

# CHARITY CASE STUDY

Omega was awarded £125,000 worth of grants following a management consultancy project with the Cranfield Trust.



[www.omega.uk.net](http://www.omega.uk.net)

## OMEGA BACKGROUND

Omega is the National Association for End of Life Care that works across the West Midlands and the surrounding area to raise standards in end of life care, health and social care. Omega's network of talented volunteers engage with people who urgently need extra help and offer them access to supportive opportunities, information and a range of non-clinical support.

## MAKING IT HAPPEN

A desire to further improve productivity and make the Charity more sustainable led Omega's Development Director, Tom Memery, to approach the Cranfield Trust for support.

Omega had successfully applied for a grant from Lloyds Bank Foundation's Enhance programme, giving the Charity access to impartial, tailored business support and mentoring. Tom sought help to challenge the existing business plan and develop a robust framework to help the charity address priorities and improve how Omega measured and reported the value of the services they provide.



Omega's Grant Manager at Lloyds Bank Foundation introduced Tom to Trevor Kitching, Project Manager for the Cranfield Trust, a national charity offering independent management consultancy to voluntary organisations across the UK.

Any reservations Tom may have had about taking on a management consultancy project dissolved instantly when he met Trevor, as Tom reflects, "I had an immediate connection with Trevor and I knew right away that we had made the right decision."

One of the key elements for ensuring project success is matching a charity with the right volunteer consultant. Trevor understood that Tom wanted more than just help writing a new business plan and producing a reporting system, he wanted to be challenged. "Trevor was responsive from the start; he took time to carefully match us with Mark, a volunteer consultant with exactly the skills and experience we needed".



## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Working with Omega was Mark's first volunteer assignment with the Cranfield Trust. Having taken early retirement in 2009, Mark wanted to share his professional skills and experience to benefit the voluntary sector, "When I retired I wanted to do something truly valuable. Initially I found it difficult to engage with charities needing professional business support but when I found the Cranfield Trust, I had a way in with a trusted brand".

Mark had enjoyed a long career as a Project and Programme Manager, working on everything from multi-million pound IT projects to finance systems and manufacturing. He was used to developing and adapting methodologies to fit, so was used to challenging processes, a perfect match for Omega.

## HOW WE HELPED

Having produced a business plan template for Tom to follow, Mark stayed in regular contact and over the course of several months, Tom and Mark met, exchanged emails and phone calls, going back and forwards until they were able to produce the ideal business plan and reporting system for Omega. The project was not all plain sailing. The capacity issue at Omega caused the project to stall, Tom recalls, "At one point I didn't have the time to devote to the project but Trevor was on hand to keep things on track and Mark was very patient and understood the situation we were in, so I didn't feel under pressure."

## THE RESULT

After things settled down, the project resumed and went on to produce a dynamic business plan and reporting system, which is being rolled out to individual projects. Omega emerged from the process, stronger and more confident about the future. The charity is no longer reliant on statutory funding and Tom attributes this success to the support provided by Trevor and Mark, saying, "Without the help of the Cranfield Trust, we wouldn't be where we are today. Since the project finished, we have secured £87,000 from the Henry Smith Foundation, a further £38,000 from LBF and our funding applications have an enviable 52% success rate. We have expanded our flagship services 'Omega Bereavement Support and Chatterbox Action Against Loneliness Programmes and are in the process of recruiting a Director of Operations to support our valuable services. It was a worthwhile experience which has had a big impact on Omega."

Mark's first project experience was also positive, he took a pragmatic approach, saying, "I was completely flexible and the whole project took less than 10 days of my time, it was just spread over several months, to fit in with Tom's schedule".

If you would like to find out more about pro bono services for the voluntary sector, please contact us on 01794 830338 or email [admin@cranfieldtrust.org](mailto:admin@cranfieldtrust.org)

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