



## Changes to the LCVP Support Service

In the summer of 2003 the Department of Education and Science through the In-Career Development Unit restructured the Second Level Support Service, which incorporated the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Support Service. A dedicated LCVP Support Service has been in operation since the introduction of the restructured Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme in the 1994-1995 school year.

In the intervening years various National Coordinators and Development Officers have given dedicated support to schools and teachers involved in the introduction and development of this unique programme in our second-level schools and have seen its growth from a mere 68 schools in 1994 to more than 500 schools in 2003. It is important that we extend our thanks and appreciation, for work well done, to all those who worked in the LCVP support service, for their enthusiasm and commitment to the development of this excellent programme from which so many students have benefited both in their 3rd level courses and also in their search for employment or in their decisions to become self-employed.

Last year, the Department decided that it is no longer feasible to continue offering this intensive support to the programme and so a dedicated LCVP support service no longer exists. However, the LCVP Office in Navan, under the administration of Esther Herlihy, continues to provide support and to respond to the daily requests for information from schools offering the LCVP and from schools interesting in joining the programme in the future. The LCVP Coordinator and the Regional Development Officers in the Second Level Support Service, continue to offer support to LCVP schools and teachers.

This support consists of school-based support where requested, to the extent possible within existing resources. Priority is given to schools offering the programme for the first time and to schools where a number of teachers are newly appointed to the programme. Support is also offered through Regional Cluster Inservice to new schools and to teachers new to the programme. In addition, support is available for all teachers through the Modular Courses advertised. As the Education Centres now have a central role in the provision of continuous professional development opportunities for teachers, the Support Service will be working in conjunction with them in supporting the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme in our schools in the future. We look forward to establishing a countrywide LCVP network support service in conjunction with the Education Centres in the year ahead.

Our website [www.lcvp.ie](http://www.lcvp.ie) will continue to be available as a resource and we will continue to offer a telephone, FAX and e-mail service to all LCVP teachers.

Your comments, suggestions and ideas are always welcome. We especially welcome articles for inclusion in future issues of the journal. If you have an interesting LCVP experience share it with others. Please contact either [office@lcvp.ie](mailto:office@lcvp.ie) or [francesholohan@slss.ie](mailto:francesholohan@slss.ie)

Frances Holohan, LCVP Coordinator, Second Level Support Service

## Revised LCVP Syllabus – First Assessment 2004

Written Examination	Marks
Audio Visual	30
Case Study	30
General Questions (any 4 out of 6 x 25 marks)	<u>100</u>
<i>Total</i>	160

### Portfolio of Coursework

From the 2004 examination onwards, the following portfolio items and weightings will apply:

Core Items	Marks
Curriculum Vitae	25
Career Investigation	40
Summary Report	40
Enterprise/Action Plan	<u>35</u>
<i>Total</i>	140

### Optional Items

Any two items x 50 marks	<u>100</u>
<i>Total</i>	240

**Overall Total for Link Modules subject** **400**

## LCVP Recognition

Universities, DIT and Institutes of Technology

Distinction	70 points	Distinction	80 – 100%
Merit	50 points	Merit	65 – 79%
Pass	30 points	Pass	50 – 64%

## Contact Details

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# Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

## REPORTS ON INSERVICE/MODULAR COURSES

### *LCVP Link Modules – National Cluster Inservice*

A regional cluster-based inservice was offered to schools involved in the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, during the first term of 2003. This consisted of a one-day inservice for coordinators and teachers of the LCVP in schools commencing the programme for the first time in September 2003. Other participants included teachers in existing schools who were new to the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme and teachers who had not previously attended inservice on the revised Link Modules syllabus.

The LCVP Link Modules inservice was conducted in each of the Education Centre regions as follows:

- Region 1* Navan Education Centre
- Region 2* Dublin West Education Centre
- Region 3* Kilkenny Education Centre
- Region 4* Tralee Education Centre and Blarney Park Hotel – additional venue in response to the demand
- Region 5* Shamrock Lodge Hotel, Athlone
- Region 6* Carrick-on-Shannon Education Centre

The inservice covered an overview of the LCVP for teachers new to the programme as well as a detailed input on the content of the Revised Link Modules syllabus. In addition, participants were taken through the assessment of the Portfolio and the Written Examination and provided with information on the various resources available to the LCVP teacher in implementing the programme. Teachers were involved in short workshop sessions on some of the LCVP activities and found these extremely valuable. Overall there was a very positive response to the inservice and teachers expressed an interest in having further similar support. Teachers were reminded of the Modular Course available on 'Teaching the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme', as this 3-day approach enables greater participation and involvement in the actual teaching and learning methodologies involved in the LCVP.

Teachers welcomed the Resource materials developed by the LCVP support service and also praised the Guidelines issued by the NCCA and the exemplar materials therein.

Some concerns expressed included –

- Absence of a detailed marking scheme
- No exemplar material for the Audio Cassette option of the Career Investigation
- No exemplar material available for the Recorded Interview/Presentation option
- The restriction imposed by the Vocational Subject Groupings
- Lack of an Irish version of resource materials

Teachers new to the programme expressed their concern at the cutbacks in the second level support service, their unfamiliarity with the programme and their fears in taking on the responsibility of teaching the new programme with limited inservice available.

All concerns have been forwarded to the Department of Education and Science and other interested agencies and the issues raised in the evaluations received from teachers will influence the content of future inservice.

With any new or revised syllabus there are inevitably a number of initial questions and uncertainties and often a variety of interpretations. We acknowledge and greatly appreciate the help and support extended by Peter Johnson of the NCCA and by the LCVP inspectorate, Joe Codyre, State Examinations Commission and Orlaith O'Connor, Department of Education and Science. They have responded to the many issues raised by teachers following the initial inservice last year thus providing the clarity and correct interpretation so important to teachers of the revised syllabus.

### *Modular Courses 2003 – 2004*

The SLSS continues to offer its programme of modular courses for teachers in a broad range of topic areas. The Modular courses offer a model of support suited to the needs of teachers of programmes or syllabi which are moving out of the early implementation phase. In the modular courses the emphasis is not on the transmission of information but rather on the teaching of the programme or the syllabus in the classroom. The purpose is to offer a range of professional development opportunities that engage teachers' creative and reflective capacities. The Modular courses establish a process of dialogue in which participants reflect on their own practice over time and share the outcome of these reflections with a group of interested colleagues.

Participants of Modular Courses have access to a pathway to post – graduate study at Master's level at both University of Limerick and Dublin City University. This involves the submission of a number of assignments of a reflective nature

undertaken in the context of the Modular Course. Participants who achieve the required standard gain access to Master's programmes in the education departments of the two participating universities and receive agreed exemptions from some of the cognitive requirements of the programmes.

Many LCVP co-ordinators and teachers participated in a selection of these modular courses including Teaching the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, Multiple Intelligences, Enterprise Education at Senior Cycle, The Portfolio and its use in Teaching and Learning at Second Level and Programme Co-Ordination in schools.

