OUR COURSES

Training and coaching in business development, client management and leadership

questas

www.questas.co.uk

Welcome

Our purpose is to help the clients we work with to grow!

The people we develop through training and coaching tend to be technically minded and often experts in their field. Many of those we work with would label themselves ‘unnatural salespeople’ and we love to help them learn new skills and behaviours that allows them to improve (and be more motivated towards) winning work from both new and existing clients.

Read on for details of a number of our courses.

Gary Williams,

CEO and Founder, Questas

Our approach to learning

Questas works with professional and engineering services firms often operating in the built and natural environment. We provide unique training perspectives that will particularly help those who consider themselves technical professionals and not natural sales people.

The Questas Difference
The training programmes we develop with our clients are designed to deliver long-term sustainable changes in the way their business grows. We don't believe that a single training course without follow up and work-based practice works.

Training tends to be offered at client sites, but off-site venues can be used equally well. One of the keys to successful training is that the participants are away from the call of their day-to-day workload.

We use practical exercises to bring the theory to life and ensure we contextualise and apply the learning to the world of our delegates.

We are based in London and travel throughout the UK and internationally to deliver training.

Practical theory
Whilst we teach theory where necessary, our workshops and one-to one sessions are highly practical and designed to be relevant to the audience so that they can use their new-found skills and ideas in the workplace straight away.

Online modules
We offer online modules to support our face-to-face delivery. Sometimes these are taken before a course, at other times they are used to maintain the momentum of an ongoing training programme. They can also be taken as stand-alone modules.

Bespoke training and facilitation We can design specific interventions for our clients based on their particular requirements. We are also great at facilitating events, from large-scale conferences down to team meetings that are in need of energising

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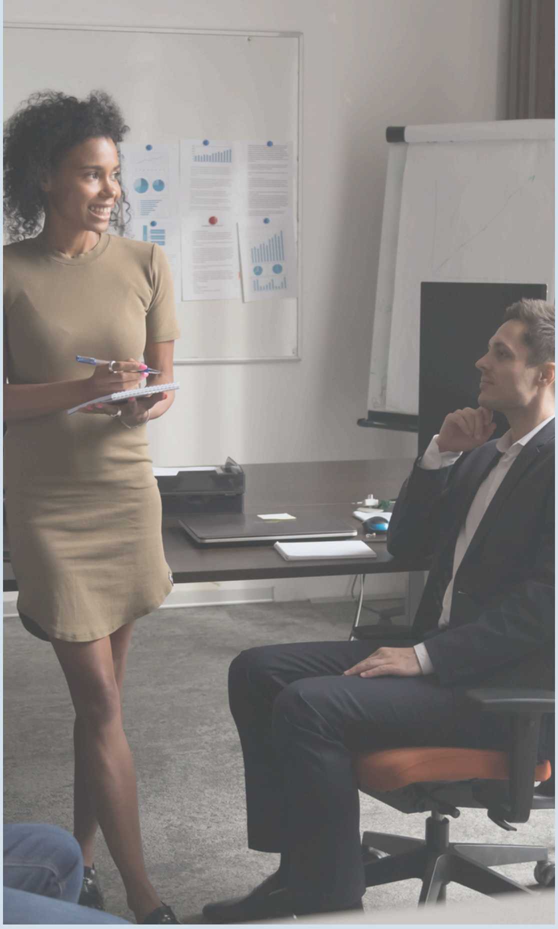

Business Development Planning

According to research, your reputation – and that of your organisation – is the most important factor for clients when choosing who to consider for projects.

Course overview
Most of our clients are time poor and often struggle to find the time to dedicate to growing their business. Exploring the fundamentals of Business Development Planning gives technical professionals the understanding and skills to scope out, plan and execute their strategic sales activity much more effectively. Learn how to get to the table of target clients and take control of your business development activity.

Who's it for?
Highly valuable to anyone who has face-to-face time with clients, and those who have a remit to explore opportunities and find work from both new and existing clients. It would also be a useful reminder for those with more experience who may not have had any formal training – or at least not for a long time!

Format
Half-day (or full day) aimed at an ideal group size of 12.

