership?

#### **BENEFITS**

Phil Bray of the Derbyshire Chamber and Business Link said: “We wanted to raise the game for our business community in Derbyshire so we contacted Shai Vyakarnam of Transitions with whom we have worked in the past and he suggested that the best way to do this is to help inspire the business community by bringing in some of the very successful people to share their thoughts on thorny growth issues. By rubbing shoulders with these people and by learning with them, and from them, it is possible that we can also inspire the business community to seriously grow their businesses and make a difference to the local economy. It is already showing results and we have barely started.

It's a very positive outcome - probably the best we could have anticipated - and reflects well on the calibre of the programme.

Please feedback to the entrepreneurs and convey my appreciation on behalf of DCBL for their contribution. I think they should derive a real sense of satisfaction from this beyond a fee-based contract for leading a session. They have inspired people with purpose and vision as a result of sharing their experience. I would also like to personally thank you for gaining their commitment to the venture and leading the programme - your role was invaluable and greatly appreciated by the delegates.”

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### Reactions from previous participants:

*The programme helped to convert theory into practice – providing the tools, techniques and stimulus to develop my business further.*

*I learned to share the vision and let go, to manage effectively. I realise I'm not the only lonely MD.*

*The group synergy was a great boost – we now share a bond and continue to meet regularly long after the programme has finished to sustain the momentum*

*I learned the need for formality, structure and systems, even in a small business.*

*I really improved my understanding of the importance of vision and sharing that vision.*

*The programme helped me to stand back and take a holistic view of the business – it provided lots of inspiration – it was great to feel excited about it again.*