Over 100 teachers and co-ordinators attended the modular course "Teaching the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme" which was offered in six education centres across the country and was facilitated by Kieran Golden and Fiona Kindlon, Regional Development Officers, Second

# Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

## REPORT ON MODULAR COURSES 2003 - 2004

Level Support Service. This course was targeted at co-ordinators and teachers who were new to the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme.

Teachers who participated in the programme had an opportunity to explore many of the methodologies used in the programme including group work, the visitor to the classroom exercise, my own place investigations, enterprise activities and work experience. A considerable amount of time was devoted to discussing the role of the co-ordinator, planning the LCVP in your school and also developing strategies for engaging reluctant learners and reluctant readers. Teachers engaged in many of the activities in order to enhance their understanding and learning and also to appreciate the value of planning for activities and evaluating methodologies they were using in schools. Participants were

also introduced to many of the enterprise/ business terms included in the Specific Learning Outcomes of the syllabus including SWOT analysis, the impact of the Single European Market on enterprise, business plans, market research, marketing mix, publicity and promotion.

By the end of the three days teachers had developed a good understanding of the LCVP Link Modules syllabus and had a better understanding of the assessment formats in the LCVP. On day three participants were presented with a CD ROM which includes resource files for teachers such as the Programme Statement, the NCCA Assessment Guidelines, a powerpoint presentation for parents' nights, worksheets for visitor to the classroom exercises, sample letters, work experience templates, past exam questions and case studies to name but a few.

### Pilot Networks

The Education Centres supported by the Second Level Support Service have initiated the setting up of Networks of LCVP teachers (similar to a subject association). Initially meetings have taken place in 10 Education Centres nationwide, i.e. Navan, Drumcondra, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Cork West, Clare, Galway, Mayo and Donegal. The aim of this initiative is to respond to the support needs expressed by teachers of the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme. Teachers have an opportunity to meet with colleagues and to discuss issues of interest. The Education Centres provided the accommodation and refreshments and SLSS personnel facilitated the initial meetings. The idea is that Network Organisers will emerge in each centre and they will liaise with the Support Service in responding to the issues suggested by teachers. Following the initial meetings in the 10 centres teachers expressed enthusiasm for the initiative and have arranged follow-up meetings in each of the 10 centres. Many of the remaining Education Centres have expressed an interest in providing a similar support for LCVP teachers and it is intended to extend the pilot in the next school year.



LCVP Teachers  
Networking in  
the West



Mayo Education  
Centre



Galway Education  
Centre



Clare Education  
Centre

### LCVP SUPPORT

We are working with Education Centres in providing support to LCVP teachers in schools

*YOUR NEEDS ARE IMPORTANT TO US*

*TELL US WHAT THEY ARE*

Are you interested in joining a Network Support Group in your area?

Let us know your views/ideas/suggestions

We are setting up a database of LCVP teachers in each region containing the following information:

Teacher's Name:  
School Address:  
Teacher's Email Address:  
Nearest Education Centre:

If you wish to be included in this, please send the above information to: [office@lcvp.ie](mailto:office@lcvp.ie)

This information will be available to Education Centres for notification purposes.

## NEWS FROM SCHOOLS

### **Caitriona Doughty, LCVP Student, St. Clare's College, Ballyjamesduff, Co. Cavan outlines links being developed in her school through the Junior Achievement Programme**



On the 11th of November 2003, Ann Marie Brennan a consultant in Wellman International Ltd, started a Junior Achievement Programme with our LCVP class. It was a great injection of inspiration into our class, as we investigated our skills and what careers we would love to have in the future.

We started off with each of us designing a business card with our names on it. Then we wrote down our preferred title. I decided to write that I was a psychologist because that would be my ideal career choice. On the back of the card I wrote my favourite things to do in my spare time, my favourite classes and all the clubs I belonged to. After I finished writing all that Ann Marie collected the cards and for the next class she had studied them to see if we would be suited to our career choice. She also furthered this exercise by handing out workbooks, which had useful hints on how to create a good first impression at an interview. We read through these and then we filled in a "life map", which consisted of some of the events that led us up to the present day and then to where we see our lives heading. This was good and useful because it started us trying to decide where we would like to be in ten years time and what we would have to do to get there.

Then we identified our skills, which is important because it is good to recognise what your strengths and weaknesses are

because then we can improve on them. During the next class we interpreted employment advertisements. Ann Marie pointed out that as we enter the job market we will be competing with many other job seekers. We looked through the advertisements and chose ones that we each liked. Mine was a Social Worker. I looked at the requirements and wrote down how my skills and education matched them. I then made a list of what skills, training and experience I would need in order to qualify for the job. This was a beneficial exercise because it helped me focus on what I would need to do to be prepared for the world of work.

We then wrote out our Curriculum Vitae and typed them up so they would look presentable. Ann Marie held interviews where she interviewed us for the chosen job. I read over my Curriculum Vitae to make sure I knew it off by heart and I reviewed the skills I needed to be a psychologist. During the interview, Ann Marie asked me what skills I felt I could bring to the job and what are my best qualities. I told her I was patient and non-judgemental, which I feel are two very important qualities for the job. Also I am not afraid to work hard to reach my goals, which I think is a good quality to have.

On the last day with Anne Marie she gave us certificates and our picture was taken and appeared in the Local Newspaper. The Programme was very worthwhile and I feel we all gained an insight into the world of work. It has prepared us for interviews and how to interpret job advertisements and applications. This information is invaluable if we are to succeed in the highly competitive world of work.

### **Enterprise Activity - LCVP Students in Gurteen Vocational School, Sligo produce a booklet on the history of the local Gaelic Football Club**

The 2001-2003 LCVP class in Gurteen Vocational School, Co. Sligo embarked on a very successful enterprise as part of their Link Modules. Their first task was to elect a management committee that would be responsible for the efficient running of the enterprise. The committee comprised of chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, assistant secretary and joint treasurers. Their class teacher was one of the joint treasurers.

It was decided at a class meeting that each student would submit two ideas to the committee for discussion and thereafter selection of the most feasible, reasonable and sensible suggestion. After much debate and a few outbursts of "what's wrong with my ideas" it was finally decided to produce a booklet on the history of the local Gaelic Football Club, namely "Eastern Harps". It was brought to their attention that they were undertaking an enormous project and that it would have to be a first class

production because it was going to exist in the public domain for eternity.

The first major problem was to decide on a title for the booklet. After much debate the group agreed that "Eastern Harps and the GAA" would be an apt title. They also agreed that any profit that might be realized from the sale of the booklet would be donated to the North West Hospice in Sligo. The class wrote letters to the local papers, to the local club secretary, to Croke Park and to O'Neill's Sportswear requesting information.

