



COLLEGE FOUNDER LEARNS TO COMMUNICATE BETTER

THE LONDON COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN WEST LONDON WAS FOUNDED IN 2000 BY MARGARET AROKIASAMY. AFTER A SUCCESSFUL PERIOD PROVIDING A RANGE OF TRAINING COURSES, MARGARET DECIDED TO FOCUS ON DELIVERING HIGH QUALITY TEACHER, CHILDCARE, ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND HEALTH AND SCIENCE TRAINING TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS.

Margaret had initially approached the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), who run the Export Communications Review (ECR), on behalf of UK Trade & Investment, to apply for an initial review when she first embarked on selling the college's broader range of courses overseas. After a short period, Margaret realised she needed to focus on a smaller number of courses and applied for a Continuation Review with Sarah Carroll, BCC-Registered ECR Consultant, to help them prepare for a new marketing push internationally.

"When we decided to reduce the range of courses we offered it was natural to turn again to the Export Communications Review for help. We knew this change meant reassessing our communications and refreshing everything in line with our new focus."

Margaret Arokiasamy –
The London College of Professional Training

Margaret had been so impressed by her first review that she had no qualms about engaging on her second, "When you run a business like ours you can get too close to see what needs to change. This was particularly true when we decided on our second review as we had faced some considerable challenges initially when we expanded internationally. Bringing in an expert consultant meant I could supplement my skills.

Hit the world running ^{UK}

I am an educator not a business or marketing expert, so having this kind of specialist help was vital. The review showed us clearly the gaps we needed to plug in our communications to ensure our new approach was effective. The review gave us a solid plan to follow."

While the review identified a number of areas to focus on, it was the guidance on how to strengthen the website www.lcptlondon.co.uk that Margaret found most valuable, "The review looked at every aspect of our marketing and communication but the improvements we have made to our website design and the information we provide, have helped us reach out to a much wider international base of students. Ensuring we got this right proved very important. The internet is often the first place potential students turn to for information about training companies. Making sure they find our website and understand the content is very important."

Margaret feels the ECR has had a considerable impact on her business, "The improvements we made to our communications as a result of the review have made us more competitive. I feel that if we had not implemented the recommendations of the review, we would have gone out of business. They were that important to our success internationally."

Her experience of the two reviews makes Margaret quick to recommend the ECR, "I would definitely recommend the ECR. Any small business that has no access to specialist marketing experience would benefit. It is a great way to help you take some of the risk out of expanding internationally, not to mention the fact that the quality of the advice strengthens your communications, which can give you a significant competitive advantage."

THE EXPORT COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW

An Export Communications Review costs £500 + VAT, however SMEs may be eligible for a UK Trade & Investment subsidy of £350 towards the cost of the review.

For more information, please visit International Trade at www.chamberonline.co.uk or contact the ECR team at the address below.

You can contact your local ECR Consultant Sarah Carroll who covers London and East Sussex on +44 (0)7711 132179 or sarah.carroll@ecrconsultants.org.

The British Chambers of Commerce manages the Export Communications Review on behalf of UK Trade & Investment.

UK Trade & Investment is the United Kingdom Government's lead organisation for supporting UK companies in overseas business, and attracting inward investment.

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