



GROWTH HUB NEWSLETTER

February 2025

Support for your business – OxLEP Business is the Growth Hub for Oxfordshire, simplifying the business support landscape and helping individuals and businesses to connect more easily. We are here to help SMEs and entrepreneurs find the support they need, offering prompt, friendly, impartial advice. We signpost businesses to the right no cost business support both locally and nationally.

Get started..

Complete OxLEP's Business Support Tool to get started and receive your business support plan signposting you to profit boosting, market growing, fully funded business support:

[Business Support Tool](#)

If you have any questions or requests for support
please email us directly at
business@oxfordshirelep.com

OxLEP Business

Last Chance for West Oxfordshire and Cherwell Businesses to Unlock Funded Support, see below for more details!

Ignite Your Entrepreneurial Dream at the “Start Your Brilliant Business Now” Workshop!

Saturday, 8th February 2025
9:30 AM to 12:30 PM,
Holiday Inn Oxford, OX2 8JD

If you've been dreaming about starting your own business but haven't quite made the leap yet, now's your chance to turn those ideas into action! This exciting, high-energy morning session is designed for anyone in Oxfordshire with a business idea, passion, or vision. Whether you're considering becoming a sole trader, forming a limited company, or launching a social enterprise, this event will provide the vital guidance you need to transform your dream into a reality.

A successful start-up is the foundation of a strong local economy, and the “Start Your Brilliant Business Now” workshop is designed to help you lay that strong foundation. Led by experienced experts, the session will guide you through the essential first steps to get your business off the ground. You'll even draft your own one-page business plan—your roadmap to success. If you're ready to start your business but unsure where to begin, this is the event that will set you on the right path.

Register today for the “Start Your Brilliant Business Now” workshop and take the first step towards building the business of your dreams!

Start Your Brilliant Business Now - Oxfordshire Tickets, Sat 8 Feb 2025 at 09:30 | Eventbrite

Start Your Brilliant Business Now

Open to everyone in Oxfordshire!

📅 Saturday 8th February

🕒 9:30am - 12:30pm

📍 Holiday Inn Oxford, OX2 8JD

OxLEP Business **CHERWELL BUSINESS SPARK** **WEST OXFORDSHIRE BUSINESS SPARK**

OxLEP Business

Final Chance for West Oxfordshire and Cherwell Businesses to Unlock Funded Support from the Accelerator Programme!

As a senior manager, business owner, or director of a small-to-medium-sized business in the Cherwell or West Oxfordshire District, now is your chance to take your skills to the next level with two powerful workshops that will help you thrive. These free events are designed to provide you with the tools you need to build lasting success, whether you're looking to enhance your sales ability or master the art of persuasion.

Sales Training: "How to Get to the No! Finding the Sales-Person in You!"

Everyone has the potential to be a great salesperson—but success comes from being consistent. In this hands-on seminar, experienced Sales Trainer Steve Clarke will show you how to build confidence and consistency in your sales efforts.

What you'll learn:

- **Getting to the No:** Embrace rejection and use it to your advantage.
- **Structuring Your Customer's Sales Journey:** Guide your customers through the sales process with ease.
- **Finding Sales Opportunities:** Learn where and how to identify potential leads.
- **Turning "I'm thinking about it" into "Yes now":** Master the art of closing deals.

Steve Clarke, former JP Morgan executive and now Director of a local health company, brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to help you succeed in both sales and team leadership.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/sales-training-and-how-to-get-to-the-no-tickets-1180160534929?aff=oddtcreator>

Banbury Cricket Ground - 13:30 - 16:30



Funded by UK Government

Cherwell

West Oxfordshire

OxLEP Business

CHERWELL BUSINESS ACCELERATOR

WEST OXFORDSHIRE BUSINESS ACCELERATOR

Sales Training and How to Get to the No!

Tuesday 25th February

1:30pm - 4:30pm

Banbury Cricket Club Ground
OX15 4BN

OxLEP Business

The Science of Persuasion in Business

Did you know that persuasion is one of the most critical skills for business success today? Whether you're in sales or managing teams, the ability to persuade and influence others is key to your success. This workshop will introduce you to the powerful, science-backed principles of persuasion, taught by experts from the Cialdini Institute.

