

TESTIMONIAL

Mentor: Celia Potterton

Mentee: Vijya Patel

Project: Art U Make

Background

Although I had set up my Business Art U Make within owned shop premises in October 2011, this has been redundant or un-operational since the end of 2011.

Art U Make was set up to sell products that were promoted and 'made' by local people; things like jewellery, paintings, ceramics, knitwear, clothes, handmade cards and crafts for gifts etc.

However, due to personal financial circumstances it was necessary to take up alternative full-time work, hence the business remained un-operational. Part of the business initiative was also to rent out the shop space for Art exhibitions or pop-shops on short or long term basis.

Mentoring

Celia visited me at my shop premises on 24 April 2014 – where we discussed ideas on what I wanted to do. We had further sessions thereafter to progress the ideas into action, which resulted in an Open Day to promote and market Art U Make's services.

Feedback

Without Celia's support I would not have considered the possibilities open to me. It was through Celia's encouragement and support that I felt I could go ahead and do something. By putting things in perspective, setting goals and offering ideas, considering taking the steps together we managed to set a date to have an Open Day.

We considered who to approach through our own networks and drew up a plan of action.

My main obstacle was not being able to move forward in marketing my business idea. I had felt overwhelmed, even though I did have my business plan and contacts. Through having a mentor, I was able to focus on an aspect which could help market my business. Celia took the initiative in setting a goal – such as a re-launch of my business and offered the support to help bring this about. She was instrumental throughout by spreading the word and breaking down the tasks involved, and I also valued and learnt a great deal through this process.