



A slightly shorter list of contents this time:-

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**Free seminar and Airbus tour** - Engineering and manufacturing businesses only

**And finally – big personal thank you**

**New Improved website and feedback facility for Train to Gain.**

Thanks to your feedback, we continue to see improvements in 'Train to Gain' (T2G).

Despite what many local colleges have been saying, T2G is a brokerage service to enable you to find out how to develop the skills you and your staff need to make your business thrive. It could be training it could be coaching or mentoring. Some of the training may be paid for and you may be able to get help with the cost of time away from work.

One of the elements the FSB fought for was an 'e-bay' type feedback system to enable employers to comment on the value or not of a training course.

After a successful pilot in the SW, this has now been expanded nationally. And the satisfaction ratings have an impact on the order of any list seen by brokers!

So if you or your staff have undertaken any training or used a mentor or coach, use the website below to say how good....or not..... they were.

And if your business is developing skills, are you sure you are fully registered with Train to Gain? It is a form of free advertising.

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/SouthWest/egtp/>

<http://www10.employersguide.org.uk/feedback/step1.jsp>

As always your feedback would be very welcome. Recent comments seem to show that the brokers are having problems identifying when a course is appropriate or when coaching would be more beneficial. Feedback on this or any other issue would be welcome – [Vivienne.rayner@fsb.org.uk](mailto:Vivienne.rayner@fsb.org.uk)

**Performing Rights – genial gentlemen or bully boys?**

Business people appreciate that 'performing rights' have to be paid for, but many complain about the way that money is collected.

SW Policy has had several serious complaints about bullying and over the top aggressive tactics. This is particularly upsetting for people working from their own homes – and often not relevant.

To help us encourage decent respectful treatment, your feedback on this to [Vivienne.rayner@fsb.org.uk](mailto:Vivienne.rayner@fsb.org.uk) would be much appreciated.

## **Business Commitment to the Environment awards 2009**

We know that many FSB members are committed to doing their bit for the environment. In fact, with higher energy prices and increasing cost of raw materials and other supplies it makes business sense. The Environmental Leadership Awards recognise outstanding environmental achievement within the business community. Application to the Awards and entry to the winners' ceremony are free of charge. There are specific awards for SMEs. Entry for 2009 opens July 1st and closes Oct 3rd 2008.

For more information <http://www.aeat.com/>

To register your interest in applying go to <http://www.bceawards.org/feedback.htm>

### **FSB Policy Documents** – members often ask what documents are available and where to find them.

They are all on the FSB website. Go to the main website, click on the 'Policy' tab and then on 'Publications' or 'Document Store'. There is a search facility – or you can choose to have them listed in date order.

Policy Documents separate into 3 groups; documents produced each year such as the Budget report and the 'FSB Achievements', documents produced as part of an on going programme of work and those produced specifically for an issue like the report on Capital Gains Tax.

Below is a list of the most recent publications and a short description of their contents.

**FSB Policy Year and Achievements 2007** - An important part of the work of the Press and Policy teams is to let FSB members know what we are doing. This is done through FSB publications and magazines throughout the year and this publication is designed to provide a summary of this work during 2007, within one document

**A Small Business manifesto - FSB Election Manifesto 2008.** We urge all candidates to adopt the measures outlined in this publication to preserve the fabric of our local communities.

**FSB Budget Submission 2008** In this budget submission we have set out a comprehensive and practical list of proposals to deliver small business growth, looking at areas such as skills, crime, transport, the environment, employment and taxation. Taken together, our recommendations would make a substantial contribution to achieving our shared aim of increased employment opportunities, more innovation and entrepreneurship and higher levels of economic growth.

**Social and Environmental responsibility and the Small Business Owner** This Social and Environmental Responsibility report provides an important snapshot of the views of small businesses on social and environmental responsibility today.

It shows that most small businesses are intrinsically responsible business owners.

