

Partners' Conference 2009

# Relieve the squeeze...

## ...how to win in the downturn



- The State of the Profession and Positioning for a New Future
- Managing the Money
- Leadership for Challenging Times
- Sourcing Finance
- Employment Law Issues
- Client Relationships

Full Day Conference

**£285** (including lunch) plus  
VAT per person

10% discount for local members  
25% discount for national members

East Midlands

Hilton Hotel, Castle Donington

**12 June 2009**



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# Partners' Conference 2009

12 June 2009, Hilton Hotel, Castle Donington

Many firms are now experiencing the effects of the downturn, whether it be through tightening cash flow, having to cut costs through reducing headcount or through the loss of clients. This comprehensive one-day conference has gathered together speakers with extensive experience in their respective fields. They will provide delegates with practical advice on not only how to survive the current downturn but also how to ensure they can position their practices to take advantage of opportunities that present themselves and to be well placed for when the upturn arrives.

9.30am

## Welcome and introduction by conference chairperson

9.35am

## State of the Profession and Positioning for a New Future

Mark Lee, Tax Advice Network

Every aspect of traditional practice life is in a state of flux this year. Not only is the country gripped by recession, HMRC has new powers and new procedures; traditional accounting and bookkeeping services are subject to greater competition than ever and auditing is about to suffer another major change with the introduction of Clarity Standards.

Is your practice one of those that has yet to suffer a major client loss or are you reeling from the impact that the recession is having on your client base?

Every practice is different and there are few general palliative solutions, but it's not all doom and gloom though. There are plenty of opportunities out there for forward thinking practices and this session will open your eyes to what's going on, what you can do and what you could achieve if you take action.

10.20am

## Managing the Money – Sign of the Times

Sue Turner, Finance into Focus

There is little credit from banks for your clients, little credit insurance available and there is a slowing down of payments from overstretched companies... British businesses are facing a triple whammy.

It's time to revisit the fundamentals:

- How well do you know your client?
- Invoicing with confidence
- Collecting with confidence
- When all else fails.....

11.00am

## Coffee

11.20am

## Leadership for Challenging Times

Ros Taylor, Ros Taylor Group

'Leadership is like a tea bag. It only shows its true colours when in hot water!' More than ever before your people will be looking to the leaders in your practice to provide direction, inspiration and motivation. This session will highlight the key skills and behaviours that practice leaders need to be demonstrating.

- Make sure that your thinking is confident and positive to motivate those around you
- Learn the skills to deal with challenging times and people
- How to be user friendly for all your clients to achieve referrals
- Take action for innovation and change

1.00pm

## Lunch

2.00pm

## Sourcing Finance

Aziz Durrani

This session will review the fundamentals of obtaining finance from traditional sources in the current climate as well as looking at some alternative methods of financing businesses.

- What are the banks looking for?
- How the adviser can help
- Alternatives to traditional financing routes
- Lobbying and PR

2.40pm

## Employment Law Issues

Derek Eccleston, Employment Law Training Ltd

This session will look at some constructive ideas for reducing employment costs without necessarily cutting headcount. Many of the alternatives impact on employees' contractual rights. This session will also review current law and best practice covering changes to employment contracts. We will also take a brief look at the redundancy process itself.

- Weathering the recession by cutting costs not jobs - short time working, layoffs
- Restructuring to make your workforce more flexible and efficient
- Altering levels of pay or working hours - the contractual issues
- Consultation with the workforce - the legal requirements and pitfalls
- Redundancy selection and consultation issues

3.20pm

## Tea

3.40pm

## Client Relationships

Lynn Galletly, People Development Works

Client relationships can come under significant pressure during a downturn, especially when the subject of fees is being discussed, and yet service excellence must remain paramount. This session will guide delegates on how to protect and develop existing client relationships whilst taking advantage of opportunities that present themselves.

