

**SFEDI Case Study: Olivia Khadka  
(Creative Skills)**



Sector: Business Support for the creative industry

Locations: Penzance, Cornwall

Status: SFEDI accreditation, February 2008

**Overall impact**

“The SFEDI process has increased my confidence and provides me with credibility with partner organisations and clients.”

*Olivia Khadka, Creative Industries Business Adviser, Creative Skills*

**Profile**

Olivia gained a MA HONS degree in Social Anthropology and Art History with a thesis on the subject of creating and marketing art with implications for the future of arts education. This was based on fieldwork amongst Cornish artists. Olivia then moved into teaching, completing a PGCE at the University of Exeter and after 5 years of teaching moved on to developing training and advice and guidance services and business support for adults whilst completing NVQ level 4 in advice and guidance. Through her background in people development Olivia then became a business adviser working with the creative industries. Olivia works in the far west of Cornwall where the creative industries make up 25% of the business stock of the area. She is on the board of Network Training, Penwith Music Centre and Cornwall Music Forum.

**Company background**

Creative Skills is the professional development agency for all creative industry practitioners in Cornwall. Creative Skills is based in Redruth & Penzance and delivers high quality sector specific training and one to one professional development planning and business support for the creative industries. Olivia joined the organisation in January 2007 in a climate where the creative industries are really now realising the need for business skills to help their sector really thrive and flourish.

**The strategy**

Olivia had worked for one year in her current role before applying for SFEDI accreditation. Over three visits, Recognising Excellence Assessor, Sue Bladon, observed Olivia providing business advice to clients and gave her ideas on how she could develop further. Sue then carried out two more observations where she provided feedback.

Olivia commented, "I have been extremely pleased with the whole SFEDI experience. Sue was positive and efficient. Everyone at Recognising Excellence has been extremely helpful and professional as well as prompt and clear with information and the final report and certificate. I was really pleased with how the process works in terms of really encouraging development through a process which is reflective. This offers room for really helping with development rather than a straight pass or fail without any feedback or encouragement in how to develop further. This is what developing people is all about!

I was extremely pleased and impressed with Sue, who really put me at ease with her calm, open, interested, helpful and above all, professional manner and evident expertise. I felt very able to talk to her about my development and she was also extremely helpful and prompt in contacting me with further information to help my improvement. I was also very pleased that there is an emphasis on the importance of developing people as being an important part of the role as well as the business and sector knowledge needed as I feel that this is a really important aspect of advising".

## The results

Olivia achieved SFEDI accreditation at the first attempt. Assessor, Sue Bladon, reported:

"Olivia is a very capable Creative Skills Advisor. She is conscientious, confident and eager to learn and develop in her role, having already made considerable progress with professional development during her first year in post. She brings to the post some useful skills from her teaching background – interpersonal, presentation, ability to manage 'brainstorming'/planning sessions and work with groups.

Her systems are rigorous and she has a structured, but not inflexible, approach to her sessions with clients, using a variety of tool and techniques to assist the planning processes. Her knowledge of the sector, local contacts and developments is a considerable strength, along with her interest in and knowledge of, marketing issues, as she realises how important this aspect is for business success 'no market, no business'. Alongside, she has a good grounding in business counselling and business planning, gained from her own professional development activities during the past year, which serve her well.

Olivia shows a genuine interest in her clients and enjoys her job, wanting to deliver a high quality service to her clients, reviewing and reflecting upon her practice as an integral part of her work

- For further information about SFEDI accreditation and entry on to the National Register for Business support Professionals please email [olive.corner@recognisingexcellence.co.uk](mailto:olive.corner@recognisingexcellence.co.uk) or telephone Olive on 07966 187533