

PALAVAR MAVEN
copywriter



Exeter Mentor Named as One of Britain's Top 50 Business Advisers

An Exeter based Chartered Accountant and business owner, has been named as one Britain's top 50 business advisers.

Jerry Davison, who offers business advice to help local early stage entrepreneurs, was picked from hundreds of advisers from around the UK for his work with growth businesses and start-ups.

Jerry who runs www.millconsultancy.co.uk, www.finance-department.co.uk and www.southwestfd.co.uk, said: "There's a strong risk that without good strategic advice you can wake up one day with a business that doesn't bring you pleasure, and you resent. And what's worse, because you arrived there through a series of a hundred small compromises over several months, you didn't see it coming. Good advice can help you put simple systems and practices in place to make sure that the business stays on track and does what you wanted it to, and hoped it would."

With over twenty years of experience as a consultant and business adviser, Jerry has recently mentored Crowdcube; setting the Exeter-based crowd sourcing firm on a clear path towards future growth.

Run by small business network Enterprise Nation, the awards set out to highlight the behind-the-scenes work carried out by experts helping Britain's army of small businesses to build and grow. Emma Jones, founder of Enterprise Nation said: "These business advisers are the unsung heroes behind Britain's booming small business culture."

The advent of the awards has uncovered some incredible work that has helped fledgling firms take steps towards sustainability and growth, by taking a strategic look at their business. Emma added, "Research shows that firms taking advice do better than those that don't – and it stands to reason that good advice can help avoid some of the damaging, early mistakes entrepreneurs can make that can often force them to give up."

Jerry saw an opportunity for his experience to be passed on and help other businesses by offering guidance and support. To have been chosen for these prestigious awards, Jerry was selected from over 200 nominees. He said "I've seen many businesses from the early stages, and seeing great ideas soar makes it all worthwhile. Now, thanks to the Government's £30m Growth Voucher initiative, there is an increasing interest in taking strategic advice to overcome barriers and unlock growth potential."

Jerry's top tips for growing a business are:

- Question everything you're told
- Ask others who've started-up what they wish they'd asked for with hindsight. If you don't know anyone, book yourself onto free business networking events (Eventbrite is a good place to find some)
- Make sure you actually get around to running your business and don't spend all your time talking about it

In a Government report entitled Growing Your Business, Lord Young suggested if Britain's smallest firms were to take on just one more employee each, it would eradicate unemployment in the UK. He said: "The evidence is unequivocal: businesses that seek and engage external help are more likely to grow. But much more needs to be done to encourage firms to invest in their capability."

To see the full list of winners, visit:

<https://marketplace.enterprisenation.com/top-50-advisers>

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About Enterprise Nation

Enterprise Nation is a small business network with more than 67,000 members. Its aim is to help people turn their good ideas into great businesses – through expert advice, events, networking and inspiring books. Enterprise Nation was founded in 2005 by Emma Jones MBE also co-founder of StartUp Britain. 2015 is the year of membership.

About Growth Vouchers

There are six stages in the GV programme.

1. **Stage 1**, is the initial application stage where businesses apply to join the programme. All applicants will be able to complete the application process online by going to www.gov.uk/apply-growth-vouchers

Eligible companies that wish to participate will be invited to apply online and to answer a brief questionnaire. This is devised to help assess which one of five areas of their business might most benefit from strategic advice.

2. **Stage 2**, will involve businesses carrying out an assessment of their needs by either completing an on-line assessment or by meeting with an adviser. Adviser interviews can be carried out over the telephone but the majority will need to book an appointment and arrange to meet face to face.

3. **Stage 3**, after completing the assessment, applicants will be given a recommendation about what type of advice would be the most appropriate to meet their needs. Applicants will be told at this stage whether or not they have been allocated a voucher to help pay for the cost of obtaining this advice. Businesses will be randomly selected to receive a voucher. Not being selected is not a reflection on the viability of the business. This is to ensure we get a good selection of businesses across all groups to help assess the impact of the advice that has been delivered.

Vouchers can be used to subsidise the cost of obtaining strategic advice on any of the following five areas:

Raising finance and managing cash flow Marketing, attracting and keeping customers Making the most of digital technology Improving leadership and management skills Recruiting and developing your staff

4. **Stage 4**, applicants will then be advised to select a supplier from the list of registered providers on the new on-line Marketplace managed by our external partner, Enterprise Nation. The providers on the website have to meet a quality criteria to be listed.

5. **Stage 5**, once a suitable provider has been selected, the participant will make their own arrangements to receive the advice. The Growth Voucher can be used as part subsidy to pay for the advice. Vouchers will cover up to 50% of the cost of paying for advice up to a maximum of £2,000. Participants can pay more if they feel it is appropriate but the maximum they can claim back from the Government is £2,000.

6. **Stage 6**, after paying for the advice they have received, participants can submit a claim for the subsidy. They will have to provide evidence that the invoice has been paid and details of the advice they received.