- What are your clients buying?
- Developing advocacy – the five golden rules
- Identifying and winning further opportunities - excelling in, not just surviving, a recession
- Selling benefits and 'holding your own' during client fee negotiations

4.30pm

## Close of conference

## Speakers

### Aziz Durrani

Aziz is a business reporter for The Guardian and The Observer newspapers focusing on the credit and liquidity constraints affecting companies in the current climate. Until February 2009 he was an Associate Director at Bank of Scotland. He began his career at Andersen Business Consulting, and later joined Standard Chartered Bank.

### Derek Eccleston FCIPD ACII

Derek is an experienced, practical consultant and author, specialising in employment law and employee relations, through his consultancy Employment Law Training Ltd. He has spent over 25 years in senior HR roles in local government, engineering and financial services. He advises SMEs on HR issues from recruitment to termination and presents for a number of national training organisations.

### Lynn Galletly

Lynn is a highly experienced consultant with People Development Works where she has worked with many firms in the professional services sector. Lynn has a lively, outgoing and practical approach to improving organisational and individual client performance.

### Mark Lee FCA CTA (Fellow)

Mark is a sought after commentator, speaker and broadcaster appearing on BBC Breakfast, Sky and BBC's Newsnight as well as being featured in Accountancy, AccountancyAge, AccountingWEB and many other business periodicals. Mark has been a partner in two large accountancy firms and was Chairman of the ICAEW Tax Faculty from 2003-2005. In 2007 he founded and now chairs The Tax Advice Network. He has a reputation as being an agent for change with an ability to motivate and excite those who hear him speak.

### Ros Taylor

Ros is a leading UK psychologist, executive coach, successful businesswoman, an accomplished author and a TV and radio presenter. She travels the world developing the leadership potential of employees through the Just Leadership™ programme which she formulated. A creative academic, Ros is a chartered clinical psychologist, coach, trainer and regular speaker on the conference circuit in the USA, Europe, China and Japan.

### Sue Turner

Sue Turner is a consultant with Finance into Focus. She qualified as a chartered accountant with Arthur Andersen in 1999 and subsequently moved into financial training. Her down to earth and inclusive delivery style has proved popular in the UK, the US and China. She currently designs and delivers innovative management development programmes for clients including Shell and T-Mobile.

## Venue

### The Midlands

The Hilton East Midlands Airport Hotel,  
Junction 24, M1, Derby Road,  
Castle Donington, Derby, DE74 2YW  
Tel: 01509 674000

### 10% discount for Local Members

A 10% discount on the total price will be given to all firms who pay an annual subscription (based upon the size of their practice) to belong to a Mercia training group. This does not include firms who buy season tickets. For further information please contact Sarah Moore.

### 25% discount for National Members

A 25% discount on the total price will be given to all firms that have enrolled as a National member.

If you have not yet joined as a Local or National Member of Mercia and would like more information please tick the box on the booking form and return it to us, alternatively you can visit our website at [www.mercia-group.co.uk](http://www.mercia-group.co.uk) for this information.

## Booking Form

I would like to book places on the Partners' Conference 2009 as follows:

A total of _____ places @ £285	£	<input type="text"/>
Less 10% discount for Local Members	£	<input type="text"/>
Less 25% discount for National Members	£	<input type="text"/>
Sub total	£	<input type="text"/>
VAT @ 15%	£	<input type="text"/>
TOTAL	£	<input type="text"/>

Please provide delegate names:

<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>

Contact name	<input type="text"/>
Name of firm	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	
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<input type="text"/>	Postcode <input type="text"/>
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Please invoice my firm. I understand the usual 28 day credit terms apply

I enclose a cheque for £ \_\_\_\_\_ made payable to Mercia Group Limited

I would like to receive more information about National/Local membership

Confirmation: An invoice will be sent as confirmation of your booking.

Cancellations: No refund will be made where cancellation is received less than 14 days before the date of the course. All other cancellations will be subject to a £25 administration charge. All cancellations must be in writing.



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