

Enterprise Coaching - Tracey Saxby t/a R.T. Cakes.

Tracey Saxby, from Easington Colliery, has had a varied career, starting off in retail and customer service roles, before taking up her passion for singing on the local pub and club circuit. Tracey gave up her singing career when she started a family and upon returning to work she started working in a local café. Tracey enjoyed this role and, deciding that it was something she could do for herself, she took a lease on a café on Seaside Lane in Easington Colliery. However, Tracey did not know that there was any external support available and struggled to make the business profitable. Unfortunately the café closed and she became unemployed.

Tracey had spent over 12 months out of work when she decided to enrol on a cake decorating course to relieve her boredom. She found she had a flair for cake decorating and found the whole process of creating her 'masterpieces' very rewarding. Friends and family soon found out they had an expert cake maker in their midst and asked Tracey to bake and decorate cakes for their special occasions.

Tracey had never planned to start a business again, having had such a negative experience once before. When she first met her local business coach (supported by Be Enterprising, the LEGI Partnership for Derwentside, Easington, Sedgefield and Wear Valley) she felt very negative about the prospect of going into business. However, the Be Enterprising coach sat down with Tracey to discuss her fears, identifying that it was a fear of seeing all she'd worked for fail again.

During discussions about the failed café, it became apparent to the Be Enterprising coach that she had not carried out any preparatory work, taken any business advice or put together a business plan. Together Tracey and her business coach discussed the problems that had arisen and the possible reasons she was unable to work them out.

Tracey now had a different view on her new business venture and she and her coach set about planning the future. Tracey accessed a Be Enterprising grant to pay for professional full colour fliers and worked hard on market research, to prove that there was a market for her service. She also identified the start up requirements and the costs involved.

Tracey and her Be Enterprising coach worked together to produce a robust business plan and realistic cash flow forecast. This was used to accompany Tracey's Phase 2 grant application for start up costs. The application was successful and Tracey received a grant of £1543 to purchase the essentials she needed to be able to deliver her service at a professional level, which includes her website www.rtcakes.co.uk. The business is now trading and the orders are flooding in. Tracey is very grateful for the support she is receiving from Be Enterprising and is looking forward this time to success.