

# the obk MBA

a tailored MBA course for busy owner managers



“As a whistle-stop tour of essential topics this course would be hard to beat – certainly in terms of value for money. I have found it to be informative, relevant and fun.”



This is a highly focused course that covers the essential areas of business leadership and management as they apply to smaller businesses. The monthly 3 hour sessions start at 8am and finish promptly at 11am. Each MBA group is small and the sessions interactive.

The course content is unashamedly directed at the needs of owner-managers and their businesses. It is all practical, even if sometimes presented as theory. Some of the content is aimed at building the personal skills needed to direct and run a small to medium sized business. On the centre pages is a list of topics in the three main areas covered. Individual modules from each area are mixed and matched to make sessions more varied and meaningful. We ask that every session is attended – it can be amazing what you learn even about a subject you “know”!

We would like to make it clear that the obk MBA is more education than training – and, of course, it is not a real Masters degree! Although the group is deliberately kept small and questions and interaction are encouraged, the information is inevitably generalised so it can be applied to a variety of situations.

“Real knowledge is to know the extent of one’s ignorance”

CONFUCIUS

## course format

12 month course  
Meet monthly for 11 months  
(no session in August)

The last session is a half-day to include ‘graduation’ and celebration lunch

Small group  
Highly-interactive style  
Reading and book list (optional but advised)

Occasional small amount of homework, usually reading relevant article supplied e.g. from Harvard Business Review

## the obk MBA

**This unique course is meant for busy owners of small and medium sized businesses. Most successful business owners did not go to Managing Director School before starting their business. As a business grows business owners have to learn to play by a new set of rules. The obk MBA attracts successful and aspiring business leaders who want to benefit from a structured training in areas of business analysis and development.**

## course leaders

Paul Kennedy and Paul O’Byrne developed and first ran this course in 2003. This course is based on their 15 years experience of what makes a successful business and uses some world class teaching resources. The course was developed in response to a client survey in which business owners said “We have had no formal business training – but we want to learn.” The course has since been developed and rolled out to non clients.

Paul Kennedy now leads this course and covers many of the core modules. Paul is a Chartered Accountant and has been providing business development consulting services to owner managed businesses for more than 15 Years. Paul continually studies why some owner managed businesses succeed while others fail and Paul uses these insights when teaching this course. Paul has developed and delivered dozens of courses and seminars for various client groups and various institutions and bodies including Enterprise Agencies, Trade bodies, legal and accounting networks and firms, professional bodies and banks and regularly speaks to groups in United States, Australia, New Zealand as well as in the UK.

### guest speakers

Guest speakers with specialist knowledge are brought in to cover such areas as Law, Thinking and Negotiation skills. Past speakers have included author and pricing guru, Ron Baker and speaker and lawyer, Michael Lane.

### taster sessions

‘Taster’ sessions are run in October and November to give potential attendees a taste of the style and content of this course so if you are interested attending this course next year please look on our web site for more information [www.obk.co.uk/mba](http://www.obk.co.uk/mba).

### business visit



Business visit to Tims Dairy

During the year we visit a business to look at how some of the theories work in practice.



Paul lives in Broxbourne with his wife, a fitness instructor, and 2 children. He tries to keep fit and is passionate about skiing.



## leadership

**Owner managers have to wear different hats. As leaders they must articulate what the business stands for and communicate their vision of the future. They have to recognise the need for change and carry their people with them. As managers they must create an environment and organisational accountability to get work done through other people in a predictable way.**

“To accomplish great things, we must not only act, we must dream; not only plan, but also believe”

**ANATOLE FRANCE**

### vision and culture

- What is leadership?
- The difference between leadership and management
- Leadership skills
- What makes an inspiring leader?
- Creating a volunteer mindset
- Articulating a clear vision
- Giving people real jobs
- Creating a positive environment
- Building trust and respect
- Encouraging innovation and continuous improvement
- Creating a team culture
- Change and leadership
- Why transformation efforts fail
- Lessons from “Who moved my cheese?”

