

Your Independent Practice Roadmap



Small steps. Clear direction. The right support around you.

Ashley Edwards

The Business Companion

Walking alongside your business.



25+ Years

supporting professionals and business growth



Mentored & Coached

around 200 small businesses and self-employed professionals



Trusted Mentor

for Help to Grow: Management and
Staffordshire business support programmes



Built on Experience, Grounded in Support
practical guidance from someone who understands



Your Independent Practice Roadmap

Small steps. Clear direction. The right support around you.

PRE-START



Research & Planning



Get Advice & Support



Build Your Confidence

0-2 YEARS



Set Up Systems



Build the Right
Support Team



Build Your
Marketing Foundations

2-5 YEARS



Refine Your
Processes



Expand Your
Network



Leverage
Technology

5+ YEARS



Scale & Diversify



Legal & Financial
Support



Wellbeing &
Business Support

SUPPORT AROUND YOU



Local Support
& Funding



AI & Tech
Tools



Business Communities
& Networking



Coaching &
Mentoring



The
Business
Companion

Small steps every day

Great at what you do...

*but nobody teaches you how to build
the business around it.*



Suddenly you're expected to become...



many things, all at once.



You don't have to do it alone.

*The right support at the right time can make
all the difference.*

SUPPORT AROUND YOU



Local Support
& Funding



AI & Tech
Tools



Business Communities
& Networking



Coaching &
Mentoring

Local Support & Funding Exists

(Most people just don't know about it)


The
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Companion

Small steps
every day



WOLVERHAMPTON & BLACK COUNTRY

- ✓ Black Country Growth Hub
blackcountrylep.co.uk/growth-hub
- ✓ IGNITE Wolverhampton
ignitehub.co.uk
- ♥ Free workspace, networking,
workshops & start-up support



BIRMINGHAM

- ✓ Business Growth West Midlands
– Birmingham Support
businessgrowthwestmidlands.org.uk
- ✓ GBSLEP Growth Hub
gbslepgrowthhub.co.uk
- ♥ Free advice, funding guidance
& growth programmes



STAFFORDSHIRE

- ✓ Staffordshire Growth Hub
staffordshire.gov.uk/business/growth-hub
- ✓ Women in Business
staffordshire.gov.uk/business/women-in-business
- ♥ Workshops, mentoring,
networking & funding support

More Local & National Support Available



More Support – Nationally

- ✓ **Help to Grow**
help-to-grow-management.uk
- ✓ **Enterprise Nation**
enterprisenation.com
- ✓ **Local authority programmes**
- ✓ **Chamber of Commerce
events and networks**



These organisations and
programmes are here to
help you:



Start with
confidence



Grow your
business



Access funding
& resources



Build connections
& community



Funding Is Available

WOLVERHAMPTON



Vibrant High Streets Grant

-  Up to £5,000
-  Marketing
-  Digital improvements
-  Refurbishment

WEST MIDLANDS / BIRMINGHAM






BEAS Funding

-  Up to £100,000
-  Sustainability
-  Energy improvements

SME GROWTH GRANTS



-  Growth & expansion
-  Innovation
-  Skills development



AI & Tech Tools

Organisation



Calendars & scheduling



Task management



Keep everything in one place

Content & Marketing



Social media ideas & planning



Canva for graphics & branding



Simple professional websites

Admin



Templates for emails, documents & forms



Email support & automation



Organise notes & files easily

AI Support



Brainstorm ideas



Writing support



Research & summarise information



Structure & plan with ease



Business Communities & Networking



WHY IT MATTERS



Reduce isolation

Connect with people who understand your journey.



Build meaningful relationships

Create trust, collaborate and open doors to new opportunities.



Gain support and fresh ideas

Learn from others and get new perspectives.



Grow your business

Increase your visibility, reach and confidence.



EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITIES & NETWORKS



IGNITE Wolverhampton

Free workspace, events and support for entrepreneurs and small businesses.



Black Country Growth Hub Networks

Access local business networks, events and specialist support.



Loop Networking

Friendly, local networking groups across the Black Country.



SHE Network Wolverhampton

A supportive community for women in business.



Pathway2Grow

Informal networking, peer support and business events.



Wolverhampton Mentoring Network

One-to-one mentoring to help you grow and achieve your goals.



The
Business
Companion

Small steps every day



Coaching & Mentoring

Guidance, encouragement and clarity when you need it.



CLARITY

Sometimes you simply need help knowing where to start.



CONFIDENCE

Support can help reduce overwhelm and self-doubt.



ACCOUNTABILITY

Small, consistent actions are easier with encouragement and support.



EXPERIENCE

Learn from people who've already navigated similar challenges.



“ Sometimes the right conversation changes everything. ”





Small Steps at Every Stage



PRE-START

- ✓ Explore your ideas and values
- ✓ Ask questions and learn
- ✓ Build confidence
- ✓ Research your options
- ✓ Start planning simply

♥ Focus: Clarity & Confidence



0 – 2 YEARS

- ✓ Create simple systems
- ✓ Get organised and structured
- ✓ Build your visibility
- ✓ Find support and ask for help
- ✓ Celebrate small wins

♥ Focus: Structure & Momentum



2 – 5 YEARS

- ✓ Refine processes and systems
- ✓ Protect your time and energy
- ✓ Strengthen relationships
- ✓ Review and adjust your offers
- ✓ Invest in your development

♥ Focus: Growth & Balance



5+ YEARS

- ✓ Lead your business sustainably
- ✓ Diversify carefully
- ✓ Mentor and support others
- ✓ Build long-term impact
- ✓ Create the lifestyle you want

♥ Focus: Impact & Legacy



The
Business
Companion

Small steps
every day



You don't have to have it all figured out.



Start with what you know.



Learn as you grow.



Ask for support when you need it.

Small steps every day.



The
Business
Companion

Small steps
every day



Thank You

Small steps every day.



Walking alongside your business.