



Business Advice Area

Improving leadership and management skills

Advice in this area aims to help business owners develop their strategy and vision, and how to build and improve the leadership and management potential of themselves and their team.

The advice could be used for assessing capabilities, identifying management development needs, improving management practices, reviewing business strategy, planning for the future and managing change.

What are the benefits of taking advice in this area?

Strong leadership and management skills are vital for business growth. Leadership skills help business owners and line managers provide a vision and direction which employees can get behind and help drive the business forwards. Management skills help business owners and line managers design, plan and implement essential processes.

Skilful leadership and management helps the management team:

- Take calculated risks when identifying new markets and new business **opportunities**
- Ensure thinking and decision making is strategic and leads to sustainable **achievements**
- Improve systems and processes to drive **efficiency**
- Keep track of how well systems and process are working to drive **effectiveness**.

Taken together these elements will help small businesses achieve their strategic objectives, deliver new or improved products or services to more customers at higher margins, and make sure the business is run effectively and efficiently in order to ensure the business' long-term health.

What might advice in this area involve?

Expert advice will help you and the management team to develop and review your business strategy, set direction for the business, assess your skills and capability, and make the most of business opportunities and the skills of your staff through strong leadership.

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What sorts of activity could Growth Vouchers be used for?

Leadership and Management capability assessment and planning

- Assessing the skills necessary to lead and manage your business
- Evaluating how your current leadership and management capability, training and development contributes to the survival and growth of your business and your scope for improvement
- Measuring individual leadership and management performance against personal and business objectives
- Developing plans to ensure effective and timely leadership and management development takes place
- Taking advice on how to fund leadership and management development

Strategic planning, vision and direction

- Undertaking a business needs analysis to assess opportunities and their risks, and identify how your business can meet its strategic goals
- Assessing how vulnerable your business is to economic and other changes in the market
- Advice on developing the vision and mission of the business, how to communicate it and ensure it engages employees as the business changes and grows.
- Help to create a culture of positive people management throughout the organisation

Performance Management

- Taking advice on how performance management systems can help your business
- Implementing performance management systems
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the system

Managing Change

- Ensure all members of staff are involved and can contribute to change
- Getting advice and support to help with the successful implementation of the plan and the monitoring of its success
- Help to identify and deal with obstacles to change and support your staff through the change process

What sorts of activities shouldn't Growth Vouchers be used for?

Growth Vouchers should not be used to subsidise leadership and management training, coaching and mentoring. Advice must be impartial and based on what the business requires; advisors should not be linked to specific brands.

What should I look out for when choosing an advisor in this topic?

- Are they a leadership and management expert or a full member of a recognised institute with an independent customer complaints-handling process (such as ILM, CMI, CIPD and IOEE)?
- Do they have three years experience of working in, or advising, small businesses (with references or are they accredited against SFEDI standards?)
- Do they have professional indemnity insurance?
- Do they have professional qualifications in a relevant discipline?

What are typical charges?

While it's difficult to define exact rates, Leadership and Management consultants tend to charge upwards of £300 per day, and some experienced business consultants will charge more than £600 per day. However price isn't necessarily an indication of quality so it's important to shop around. Try and get at least three detailed, costed quotations and check background and experience.