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Colander

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Funding available for Colander training...

Did you know there are grants available to SME's with a minimum of 5 employees to put towards the cost of our training? Contact your local branch of Business Link for more information at www.businesslink.gov.uk or let me know and I will find out who can help in your area.

Courses to help with Business Development

The next two half-day public courses on Tuesday 28 September are focussing on business development.

Business planning for small to medium practices

28 September 2010: 09.30-13.00

Course director: **Caroline Cole, Colander**

Previous delegate said: *"Very reassuring, with simple explanations of all aspects. Thank you."*

This course has been designed for people who are setting up in business and are looking for guidance on writing a business plan. It is also for those who want to manage the growth of their practices and plan for future developments.

This course takes delegates through a step-by-step guide to Business Planning: understanding where the business is today, building consensus for future aims and finally, writing a plan. Templates, case studies and discussions are used, to help delegates go back to their practices and instigate their own Business Plans. [more...](#)

Financial management for small to medium practices

28 September 2010: 09.30-13.00

Course director: **Nick Coates, FCA**

Previous delegate said: *"Very worthwhile and lots to take away and consider, I'll definitely be revising some of our working methods."*

This course is designed for partners and directors of small to medium sized practices looking to put in place effective financial management

systems to help achieve a profitable balance between creativity and business acumen.

The course will focus on financial tasks that will see a practice through to the other side of a recession, taking the guesswork out of financial management and creating financial systems to help the smooth running of the day-to-day, month-to-month financial activities, as well as forming the bedrock for future gazing and potential growth. [more...](#)

Other Public Courses in 2010:

Programming time on projects

19 October 2010: 09.30-13.00

This course will help delegates improve their control of time and resources on projects. [more...](#)

Essential management and communication skills

19 October 2010: 14.00-17.30

Management techniques to get the best from creative people: communication, inspiration, delegation, dealing with difficult people and handling conflict. [more...](#)

Marketing and new business development

18 November 2010: 09.30-13.00

A guide to marketing a professional practice: understanding who you want to sell to, why and then how. [more...](#)

Working more efficiently

18 November 2010: 14.00-17.30

How time is used at present, how it could be used better and how to overcome the obstacles to being more efficient. [more...](#)

[Click here](#) for further details. As ever **early booking** and **multiple discounts** available.

If you have several interested delegates, we can run any of our public courses for you in-house - and tailor them to meet your specific requirements.

Help for Engineers: Staff Development

Managing creative people demands intelligence, flexibility, resilience and subtlety but it also helps to have clear, open and understandable

HR policies. We work with architectural practices to create tailored management systems that allow their staff to blossom within a framework that also reflects the practice ethos.

Ways that we have helped include:

- Skills and competencies audits
- Psychometric testing
- Job descriptions for engineers and support staff
- Appraisal systems
- Personal Development Plans (PDP's)
- Reviews and appraisals for senior people

For further information, do visit our [website](#), or call Caroline Cole direct on 020 8771 6445

Latest [Colander Blog](#)

August 25, 2010

In this market, many clients are not actually building....

... and those who are prepared to commit to long-term fees on projects are few and far between.

So, to survive, architects and engineers should consider how their skills can be used outside the traditional, project based building contract.

This might mean stealing back some of the advisory work from project managers and agents, by helping clients to make front-end strategic decisions. Equally it might mean taking a broader role, advising clients on their existing property portfolios, whether for refurbishment work or to bring existing buildings up to acceptable levels of energy and carbon sustainability.

Think also about offering services in small packages, that allow a client to commit to short-term, lump sum fees. This way, a project can be nudged along without a client having to secure long-term investment.

But remember, to do any of this successfully, each of these small pieces of work needs to include a margin for profit; this means being acutely aware of how much it costs to deliver each element of work – and pricing accordingly. To this end, case study reviews of past projects and business benchmarking are both invaluable.