Outcomes
Learn how to maximise the time and the resources you have to dedicate to business development. Understand the principles clients use to select chosen providers and develop a set of tools to help explore the client's world. Ultimately you will develop increased confidence and will learn to apply tried and tested strategies and tactics to help you unlock more opportunities and win more – and better – work.

CONTENT OUTLINE

- Planning business development activity – The Questas Growth Model ©
- Learning how clients buy
- Developing a deep understanding of client needs
- Preparing for and structuring business development discussions
- Differentiating your offer – elevate your business's reputation
- Introduction to client management

"I wish I knew this stuff years ago."

Senior Consultant, RPS

Networking Skills

Our clients often tell us that they're 'non-sales people' and that business networking fills them with dread. Using both theory and practical exercises, this course will help participants to hone their communication skills – and gain more confidence.

Who's it for?
This tried and tested training is designed for anyone required to attend events for the purpose of networking. This is run as an 'on your feet' course full of practical hints and tips that will increase confidence and provide participants with tactics and skills to make networking an enjoyable and fruitful experience.

Format
This course can be designed for up to 30 participants and run either as a 90 minute 'lunch & learn' session or a half-day workshop.

Outcomes
Become clear about your objectives in attending a networking event. Feel confident in a room where you don't know anyone. Learn techniques to politely navigate the room and make meaningful contact with the people you really want to meet so that you can begin fruitful relationships.

CONTENT OUTLINE

- Preparing for an event – explore your network, use your colleagues
- Setting yourself objectives
- Working the room – appearing confident and interesting
- Making introductions, having valuable conversations
- Questioning, listening, and breaking into groups
- Moving on from a conversation politely and professionally
- After the event – following up, maintaining contact

Sales Conversations Skills for Non-Sales people

We help technical people feel comfortable with the idea of selling – demonstrating that it is not some sort of 'dark art' – which can make a radical change to the dialogue they have with existing and potential clients.

Course overview
Our sales training has been developed over years into an approach designed for both natural and 'unnatural' salespeople. We have a tried and tested structure which will help participants become more effective at professional sales conversations. Participants practice different tasks to build their skill sets, from listening techniques and questioning skills to building trust and gaining the client's commitment.

Who's it for?
Anyone responsible for building client relationships, uncovering new opportunities and converting them into fee paying work.

Format
Full day workshop aimed at groups of 9 – 15 participants. There is an emphasis on skills practice, and we often use actors to play clients in sales meeting simulations.

Outcomes
The course is designed to resonate with technically minded individuals and 'unnatural' salespeople to develop skills and build confidence. Having completed the session, our participants tell us they have more face-to-face business development discussions and those conversations are more effective, leading to a greater number of opportunities and improved win-rates.

CONTENT OUTLINE

- Planning and preparing for client meetings
- Understanding the client Exploring the client's world – developing a differentiator
- Planning, structuring and managing business development meetings
- Practicing sales meetings and building relationships
- Delivering a compelling proposition

Presentation and pitching skills

Presenting, especially a pitch, can be a very pressured situation and it is normal to feel anxious. Learning visualisation skills to cope with 'what if' scenarios leaves headspace to focus on a successful outcome.

Course overview
Focus is on preparation, not just in terms of structure and approach to a pitch but the practice and visualisation activities to mentally prepare for it. In this course we challenge our participants at times to operate outside of their comfort zones. This allows us to provide the strategies and tools to alleviate the symptoms of anxiety that so many of us come up against when we are asked to speak publicly.

Who's it for?
This course is for anyone with a remit to present internally and/or externally. Clients are encouraged to bring along real life scenarios to work through.

Format
This is a highly practical one-day workshop. Participants will present to a group at least twice in the day and be filmed.

Outcomes
Present with greater confidence and professionalism. Learn to plan and structure presentations and be clear when pitching, ensuring emphasis on key messages while keeping an audience engaged.

CONTENT OUTLINE

- Who is your audience, what are their expectations?
- How to engage your audience
- Making it memorable – key messages, unique elements, clear calls to action
- Presentation format and structure
  Speaking with confidence, controlling your nerves
- Body language, gestures, vocal tone and pitch

"Great day! Really fun and innovative way to beat the fear of presenting to an audience."

