

SME Business practice conference: the making of a resilient business

10 October 2024 – IStructE international HQ

Registration & networking		
09:30	Registration & networking	
10:00	Opening remarks & introduction Kate Leighton, Director and founder, Static Dynamic IStructE Trustee Board member	
10:05	Keynote address: the business of practice Mark Whitby, Design Director, Whitby Wood	<i>How did the big companies get there? How did they survive the various crisis that shaped our recent past?</i> Mark shares his experiences in setting up a business from the ground up, highlighting lessons learnt from challenges and pitfalls, as well as success stories.
Session 1: Business risk management		
10:30	Professional Risk and Professional Indemnity (PI) Insurance Tanya Winstanley, Partner and Group Director, Professional Risks Division, Griffiths and Armour	<i>How can businesses survive in an environment that seems to be increasingly litigious?</i> After a period of unprecedented turmoil in the PI insurance market, this presentation will consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons learned from the last few years • The risk landscape for Structural Engineers and what that means for individual firms • How effective risk management remains key to building resilience • What a robust PI Insurance solution looks like
10:45	Cybersecurity and digital robustness Kerrie Machin, Partner, Mitigo	<i>Is your business resilient to cyberattacks? Why should it be? What should you do?</i> With the shift to online-based work and the ever raising cyberattack strategies, having strong risk mitigations strategies in place is an imperative for business. This talk explores best practices to achieve digital robustness and protect your business from the worst effects of cyberattacks.
11:00	Accounting Speaker to be announced	
11:20	Session 1 Q&A	
11:30	Morning break (25 min)	
Session 2: Business strategy		
11:55	Business diversification VS Specialisation John Staves, Managing Director, Michael Aubrey Partnership Ltd - on business diversification Other speaker to be announced	<i>What are the benefits of saying 'yes' to everything? What is the case in favour of specialisation?</i>

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		These talks aim to offer some insights into how a business can build resilience and withstand cyclical crisis.
12:15	The lifecycle of a business: starting it, growing it, phasing it down	<p><i>In this session, you are centre stage! Share your experiences of what the challenges and best practices inherent of owning a business are - at each stage of its lifecycle:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Starting a business from scratch: what needs to go in the business plan?• Growing a business: how to change/improve a business strategy effectively?• Phasing down a business: what are the watchouts? <p><i>Discussions are organised around the 3 streams above and are self-led. The session is designed to encourage peer-to-peer learning and networking.</i></p>
13:00	Lunch (1 hour)	
Session 3: Workshop		
14:05	Marketing and profit strategies for practice owners Kuldip Singh Sahota, Business Coach, Action Coach	<p><i>How can you bullet-proof your business through your marketing strategy?</i></p> <p>In this workshop, discover techniques to attract and retain your ideal client, understand the true purpose of your marketing efforts to boost business growth, and learn how to leverage the top five profitability metrics that your practice should monitor and improve.</p>
15:05	Afternoon break (25 min)	
Session 4: Regulative updates		
15:30	Summary of key developments in employment law Speaker to be announced	<p><i>What has changed in employment regulation?</i></p> <p>This presentation provides an update on the changes in the legislation, to come into force from October 2024. Includes a Q&A.</p>
15:55	The Building Safety Act: an update for SME owners. Patrick Hayes, technical Director, IStructE	<p><i>How does the Building Safety Act affect your practice?</i></p> <p>The BSA has changed how SME must demonstrate competency and compliance to Building Regulations. In this presentation, Patrick Hayes provides an update on how the BSA affects SME owners in their day-to-day operations, as well as pointing out useful guidance available. Includes a Q&A.</p>
16:25	Closing remarks Kate Leighton, Director and founder, Static Dynamic IStructE Trustee Board member	

This programme is subject to change.