

## Funded support enables West Yorkshire business to streamline and grow

Finance consultancy ABL Business has worked with training provider Brook Corporate Developments to implement ISO9001 and increase efficiency in their workplace. Taking advantage of funding from **Higher Performing Workplaces (HPW)** in the process and fast-tracking their route to growth.

***“The work that the funding has helped us to achieve is so important, it’s just going to help us succeed and be a better business.”***



Based in Cleckheaton, **ABL Business** was set up in 2013 by Joint Managing Director Alex Beardsley and her business partner Andy Redman (pictured left). ABL has 11 members of staff and will soon have offices in four other locations due to the fact that they are growing rapidly. ABL’s mission is to make complex finance transactions simple for businesses and they put their clients at the heart of everything they do. We spoke to Alex about how the funding

from Higher Performing Workplaces is helping them exceed their business goals.

Alex – *“The work with Brook is keeping employees engaged in terms of what we’re doing as a business. The key areas of employee engagement, processes and systems are also crucial to our clients, so if our own employees recognise and practice the importance of these things, then that’s another strength of our business.”*

**Brook Corporate Developments** have supported ABL with the ISO9001 certification and implementation, Dom Brook of Brook Corporate Developments explains how they were able to slot in at ABL and make good things happen.

Dom - *“Brook’s services are more than just training, we’re very much ‘hands on’ with lots of individual one-to-ones and mentoring. We’re working with the key decision makers in ABL to make sure that, once the ISO processes are set, they’re then implemented correctly and there’s continuous improvement from the team. We can help with the process design aspect as well as the training of the team to make sure that they do it correctly.”*

Previously the process work was falling to Alex but ISO9001 has helped this. ABL now have a risk register and an opportunities register, which means there are objectives that other staff members ‘own’. The process design element of Brook’s support means that processes that already existed are being formally recorded, communicated and followed.

ABL has a goal to develop a national brand and have five regional offices by 2023 but it’s already looking like there will be four offices by the end of 2021. ISO9001 allows ABL to keep a close-knit team approach and maintain their culture but on a bigger scale.

## The training has been great for staff motivation during the pandemic

Alex – *“Covid has had a positive impact on us as a business. My business partner and I have had the time to step back from the business and really look at what we wanted to do going forward. Our staff have taken comfort in the fact that we’ve invested in training and an office refresh during the pandemic, as it means they can see that we are here for the long haul. We are investing in this business, we believe in the business and we believe in our team .”*

Without the Higher Performing Workplaces funding from WYCC it would’ve been difficult for ABL to fit the training into their budget due to all the other investments they’d made in the financial year. But, thanks to Brook Corporate Development’s support, they were able to access the funding and make their budget go further. Brook take away the stress of sourcing the funding for businesses by being knowledgeable and able to help with the paperwork requirements.

Alex – *“The funding has meant that we’ve been able to bring the training forward, which means the business isn’t waiting around to capitalise on opportunities. It means that we’ll eventually be able to employ more people, be bigger and contribute more to society.”*

Dom – *“When I speak to businesses I always mention that the funding will either help reduce budgets down or it will help you get more for your budget. If you save the money you can pump it back into your own business. The great thing about HPW funding is that it’s already subscribed to the training provider. So our clients don’t have to go through an application process as long as they’re eligible. It’s so easy for businesses to access.”*

## ABL future plans

Alex – *“I’ve calculated that Brook’s support is going to add at least 20% to our income as a business, due to efficiencies, management and making sure we’re on top of certain areas.”*

Alex is excited about future prospects since working with Brook. She knows that achieving ISO9001 in the finance sector is rare, so it creates a competitive edge for ABL Business.

Alex – *“Brook have been so fantastic that they will be involved with ABL for the lifecycle of the business. If I need anything, I will just speak to Dom. This is due to the fact that Brook were able to get us the funding and everything was so seamless.”*



**Higher Performing Workplaces** is funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and managed by the West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges. Eligible businesses can receive 40% ESF funding towards the cost of any HPW training. Eligible businesses must be based in one of the following districts: Bradford, Calderdale, Craven, Harrogate, Kirklees, Leeds, Selby, Wakefield or York.