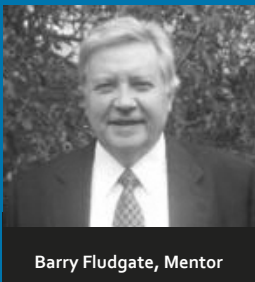




Future Workshops benefits from past experience



Matt Brooke-Smith,
Mentee



Barry Fludgate, Mentor

Future Workshops is entrepreneur Matt Brooke-Smith's third and most successful start-up. Founded in 2008, the company builds iOS, Android and other platform Apps for top brands and blue chip enterprise companies.

"I realised that when Apple launched its App Store in 2008 there was a huge opportunity to do something exciting," says Matt explaining where the idea came from. "Our aim has always been to provide top quality apps for iPhone and iPad, focusing on usability, style and simplicity."

Since its launch Future Workshops' revenue has doubled year on year. Wishing to capitalise upon this success, Matt felt that he needed experienced input to advise on the company direction. To this end Matt sought the counsel of ITC Entrepreneurs' Forum mentor, Barry Fludgate, who has more than 35 years' financial, management and information technology experience.

The ITC Entrepreneurs' Forum is a network of early stage entrepreneurs lead by The ITC (Information Technologists' Company), which is the 100th Livery Company of London, focused on IT and business. The Forum's goal is to help entrepreneurs to accelerate their growth and realise their full business potential. In doing so, it offers a free mentoring service provided by 25 successful business people who have a combined business start-up experience creating a market value of £800 million.

"My background is in software and, having started a company which went public on NASDAQ, I was really intrigued by Matt, his company and approach," explains Barry.

"Matt had six developers and he was doing everything else. This is fine if you are a small organisation, but as you get bigger and bigger, you become more and more stretched. You have to take care to build a good, but lean organisation around you. If you don't do it right from the beginning, you're in trouble. That is one of the reasons that stop small companies from growing."

"The process we went through was to examine the company's current condition and what Matt really had to do and what he could delegate. This resulted in Matt taking on his first admin staff on a part-time basis."

Matt and Barry meet as often as possible to discuss how the business is going and to talk through upcoming decisions and customer pitches. "It is great to be able to talk these issues through with somebody," says Matt. "Our client base has moved towards the finance sector this year, and Barry has the experience to provide constructive criticism and help highlight advantages of working with us. What is important to a bank is different to what is important to consumer brands."

Being an ITC mentor, Barry is able to consult with others if he does not know the answer. However, Barry insists that it is not necessarily his role to find the answers. "A mentor has to ask questions and help the mentee draw his own conclusions and solutions," says Barry.

Future Workshops continues to grow and, will achieve £1 million of revenue this year.