What you'll learn:

- **Understanding Human Behaviour:** Learn how we really make decisions and how to use this in your business.
- **The Power of Ethical Persuasion:** Discover how to apply Dr. Robert Cialdini's Principles of Persuasion in an ethical and effective way.
- **Instantly Applicable Tips:** Gain practical tips to use right away to resolve your influence challenges.

The session will be led by Mark Brown, a founding member of the Cialdini Institute, who has co-created training programs with Dr. Cialdini. This is a collaborative session with plenty of time for networking, sharing experiences, and discussing how to apply these principles in your business.

The Science of Persuasion in Business - West Oxfordshire Accelerator Tickets, Wed 12 Feb 2025 at 09:30 | Eventbrite

Witney Lakes Resort - 9:30-12:30



The Science of Persuasion in Business - Cherwell Accelerator Tickets, Tue 4 Mar 2025 at 09:30 | Eventbrite

Bicester Hotel Golf & Spa - 9:30-12:30



OxLEP Business Events

All our planned fully funded events can be accessed and booked here: <https://oxlepbusiness.co.uk/events-overview/>

Get Your Business Net Zero Ready, Or FAIL!

Mon, 3 Feb 2025 15:00 - 17:00 GMT - Online

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/get-your-business-net-zero-ready-or-fail-tickets-1116383776929?aff=oddtcreator>



This event will help you to take the critical first / next step on your Net Zero journey.

Market pressure is mounting and this is only going to increase. For instance, every supplier to the NHS (with a contract over £10k) now has to have a carbon reduction plan and commit to Net Zero. Soon enough this will spread to every contract and market across the UK and beyond. Every customer will expect you to be taking action!

But don't panic, there are tools and experience available to help small businesses to take action, and this Masterclass will walk you through a selection of these.

Leadership and Your Growing Business

Tue, 4 Feb 2025 13:00 - 14:00 GMT - Online

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/leadership-and-your-growing-business-tickets-1116501609369?aff=oddtcreator>

A small business doesn't need the full raft of corporate structures to work well, but as it grows, will need to be guided in a different way from the informal 'family' structures and methods you could use when it was just you. Do you ever find yourself thinking:

- "Why does everything end up on my desk?"
- "Nobody shows any initiative – it's like managing a bunch of children."
- "Why can't I get people to do what I want them to do?"
- "I do everything I can to look after them, yet they still complain."

These are all signs that your informal leadership style and structures are running out of road. Growing organisations need to be structured more than start-ups, but this doesn't mean 'corporate' systems. In fact, people moving to SMEs from corporates very often fail precisely because they try to over-engineer the organisation.

OxLEP Business Events

OxBOoSt Network - February

Tue, 4 Feb 2025 16:00 - 17:00 GMT - Online

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/oxboost-network-february-tickets-1139771931529?aff=oddtcreator>

The Number 1 regular meet-up for Oxfordshire businesses who want to connect, collaborate and exchange ideas.

OxLEP Business engages with thousands of business owners and leaders every year providing knowledge, advice and other business development support. But until now there hasn't been an easy way to help these businesses to network. Problem solved...

The OxBOoSt network will meet via zoom on Tuesday 4th February from 4:00pm to 5:00pm and is open to all Oxfordshire based businesses to join (and its free!).

Each meeting will include 5-8 pre-arranged slots for businesses to share their story or pitch for collaboration and a forward look of business support from OxLEP. And of course there will be plenty of time for networking.

Love AI-Land: The Business Special

Fri, 14 Feb 2025 09:30 - 11:30 GMT - Online

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/love-ai-land-the-business-special-tickets-1113755375309?aff=oddtcreator>

This Valentine's Day, fall in love with the future of your business! Join us for Love AI-Land - The Small Business Special, a webinar designed to help UK small business owners find their perfect match in AI tools and technology.

Let us show you how AI can be your business's new soulmate, transforming the way you work and helping you achieve more than ever before.

Here's what you'll fall head over heels for during this session:

- Discover how AI is the secret ingredient in creating smoother, more efficient workflows.
- Learn how AI tools can make your business more effective, giving you more time to focus on what you love.
- Get practical, heartwarming tips to spark a long-term relationship with AI in your daily operations.

Whether you're an AI skeptic or a tech enthusiast, this session will have you saying, "Be mine!" to the incredible potential of AI.