The group also carried out market research on the feasibility of the enterprise. A questionnaire was designed on computer and LCVP students explained the purpose of the survey to forty members of the public and asked them for their views on the questions. Some of the questions that were asked were as follows:-

## NEWS FROM SCHOOLS

1. Would you buy the booklet?
2. How much would you pay?
3. Do you have any material that could be included in the booklet?  
If yes, would you be prepared to give us this material?

The results of the research showed that the enterprise should be a huge success. LCVP students also wrote letters to businesses requesting sponsorship and advertisements for inclusion in the booklet. They visited the local business people for the same purpose. It was ironic that the only two organisations that did not give a positive response were Croke Park and O'Neill's. The students were disappointed and a little deflated by this.

The final booklet comprised of eighty pages and included among other items interviews, photographs, a history of the two clubs that merged to form Eastern Harps, the history of Eastern Harps, the club's roll of honour, list of sponsors, advertisements, pen pictures of players, list of officers past and present, 2001 balance sheet, an item on Mr. Michael Cusack and pen pictures of the production team.

The students bought the paper, ink, covers and binding combs. They designed the cover, did the printing and editing, scanned photos, decided on layout and bound the booklets themselves. They kept very detailed accounts of income and expenditure. Their teacher acted as facilitator and guide and gave encouragement whenever necessary. They published eighty copies and sold the complete production in two days.

When all expenses were paid they were in the very proud position of being able to present North West Hospice, Sligo with a cheque for seven hundred euro.

The exercise also generated several items for inclusion in their LCVP portfolios.



Front Row shows the management committee with cheque for €700.00.  
L to R: Brendan Towy, Jimmy Ray, Lorraine Tynan, Carl McKeon and Shane Hara.  
Back Row L to R: Christy Gallagher - Principal, John Kelly - North West Hospice and Paddy Conheady - LCVP Co-ordinator and teacher.



Presentation of Cheque L to R: Carl McKeon, Brendan Towey, Jimmy Ray -Treasurer, presenting cheque to John Kelly - North West Hospice, Lorraine Tynan with copy of booklet, Shane O'Hara and Paddy Conheady - teacher.



The Management Committee with cheque L to R:  
Jimmy Ray, Brendan Towey, Lorraine Tynan, Shane O'Hara and Carl McKeon.

# Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

## NEWS FROM SCHOOLS

### ENTERPRISE ACTIVITIES – WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SCHOOLS

Ardee Community School, Ardee, Co. Louth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mini companies producing clocks, jigsaws, keyrings, table displays for Christmas candles, Christmas mugs filled with sweets &amp; chocolate truffles</li> </ul>
Ashbourne Community School, Co. Meath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Show to celebrate 10 Year Anniversary</li> <li>• Mini companies - Candle making, coastline creations making products from shells, stones e.g. candle stands, chains, pendants etc</li> </ul>
Portmarnock Community School, Co. Dublin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fundraising for Concern – concern fast</li> </ul>
Our Lady's Secondary School, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan Monaghan Collegiate School, Co. Monaghan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fashion show for charity, table quizzes</li> <li>• Sweet Shop, Hand design cards for numerous occasions</li> </ul>
Maynooth Post Primary School, Co. Kildare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Tracksuit, School Jacket, Local Christmas cards, Sports Day, School Shop</li> </ul>
C.B.S., James's Street, Dublin 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making &amp; selling of wooden plaques with T.V./Film/Sports stars on covers</li> </ul>
Deansrath Community College, Dublin 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St. Patrick's Day Cards</li> </ul>
St. Joseph's School for Deaf Boys, Cabra, Dublin 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Coffee Shop, Wooden objects for sale</li> </ul>
Scoil Ruain, Killenuale, Co. Tipperary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table Quiz for 1st &amp; 2nd Year Students</li> </ul>
St. Mary's C.B.S., Youghal, Co. Cork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sandwich Bar, Recipe Book, Booklet on history of local GAA clubs, Ceilí –Seactain na Gaeilge</li> </ul>
Loreto Secondary School, Wexford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoe box appeal for Chernobyl Children's Project</li> <li>• Samaritan's purse shoebox appeal, Joint trade fair in school where TY &amp; LCVP sell their products</li> </ul>
Brigidine Secondary School, Mountrath, Co. Laois	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fundraising for local charities - Charity Walk, first aid and life saving courses, Fashion show, Dinner served to parents</li> </ul>
Presentation Secondary School, Wexford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talent Show for 1st Years, Organising class hampers for St. Vincent de Paul at Christmas, Sponsored Walk for charity</li> </ul>
Scoil Mhuire Gán Smál, Blarney, Co. Cork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fashion Show</li> </ul>
St. Finian's C.B.S., Doon, Co. Limerick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christmas Concert, Fashion Show, Table Quiz, Cake Sale</li> </ul>
Coláiste an Chroí Naofa, Carraig na bhFear, Co. Cork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christmas Calendar and Cards, Fundraising for local hospice, Table Quiz, Ceilí</li> </ul>
Listowel Community School, Co. Kerry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sponsored School Walk, Soccer Blitz</li> </ul>
St. Aloysius College, Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Conference, French Table Quiz, Cake Sale</li> </ul>
Castletroy College, Co. Limerick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table Quiz, Fundraising for Exchange Students</li> <li>• Fundraising – Teachers Uniform Day</li> </ul>
Mercy Mounthawk, Tralee, Co. Kerry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table Quiz for 1st Years</li> </ul>
Coláiste Treasa, Kanturk, Co. Cork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fashion Show, Sponsored Walk</li> </ul>
St. Columba's, Glenties, Co. Donegal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fundraising for Concern Fast</li> </ul>
Carrick-on-Shannon Community School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Junior Achievement Success Skills Programme</li> </ul>
Grange Vocational School, Co. Sligo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christmas Logs</li> </ul>
Mean Scoil Mhuire, Newtownsmyth, Galway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Trade Fair, Table Quiz, Raffle</li> <li>• AIB Bank Challenge</li> </ul>
Calasactius College, Oranmore, Co. Galway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmentally Friendly Fashion Show, Christmas Talent Show, Creation of School Year Planner</li> </ul>
Presentation College, Athenry, Co. Galway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Musical "Guys &amp; Dolls", T-shirt and sweat shirts for "Guys &amp; Dolls", Fundraising for Concern Fast</li> </ul>
Kilcormac Vocational School, Co. Offaly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christmas Fare</li> </ul>
Mercy College, Woodford, Co. Galway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pizza Day</li> </ul>

## DEVELOPING LOCAL BUSINESS

Meath County Enterprise Board Limited was established in November 1993 with the goal of assisting enterprise development in the County through the creation of an enterprise culture, the provision of advice and support and the granting of financial aid. The assistance that is on offer to existing and potential entrepreneurs can be categorised into the following areas:

- Promoting an enterprise culture and creating business awareness.
- Providing business information, advice, training programmes, counselling and mentoring.
- Providing financial aid for job creation in the form of capital, employment, feasibility and repayable grants.