To quote one small business owner on corporate social responsibility (CSR) 'it is simply a part of doing business in a successful and profitable manner in the 21st century and not some stand - alone concept that is bolted on later.'

Small businesses tell us they would benefit from Government incentives and practical examples from other businesses about enhancing and increasing their involvement in the social and environmental sphere.

What they do not want is any type of mandatory reporting of CSR activities or specific CSR legislation. The survey demonstrates that legislation would only serve to hinder the very good work already undertaken by small businesses. Time spent filling in forms to prove that businesses are acting in a socially responsible manner is time that could be better spent actually doing it.

**FSB Capital Gains Tax Report** A review and recommendation to the Chancellor of the Exchequer by the Federation of Small Businesses regarding Capital Gains Tax

**Employment Law – Key Facts:** Over the last decade, there has been a significant increase in UK and EU employment legislation, originating from both the EU and the UK. The FSB strongly supports a mutually ethical relationship between employer and employee, but has concerns that if the legislative pendulum swings too far in favour of the employee, that same legislation will cause the opposite effect of what it set out to achieve.

**HS Report 2007** - Small businesses are concerned that common sense is being lost from the Health and Safety regime in the UK. The FSB has published a report on Occupational Health and Safety in small businesses which looks at the impact of health and safety legislation, the Fire Safety Order, H&S and fire inspection regimes on businesses and as well as their views on workplace health issues.

**What would you do with an extra 7 hours?** Small businesses spend over 7 hours each week filling in forms - time that could be much better spent creating new jobs.

**The Small Business View of Business Support** - The FSB has published the small business view of business support. It ascertains what business support services were used most commonly by members and gathers their opinions of the business support services provided by the Government.

**FSB Report on Small Business Banking** - The FSB report on small business banking is taken from a survey of the FSB membership in November 2006, and is the first survey and report of the FSB Financial Affairs Committee.

**FSB Launches report on Gold Plating** - The Federation of Small Businesses, in association with the Foreign Policy Centre, has published a report into the practice of 'gold plating' EU regulations. The report, including detailed analysis of specific laws and case studies into the impact of gold plating, is the first major piece of research into the detail of the subject as well as the final report before the publication of the Government's Davidson Review on the matter.

**FSB Health matters** The FSB have published detailed research into the health of small businesses, their owners and staff. "Health Matters" looks at the small business perspective on health issues. The survey has discovered that small business staff are made of strong stuff and are innovative when it comes to addressing health issues in the workplace.

**FSB Postal Report** The FSB has published a report looking into small business use of the postal system. The survey looks at how firms access both the Post Office and the Royal Mail and makes detailed recommendations on how to improve both services.

**Small Businesses and Public Procurement** Why should you use SMEs in public sector procurement? In the words of a procurement professional at Haringey Council: "The more competition you get for your contracts, the more chances you have of finding the best possible supplier and achieving the best value for money"

**Free seminar and Airbus tour** - Engineering and manufacturing businesses only

If your business is engineering or manufacturing, July 10<sup>th</sup> is your chance to attend a free seminar on improving your organisation's productivity and profitability.

Employees are the heart of every business and their performance has a direct impact on productivity. It is no coincidence that the highest performing companies in the UK such as **Airbus** are those that focus on the skills of their employees.

The National Skills Academy for Manufacturing is holding seminars to support you to achieve significant improvements through improving the skills of your employees.

This seminar will provide you with the tools, ideas and inspiration to directly apply in your business. The seminar runs from 9.30am to 11. Afterwards there will be an opportunity to see a world class operation in action by having a tour of the **Airbus** plant followed by a buffet lunch.

Please contact Sally-ann Long at [sallyann@bgtraining.org.uk](mailto:sallyann@bgtraining.org.uk) or phone 08453386060.

**And finally – big personal thank you** for all the congratulations on being made an MBE in the Birthday Honours List. I regard it very much as an award for the FSB Team in the SW, recognising our efforts on behalf of small businesses.

Vivienne Rayner MBE  
23<sup>rd</sup> June 2008