Introducing the North West Family Business Programme

Success. Why keep it to yourself?

Introducing the North West Family Business Programme
Collaboration is a competitive advantage.

Success isn’t achieved in a vacuum. We all learn from others, build on what’s gone before, stand on the shoulders of giants. As a giant of today, there are many incentives for your company to pass knowledge of what’s worked for you on to SMEs in the North West.

Sharing expertise with these firms – the backbone of our economy – can unlock valuable new insights and opportunities for your business as well as theirs.

A clearer picture of the business climate is there for the taking, as are closer links with potential customers and suppliers, all wrapped up in the chance to give something back to the wider business community. Your people can develop as managers and leaders, while your senior leaders can move outside their comfort zone and test their capabilities in an entirely fresh context.

Working in partnership with the North West Business Leadership Team, Be the Business has created the North West Family Business Programme as a pilot for such fruitful collaborations. This brochure outlines the part you can play in a range of initiatives with varying degrees of commitment:

Advisory Boards – A great way to gain board-level experience
Mentoring for Growth – Sparking powerful, productive collaborations
Peer Learning – Helping family firms learn from each other
Business Placements – Time to take an outsider’s perspective
Open Business Day – Extending networks, making connections

“Our movement is about businesses coming together to share the things that have made them successful and providing inspiration for firms to make small changes that make a big difference to their performance.”

Sir Charlie Mayfield – Chairman, Be the Business and John Lewis Partnership
We are Be the Business.

In 2015, the Chancellor asked Sir Charlie Mayfield to dig deeper into Britain’s chronic productivity problem. In response, he brought together many of the brightest minds in UK plc and in November 2017, Be the Business was launched.

Our work is rooted in two fundamental insights about productivity:

1) Good management and technology practices are a major driver of performance improvement

2) The UK is home to some of the world’s most productive firms, but many practices that drive success have not diffused through the wider business community

Supported and funded by UK government and leading British companies, we’re using these insights to propagate and amplify success across the entire spectrum of British business. We work with any company that wants to build on its strengths, and we have the resources to help them improve.

For instance, our Collaborative Networks Programme brings together groups of peers to share business ideas and solutions, in person or via digital platforms. These communities identify common challenges and work creatively together to solve them, with input from business leaders with relevant experience. It’s by business, for business – and it works.

Join our movement.

Be the Business is a galvanising movement with impeccable credentials. Our advisory board is made up of leading names in sectors including tech, manufacturing and advisory services. What’s more, we’re actively supported by some of the UK’s most senior business leaders from the likes of:

- Accenture
- British Museum
- EY
- KPMG
- Rolls-Royce
- Siemens
- Amazon
- CBI
- ITV
- Lloyds Banking Group
- Trinity Sky
- BAE Systems
- Cisco
- John Lewis Partnership
- McKinsey & Company

Now we’re asking you to lend your weight to our new North West Family Business Programme.
**The nation’s best in the North West.**

**What are the aims of the Programme?**

The North West Family Business Programme is piloting a range of ways to help family SMEs in our region to improve their business. It’s co-created by leading minds in industry, specifically to address the unique pressures and challenges of running a family business.

Family firms are vital to the UK economy, accounting for 88% of all UK firms and employing almost half of the UK’s private-sector workforce. Their success is key to improving UK productivity as a whole, and we’re offering a compelling proposition to SMEs wanting to improve: *Learn, adapt and adopt what works for Britain’s best, from Britain’s best.*

This is where you come in. We’re inviting the region’s most influential voices to help us galvanise North West family firms to become some of the UK’s best-run companies.

The Programme is made up of initiatives that unlock the energy and potential held in our family SMEs. All are designed to get family firms talking, sharing, learning and thriving. And your expertise could prove invaluable to any one of them.

“Family owned businesses are at the heart of our communities. We want to build upon their success, learning from each other – together driving a more prosperous future across this great region.”

*Emma Degg – Chief Executive, NWBLT*
Advisory Boards:
The positive influence of objective voices

Sitting on an advisory board is a great way for business leaders or your senior managers to gain board-level experience while dispensing valuable advice to family firms.

How it works
Our Advisory Boards comprise managers and leaders from a range of organisations. This is an opportunity to spend a year supporting and challenging SMEs in their growth plans, sharing expertise and developing analytical skills in the process.

What’s involved
Each Advisory Board supports up to three SMEs for a 12-month period. At quarterly meetings, the board will track progress and advise on a key business issue brought to the table by the SME leaders.

Where you’ll gain
There is no better way for senior managers or business leaders to prepare for a place on the board. Gaining non-executive director experience broadens perspectives and flexes critical powers of analysis. At the same time, Advisory Board members get to build their professional network and understand issues facing SMEs in your supply chain or customer base.

To learn more and sign up to participate on an Advisory Board visit www.bethebusiness.com/familybusiness

“When we are looking for potential Non-Executive Directors to join boards, we search for individuals who bring depth to their experience but also breadth, to enable them to contribute to the full range of commercial and governance issues.”