### **Promoting an Enterprise Culture & Promoting Business Awareness**

The creation and promotion of business awareness amongst potential entrepreneurs at all levels is a key objective of the Enterprise Board. This is achieved through a combination of pre-enterprise supports such as the Start Your Own Business Programme and Idea Generation workshops.

The Enterprise Board have been actively promoting an enterprise culture in schools for almost ten years now through various initiatives such as the Student Enterprise Awards, presentations on the topics of entrepreneurship and the LCVP Enterprise Encounter Programme.

### **Providing Business Information, Advice, Training Programmes, Counselling & Mentoring**

The Board has developed a range of business advice, counselling and information services including a comprehensive business library and employs a full-time Business Adviser to offer business advice and counselling free of charge to existing, new and potential entrepreneurs.

Each year the Board organises and delivers a wide range of training programmes and seminars on topics such as business planning, book-keeping and taxation for the self-employed, employment law, marketing and information technology, to both existing and potential entrepreneurs. Training programmes for 2004 will range from 1-day information seminars on topics relevant to small business owners, to six-month programmes on various areas of management development. A copy of our training brochure may be obtained by contacting the Meath County Enterprise Board or visiting our website at [www.meath.com](http://www.meath.com).

Also, the Mentoring Programme gives owner/managers of micro-enterprises access to an experienced business person who can help them to develop their business.

### **Provision of Financial Assistance**

The Enterprise Board can provide financial assistance to new and existing enterprises that wish to increase their workforce. To avail of this assistance, projects should not directly interfere with or compete with any similar business in the area, should be in manufacturing or internationally traded services and must be relatively small in scale (i.e. total investment cost should be less than €127,000)

The following three types of grants are available;

- **Feasibility Study Grants** - Up to 50% of the cost of the study can be grant-aided to a maximum of €5,100.
- **Capital Grants** - Up to 50% of capital outlay is available subject to a maximum of €63,500.
- **Employment Grants** - Up to €6,350 is available for each newly created full-time job.

The Board also acts as a single point of contact, in that staff can also give advice and guidance on services and assistance that may be available from other State Agencies, Commercial Bodies and Financial Institutions. The Board and its staff are committed to entrepreneurial and micro-enterprise success through the provision of on-going assistance and support. In order to find out more about our services and how to avail of them, you can contact us at;

The Meath County Enterprise Board Limited, Navan Enterprise Centre, Trim Road, Navan, Co. Meath  
Tel: 046-9078400, Fax: 046-9027356, Email: [mhceb@meath.com](mailto:mhceb@meath.com), Website: [www.meath.com](http://www.meath.com)

# Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

## ENTERPRISE BOARD WEBSITES

Carlow County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.carlow-ceb.com">http://www.carlow-ceb.com</a>	Mayo County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.mayoceb.com">http://www.mayoceb.com</a>
Cavan County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.cceb.ie">http://www.cceb.ie</a>	Meath County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.meath.com">http://www.meath.com</a>
Clare County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.clare-ceb.ie">http://www.clare-ceb.ie</a>	Monaghan County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.mceb.ie">http://www.mceb.ie</a>
Cork City Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.corkceb.ie">http://www.corkceb.ie</a>	North Cork County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.theenterpriseoffice.com">http://www.theenterpriseoffice.com</a>
Donegal County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.donegalenterprise.com">http://www.donegalenterprise.com</a>	Offaly County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.offaly.ie">http://www.offaly.ie</a>
Dublin City Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.dceb.ie">http://www.dceb.ie</a>	Roscommon County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.roscommon.ie">http://www.roscommon.ie</a>
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.venturepoint.ie">http://www.venturepoint.ie</a>	Sligo County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.sligoenterprise.ie">http://www.sligoenterprise.ie</a>
Fingal County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.fingalceb.ie">http://www.fingalceb.ie</a>	South Cork County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.sceb.ie">http://www.sceb.ie</a>
Galway County & City Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.galwayenterprise.ie">http://www.galwayenterprise.ie</a>	South Dublin County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.sdenterprise.com">http://www.sdenterprise.com</a>
Kerry Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.kerryceb.ie">http://www.kerryceb.ie</a>	Tipperary North County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.tnceb.ie">http://www.tnceb.ie</a>
Kildare County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.kildareceb.ie">http://www.kildareceb.ie</a>	Tipperary South County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.southtippceb.ie">http://www.southtippceb.ie</a>
Kilkenny County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.kceb.ie">http://www.kceb.ie</a>	Waterford City Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.waterfordceb.com">http://www.waterfordceb.com</a>
Laois County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.laoisenterprise.com">http://www.laoisenterprise.com</a>	Waterford County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.enterpriseboard.ie">http://www.enterpriseboard.ie</a>
Leitrim County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.leitrimenterprise.ie">http://www.leitrimenterprise.ie</a>	West Cork County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.wceb.ie">http://www.wceb.ie</a>
Limerick City Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.limceb.ie">http://www.limceb.ie</a>	Westmeath County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.westmeath-enterprise.ie">http://www.westmeath-enterprise.ie</a>
Limerick County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.lcoeb.ie">http://www.lcoeb.ie</a>	Wexford County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.wexfordceb.ie">http://www.wexfordceb.ie</a>
Longford County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.longfordceb.ie">http://www.longfordceb.ie</a>	Wicklow County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.wicklowceb.ie">http://www.wicklowceb.ie</a>
Louth County Enterprise Board <a href="http://www.lceb.ie">http://www.lceb.ie</a>	

# Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

## Galway County and City Enterprise Board Limited

### Galway County and City Enterprise Board Limited

The Galway County & City Enterprise Board Ltd when established in 1992 was the first Enterprise Board in the country. The Government in setting up the Enterprise Board acknowledged that there was a need for a structure at local level to reflect and fulfil the particular needs at county level.

The Galway County & City Enterprise Board Ltd has seventeen members and is serviced by a full-time staff. The Board meets on a regular basis and has three main objectives:

- 1 To create an Enterprise culture
- 2 To assist in the development of new jobs
- 3 To influence the allocation of funds and supports to small enterprises from all sources.

The Board is innovative and has a number of developmental tools to enable it to carry out its functions. These tools include

capital grants, feasibility studies, employment grants and a mentoring service.

The Board is fully conscious of the high number of young students throughout the county and city and the high quality of schools and dedicated teachers. Consequently, the Board has been flexible over the years in assisting the promotion of entrepreneurship among school leavers.

The Board has been consistently involved in the Young Entrepreneurs Scheme, Enterprise Encounter and has from time to time assisted individual schools on a one-to-one basis. The Board has always been anxious to facilitate school programmes where possible and has provided speakers and short seminars within the school system. The Board is receptive to any structured proposals emanating from the schools or teachers.

