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Turning a Passion **INTO A BUSINESS**

MANY NEW BUSINESSES COME ABOUT FROM A BRAND-NEW START

and are set up from scratch by pioneers. There are some businesses, however, which are purchased or inherited second hand. These businesses can be on their last legs and require guts, drive and determination by the new owner to ensure they are rebuilt successfully.

MOST PEOPLE DON'T GET INTO BUSINESS

to do the books, but Craig Hibbert did. As part-owner of a retail sports store for 25 years, Craig was responsible for keeping the books, but, like a lot of small business owners, he had no idea what he was doing. Craig chose to up-skill and qualified as an Accounting Technician with the New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants.

Craig founded 'Bookworks' in 2004, motivated by the continual avalanche of client records which he'd received in shoe boxes. Craig's forte is fixing messes in his clients' software.

"I spend most of my time fixing clients' software messes, as well as training and supporting my clients in a one-on-one situation," he explains. "I am an Approved Trainer for MYOB, QuickBooks and Xero, and because of these accounting qualifications, I bring that extra level of knowledge and experience, filling the gap between client and accountant, because having been in both positions, I know that neither one understands the other very well."

Craig finds value in being involved in The Alternative Board peer group process. "Running your own business by yourself is lonely, having the understanding and support of the other Members has been crucial in my decisions. Sitting around the Boardroom table, with my peers, has shown me that I am not alone."

"I've learned to take more time over my decisions in order to consider all aspects. I now make the decision for myself and not the others, when it's right for me and because it's right for me."

Craig attributes the success of his business to the approach of treating his clients and their businesses as though they are his own, by doing what he says he'll do when he says he's going to do it. The Alternative Board peer group process allows Craig to remain true to his word by enabling him to be consistently and consciously accountable within the business world.



"I urge all small business owners to seek support and advice from others when and where you need it and, importantly, that you act upon that advice," he advises.

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