



RESILIENCE FIRST



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Webinar Report

Re-emergence Guide for SMEs

Tuesday 14 September 2021

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Launch of Re-emergence Guide for SMEs in partnership with Facebook and Russell-Cooke

Chair:

Bob Rothenberg MBE, Former Partner, Blick Rothenberg.

Speakers:

Matthew Jaffa, Senior External Affairs Manager (London), Federation of Small Businesses.

Kizzy Augustin, Partner, Russell-Cooke.

Emma Shipp, Consultant, Russell-Cooke.

Overview:

- The resilience of small businesses is important for society as a whole.
- The path to reopening may seem daunting for small businesses, particularly those who have never faced a crisis before.
- The guide focuses on eight pillars which are designed to prompt consideration in areas which are important for re-emergence.
- It is crucial not to lose sight of running your business at the same time as investing in your business resilience.

Resilience for small businesses:

- For small businesses or micro-businesses, resilience is about keeping going when things are bad, and to adapt in adversity.
- For recovery there is a need to move away from survival and to take stock of when things are going well.
- Currently, confidence among small businesses is not high and there are many practical challenges faced in moving towards recovery and back into growth.
- There are multiple practical difficulties for small businesses which play a large part in the ability for businesses to function in the day to day. While resilience might not be a main concern when faced with direct, practical challenges, it is important to articulate the benefits of embedding resilience to deliver strong, sustainable business outcomes.
- Many of the buzzwords banded around today do not land with small businesses and are, in fact, difficult for small businesses to think about. To gain traction, we must convey to small businesses that there are benefits to be attained in the short and long term through investing in their resilience.
- We need methods to engage small businesses with resilience and sustainability agendas for their own long term good.

Going beyond the traditional:

- Many businesses do not see a return to the workplace as we would traditionally envisage, and the guide works as a good starting point in assisting business owners, operators and managers in facing and adapting to their new realities.
- The eight key pillars in recovery are:



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- ✓ *Prepare* – Commit time, resources and ownership to review your business preparedness so you can respond in the best way.
 - ✓ *People* – Keep your workforce supported and engaged. They are your most critical and valuable supporters.
 - ✓ *Process* – Adjust to the demands of your business; this is supported by having the right policies and procedures in place.
 - ✓ *Patrons* – Stay connected to your customers by keeping them informed and engaged.
 - ✓ *Profits* – Consider your cashflow and adjust the business plan and supply chain, as needed.
 - ✓ *Place* – Consider you workplace location, what risk factors there are, and ensure the safety of your staff.
 - ✓ *Promotion* – Seek out promotional assistance to increase your business presence.
 - ✓ *Practice* – Monitor, evaluate, assess, and implement across your business process and procedures.
- Many of the pillars of the guide have legal connotations of which business operators need to be aware.
 - A proactive approach in the areas mentioned in the guide will make re-emergence easier for small businesses.

Other considerations:

- Planning is crucial, whether it is existing and formatted or made up on the go; cementing a direction in a plan provides a focus for output.
- Engaging and communicating plans with your people is vital as is allocating and defining responsibilities in the delivery of your business plans.
- Knowing your finances in detail is integral to re-emergence. Whether in a pinch point or in a time of success, a good financial overview will allow your business to cope, adapt and thrive.
- Aligning the interests of your people with the success of your business provides greater scope for resilient outcomes. For smaller and micro-businesses, it is often easier to implement staff incentives and to bring people on board in a vision for success than it is for larger, less agile organisations.
- There has to be a 'carrot' (incentive) approach to bring small businesses along in a resilience agenda.
- It can be an isolated environment for small and micro-businesses, and developing a sense of community and shared experience are important elements in recovery.
- Businesses to an extent have been resilient through their experience of Covid-19. This should be used as a building block to take stock of what the strong points were and build upon them.

The webinar recording can be found [here](#). The guide can be found [here](#).

Further resources provided by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) on sustainability can be found [here](#).

Thanks were expressed to Facebook and Russell-Cooke for their help in creating the guide.



Speakers Biographies:

Bob Rothenberg retired from Blick Rothenberg Chartered Accountants in 2019 having been senior partner for over 20 years. He was made an MBE in the 2007 New Year's Honours List for services to business and to the community in London. He continues to work both advising a number of clients and acting as a trustee and an executor. Bob is Chair of the Governors of Highgate School, a Trustee of Police Now and has served as a Trustee of The Prince's Foundation and as a Board member of both London First and Think London, the predecessor of London & Partners, the official foreign direct investment agency for London. He has been regularly quoted on tax and commercial issues in the national press and appeared on these topics on radio and other media outlets. Bob and his wife Pippa live in north London and they have three children and seven grandchildren. He is a keen skier, avid Spurs football supporter and enjoys theatre and opera.

Matthew Jaffa is the FSB's chief London spokesperson and leads on London policy issues affecting small businesses, including economic policy. He also worked in the national policy team working on education and skills, and transport policy. Prior to working at the FSB, Matthew worked in the Cabinet Office in the Better Regulation Executive looking at European Regulatory Impact Assessment and the Strategy Unit, where he was a researcher on various strategic projects.

Kizzy Augustin is a Partner at Russell-Cooke and the head of their health and safety team, which forms part of the wider fraud and criminal litigation department. She specialises in advising small to medium sized businesses in health and safety, fire and environmental matters and has significant experience in defending companies, senior directors and employees in corporate manslaughter and serious fire and health and safety prosecutions. Kizzy provides strategic legal advice to clients both in response to incidents, as well as preventative consultancy advice in relation to corporate policies and procedures to ensure compliance with current safety legislation and managing reputational risk. She frequently speaks on topics including the effect of Brexit on compliance, the impact of the health and safety sentencing guidelines and Covid-19 on workplace safety, how to manage mental health and wellbeing when working from home or 'hybrid working' and she has recently contributed to Resilience First's Flexible Working Guide.

Emma Shipp is a consultant in Russell-Cooke's corporate and commercial team with over 30 years of experience advising businesses on a variety of practical issues. Her particular expertise lies in mergers, acquisitions and disposals, solvent and distressed company re-organisations, startup requirements including shareholder agreements and LLP deeds. She also has a strong track record assisting clients with various business arrangements such as joint ventures, share option schemes and investment agreements. Most recently, Emma has spoken and written about the ramifications of the end of the Brexit transition period as well as the Covid-19 pandemic for small businesses.