### Health and Safety

An employer is responsible in so far as it is reasonably practicable for the safety, health and welfare of his/her employees. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) reports to the Minister for Enterprise and Employment and has a duty to enforce Safety and health laws generally.

The following is not a complete list of legislation, but a quick overview. The HSA can provide current lists of all legislation in force.

#### **SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK ACT 1989**

In 1989 new legislation came into force that covered all places of work regardless of size or activity. It applies to employers and self-employed persons, manufacturers, suppliers and importers. Even where persons are employed by another employer, obligations arise for the persons who have control of workplaces such as duties to provide for safety and health relating to means of access and egress, and articles or substances used at the workplace or provided for use at work. Under this Act, legal requirements are also placed on employees to carry out their work in a safe manner and obey health and safety rules. All employers and self-employed persons must prepare a Safety Statement outlining the hazards in their place of work and detailing how they are controlling these and safeguarding the health and safety of employees. Employers are required to consult with employees on health and safety issues and employees may select a Safety Representative to represent them on these issues. Any employer who manufactures, designs, imports or supplies plant/equipment or materials is required to test adequately and give adequate information on hazards associated with the product.

#### **LEGISLATION AFTER 1989**

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 1993 came into force in February 1993. These consist, at present, of nine sets of regulations which include much more detailed requirements for risk assessment, design of the workplace, use of work equipment, manual handling methods, use of visual display units, electricity, protective equipment, safety signs and the availability of first aid. They also cover notification requirements of accidents and dangerous occurrences and regulations governing conditions for pregnant employees.

#### **SPECIFIC HAZARDS**

In addition to the above legislation, there are other pieces of legislation covering specific hazards such as noise, chemicals and certain named substances, asbestos, lead, infection and biological risks. Companies involved with construction are also covered by specific legislation.

#### **ENFORCEMENT OF LEGISLATION**

Legislation provides that the HSA inspectors may enter any workplace at any time to inspect documents, books, registers and the physical environment. Various enforcement notices may be used such as improvement directions and plans, improvements notice, and prohibition notices.

#### **PENALTIES**

The penalties under the Act are:

- a maximum fine per offence on summary conviction is €1,000.
- an unlimited fine and/or up to two years' imprisonment in the case of certain offences for which a person is convicted on indictment. These include breach of a prohibition notice.

#### **WHERE TO GO FOR HELP**

The Health and Safety Authority provides information in the form of leaflets, list of legislation and guidance on their interpretation, phone (01) 662 0400.

Copies of legislation and guidelines for the interpretation of the legislation are available from the Government Publications Office, phone (01) 661 3111.

Forbairt Information Services can guide you with documentation on standards for equipment and signs and guidance notes on safe practices, phone (01) 808 2000.

If you are a member of a professional or employer's organisation or union, they may also be able to advise you.

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## IDEAS FOR YOUR NEW BUSINESS

Every successful business in the world started with someone having an idea which they had the drive, enthusiasm and the ability to turn into profit. Some of those ideas were completely new and many more were tried and tested before by someone else. It does not matter which category your idea falls into as long as it's profitable, legal and you can enjoy doing it.

### HOW TO GENERATE IDEAS

There are three simple stages to ideas generation.

The first is to look around you and think. Generate as many ideas as possible, quantity rather than quality is what matters at this point. You should suspend your judgement until later.

Stage two is to examine your ideas in great detail and identify the ones that have the most potential.

The third is to put your ideas into actions.

When you find an idea that looks promising ask yourself the following questions:

1. Is this really what I want to do?
2. Can I make it work?
3. Is it worth the risk?

The preparation of your ideas and plans will be time consuming but it is well worth putting in the effort to do this properly because it will pay dividends later on.

### WHERE WILL IDEAS COME FROM?

All around us there are sources of good ideas. Some of them are not immediately obvious.

- What people eat and drink.
- What people wear.
- What products are stocked in shops and supermarkets.
- People's lifestyles.
- Magazines, newspapers, directories, current events, etc.
- Programmes you would not normally watch.
- Particular population groups, e.g. swimmers, drivers, cinema-goers, young mothers, etc.
- Problems that you can solve. Most problems which people encounter can present an opportunity for you to develop a solution.
- Examine current products and services for ways that you can "do it better".

### WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN YOU HAVE FOUND IT?

An interesting idea does not always lead to success, so how do you assess whether your idea will be successful.

The first step is to assess yourself. It is essential that you have, or can obtain, the necessary knowledge, attitude, skills and work habits to put your future plans into action and make a profit by doing so. It is essential that you can enjoy what you do but remember, you are in a business to make money.

Only when you have assessed yourself can you properly assess your idea. The following bullet points will help you to do just that.

- Who will buy your product/service?
- Why will they buy it?
- How much will they pay?
- How much will they buy?
- Who are your competitors?
- How will your competitors react?
- What is your competitive advantage?
- How will you market your product/service?
- How much will it cost to supply?
- What other costs are involved in your business?
- Will the business earn enough to cover all the running costs?
- How much profit will you make?
- How regular will your cash flow be?
- What equipment, materials, premises, skills will you need?
- How will you fund it initially?
- Are there any special requirements (e.g. licenses, planning permission, health regulations, etc.)?

All of the above will play an important part in setting out your business plan.

### WILL PEOPLE BUY YOUR IDEA?

Your customers will only buy from you for one reason:

"They are not fully satisfied with what they have at present."

If they were fully satisfied they would never buy anything. Your product/service must therefore satisfy a desire or a need in the marketplace.

On the whole, people do not buy what a product is, but rather what the product or service does for them. Decide therefore what your particular idea or product can do for your client and how they will benefit.

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## PROFILING AN ENTREPRENEUR

*The following article is an interview with Mr. Colm Horton, MD, Quantum Manufacturing Ltd, Navan, Co. Meath. Quantum Manufacturing Ltd manufacture and supply liquids and towelettes in sachets.*

*You will notice that many of the questions asked are drawn directly from the Specific Learning Outcomes (SLOs) of the LCVP Syllabus.*

### 1 Company History

#### **When was the enterprise established?**

The business was established in 1997 by means of a partnership between two people. When I founded the business I knew that I would need further investment to ensure its viability. There was a limit to how much funding I could raise and hence a suitable partner who could help with the financing was required. The business started out with a 50 – 50 split between myself and my partner. As with most partnerships it ran its course until the end of 2001, at which juncture, I (Colm Horton) purchased the business outright.

#### **Where was the enterprise set up?**

As a native of Navan and currently living in Navan, the business was set up locally. This was done for a few reasons, one being quality of life (prior to this I had been travelling to Dublin on a daily basis) and the other main reason was because of the availability of industrial space at an affordable cost. The business is located approximately 1/2 mile outside of Navan in a new Industrial unit which is in a new and thriving industrial estate. We currently occupy 6,000 sq. ft. This space is broken down into offices, canteen area, toilets, production, warehousing and quality control.

