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Donna Marks, A.D. Hewett & Associates, Brighouse, July 2009

Dental practice increases patient numbers following **Business Link** workshop

A West Yorkshire dental practice has increased new patient numbers by 42% following advice from a free Business Link Yorkshire workshop. Donna Marks, general manager at Brighouse based A. D. Hewett & Associates regularly attends Business Link’s events, but was amazed at the media reaction after she put into practice the action plan she’d learned on the ‘How to use the media for free’ course.

“We went independent over three years ago and it’s important to stay in the public eye to maintain patient numbers. The course showed us how to spot a news story and after talking to the tutor, we realised we had a great story to tell.”

The practice, which has over 12,000 patients on its books, has, for the second year running, won a national award, The Good Practice Scheme. The accolade rewards practices which provide great customer care through achieving consistently high clinical and ethical standards.

“We wrote a news release which told our story, took some

pictures of the team, and sent all the information to local papers”, says Donna. “My news story was a success and was printed in three local papers, word for word. One paper gave us ¾ of a page with colour photographs - you couldn’t miss it if you tried. The team was very happy to see themselves and the business in the local papers and existing patients thought it was great. The real eye opener was that I did not expect a 42% increase in new patient activity from the free media exposure. Just goes to show, if the right people deliver the right training it really does work!!

Kate Betts, who runs the course for Business Link Yorkshire and has worked in the media for more than 20 years, believes that many business owners don’t realise that journalists are always on the look out for stories.

“Approaching the local media in the right way and giving them stories is a double-win. The business gets free publicity and the reporter gets a story. And the great thing is it doesn’t cost anything, which is vital in these difficult economic times.”

Could you benefit from Business Link’s free, independent and impartial advice?
Contact us now to find to what we can do for your business.

Telephone **08456 048 048**

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Our practice is a member of the British Dental Association's Good Practice Scheme

This means that we are committed to a standard of good practice set by our professional association

Vernon Tolson, events manager at Business Link Yorkshire, reviews and selects events from dozens of possible options. "We choose workshops that will best support businesses in the region. There are many smaller businesses who cannot afford to buy in public relations help so this workshop is a great way to gain free and effective publicity. It's been incredibly popular."

'How to use the media for free' workshops are some of thousands of free Business Link events which are being run around Yorkshire and Humber this year.

NB: All case studies have been signed off by the subject and Business Link Yorkshire. All details are accurate at the time of publication, but please check with Business Link's PR team before using this case study, as details may have changed.

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