

It's good to talk

As an award-winning entrepreneur and motivational speaker, David Bell offers advice to help businesses succeed and achieve their full potential.

Based in north Essex, David Bell started his entrepreneurial journey back in 1996 at the tender age of 17 when co-founded the APC Solutions Group – now recognised as a leading provider of wireless communications solutions. Twenty-years on it's now a multimillion-pound company with offices in the UK, South Africa, North America and the Middle East.

In 2013 David set up Simboc Limited, a business consultancy and management company, and earlier this year founded The Speaker Expert to help coach and train individuals who want to learn how to speak and present like an expert. He is also regional chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses in Essex.

Ahead of a presentation he is due to give at the Chartered Institute of Marketing's autumn conference in Chelmsford next month, BEM asked David for some words of business advice:

Marketing

"Do things differently and not the same as everyone else. If you always do what you've always done, you will always get what you have always got. Stand out from the crowd and think outside the box. Try standing up and presenting to audiences – not a sales pitch but a talk offering golden nuggets of advice. People don't always see the business benefits of this but you are building a rapport with your audience. Take the opportunity to talk at free events, it will help you polish your speaking technique and deal with any nerves, and all the time you will be developing relationships.

Know your numbers

"You can't have a successful business if you don't know your numbers. You should have figures for turnover, profit, overheads and costs, what business is in the pipeline, sales, what's in the bank,

VAT and tax. Having a good accountant who will share information is invaluable. Today there is no excuse for not having this information to hand, as there are cloud-based systems that you can access on your phone and get these numbers at the press of a button. Of course, the information is only as good as the figures you put in but knowing how much you are owed and what's overdue will help with the all-important cash flow.

Building relationships

No-one is an expert at everything, so it is important to build relationships with people who can help you. Whether it be IT engineers, accountants or office cleaners - these are people who can do things for you and who you will pay for their expertise.

It's also important to treat people on both sides of your business as customers. Develop a good relationship with your clients so you

HEAR DAVID SPEAK

David is one of a number of speakers giving presentations at the Chartered Institute of Marketing's autumn conference.

Called **Inspiring Entrepreneurs**, the event takes place at Anglia Ruskin University's Rivermead Campus in Chelmsford on 12th November.

Visit www.cim.co.uk for more information and to book a place.



know what they want rather than assuming what they want.

On the supplier side, so many people try to beat up their suppliers but it's important to have a good relationship with them and some mutual understanding.

If you try to screw them down too much on price, it will make it difficult for them to survive.