OxLEP Business Events

OxLEP Women in Business Gathering

Tue, 25 Feb 2025 09:30 - 12:00 GMT

Location: Banbury Cricket Club Ground, White Post Road, Bodicote, OX15 4BN

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/oxlep-women-in-business-gathering-tickets-1109126319679?aff=oddtcreator>

The Women in Business network provides an environment in which you can be yourself and have meaningful discussions with fellow women in business within Oxfordshire, as well as share experiences.

- A place in which you can build trusted relationships with like-minded women
- An opportunity to increase your business knowledge
- An opportunity to take part in discussion topics
- An opportunity to raise awareness of your business and personal brand

Our Women in Business Gatherings provides the opportunity for us to celebrate our amazing local female talent, wonderful business relationships forged to date, and the evident appetite for female empowerment across the region. OxLEP's existing and new female clients are invited to come together for a fantastic morning of networking and insightful conversation.



Limited Spaces!

Women in Business Gathering

 The Pavilion,
Whitepost Road, Bodicote,
Banbury, OX15 4BN
February 25, 2025
9:30 am - 12:00 pm



OxLEP Skills

National Apprenticeship Week 2025 in Oxfordshire

<https://oxlepskills.co.uk/naw2025>

National Apprenticeship Week aims to highlight the exceptional work being done by employers and apprentices across the country.

The 18th annual week-long celebration of apprenticeships will take place from 10 to 16 February 2025 with the theme 'Skills for Life', reflecting on how apprenticeships can help individuals to develop the skills and knowledge required for a rewarding career and businesses to develop a talented workforce that is equipped with future-ready skills.

We've created a list of what's on in Oxfordshire, including webinars and open days.



Apprenticeships webinar for parents and carers

<https://careersliveuk.com/partner/oxfordshire-careers-hub>

(click on upcoming events and scroll down to register)

Are you a parent or carer? Would you like to know more about apprenticeships to help you support your young person with deciding what to do when they leave school or college? There is so much choice for young people in terms of what they can do at 16 and 18 and it's important that all young people learn about all the pathways available to them so that they can decide on their best next step.

As parent/carers we know the important role you have in supporting your children with these choices, so we'd like to invite you to join Oxfordshire Careers Hub and CareersLive (young people are welcome to attend too!) on Tuesday 11 February from 18:00 – 19:00, which is during National Apprenticeship Week, to hear from local employers and apprentices and learn more about a pathway that has opportunities for everyone.

OxLEP Skills



Explore your young person's career dreams!

Oxfordshire Careers Hub is teaming up with CareersLive to run an apprenticeships awareness broadcast for parents and carers (students are encouraged to attend too!) on 11 February 2025 from 18:00-19:00, which is during National Apprenticeship Week.

Webinar
February 11, 2025
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm



Careers Live | Oxfordshire CAREERS HUB | CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY

Careers Fest 2025 – session for parents and carers

<https://careersfest2025twilightsession.eventbrite.co.uk>

Are you a parent or carer of a young person in Year 9 or above? Like to know more about their options for when they leave school or college to help you support them with taking their best next step?

Oxfordshire Careers Hub are holding a twilight session for parents and carers at Careers Fest on Wednesday 19 March from 16:00 – 19:00 at The Kassam Conference & Events Centre, which will be an opportunity for you to meet with a wide range of employers, further education colleges, universities and training providers and find out about all the options on offer. Visiting Careers Fest with your young person is a fantastic way to get those careers conversations started and help you feel equipped with the right information to support them with deciding on their next step.



Spend time with your young person at Careers Fest

Attending Careers Fest together is a great opportunity to invest in your young person's future, where they can explore diverse career paths, interact with professionals, and gain a clearer understanding of their aspirations!

The Kassam Conference & Events Centre
Wed, 19 Mar 2025
16:00 - 19:00 GMT



careers fest | Oxfordshire CAREERS HUB | CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY

OxLEP Skills

Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards 2025 closing soon

<https://oxlepskills.co.uk/oaawards>

The Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards 2025 are open for entries and nominations until midnight on the evening of Monday 24 February.



Winners will be announced at a special celebration evening, set to take place on Thursday 22 May in one of the most prestigious venues in the world, the iconic Long Library at Blenheim Palace, itself a World Heritage Site, an attraction for local and global visitors and central to the everyday lives and livelihoods of the neighbouring communities.

