

SESAME

WISE
Working in Social Enterprise

part of the
Waste-reduction Initiatives for Social Enterprise
programme

Acknowledgements

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Welcome to WISE

WISE is a European Social Fund programme funded between May 2002 and April 2004. It aims to:

- conduct a full and robust feasibility study that will identify market opportunities and niches in relation to waste management, that will enable the creation of new social enterprises in the waste recycling sector
- establish a programme of learning for managers in social enterprise that will enable those working with severely disadvantaged people to develop the business skills to expand their enterprise.

Recycling

In Waste Strategy (2000), the government set targets for increased waste recovery and recycling and called on both waste collection and disposal authorities to

'involve local people on decisions on waste and work with community based schemes to promote re-use and recycling'.

The WISE champion and the WISE programme researcher will research, finance, establish and develop viable social businesses in recycling. Social businesses have social goals -- in this case both environmental, and in regard to employment, where WISE has a target of creating sustainable employment in social enterprises for between 50 and 100 people in Essex and Cambridgeshire by mid-2004.

Learning

Many of those currently developing social enterprises come from a non-business background, often involving care for people with disabilities. The skills they have developed in working with disadvantaged people are invaluable in working in the social business sector. However, there is a great demand for skills development in other areas, such as entrepreneurship, financial management, marketing and workforce development – the abilities necessary to run a successful business.

The WISE learning modules have been developed from the Anglia Polytechnic University SESAME (Small Enterprise Sensitive Accessible Management Education) programme. The achievements of SESAME in delivering management education by open learning to around 1000 managers in small and medium-sized enterprises were rewarded with the SFEDI Best New Learning Media award in 2002.

This element of WISE aims to enrol 50 social enterprise managers on the learning programme, and deliver workshops promoting the role of social enterprise in recycling to 120 people from the voluntary and community sectors.

The WISE Partnership

WISE is a partnership between Anglia Polytechnic University, the Environment Agency, Essex Businesslink, Essex County Council Enterprise/Social Services, the Papworth Trust, ReMade Essex and Social Firms for Essex.

How to use this book

This book has been written and produced to make your learning efficient and enjoyable. You will find that most topics are presented on two facing pages – a double page spread. Occasionally, some longer topics are covered on two spreads, but the main point here is that you should easily be able to take in the main points at a glance.

Before you begin, look through the sections and topics listed in the contents. This will give you a good idea of the scope of the book. Then focus on one topic at a time and give yourself time to read and think about it.

We have attempted to make the book lively and interesting. There are plenty of stories and case studies and lots of references for you to follow up what is happening in other social enterprises. We have also included activities and checkpoints to give you a chance to stop and think about what you are learning. Please do take time to pause and reflect – one of the best ways to learn is to do something with the information you are reading, and writing things down is an excellent way to summarise your thoughts about a particular subject. We suggest you do this in a learning journal.

Keeping a learning journal

A learning journal is an extremely effective way of keeping track of your learning. It can also form the basis of discussions between you and your tutor.

In the SESAME Study Guide, we strongly advise you to keep a learning journal if you are working towards gaining the Diploma in Small Business Management. If you are working through a module purely for your own benefit, you will still find it helpful to keep a record of your work.

A learning journal can be almost anything:

- looseleaf A4 pages which can be slotted into the book (or kept in a separate ring binder)
- a book of blank pages beautifully bound in leather or handmade paper
- a small notebook
- a diary
- a wirebound notebook
- a PDA.

A learning journal can also be a video or a cassette or a Dictaphone ...the main thing is to have somewhere to record your thoughts and ideas. You may also like to keep a large envelope or scrapbook for clippings, pictures, minutes of meetings or other things which you haven't generated. Feel free to draw pictures or doodle if that helps you to think.

If you don't particularly like writing, don't worry – you can keep record your thoughts on video or cassette. Some people like to dictate their thoughts while in the car or on a train, and this is perfectly acceptable, although we still encourage you to get some practice writing things down (or drawing them) if you possibly can.

Although there is some space in the book for making notes in response to the activities and checkpoints, you may prefer to write down your thoughts somewhere else – your learning journal is the perfect place to do this. In fact, it would be a good idea to get into the habit of noting down any ideas or things you want to do as a result of working through the activities and checkpoints in the book. This way, you can easily refer to them – your learning journal then becomes a really useful 'To do list' or, at the very least, an aide memoire of your intentions.