



Business in the Arts: North West

Learn About Leadership by Volunteering

The following article by Business in the Arts:North West's Manager, Vivienne Tyler, was printed in the last issue of the Daily Post on 13 January 2012.

A recent article in the leading US business magazine, Forbes, extolled the virtues of volunteering in non-profit organisations because it offered people from business rare chances to learn intangible leadership skills, such as persuasion and mediation. The reasoning is that when volunteering in a charity, business people usually operate outside the organisation's structure – they cannot give instruction, they have to earn the trust and respect of the staff in order to practice what is described as 'permission leadership'.

This is not news to Liverpool based, Business in the Arts:North West, a charity that has been brokering such management volunteering opportunities within the arts and cultural sector for over 21 years. Through programmes that provide advisers, mentors and board members for cultural sector organisations, Business in the Arts has matched over 1,200 business people with arts organisations needing specialist skills. One business manager with United Utilities plc described his experience as "The best development a business person can get".

At a time when training budgets are under pressure in both the business sector and the arts, isn't it time that more businesses started looking at the mutual advantage of encouraging their managers and executives to volunteer? Business people can help to skill up the cultural sector and gain benefits themselves through working in a sector where creative solutions to problems are essential because resources are scarce; where they will need to communicate especially clearly and influence without authority. And the volunteers would be assisting a sector which is critical to the growth of the city region's visitor economy.

Most people think of volunteering as very hands-on, such as working in a charity shop or driving people to hospital appointments. But Business in the Arts' programmes are designed specifically to be accessible to busy people holding responsible jobs. So why aren't more businesses looking at such opportunities? Of course there are exceptions and Business in the Arts is grateful for ongoing support from organisations such as Bruntwood, DWF LLP, Manchester Business School and TalkTalk Group. However, many companies seem to have retrenched in these tough times rather than thinking about inexpensive ways of continuing to develop their managers - ways which also create company ambassadors and help to fulfil corporate social responsibilities. It is a classic win win.

Making the Most of Your Board

It's time for the annual running of Making the Most of your Board. This informative and practical one day course provides an opportunity for chief executives (or those responsible for serving a board) to explore ways in which they can help to improve the performance and contribution of their boards.

The course has been refined over a number of years and always gets good feedback:

Excellent, though-provoking, very useful. Will make a real difference to the way we work!

I hoped it would hold the answers to all my problems. It was the answer.

Entertaining, informative and authoritative, but with a light touch, plus a wealth of great materials to take away.

The course is priced competitively at £90 (VAT exempt) to make it as accessible as we can. There are only 14 places, so book your place ahead of the closing date of 12 March.

We plan to run The Role of the Chair course in May, if you would like to express an interest in a place on the course, please email all@businessinthearts.co.uk

The Programmes - Here are the latest matches:

BETTER BOARD BANK - New matches bring the total to 425.

The Bluecoat - Emmanuel Matan, Matan International Group Ltd
DanceSyndrome - David Lee, consultant
Venture Arts - Laura Brown, Laura Marie Brown
Hot Bed Press - John Napier, consultant
Victoria Baths - Brierley Stubbs, B2B Strategy Solutions
Manchester Literature Festival - Olive Strachan, Olive Strachan Resources
Psappha – Dorothy Taylor, consultant
The Bluecoat - Mike Furniss, EMQ Services

MENTORING - These new matches bring the total to 144.

Kerry Moore, FACT- Irene Newton, consultant
Ben Hunt, Your Prescap - Diane Brown, BFG Associates
Martha Hawkins, The Bluecoat - Vony Gwillim, Coachwork

SKILLS BANK - The number of projects confirmed to date is 547.

Norton Priory Museum and Gardens/Christopher Sefton, CS Associates—marketing/branding
Lancashire Sinfonietta/Malcolm Brown, Osiris Training—business planning
Louise Wood/David Seaman, David K. Seaman Coaching—marketing
The Dukes Playhouse/Sandra Walsh, consultant—HR
Storey Gallery/Colin Johnston, Snowdrop Marketing Ltd—marketing
Leaf Arts/Alison Vasey, Siemens plc—marketing
Adelaide Shalhope Designs/Emma Smyth, consultant—marketing
Chrissy Webster/Rob Allen, Children, Young People and Families' Network—marketing
Life is a Cabaret/David Lee, consultant—business planning
Made by Hands of Britain/Paul Foden, Byotrol Technology Ltd—business planning

QUICK FIXES – 114 completed to date

Bury Art Museum - Mustapha Koriba, NasNad International Ltd—business practices
Michelle Brand - Durham Grigg, IP Works—legal
Blott Artist Studios - Robert Stoker, Shop Direct—legal
Activate Arts - Simon Whitehead, EOS Law LLP—employment law
Community Arts Northwest - Vivienne Tyler, BIA:NW—governance
Birth Rites Collection - Roy Crozier, Clarke Willmott—legal/contracts
The Bluecoat - Simon Whitehead, EOS Law LLP—legal
Amber Personal Management - Robert Stoker, Shop Direct—legal
TiPP - Mike Edwards, Kaleidoscope ADM Ltd—marketing
Lancashire Sinfonietta - Jonathan Gillow, Cobbetts—organisational structures
Full Circle Arts - Robert Stoker, Shop Direct —legal/contracts

The monetary value of support provided through BIA:NW's volunteering programmes now amounts to almost £14.8 million.

Thanks to our Funders and Supporters

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Bruntwood
DWF LLP
Eversheds
Manchester Business School
TalkTalk Group

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