Tim Howlings, Brasier Freeth

Bids & Tender Training

By understanding the value of planning a process and the decisions you take along the way, this course will change how you approach bids, improving your efficiency in responding and your success at winning them. Bid less and win more!

Course Overview
Learning how to produce a winning bid (from gathering the right team and planning the activity timeline to delivering the final document) is one of the most important business skills you can acquire. During this course you will be taken through the process steps and will look at techniques to ensure you meet your client's requirements and stand out from the crowd using the

Who is it for?
All professionals involved in tendering and writing bids. Building the skills and confidence needed to respond to competitive tenders, from letter proposals to complex multimillion contracts.

Format
One day on-site practical workshop for up to 12 people. Participants are encouraged to bring real life scenarios to work through. We can also host active bid team sessions to kick off or problem solve an ongoing bid or tender.

Outcomes
You will leave with the understanding of how to identify the process, appoint the team and apply the methodology to produce winning bids and tenders. Taking a customer focused approach, you will be able to differentiate your proposal by emphasising key features and benefits. These skills will also give you the tools to transform a weak bid into a winning one.

CONTENT OUTLINE

- Planning the process – timelines, team and effort
- Pre-bid decision making – to bid or not to bid
- Planning tools and techniques
- Using BASE (Benefits, Affinity, Solutions, Evidence) structure
- How to storyboard
- Defining your Value Proposition
- Benefits v features
- Writing and editing tips

Negotiation Skills

Everything is negotiable. Whether or not the negotiation is easy is another matter, but the first step is always communication.

Course Overview
This course is designed to take you through the theory and practice of 'Principled Negotiation'. It provides the tools and tips to allow you to separate people from the problem, evaluate options and find a position of mutual acceptance to achieve the win/win with your clients (and colleagues!).

Who is it for?
Anyone who is involved in internal or external negotiations, particularly in final stages of securing bids and contracts. It is also very useful for those situations where clients are trying to push the boundaries of the contract – commonly known as 'scope creep'

Format
One day workshop for up to 12 people. This course includes hands-on techniques, working through theory and practical exercises.

Outcomes
Offering a variety of negotiation styles and the know-how of when to use them, this course will leave the participant with the methodology to frame your negotiation, identify your acceptance zone and manage conflict through to resolution. Couple with this the ability to think creatively to provide options that focus on the interests of all parties, to find a mutually satisfactory outcome and a relationship that remains strong.

CONTENT OUTLINE

- Defining negotiation – what is 'Principled Negotiation'
- Negotiation styles – qualities of a great negotiator
- Creative thinking for optimum solutions
- Know your BATNA (best alternative to a negotiated agreement) and understand your 'walk-away' before you start
  Preparing and structuring a negotiation
- The LADDER of Assertiveness

Key Client Management

Proactive client management ensures that you deliver services on time and on budget while meeting expectations and nurturing a positive working relationship

Course overview
Providing a comprehensive overview of client planning aimed at those new to the idea, this course will help your team identify potential growth and strategic solutions to benefit both you and your clients. It will also be useful to protect relationships from competitors aiming to increase their 'share of the pie' at your expense.

Who's it for?
Client-facing fee earners who are responsible for managing key accounts. Participants are quite likely not to be trained sales professionals, but technical experts who have been given the responsibility for developing and protecting the most important clients in the business. We often encourage a mix of people in the workshop in terms of both seniority and discipline

Format
One day workshop for up to 12 people.

Outcomes
Participants will find an increased awareness of what needs to be done to achieve client retention and growth, leading to the increased profits of mutually beneficial client / supplier relationships. They will also be equipped with the skills and resources needed to implement a practical plan of action for their organisation to establish the best practice of Key Client Management culture.