The awards are organised by OxLEP Skills on a not-for-profit basis, with the generous support of a number of sponsoring organisations.

The 2025 headline sponsor is The Hill Group, who will choose the overall Apprentice of the Year from the winners of the five apprentice awards. The award categories and sponsors are as follows:

- Intermediate Apprentice of the Year – Abbott Diabetes Care
- Advanced Apprentice of the Year – NielsenIQ
- Higher / Degree Apprentice of the Year – Siemens Healthineers Magnet Technology
- Special Recognition Award – Milestone Infrastructure
- Rising Star Award – Popham Hairdressing
- Shining Star Award – IST INTECH
- Apprenticeship Ambassador Award – Grundon Waste Management
- Inspiring the Future Employer Award – Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Skills Champion Award – The Engineering Trust
- Training Provider Individual Award – Oxford Brookes University
- Apprenticeship Employer of the Year (<250 employees) – Olamalu
- Apprenticeship Employer of the Year (250+ employees) – Assure UK

OxLEP Skills are also grateful to have the support of High Spec Composites, Darke & Taylor, Jonas Software UK & Europe, Oxford North, Activate Learning, Oxfordshire Advanced Skills, the South East Apprenticeship Ambassador Network, Oxfordshire County Council and the University of Oxford.

Entering the awards as an employer, or nominating an individual, is a fantastic way to showcase your organisation and celebrate the achievements of your star apprentices and the colleagues and training providers who support them along their journey. Finalists and guests will have the opportunity to join us at Blenheim Palace for a fantastic evening of apprenticeship celebrations.

Oxfordshire Net Zero Business Support

Oxfordshire Greentech

<https://oxfordshiregreentech.co.uk/>

Oxfordshire Greentech is a business network supporting the growth of the low-carbon sector in Oxfordshire. We bring together businesses and organisations to encourage innovation, collaboration and knowledge transfer, to facilitate the transition towards a sustainable, low carbon future in Oxfordshire and the world.

Energy Saver app

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/energy-and-climate-change/retrofitting-your-home/retrofit-help-you/energy-saver-app>

Energy Saver App is a new, free mobile app from Oxfordshire County Council that will help you save money on your home energy bills (on average 8% or over £200 a year) and reduce your household emissions.

Oxfordshire Business Support

Other Resources: As part of our ongoing commitment to provide the best possible service to Oxfordshire's SME's we always ensure that other services and opportunities which may be available to business within Oxfordshire are highlighted and signposted.

For more information visit here: <https://oxlepbusiness.co.uk/external-resources/Business & IP Centre Oxfordshire>

At the Oxford Westgate Library

Supporting Oxfordshire residents to start, protect and grow their own business.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/business/business-and-intellectual-property-centre-bipc>



OSEP

OSEP provides support, empowerment, and advocacy for local social enterprises, enterprising charities, and purposeful businesses in Oxfordshire.

OSEP, a local Social Enterprise itself, plays a crucial role in fostering a community where businesses prioritise positive societal impact alongside their financial success.

Website: <https://www.osep.org.uk/>

Email: hello@osep.org.uk

Non OxLEP News/Events

Business Friends Launch Webinar

By Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse

Date and time: Fri, 14 Mar 2025 10:00 - 11:30 GMT

Online

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/business-friends-launch-webinar-tickets-1223343125219?aff=oddtcreator>

Domestic abuse can have a significant, often overlooked impact on businesses, both financially and in terms of workplace morale.

The costs associated with domestic abuse can include:

- decreased productivity
- increased absenteeism
- higher healthcare expenses

The mental and physical toll of experiencing domestic abuse may lead to employees struggling to focus, a reduction in their efficiency and potential errors in their work.

By addressing domestic abuse proactively, companies can foster a supportive work environment, ultimately protecting their workforce's well-being and maintaining their bottom line.

The Oxford Magazine: What's on in Oxfordshire -

<https://theoxfordmagazine.com/>

Oxfordshire County Council News: [News from Oxfordshire County Council](#)

Experience Oxfordshire: [Top 10 Things to Do in Oxford and Oxfordshire – Experience Oxfordshire](#)

Oxfordshire County Council: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/>