

Sophie Wright speaks out on the benefits of mentorship. Why did you want the free one-to-one chamber business mentoring?

Benefits of mentoring

Mentoring and mentees.

As a business start-up, I thought I should take advantage of any free advice I can get my hands on. So the price is right. Working for myself, I do not have colleagues I can bounce ideas off of, and the business mentor acts as a great sounding board. I particularly liked that the mentor I chose was also an accountant like myself and had many years of experience. He has seen it all and if I needed any technical advice, he could help in that area as well.

Benefits you and your business gained

The thing about running your own business, is sometimes things work out, and sometimes they don't. And when they do not you need to pick yourself up immediately and get on with it. Knowing that I had a scheduled mentor meeting to go to, with action points to complete from the last meeting, has contributed to helping me get back on that horse. It has provided me with motivation. My mentor also came up with marketing ideas I had not thought of, and gave me tips on how to handle certain tricky situations I had faced client-side.

What was your impression/experience of your mentor?

I have had a great experience with my mentor. We meet once a month and tackle the issues my business is facing at the time. The programme is completely confidential so I can discuss any issues in confidence. He is helpful and kind. He listens to what I have to say and immediately tries to think of solutions with me. We always leave the session each with our own action points for the next meeting.



A date to remember



This year's Richmond Business Awards will be held on Friday, November 13, at the Rugby Football Union's Live Room in the company of Twickenham MP Dr Tania Mathias and Richmond MP Zac Goldsmith. Pictured are the chamber's Anne Newton, Julia Carr of Yuma Sushi, and Paul Miller the artistic director at the Orange Tree Theatre

Deadline for the Richmond Business Awards is looming



Chairman:
Anne Newton

Anne Newton, chairman of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, said: "Due to popular demand we have extended the deadline, this is now Monday, September 28, enter several categories and celebrate what you and your teams do so well.

"So to prompt you, please take a look at the categories below and within four simple clicks at you can submit your replies to our very straightforward questions – it really is not onerous."

☐ Best training and development – everyone is trained – so

tell us how you train your teams.

☐ Best CSR – why not share with us all the great things you and your teams do for the community for example – we really want to hear about it.

☐ Best exporter – if you sell products or services abroad – tell us your story

☐ Best business – for businesses over £1m turnover – simply share the strengths and achievements of your business with Richmond upon Thames

☐ Best innovation – there are so many of you out there innovating – please share these

with us.

☐ Best professional practice – describe the professional nature of your business and how your teams deliver – testimonials help.

☐ Best retailer – which one of our wonderful shops will win this one?

☐ Best website – show how your website is a key part of delivering for you.

☐ Best start up – we love this category as we have all been there.

So take some time to write your story by replying to our questions.

☐ Best small business – this category is for businesses under £1m turnover.

☐ Best charity and non-profit – with 900 in the borough we want to showcase the best – so have a go.

☐ People's choice – this is where you vote for your favourite business or non-profit – this is a straight race to the finish line.

☐ Best customer service – this is at the heart of every business and so open to all businesses to enter – testimonials from customers and clients helps.

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