#### **Could you outline how you came up with the business idea?**

While in my previous job we had a requirement for some ink removing wipes. I did a lot of research and could not find anyone in Ireland who manufactured any types of wipes. My research then took me to the UK where I discovered that there was a shortage of reliable manufacturers of sachet products. The research I carried out also opened my eyes to the variety of different products that were available and which we could potentially manufacture. As I was unhappy in my own job and always had a desire to work for myself I decided that this was as good a reason as any to start out on my own.

### 2 Details of Business

#### **Who is the Managing Director/Owner/CEO?**

The Business is owned by myself and my wife (Colm Horton and Nuala Flanagan). I am the Managing Director and Nuala is the Company Secretary.

#### **Type of Business:**

The manufacture and supply of liquids and towelettes in sachets.

#### **Description of Product/Service:**

A wet wipe is a single use wipe that is sealed into a sachet. Most people associate wet wipes with the refresher wipes that are handed out with a meal on an aircraft. Other typical examples are antiseptic wipes, self tanning wipes, insect repellent wipes, nail polish removing wipes, etc. The most common examples of the liquid sachets we produce are shampoo sachets, mud masks, moisturising creams, conditioners etc.

### 3 Personnel

#### **How many employees are in the business?**

There are currently 14 full time people employed in the business, one person on consultancy and three people on part time.

#### **What different career/jobs are available within the enterprise?**

We currently employ people in administration, engineering, quality control, and purchasing as well as general machine operators.

#### **Who recruits staff?**

Staff are recruited by both myself and our Quality Manager.

#### **How are staff recruited?**

They are recruited in a variety of ways; by word of mouth, through FAS, through advertisements in local papers and through other connections (i.e. Enterprise Boards, colleges etc.). Curriculum Vitaes are the standard application that we look for when assessing potential candidates.

#### **What types of training are important for your employees?**

As we manufacture cosmetic and pharmaceutical products we have an emphasis on hygiene, quality and safety. All machine operators are given up to six months internal training. We run internal and external training courses and provide refresher training in key areas. All new employees are given initial training and we maintain a matrix for each employee that identifies what training they have received and what training they may need.

## PROFILING AN ENTREPRENEUR

### 4 Health & Safety

**What Health & Safety signs are on display in the workplace?**

We use signage to a large extent and have signs that cover the following;

- Forklift in use
- High Temperatures on machine parts
- Identification of all fire extinguisher points
- Fire assembly points
- General safety and hazard points

**How are employees made aware of Health & Safety issues?**

All new employees are given an induction course on our basic systems. Regular training and meetings are held on site (and if necessary off site).

**What PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is worn?**

- All employees are issued with laboratory or workshop coats.
- Overshoes, mop caps (hair caps), and beard covers must be worn at all times in the production, warehouse and packing areas.
- Safety goggles and face masks are available for use when required.

### 5 Industrial Relations

**What trade unions represent the workers in the enterprise?**

None.

**What is the procedure when worker grievances arise?**

There is a written procedure for grievances and our Quality Manager who is an outside consultant with us acts as a facilitator/mediator.

### 6 Business Support

**What organisations or government agencies have assisted the enterprise?**

From the very start we have received unbelievable support from the Meath County Enterprise Board. Now that we have increased our employees above 10 we have just been listed as an Enterprise Ireland client.

**What type of assistance has been provided?**

- We have received Capital grant aid from the Enterprise Board to the tune of approximately €53,500, which was used in the purchase of two automated sachet machines.

- We received a feasibility grant for €3,250.

- Availed of a website development/creation course.

- Availed of a Management Development course.

- Availed of an Exporting course.

- Took part in a sponsored trade mission to New Hampshire in the USA.

**Did you have to prepare a Business Plan for any of these organisations or agencies?**

Yes, a business plan was an essential requirement for The County Enterprise Board, Enterprise Ireland and our Bank.

**What information must be included in a Business Plan?**

Introduction, Product Description, Knowledge of product and its market, Process description, description of raw materials, potential customers, marketing, capital equipment, management and employment, investment requirements, long term strategies and finally financial forecasts (profit and loss × 3 years and cash flow projections × 3 years).

### 7 Marketing and Promotion

**Who are the target market?**

For us it was all business-to-business. We were not developing our own products but instead were targeting other companies that were purchasing sachet products. We targeted the healthcare, veterinary, cosmetic and beauty markets.

**Who are the main competitors?**

In Ireland we have no competitors, in England we compete with about 12 companies, none of whom are household names.

**How important is Market Research?**

Very important! We need to be aware of new product categories, new packaging methods and consumer trends. Before we can sell to a company we must first find out what the company wants and perhaps more importantly what its customers/consumers want.

**How does the enterprise promote/advertise its products/services?**

We employ one full time sales person in the UK (which is our biggest market). Our sales manager calls to most of our customers and chases down leads with potential new customers. We do not advertise – most of our business comes to us by referral, which is a very satisfying way of obtaining new clients.

**Where does the enterprise sell its products?**

We do not as such have our own products, but manufacture other people's products. We manufacture products for the following customers; Boots, Sainsbury's, Shell Car Care, Ann Summers, Etam,

## PROFILING AN ENTREPRENEUR

Norbrook Laboratories, Marks & Spencer's, Novartis, Glaxo Smithkline, Schering Plough, Umberto Giannini Hair Cosmetics as well as many others.

### 8 Information & Communications Technology

**What role has ICT had in the development of the enterprise?**

Its role has evolved from being non-existent to now being a daily part of our working lives.

**Where and how is it used in the enterprise?**

The facility is fully networked and we use email and the Internet on a daily basis, in fact it is fair to say that it is an essential part of the business and we could not function properly without it.

Mobile phones are in use with key personnel to ensure that key decisions can be taken by seeking advice from personnel not on site.

### 9 Single European Market

**Can you describe the impact of the Single European Market on your business?**

I think that we do not visibly see the impact of the single European market as it has pretty much been present since we started and we have no experience of working without it. The single biggest difference is the freedom of movement of goods and people within the member states. The enlargement of the EU will bring changes, particularly in the availability of a fresh workforce.

### 10 Self Employment

**What skills and qualities do you think, are needed to set up and run an enterprise?**

Common sense, hard working, dedication, level headed, a good communicator, the ability to think on your feet and the gift of not panicking when it seems like there is no other course of action.

**What do you see as the benefits and drawbacks of self-employment?**

*Benefits:* Job satisfaction, being your own boss, financial gains, flexibility.

*Drawbacks:* Long hours, being responsible for your employees (their livelihoods, their families livelihood, mortgages etc), financial ruin and pressure.

**Would you have any advice for someone thinking of setting up their own business?**

- Use your head to evaluate your business plan and decide on whether or not you have a viable opportunity.
- Use your heart to decide on what you truly want to do.
- Use every help and advice that is offered.