Joelle Warren – Executive Chair & Founding Partner, Warren Partners
Mentoring for Growth:
Inspiring guidance to boost performance

Our unique mentoring initiative is one of the most effective and rewarding ways to share your successes with business leaders keen to learn and improve.

How it works
Mentoring for Growth is a mentoring programme of impressive calibre. The goal is to spark inspiring collaborations between mentors from big corporations and key decision makers, owners and directors of family SMEs in our region.

Mentors are selected for expertise relevant to the needs of the firm they’re helping. The programme is led by our delivery partners, whose deep local knowledge and rigorous process ensures the best possible fit between mentor and mentee.

What’s involved
Mentors support up to three SMEs for a 12-month period. Regular one-to-one meetings allow mentees to bring their core issues to the table, kick-starting an exchange of ideas and experiences to shape the future direction of their business.

Where you’ll gain
Our mentors give back a lot, offering practical guidance to make family firms more productive and ready for growth. But the programme also offers rich insights into smaller businesses that a chosen mentor can bring back to your company.

To learn more and sign up to participate in Mentoring for Growth visit www.bethebusiness.com/familybusiness

“Our mentors have been delighted to share their experience with some fantastic SMEs. It’s really a two-way street, with our mentors getting as much back as they give.”

Regis Simard – President Pharmaceutical Supply Chain, GSK
Running a family business can leave people feeling lonely and isolated. In our Peer Learning groups, facilitated by representatives of larger businesses, they’re no longer alone.

**How it works**
Once a month, Peer Learning brings together a small group of like-minded family business leaders to work through real-life business issues and complications. These sessions are facilitated by managers and leaders from companies like yours.

**What’s involved**
Group sessions are held monthly over a period of 6-12 months, with facilitators there to set ground rules and keep groups running smoothly. They can also find ways to stimulate discussion and learning, such as arranging external speakers from their own networks.

We offer ‘train the trainer’ style learning before the programme and provide facilitators with plenty of support throughout to equip you with the skills to run the group.

**Where you’ll gain**
Facilitators get the satisfaction of seeing their groups grow, as well as picking up some valuable transferable skills for themselves. Your organisation will benefit from getting to know the types of challenges facing your customer and supply chain SMEs, as well as the opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to the economic development of the local region.

To learn more and sign up to contribute to Peer Learning visit www.bethebusiness.com/familybusiness

“The main highlight has been forming a close group of like-minded individuals who I can trust, and gain some truly valuable opinions.”

Chris Mayne – Director, Forsberg Service
Leaders of family businesses can have limited experience of life outside the family firm. A short placement in your company can provide valuable insights and inspiration to improve.

**How it works**
You’ll be matched up with the current or future leader of a compatible SME (never a competitor or supply chain member). The placement will give you an opportunity to showcase your achievements, while presenting your guest with some proven pathways to success.

**What’s involved**
You’ll host for up to five days, opening up the inner workings of your business in the process. We’ll provide a suggested framework for how to structure the placement; you’ll agree dates and content with your guest.

We always encourage a return visit to give both companies a chance to forge closer ties and share what they do best.

**Where you’ll gain**
Hosting a business leader requires you to step back from day-to-day operations and take an outsider’s perspective. You may be asked questions that lead to new ways of considering improvements in your own business. Plus the placement can shine new light on achievements you might have taken for granted.

To learn more and sign up to host a Business Placement visit [www.bethebusiness.com/familybusiness](http://www.bethebusiness.com/familybusiness)
Open Business Day:
Celebrating British business success

Open Business Day is a national moment to celebrate and share in the achievements of our businesses, big and small.

How it works
Firms everywhere will be opening their doors, showcasing the best things about their business and promoting the power of collaboration in the business community. Your company can be involved as a host or as visitors.

What’s involved
You can become a host by signing up to open your doors and run insight events for other SME leaders in the region. We’ll send you an informative ‘how-to’ pack for the day and you’re free to showcase whatever you’re proud of in your business.

To participate as a visitor, simply sign up to attend Open Business Day events across the North West.

Where you’ll gain
The day is all about collaboration – extending your network by making connections with like-minded business leaders. Participating firms will come away with a better sense of the challenges, methods and successes of different businesses around our region.

To learn more and sign up as an Open Business Day host or visitor visit www.bethebusiness.com/familybusiness

“I love learning from other people, visiting other companies. Some things will never work for us but some you can adapt and change.”

Roger Smith – Managing Director, Thomas Graham & Sons
One thing we have definitely done right is to ask for help. In no time we had a senior executive from a large company as our mentor who enabled us to find a vital missing element in our business: focus.

Matt Carr – Director, Carrs Pasties

Work on the business, not in the business.

Be the Business manages and supports a number of leadership development programmes that are designed specifically with SMEs in mind.

These include our Productivity through People programme, which is delivered in association with Lancaster University Management School.

An essential part of the design of our programmes is creating networking opportunities with best practice companies who are willing to share their insights and experience with others in an open and collaborative way.

We would love to give you opportunities to support, co-deliver or sponsor our programmes locally, regionally or nationally. So if you want to develop your team, your supply chain partners or yourself, contact us at familybusiness@bethebusiness.com