



Focusing on the future

As we continue to make ponderous steps out of the downturn, companies face enormous challenges as they prepare for a very long haul in a much changed business environment.

For the past few years, managers have been in survival mode in order to protect their businesses as the change in economic fortunes caused chaos on a global scale. Now that glimmers of confidence are returning, it is time to take stock and review the impact of what lies ahead. Nobody knows for certain whether the economy will continue on a growth pattern or whether it will revert back to more problematic times but for businesses it is a question of managing the risk whilst keeping a weather eye open on the future. However, standing still is not an option.

Adapting to a new environment

More businesses fail on the way out of recession than on the way in. Indeed, for many sectors the way in which they operate post credit crunch will be fundamentally different to that prior. Managers will need to get to grips with this new approach quickly if they are to take advantage of any upturn and secure a long term future. Resizing and restructuring may well be necessary whilst considering how a multitude of variables may impact.

Cost-cutting and efficiency

With a focus on medium to long term gains, managers can revisit cost-cutting and efficiency programmes to ensure they add real value to their business.

For some sectors, such as the public sector, the full force of the downturn is still being felt plans must be made now to preserve their positions. For others who have already experienced the full force now is the time to seek out opportunities and commence managing for growth.

Implementing the right strategies

Cash management, optimising costs and minimising major liabilities need to be on top of the agenda. Without the implementation of the right strategies businesses are unlikely to emerge unscathed.

Resilience and management skills vital

There is very little doubt that there will be some very difficult times ahead for all businesses. For some the outcome will be inevitable whilst for others it is a question of getting ready for the impact of conditions when they finally hit upon their sector.

Taking an eye off the ball as the dust settles is not an option and it is vital that businesses take the necessary steps to ensure they emerge from the economic downturn stronger and with a greater competitive advantage.

A taxing time

Since 2008 H M Revenue & Customs has backed hundreds of thousands of time-to-pay arrangements with billions deferred and outstanding that needs to be repaid.

Many businesses seem to be in total denial. Directors must take swift action if there are tax issues relating to their companies. Whereas the taxman has, by and large, supported small businesses, it is now payback time. The Revenue is seeking to maximize the tax take by a demand for robust business plans. Should these plans fail to meet the required standard or a business fails to maintain its tax instalment schedule, the consequences are likely to be harsh.



UK businesses have managed to increase Crown arrears at an alarming rate leaving a massive UK plc debt overdue.

Those businesses still owing money to the Crown are now required to submit repayment plans that are beyond reproach. These plans must not only be workable but deliverable.

