

Briefing Note

22 January 2009

Surviving the downturn: ACE guidance

-8.5%

Forecasted decline in total construction output in 2009

Source: CPA

49%

Of ACE member firms expect the economic recovery to begin in 2010

UK economic activity is contracting and unemployment is rising vertically as deflationary pressures shape the business environment. As a broad barometer for the health of the economy, the industry is increasingly being squeezed. Indeed, some analysts expect an extensive decline in construction output as current market difficulties continue. The consultancy and engineering sector is being crunched by cumulative forces of supply, demand and finance availability. 2009 will certainly be a tough year before a slow recovery begins in 2010. ACE recognises this and endeavors to continue to help member firms adjust to the changing economic picture.

Although the situation is difficult, there are some actions which you can take now:

- Maintain open and productive relationships with your local bank
- Enhance internal efficiency through improved budget management and tracking workloads
- Implement an effective strategy for managing human resources to reduce or avoid job losses
- Call ACE's Business Helpline for advice

In this briefing note we include links to ACE guidance that will help you manage your cash flow, human resources and banking facilities during the recession. Furthermore, ACE's Business Helpline continues to provide key advice for member firms.



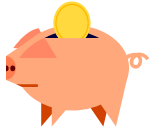
Managing Your Cash: Tips for Small Businesses - an ACE guide

When economic times are tight, managing cash flow is paramount as a key indicator of business health. Thus, the inflow and outflow of cash needs careful monitoring and management to enhance firms' financial security. This note provides a list of key points to help SMEs manage their cash. To access the document click [here](#)



Human capital through the recession: an ACE guide on managing redundancies

The current downturn increases pressure on the labour market. However, with proper planning on current and future staffing needs, it may be possible to avoid implementing short-term solutions to the current situation. In this paper ACE presents a brief overview of redundancy procedures in England, Scotland and Wales to make organisational change easier. To access the document click [here](#)



Making the most of your banking services

The intensification of the banking crisis over the last couple of months has had a serious affect on the availability of credit. Maintaining liquidity is increasingly significant for all firms. In this paper ACE puts forward recommendations on the steps firms can take to make the most of their banking services. To access the document click [here](#)



Providing business assistance: the ACE Business Helpline

In the current business climate, first-rate professional advice is of the utmost importance. ACE provides valuable guidance and information on contractual, insurance and risk management issues via our legal team and through access to other legal experts in the industry. Here, ACE outlines the type of help available to members. To access the document click [here](#)

ACE will continue to assist its member firms in finding effective solutions to current challenges.

As the business association for the consultancy and engineering sector, ACE exists to help member firms in whatever way we are able. If you need business help, advice or guidance please contact us and we will do our best to assist.

To access the ACE business helpline please call 0845 450 1980.

This briefing note is not a substitute for professional advice, which you are advised to seek, before pursuing any course of action.

©ACE, January 2009