CONTENT OUTLINE

- Understanding your client and their buying decisions
- Learning how to become the 'Trusted Advisor'
- Identifying cross-selling opportunities
- How to collaborate and break down 'silos'
- Creating a client plan
- Implementing the client plan

Client Relationship Skills

Delivering projects well is the first step in developing further opportunities, but it's not enough. We need to be proactive in building relationships, understanding our clients and their objectives, and positioning ourselves as trusted advisers.

Course overview

Adapted from our popular 'Selling Skills' training this course is focused on client retention and introduces the tools and skills required to strengthen and broaden client relationships. Participants will practice different tasks in role-play scenarios.

Who is it for?

Anyone who has a responsibility for retaining and building upon existing client relationships, whether to uncover new opportunities or deliver existing projects.

Format

This is a practical full day workshop ideally aimed at groups of between 9 – 15 participants.

Outcomes

Participants will find they are in a better position to assess and build on client relationships by recognising what works with different personality types to develop loyalty and become a trusted advisor. They will become more confident to progress face to face conversations that will lead to a greater number of business development opportunities.

CONTENT OUTLINE

- Planning client relationship activity
- Relationship mapping
- Really understanding your client
- Client personality types
- Becoming and staying the 'Trusted Adviser'
- Client conversations skills (Listening, Questioning)

Developing Client Action Plans

How to deliver services that meet or exceed client expectations whilst nurturing existing and building new relationships. Developing an understanding of the client that allows you as the supplier to help them achieve their objectives.

Course overview
The practical implementation of developing Client Action Plans in 'real business' scenarios. Whether reviewing a number of clients in a similar sector or taking a deep dive into a single high-profile client or complex Framework, Questas consultants will work with your team to apply proven methodology that will identify the ways you can help your client grow.

Who's it for?
Client account managers and key individuals on the delivery team. Those responsible for and involved in winning work and delivering services to the firm's most important clients.

Format
Format Half, one or two day practical 'real business scenario' sessions.
Option 1 Working on a number of clients within the same sector or market space.
Option 2 'Deep Dive' sessions focusing on a small number of clients (sometimes just one).
Option 3 'Deep Dive' focusing on how to develop clients operating with a Framework.
With all the above it is recommended that sessions are attended by all internal stakeholders involved in developing the client.

Outcomes
This course will shine a spotlight on your client, understand their motivations and interests and support you setting the objectives, plan and actions to help your client grow. The aim is to gain loyalty, uncover cross-selling opportunities and develop a long, mutually beneficial relationship with the firm's best customers

CONTENT OUTLINE

- Defining key client management
- Operating under a Framework
- Applying decision making processes
- Understanding the client's drivers
- Horizon thinking and positioning
- Becoming and staying their 'Trusted Advisor'
- How to identify and develop cross-selling opportunities

Cross Selling

There has to be added value for the client to buy additional services from you. If they already buy that second service from an alternative provider, you must clearly 'sell' the benefit of them buying both services from you.

Course overview

By recognising your own company's wider business capabilities this course allows you to explore more opportunity to offer these services into your clients. There are many reasons why cross selling is harder than we think it should be. Our research has shown the same barriers exist in many organisations. We shine the light on each of these and offer solutions as to how to overcome them.

Who's it for?

Anyone responsible for retaining and building upon existing client relationships, whether to uncover new opportunities or deliver existing projects. This course aligns well with 'Client Relationship Skills'.

"We all very much enjoyed the session and I have already put it into use!"

Principal, Momentum Transport Planning

Format

One day workshop for up to 12 people.

Outcomes

Participants will be able to adopt a more strategic approach to addressing clients' requirements, looking for ways to help their clients grow while offering opportunities to win work for their own business.

CONTENT OUTLINE

- Identifying the opportunity
- Understanding the barriers to Cross Selling and overcoming them
- Building trust
- Understanding your wider business capabilities
- Managing internal communication
- Developing your selling skills

Difficult Client Conversations

Productive communication is built upon rapport, not necessarily upon agreement. By looking at the psychology behind difficult client conversations, we take a practical approach to helping you manage 'disagreement without being disagreeable'.

Course overview
It's inevitable that conversations with clients aren't always to deliver good news: explaining that a project is not going to be on time or on budget; pushing back on a client who is stretching the boundaries of the contract; or dealing with internal stakeholders who are not meeting expectations. This course gives you the tools to manage these situations with skill and conviction.

