



## Case Study

Mary Powell  
The Emporium



“The e-commerce side of our business is becoming increasingly important, requiring a new set of skills in addition to those we’ve already built over nearly 25 years of being a high street retailer. The Leadership and Management programme has enabled us to achieve a level of investment in marketing training that we simply could not have afforded by ourselves.

Mary Powell, Partner  
The Emporium, Maldon

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**Project:** Leadership & Management  
**Business Sector:** Retail and e-commerce  
**Location:** Maldon, Essex  
**No. of Employees:** 12

Mary had spent nearly 20 years with a national newspaper group in senior organisational and training roles when she was made redundant. She decided to return to the family business, an Emporium specializing in goods for the home and garden, pet products, gifts and much more.

“When I rejoined the business, my role was to assist my sons, Richard and Gareth, with the e-commerce side of the business,” explains Mary. “We quickly realised that we could no longer rely on our location and the high footfall it attracts to grow. We needed to start marketing both sectors of our business, which was a new step for us.”

Mary attended a number of marketing sessions with Essex Chambers of Commerce. Through the chamber, she found out that The Emporium might qualify for financial support for training, and was put in touch with TCHC to learn more.

Leadership and Management Adviser Bev Wallman takes up the story: “My first task with a new client is to complete a training needs assessment to determine where skills and training support is best targeted. That’s exactly what we do at TCHC – work with clients to identify their training needs, and then find relevant training solutions and possible funding.”

“Clients can either choose the training company they prefer to work with, or I can find a provider for them,” continues Bev. “We process the paperwork and pay a contribution towards the costs, up to a maximum of £1,000.”

Mary was impressed with the training she received. “What was fantastic about the training was that the company came to our internet office on a Saturday, which suited our schedules,” explains Mary. “They had developed a bespoke programme tailored exactly to our specific requirements and that ran at a pace that matched our individual needs.”

“Getting half the training costs refunded meant that we could then go out and buy the complete suite of professional design and photo editing software we needed,” Mary says. “This has made a huge difference to our ability to create marketing materials ourselves, and means we no longer have the expense of using an external supplier.”

Looking ahead, Mary anticipates that The Emporium’s image, both in-store and online, will be significantly enhanced: “Now all three of us have received training, we can do so much more. And next month we start our first marketing campaign!”



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