

Secret millionaire to speak at Forum of Private Business event

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Growth through and beyond the recession will be the theme of a free event organised by the Forum of Private Business taking place on 17 March 2010.

The Business Support Event, at which the Forum of Private Business' new tailored business support solutions will be revealed, will feature as guest speaker the star of Channel 4's Secret Millionaire Kavita Oberoi, one of the UK's most successful female entrepreneurs.

Mrs Oberoi, who in 2001 founded the Derbyshire-based Oberoi Consulting, a business healthcare consultancy, will tell her story and offer attendees the advice and practical guidance required to succeed in business.

"Recessions bring opportunities as well as challenges," she said. "Despite the difficulties, innovative and astute entrepreneurs combining passion with careful preparation can achieve great things.

"Adversity brings out the qualities that every entrepreneur needs to be successful – guts, problem-solving, strength and perseverance. Establishing a company in the lean times can bring great rewards when the economy enters sustained recovery."

Mrs Oberoi, who left university with a first class degree in applied chemistry before embarking on a career as a medical representative with Bayer Pharmaceuticals, was inspired to start her business after missing out on a promotion with the company.

She added: "I think my story has a lot of parallels with the experiences of business owners who will attend the event. There will be many messages they can take away with them. It's about embracing change and being flexible enough to adapt quickly and efficiently.

"On the surface, starting or trying to grow a small business in a recession might seem irrational, but, if done correctly – and with the right support – it can be the most rational decision you will ever make."

Raised in a traditional Indian family, Mrs Oberoi credits her mother as the driving force behind her educational achievements and her father, who died when she was 15, as her entrepreneurial inspiration.

At the event Phil Orford, the Forum of Private Business' Chief Executive, will discuss the changing nature of the organisation's business support services. He will tell attendees how the Forum is providing real help to business owners through and beyond the recession.

"We have technically entered a period of recovery but there is still a tough time ahead for small businesses. We are entering a new business landscape where entrepreneurs need support that

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is tailored to their individual needs. As one of the UK's leading business support and lobby groups we have evolved to meet that need."

Registration for the event, which is being held at the City of Manchester Stadium, Manchester, begins at 2pm.

From 2.15 to 2.45pm there will be a workshop session on accessing finance run by Business Link North West entitled 'Are you ready for investment?' and another on workplace inclusion called 'What's the business in equality?' to be run by the UK Council for Access and Equality (UKCAE).

Following their talks Mr Orford and Mrs Oberoi will take part in a panel session which will also include David Booth, International Trade Adviser at UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) and Managing Partner at Clydesdale and Yorkshire Bank (CYB) Paul Reeves.

Attendees will also have the opportunity to network with other business owners in a networking session to run from 6-7pm, when the event will close.