## National Training and Development Institute – A Training Scheme in your locality

The National Training and Development Institute (NTDI) is Ireland's largest non-governmental training organisation with more than 50 purpose built training and employment units nationwide catering for over 4500 students annually.

The objective of the NTDI is to assist people at a disadvantage in the labour market to learn the skills they need to build lasting careers in jobs that reflect their interests and abilities. This is achieved through a brand of training, education, employment access and enterprise development that is respected and replicated across Europe.

Within Ireland, these services have already enabled more than 20,000 people, many of whom had never previously been employed to join the workforce in careers as diverse as agriculture and architecture.

The majority of NTDI's student body is made up of people with disabilities, although other groups and individuals facing obstacles in the search for work are increasingly using its services. Based on a holistic approach, students are facilitated to develop a clear understanding of their strengths and encouraged to demonstrate a range of personal skills to make realistic choices/decisions about future life goals.

The organisation offers over 40 different vocational programmes which carry nationally and internationally

recognised certification and are designed to lead either directly or indirectly to jobs or progression to further education. All programmes are designed to meet individual needs so that students can achieve their vocational goals at their own pace and within a lifelong learning framework.

NTDI's 575 strong multi-disciplinary team of trainers, teachers and curriculum development officers, psychologists, counsellors and employment support staff ensure training which facilitates different learning styles and allows sufficient time for each student's development, both personally and vocationally.

All NTDI students may avail of additional educational supports based on their individual needs, including literacy, numeracy, problem-solving, self-management, social skills development, goal clarification and confidence building. In addition, all students are provided with training in the following areas: health and safety, computers and work experience.

No fees apply to NTDI courses. There are no formal entry requirements, although students must be over 16 years.

**For more information on your local NTDI training centre log on to [www.rehab.ie/ntdi](http://www.rehab.ie/ntdi)**

## PROFILING AN ENTREPRENEUR



**Margaret Fitzsimons**

**All Hampers Ltd**



All Hampers Ltd works with companies who reward their employees for long term service by providing customised hampers and gifts. Other customers include companies who want to provide an appropriate present to thank clients for contributing to their success. All Hampers includes gifts such as Mother and Baby Hampers, Food and Drink Hampers, Aromatherapy Hampers, Newbridge Silverware and Tipperary Crystal.

All Hampers Ltd was founded by Ms. Margaret Fitzsimons. Margaret decided to set up All Hampers Ltd for a number of reasons. She always wanted to work for herself and geared her studies with this in mind. Margaret spent four years in UCD studying for a Bachelor of Commerce Degree and a Masters in Accounting. She then trained for three years in PricewaterhouseCoopers as a Chartered Accountant and also completed the Taxation Exams. She had a solid financial background, which helped greatly when she decided to set up and run her own business. Her studies helped in that she could write and understand her own Business Plan and her experience as an Auditor meant she had seen how industry and businesses operate.

Most importantly she had an idea she thought would work. All Hampers Ltd was set up to be a one-stop shop for all gift requirements. Corporate Christmas Gifts, Birthdays, Weddings, New Baby, whatever the occasion Margaret wanted to have the ideal gift to mark it.

Margaret highlights the fact that the idea is the first step. Next is the Market Research. You can start this by looking at competitors. Examine what products and services they provide. Decide if your company can provide something

better or fill a gap in the market. You can analyse your competitors by examining their accounts, which can be obtained from the Companies Office in Parnell Street.

There are several sources of Financial Supports and Soft Supports, such as grants and mentoring available from organisations such as County Enterprise Boards, and you should always contact your local office for advice and assistance.

Once you decide your business idea is viable and you form your company, the next step is the creation of the business plan. This is important because it forces you to focus on realities of the business, such as the figures. How much will it cost to set up? How much will I need to sell per month to break even? Who is going to buy from me? Why will they buy from me?

From there, you decide how best to promote your business. In June 2002, Margaret started researching what products she would use in the hampers and sourcing these products. In September 2002 she carried out a brochure mail shot to 8,000 companies. Another method of generating business is networking, such as joining the Chamber of Commerce and meeting like-minded business owners at business events. Advertising on a website and obtaining interviews in magazines can also increase your profile. Overall, Margaret feels that the best possible training and experience is gained by actually starting the business.

*If you would like to know more about All Hampers please log on to [www.allhampers.com](http://www.allhampers.com) where you may subscribe to All Hampers monthly e-mailable newsletter and gift reminder service.*

## The Entrepreneur

The Entrepreneur is the key person in a successful business. He or she sees a market opportunity and then has the motivation, the energy and the ability to mobilise all the resources necessary to achieve success.

Entrepreneurs have many qualities in common – they are:

- Energetic and willing to work hard – definitely not thinking in terms of a 9 to 5 job!
- Extremely focused on the idea they have developed or the ambition they want to realise.

- Persevering and prepared to stick at something they believe in – often they make little or no money in the early stages of developing a new business idea.
- Very motivated and not deterred by the obstacles or mistakes that will present themselves .

‘Anyone who wants to achieve a dream must stay strong, focused and steady’. Estee Lauder.

‘I do not believe a man can ever leave his business. He ought to think of it by day and dream of it by night’. Henry Ford.

‘One sound idea is all you need to achieve success’. Napoleon Hill.

## PROFILING AN ENTREPRENEUR

### Wood B Designs – Brendan Dunne

#### For the Perfect and Unique Gift to give or to receive

##### INTRODUCTION

Wood B Designs was formed during 2002 by Brendan Dunne and his partner Paula Hanafin. Craftwork, primarily woodturning, has been part of Brendan's family for generations, so setting up his own business in this area seemed a natural step to take after many years working for a major multinational company. However the experience gained during these years was invaluable when it came to starting and running his own company.

Brendan's vision was to produce high quality unique designs from Irish hardwood. The success of the business so far is an indication that they have "hit the spot" and are realising their vision. This is due to many aspects some of which are:

- Listening to customers and taking their views on board.
- Producing the finest quality to the very best of your ability.
- Being professional in all aspects of business.
- Being innovative and creative.

Wood B Designs work with Irish hardwoods primarily Ash, Elm, Sycamore, Spalted Beech, Yew and Bog Oak. Wherever possible they choose timber with character in the grain whether in the form of knots, burrs, twists or colour, basically whatever art nature has produced. It is this beauty that Brendan tries to preserve when forming the piece, whether it is a clock, mirror, table-top piece, candlestick etc

**PRODUCTS** – The range of products Wood B Designs produce are:-

- *Reflections* - *Rustic Mirrors*
- *Reflection in Time* - *Mirror/Timepiece Combination*
- *Moments in Time* - *Various wood combinations with timepiece*
- *Classic Time Pieces* - *Pendulum wall clocks, Slate/Wood Timepieces*
- *Desktop Range* - *Business Card/Pen Holder, Letter holder, Calculator and pen*

- *Distinctive Tableware* - *Candle Sticks, Table centrepieces, Vases*
- *Leisure-Time Range* - *Leisure-Time sporting awards*

They also cater for individually commissioned pieces and will incorporate the customer's own design and requirements. This has led to many new innovative pieces being produced and new styles added to the ranges. They combine slate and wood in many of the designs and it was this use of slate that enabled them to engrave and personalize some of the pieces. It may be a business card holder with a company logo or a plate attached to a piece simply saying "happy anniversary" as long as there is a flat surface to either engrave or attach an engraved plate to then the item may be personalized.