Who is it for?
Client-facing individuals, project managers and those who find themselves in awkward situations with clients.

Format
Normally run as a half-day workshop with around 12 people, we create real scenarios (common to our client's world) to give delegates the opportunity to put theory to the test in simulated difficult conversations.

Outcomes
Improved confidence and skills. Delegates will have a framework and structure for these types of conversation and the ability to protect the relationship whilst dealing assertively with clients' sometimes unreasonable demands.

CONTENT OUTLINE

- 3E model for structuring difficult conversations:
  Explanation,
  Expectations,
  Engagement
- Taking the tension out of a heated conversation
- Recognising different styles and countering them

Coaching

Training will provide delegates with new ideas and skills. Coaching will embed those skills and allow individuals to eradicate bad habits and develop new ones aimed at helping them achieve peak performance.

Who's it for?
Any business development programme is about long-term behavioural change as well as learning new skills. Positive interventions following training will reinforce the behaviours and help with any personal or team 'road blocks'. Coaching can be provided both in team sessions and individually and can be face-to-face, on the telephone or via video call.

Format
Coaching sessions are one to one for an hour or 90 minutes in length and Coaching we suggest a minimum of 4 – 6 sessions to enable the best possible outcomes.

Outcomes
Outcomes differ depending on the objectives, but examples are: increased focus on the most important activities; clarity of thinking in how to achieve objectives; greater levels of confidence; new tools to deal with difficult situations; improved management capabilities i.e. delegation; and reduced levels of stress.

"One to one coaching helped me overcome some of the barriers I faced as a technically minded person. I am now much more confident with clients."

Technical Director, RPS

CONTENT OUTLINE
Coaching sessions are driven by the needs of the coachee but we always begin with a 3-way meeting including the coachee, the line manager and the coach to agree objectives, feedback, what is shared and what remains confidential.

Objectives might include:

- Helping to embed new habits
- Helping individuals with areas they find difficult to implement
- Helping with practical actions where a team or individual do not know how to proceed

Leadership Skills and Behaviours

Developing leaders to enable growth is an essential component of success. This course is designed for those new to leadership and a great reminder for established leaders.

Who is it for?
All leaders throughout businesses; executive, management, and those within business units, disciplines, or sectors. Ensuring the leadership teams are aligned with your business development strategy is an essential component of maintaining the momentum of any training programme and achieving sustained growth.

Format
Leadership courses will vary in length and format according to requirements.

Outcomes
Achieving the best performance from the people we have in our teams is the ultimate objective. When we combine focused training with strong, joined up leadership we give ourselves the best chance of success. Specific outcomes include: highly motivated teams; improved productivity; better use of resources; greater levels of confidence; consistent achievement of objectives; and growth!

CONTENT OUTLINE
Our leadership training is entirely tailored to the needs of our clients but some of the elements covered would be:

- Leadership vs management
- Situational leadership
- Delegation and motivation
- Measuring and monitoring
- Setting objectives and actions
- Giving feedback
- Achieving peak performance in your teams
- Running effective meetings

Our core team

Gary Williams

Business development consultant, sales trainer and executive coach, Gary is the founder and CEO of Questas. A former sales director, he has spent 15 years in the professional and engineering services sector, helping companies to transform their account management, client relationship and business development skills.

Paul Brady

Paul has been an interactive theatre specialist for over 20 years, using drama and performers in the context of business training. He has worked across a variety of sectors, enabling participants to get to grips with the behaviours that support business innovation and change.

Annabel Miller

As a learning and development practitioner with 15 years experience, Annabel's expertise covers communication skills, management development and team-working. She is accredited in Belbin and Myers Briggs and is a seasoned role-player with a passion for highly interactive sessions.

Our clients

Spanning consultancy, engineering, professional services and more, here are a selection of the clients.

Questas have a very good understanding of our markets, clients and our people, enabling them to tailor the training to our specific requirements

Willie Madden, Regional Director, RPS

questas

GET IN TOUCH

We help our clients grow

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