



## Case Study

Sarah Willis  
Russen & Turner



“Our leadership challenge was to maintain the morale and operational effectiveness of the business that remained, to enable us to trade out of the downturn. Without the support of TCHC and the training we received under the Leadership and Management programme, it is unlikely that we would have survived.”

Sarah Willis, Director,  
Russen & Turner

**Project:** Leadership and Management  
**Business Sector:** Property and Construction  
**Location:** Kings Lynn, Norfolk  
**No. of employees:** 17

Russen & Turner was launched in 1981 as a surveying practice and expanded in 1993 to encompass estate agency in the depths of the last recession. At its peak, the firm employed 40 people across five sites in East Anglia and the East Midlands but as Managing Director, Sarah Willis explains, the company has recently had to deal with a second crippling recession.

“We were forced to split the firm in two,” she says, “with the offices in the East Midlands region taking some of the business, leaving us with the western Norfolk area, around Kings Lynn. So, because our big company infrastructure no longer had the bigger business to support it, we were forced to downsize, resulting in redundancies.”

After approaching Business Link for help, Sarah was put in touch with TCHC Leadership and Management Specialist Colin Grant.

“The business and its management team were clearly going through a very painful process, and I completed a training needs assessment to identify the skills the firm needed at that time,” explains Colin. “The analysis showed me that what Russen & Turner most needed was clear leadership from its directors, plus well-defined business objectives that everyone in the firm could understand and set their sights on achieving.”

Sarah embarked on the two-day leadership programme ‘Why would you want to be led by someone like you?’ on Colin’s recommendation.

“It was really useful to talk to and share solutions with other businesspeople from totally unrelated business areas, but who had exactly the same issues to contend with.” Sarah recalls.

Colin says: “I was really pleased that Sarah benefited from the training, despite her initial concerns that training was not the answer. She has since gone on to use TCHC’s services to arrange further training in search engine marketing.”

Sarah concludes “We are still here and still trading! That’s quite an achievement in the current economic climate and one that I think would have been unlikely without the financial support and training we have received.”

“The training has given us a renewed sense of vigor and the tools we need to develop our business.”



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