##### CRAFT SHOP

Wood B Designs opened a craft shop in Sean Costello St, Athlone, Co. Westmeath on 7 February 2003. The shop features mainly Wood B Designs products plus some pieces from local craftspeople. Since opening the craft shop, Wood B Designs products have evolved greatly. This is due primarily to listening to customers and getting feedback. They now carry a range of coffee tables, hall and telephone tables plus much more.

In the shop Brendan and Paula will help you choose that really unique gift. You may like them to make up a gift hamper or even design the piece yourself. Most of the pieces may have a personalized information card attached. This is where they print a message (TO: ... FROM: ... Best wishes etc) on the card that hangs with the piece. This has proved extremely popular during the year particularly with wedding gifts.

Wood B Designs is certainly carving a niche for itself in the wedding gift area. All pieces produced are completely unique, never to be repeated which means a gift given from Wood B Designs is a very special one.

##### CONCLUSION

Wood B Designs is proud to be an Irish company, producing handcrafted products using Irish Wood from its design base or in collaboration with their valued customers.

*"Craftwork has been in my family for generations and I am privileged to have inherited the skill to see the beauty of timber and then to shape and polish it to produce an item that is both beautiful and practical"*

**Brendan Dunne**

*If you would like to find out more information on Wood B Designs contact Brendan Dunne @ Wood B Designs Sean Costello St, Athlone, Co Westmeath, Ph 090 6477468 or email Brendan\_dunne@woodbdesigns.com Alternatively, you could view some of the pieces and do some research on the web: [www.woodbdesigns.com](http://www.woodbdesigns.com)*

# Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

## SUPPORTS FOR BUSINESS

**STATE AND SEMI-STATE AGENCIES** A wide range of State bodies exist to assist entrepreneurs to develop their businesses. This assistance may be in the form of cash grants but can also include advice, subsidies, training and the provision of workspace.

**THE DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT** has the overall responsibility for enterprise and its task is to create a favourable climate for the creation and maintenance of self-sustaining employment. It monitors the various legal regulations and Government policies and works to improve the environment for businesses. It has established many agencies nationally, regionally and locally to help and stimulate the creation and development of enterprise.

**FORFÁS** is the national Policy and Advisory Board for Enterprise, Trade, Science, Technology and Innovation. It reports to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

**IDA IRELAND AND ENTERPRISE IRELAND** both report to Forfás and implement policy set by it. IDA Ireland focuses on inwards investment ie bringing foreign multinationals into Ireland while Enterprise Ireland has the task of supporting indigenous (local) businesses where it is expected to employ more than 10 people within three years of start up. Its clients are mainly manufacturing and inter-nationally-traded services companies. Assistance provided by Enterprise Ireland nationally is provided in certain regions by Shannon Development or Údarás na Gaeltachta.

**SHANNON DEVELOPMENT** is the Regional Development Agency responsible for development in the Shannon Region i.e. counties Limerick, Clare, North Tipperary, South-west Offaly and North Kerry. It offers grants and other assistance to businesses in the Shannon region, broadly in line with the assistance available nationally from Enterprise Ireland.

**ÚDARÁS NA GAELTACHTA** is responsible for creating sustainable jobs and attracting investment to the Gaeltacht regions particularly in manufacturing, internationally-traded services i.e. software development and telemarketing and natural resources such as mariculture. It is also involved in community, cultural and language-development activities, working in partnership with local communities and organisations. It offers grant schemes and incentives to help small and medium-sized enterprises in the Gaeltacht areas, which are broadly in line with those available nationally from Enterprise Ireland.

**CITY AND COUNTY ENTERPRISE BOARDS** are the most important source of assistance for the start-up business likely to employ less than 10 people within three years of start up. The 35 CEBs aim to encourage local initiative. Each is a company limited by guarantee and has an executive staff headed by a Chief Executive Officer. Each Board has access to an Enterprise Fund, which has been established to assist small projects. The Boards do not duplicate support for projects eligible for assistance from any existing sectoral or grant structure or which involve primary agricultural production. In the period 2000-2006, under the National Development Plan, the focus of the CEBs is to move away from direct financial support toward a broader range of 'soft' supports i.e. training, in particular management development, mentoring and other forms of

assistance designed to increase the survival rates of start-ups and small businesses.

**AREA PARTNERSHIPS** were set up in 38 centres in 1993 under the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP). They are now supported under the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme and work at local level to generate more jobs through sustainable enterprises and through the promotion of local economic projects and initiatives. Each partnership is autonomous and works on an Area Action Plan for its own region. Practical measures are taken to discriminate in favour of the long-term unemployed and those who are socially excluded. Partnerships provide support for unemployed people setting up their own business through support for development of business plans and business ideas, financial support, mentoring, provision of workspace, marketing and training. Because of the variety in what each Partnership offers, entrepreneurs should contact the Partnership in their area for further details.

**LEADER** is an EU initiative for rural development – part-funded by the Irish Government – that enables groups in rural areas to implement their own multi-sectoral integrated plans for the development of their areas.

(See the article on Leader in the LCVP 2003 Journal)

**FÁS** – The Training and Employment Authority – provides a range of training and employment programmes, an employment service, an advisory service for industry, and support for co-operative and community-based enterprise. Individuals who want to start a business can attend the Business Appraisal Training Programme, which allows them to develop business plans, enhance their technical skills and conduct market research into the viability of their business idea. The Community Enterprise Programme provides advice, training and financial assistance to community groups involved in the creation of economically viable jobs. The Social Economy Programme supports the development of social economy enterprises that will benefit the economic and social regeneration of a community. It provides up to three years' grant support to social economy enterprises providing employment opportunities for the long-term unemployed or other disadvantaged persons. Jobstart is a recruitment subsidy that offers employers financial support to meet their recruitment needs and help jobseekers secure employment. FÁS also assists SMEs through the FÁS Co-operative Development Unit.

**FÁS CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT UNIT** assists people who wish to take advantage of the Worker Co-operative structure. The CDU requires a minimum team of three persons and a commercially viable business idea before financial support can be granted. It also assists family businesses in dealing with succession planning and transfer through employee buy-outs.

**Information on all State and Semi-State Agencies supporting business in Ireland are set out in the booklet 'Starting Your Own Business' researched and written by Ron Immink and Brian O'Kane and published for the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment by Oak Tree Press.**

**Useful website:** [www.startingabusinessinireland.com](http://www.startingabusinessinireland.com)