### competitive strategy

At the core of every business is the way it intends to create and capture value in a competitive environment. Business owners have to make critical choices. The aim of this module is to make those choices explicit so that decisions can be made consciously rather than by default. The framework taught in this module allows business owners to analyse a business including their own.

“Competitive strategy is about being different. It means deliberately choosing a different set of activities to deliver a unique mix of value.”

**MICHAEL PORTER**

- Creating and capturing value
- Competitive positioning
- Competitive advantage
- Are we meeting our customers' needs?
- How strong are the competitive forces?
- Are we stuck in the middle?
- Porter's 5 forces analysis
- Porter's generic strategies
- Cost leadership video case study
- Differentiation video case study
- Strategy v operational effectiveness
- Strategy rests on unique activities
- Different types of focus
- Trade offs – how and why they arise
- The pitfalls of straddling
- Activity fit and competitive advantage sustainability
- Pushing against competitive forces
- Mapping and presenting strategy

“Motivate them, train them, care about them...we know that if we treat our employees correctly, they'll treat the customers right. And if customers are treated right, they'll come back”

**J.W. MARRIOTT**

## business leader skills

**Business leaders are expected to have superhuman abilities as well as knowledge. These modules are tailored to the group and aim to identify skills needed and initiate some skill building. It is important to note that these sessions are no substitute for dedicated skill training, but will supplement present knowledge and often, give that 'aha' revelation into what may be missing. Personal effectiveness can be improved!**

“There is no future in any job. The future lies in the man who holds the job”.

**GEORGE CRANE**

### understanding communications

- Why doesn't everyone see things like you?
- When to write, when to talk
- One-to-one and one-to-many

### mastering meetings

- Why have meetings?
- How to prepare
- How to make things happen
- Time management

### thinking skills

- The different thinking needed
- How to get your brain aligned
- How to get your team thinking – constructively!

### negotiation

- Different negotiations need different approaches
- Principled negotiation
- Assisted negotiation

### presentations skills for business leaders

- Do I have to?
- How you can present
- Finding and organising content
- How and when to use PowerPoint, flipcharts, handouts

## management knowledge

**Business owners do not usually have any formal qualifications in finance but are asked to make financial management decisions on a daily basis. Similarly, successful business people are often embarrassed to admit that they cannot read a balance sheet. The finance module covers essential financial management for owner managers including what you should get from financial accounts and what they are never going to tell you. It also looks at what you should measure to manage.**

“Finance is an outcome – by the time you've measured profit it's too late to change it – it's a classic lag metric”

**RON BAKER**

### finance and measurement

- What is profit?
- The difference between profit and cash
- Growth and cash flow
- Return on investment
- What drives cost?
- Cost-volume-profit analysis
- Willy Prosper case study – analysing a business
- Maximum fundable growth rate
- Limitations of financial accounts
- The invisible balance sheet
- The balanced scorecard
- What drives income (primary profit drivers)
- Willy Prosper case study cont. – planning a business
- Lifetime value of a customer
- Pareto techniques
- Investment appraisal, discounted cash flow and business valuation
- What you can measure you can manage: True or false?
- The old and new business equation
- What is intellectual capital?
- Developing intellectual capital

- Measuring intellectual capital
- Why do we measure?
- Key predictive indicators
- What you measure is what you get
- Example KPIs that work

### the legal framework

Legal structures, terminology – and traps – are all around our everyday business lives. The legal framework module addresses the need to have an appreciation of the legal principles and some detailed rules affecting our organisations and our dealings with others.

- Principles of English law
- Civil and criminal law and the English courts system
- Contract law - formation and breach
- Contract terms and unfair contract terms
- Contracts – good practice
- Law of tort – how you can get caught
- Employment law – essentials
- Law relating to directors and partners
- Insurance traps
- Debts and insolvency law

### marketing and selling

Sales and Marketing are, of course, essential elements of any business, and we recognise that many businesses are highly successful at them. However, it can be difficult to replicate success in this area, transfer knowledge and even understand what it is that makes the business good.

