

CASH RELEASE

Using lean techniques to release cash locked up in excess stock and slow production can help you make it through the downturn and free help from the Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS) will show you how.

With restricted sources of credit, improving cashflow is crucial and lean techniques will minimise cash exposure by cutting waste and reducing inventory. This will also reduce lead times, which means customers get quicker delivery and you get paid faster. Manufacturing businesses of all sizes are eligible for a free annual on-site manufacturing review that is designed around individual company needs.

Call 0800 093 9077, www.mas-nw.co.uk

MATCHMAKING

The Manufacturing Institute has launched a new service to match those who have lost their jobs with manufacturing businesses seeking staff, so whether you are downsizing or recruiting, get in touch and we will 'marry' you together.

Contact Catherine Ellis on 0161 874 3276, catherineE@manufacturinginstitute.co.uk

BUSINESS SUPPORT AT A GLANCE

The Northwest Regional Development Agency has published a new business support document, providing a quick-and-easy listings guide to business support initiatives (including finance) available to help businesses in the Northwest during this economic downturn and beyond.

The new NWDA initiatives include the eagerly awaited £140 million Venture Capital & Loan Fund (VCLF), a new High Growth business support programme and Innovation Voucher scheme, as well as bolstered Access to Finance support.

For a copy of the new 'Support for Northwest Businesses' document visit www.nwda.co.uk/supportingbusiness or contact Business Link Northwest on 0845 00 66 888.

FREE HELP TO BEAT RECESSION

The Manufacturing Institute's annual Business Challenges Survey shows that the top five concerns for North West manufacturers are: reduced sales, raw materials and energy costs, cashflow, cost of production and reduced profitability.

And these are some of the problems that experts will help you overcome at the FREE Manufacturers' Survival Series of breakfast workshops, run by the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA), Business Link Northwest, the Manufacturing Advisory Service and The Manufacturing Institute.

The series of four recession-beating sessions will take place over four weeks (8am to 11.30am) in March – held Tuesdays in Manchester, Wednesdays in Lancashire and Thursdays in Liverpool.

The topic for week one is 'Leading through Uncertainty' and will feature practical guidance and advice on turnaround strategies from Sir Richard Needham, International and Commercial Director for Dyson. Graeme Leach, Chief Economist for the Institute of Directors will offer an expert assessment of the current economic situation and predictions into what's to come. Other presentations from MAS, the National Skills Academy for Manufacturing and Business Link will focus on the funding and support services available to help you through.

Cash management and sourcing finance are topics for week two and Nicholas Dodd, Director of Corporate Finance for KPMG will address potential opportunities in the current environment, while Andrew Burn, Director of KPMG Restructuring will

provide expert perspective on managing cash flow and cost reduction, while Barclays will advise how best to negotiate with banks and commercial creditors. Business Link and the NWDA will cover public funding opportunities.

Week three offers a masterclass on 'Customers and Markets' presented by Lynn Parkinson, Course Director for the Chartered Institute of Marketing, covering strategy, retaining and building customers and new market opportunities. UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), Business Link and London 2012 will also offer valuable advice on developing both domestic and international markets.

The final breakfast is 'Winning through Innovation' and Dr Adegoke Oke, Research Fellow in Innovation and Operations Management at Cranfield School of Management, will show you how to develop and implement a downturn driven innovation strategy. Leading manufacturing innovator John Elliott MBE, founder and chairman of Ebac will also deliver a masterclass on leadership and innovation. Other presentations from Business Link, Northwest Innovation Network, UKTI and the NWDA will cover Knowledge Partnerships and funding.

Tickets are free, but there is a limit to two places per company. To book log on to: www.manufacturinginstitute.co.uk/survival or call 0800 458 9585.



Surviving and thriving: Hi-tech Liverpool based electronics business Brainboxes celebrates 25 years in manufacturing. The award winning business competes head on with low cost economies to succeed through world class performance and innovation. Pictured: Dave Ritchie, Brainboxes R&D Manager with Mark Sutherland of The Manufacturing Institute.