



Bev Hurley (YTKO)

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Bev is a successful and inspiring serial entrepreneur, and one of the UK's leading experts on growing sustainable and thriving women-owned businesses. Prior to joining YTKO she has started and built several successful companies, and has a wealth of first-hand expertise particularly around access to finance, sales, markets and business growth planning.

As the founder of Enterprising Women, the Chief Executive of YTKO, and the Norfolk Network, Bev is no stranger to the challenges of growing a business and building a team of 85 staff. Delivering 40% growth for YTKO in 2009 and 2010, contracts are already in place for additional growth in 2011.

Bev is passionate about getting the right publicly-funded support strategies in place that will actually make a difference, and significantly increasing the quality of that support. Her unique start-up, investment readiness and growth programmes have enabled women to understand how to de-risk their ventures pre-start and pre-growth, and to base their business plans and financial projections on robustly validated market knowledge.

One of the key additional hurdles for women looking to take their businesses to the next level is access to finance. As an angel investor and NXD, having enabled female clients to raise over £5m in funding, as well as raising finance for an MBO and a spin-out, Bev brings an informed perspective to both supply and demand sides.

She believes that a holistic continuum of enterprise and financial support needs to be in place, starting with microfinance, unsecured debt (such as the Enterprising Women £10m Loan Fund), and appropriate equity instruments, such as mezzanine finance. Bev would also like to see many more women business angels, as angels play a critical role in the early stage finance landscape for ambitious high growth businesses.

As the holder of The Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion, one of her pleasures is making time to raise awareness about enterprise and mentor several women each year. Bev is also an Enterprise Fellow of the University of East Anglia, inspiring and encouraging young people to actively learn about enterprise as a career option. Bev sits on two private boards and has held a number of public appointments including:

- Board Member of the East of England Regional Development Agency, and Science and Industry Council
- Chair, East of England Tourism
- Board Member of Prowess
- Trustee of the East Mentoring Forum
- Enterprise Fellow of the University of East Anglia
- Board member of the European Centre for Women in Technology

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