- What is marketing?
- Developing a marketing plan
- Understanding a marketing funnel
- The 4 P's of marketing
- Marketing techniques checklist
- Consultative selling

“95% of what matters in a business cannot be measured”

**W. EDWARDS DEMING**

# testimonials

## Tom McLoughlin

MANAGING DIRECTOR

“One day a month an interesting morning kicked off with a warm welcome at reception, then coffee and a bacon roll in friendly surroundings. The monthly meeting was never long enough once you become engrossed in the wide variety of topics each morning. Over the year our horizons were broadened on subjects relating to strategies, marketing techniques, negotiation skills, people management and leadership skills. OK I failed on the presentation skills, but I did have the benefit of meeting some very interesting people from completely different working backgrounds. Many having similar problems, but everyone looking to achieve the same goal.”

*Mac's Plasterboard Systems Ltd*

## Kevin Prosser

DIRECTOR

“I found it to be interesting and relevant to my business. A great rounding off for all directors and I would strongly recommend it to anyone.”

*Tri-Star Packaging Supplies Ltd*

## Jeanette Wood

MANAGING DIRECTOR

“Time seriously well spent! It made me consider so many practical aspects of our business and I now have so much more confidence to make positive changes using a whole new set of skills.”

*Bison River limited*

## Claire O'Mahoney

“Without doubt the best course I have been on, very informative. Learnt so much some of which I have put into practice already! Great that it was in plain English and explained until we all got it. I liked the fact that there was a relaxed atmosphere at every session as I felt this helped me to absorb information. Always feel the team at O'Byrne and Kennedy have a polite, professional and proactive approach to everything. – Not to mention the bacon rolls!!!”

*Exterior Plas Ltd*

## Neil Walton

MANAGING DIRECTOR

“Not only did I improve my managerial skills especially on the financial and strategic side but I also enjoyed sharing ideas and problems with other business owners from completely different industries.”

*Centor Insurance & Risk Management Ltd*

## Giles Gibson

MANAGING DIRECTOR

“The OBK MBA provided one of the most stimulating, inspirational, thought provoking and challenging courses. It gently made you realise that you had to re-evaluate every aspect of why and how you ran your company. Every area was scrutinised, queried and challenged and you left armed with all the tools necessary to work on your business rather than just in it.”

*Original Thinking Group*

## Dave Everett & Suraj Shah

JOINT MANAGING DIRECTORS

“The obk MBA course gave us the tools to run our company as it should be, avoiding the pitfalls and concentrating our efforts where they had most impact. The regular commitment to attend made us take time away from the phones and emails to focus on the bigger picture. Basically we feel more in control having been encouraged to work 'on the business' rather than 'in the business'. Very informative, yet entertaining, we had to work, but the rewards were great. Lovely grub too.”

*Badger Computer Services Ltd*

## Elaine Verhaag

“As a whistle-stop tour of essential topics this course would be hard to beat – certainly in terms of value for money. I have found it to be informative, relevant and fun. Above all, the two Pauls have an admirable grasp of their subjects which they present with conviction and flair.”

*Chase Information Technology Services Ltd*

## Peter Timotheou

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

“Fantastic course to be taken seriously. Not for the faint hearted or “I'll do it tomorrow” brigade.”

*Tims Dairy Limited*

## Michelle Wilson

MANAGING DIRECTOR

“Take this course if you want a monthly injection of motivation! Each topic is relevant to business today and you will find yourself using many of the tips and formulas on a regular basis. Plus, you will finally understand all those things that you feel you should know but felt too stupid to ask! Particularly great for competitive strategy.”

*The Sharp End Creative Ltd*



East Wing Goffs Oak House  
Goffs Lane Goffs Oak Herts EN7 5BW  
**T:** 01707 876 876 **F:** 01707 876 877 **E:** [obk@obk.co.uk](mailto:obk@obk.co.uk) **W:** [www.obk.co.uk](http://www.obk.co.uk)