

BUSINESS ADVICE FIVE QUICK TIPS

GROWTH

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As well as providing healthcare, an optical practice is also a business. Dispensing opticians are experts in lenses and frames, but at the same time practice owners and managers are also expected to have business expertise. Read on for ideas of how to inject some business knowledge into your practice.

- 1.** Find your local enterprise agency and see what they can offer you. Many have business events, training and networking. (See Resources for contacts across the UK.)
- 2.** Look for your local Chamber of Commerce, BNI or other local networking organisation. Beyond networking, these organisations can put you in touch with local business experts and advisors, solicitors and accountants. By learning more from other members you can take lessons from outside optics and use them to improve your practice too.
- 3.** Join the Evolution Growth events for Sight Care members in London, Yorkshire and Birmingham. These monthly meetings offer networking, personal skills development and actions for growth. It is all about changing the culture, offering training and development and to focus on the owners' positive mindset, building an environment to sustain a high performing, happy business.
- 4.** Develop a plan for your business. Where would you like to see it in five years' time? An important part of this process is to identify the areas where you lack knowledge or experience. Make it a key part of the plan to find the help you need to grow your business.
- 5.** Evaluate your results. What are the key factors that indicate success to you? Make a shortlist and consider how you can measure these on a regular basis. This could include financial indicators, staff and patient satisfaction. Think about how often you need to measure these factors for them to give you meaningful information. Use your results to help you fine tune your business.

RESOURCES

Wales: Information on starting or growing a business in Wales is available via Business Wales www.businesswales.gov.wales

Northern Ireland: Enterprise NI offers business support for Northern Ireland. www.enterpriseni.com

England: The National Enterprise Network has a list of members in England, www.nationalenterprisenetwork.org

Scotland: Scotland's Enterprise agencies - Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Development International and Highlands & Islands Enterprise are listed at:- www.scottish-enterprise.com

Entrepreneurial Spark
www.entrepreneurial-spark.com

Sight Care
www.sightcare.co.uk