

# Armadillo

MEMBERS PRACTICE GUIDE







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# INTRODUCTION TO ARMADILLO

We are a network of accountants, for accountants. Our founders have more than 60 years combined experience in the sector; having built, grown & sold practices and worked within large national firms.

## OUR AIM IS TO HELP ARMADILLO MEMBERS FLY.

We do so by focusing on how, not what, on how members can improve their mindset and develop their teams and businesses. We do this by offering support, mentorship, training and a community of other professionals who all face the very same challenges. We focus on four key areas:



**PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT**



**TAX SUPPORT**



**DEVELOPING PEOPLE**



**WELLBEING**

***Intrigued?***

You can find out more about us at [www.armadilloacademy.co.uk](http://www.armadilloacademy.co.uk)



# PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT

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Professional services firms are people businesses. More so in smaller firms. Clients do not engage brands; they engage people. Teams are not primarily motivated by a firm's brand or ethos but by the people in it; by those around them, by the firm's culture. They, you, are at the very heart of the business. Developing your practice begins, and ends, with developing your people.

Having a more engaged and upskilled team will help you to:

- Win more profitable work
- Attract new high value clients
- Delegate and automate rather than have you doing all the work
- Have an easier life

In addition to tools that will make recruitment and managing your teams easier (Powered by citrus HR software is included for all Armadillo members), or recommendations on practice management software we will help you improve leadership and your teams mindset.







## ARMADILLO TOP TIP:



**It is vital that your team can see where they're going. And what part they play in getting there.**

If your teams don't have clarity on the direction you want your practice to head in, and understand and buy into what is needed to drive it there, it can be akin to taking a toddler on a road trip.

They don't know where they are going, what they are going for, or how long it will take. And they may not want to be there when they arrive! They are, quite literally, passengers. If our teams cannot see where we are going; or how we get there, is it surprising that there might be the odd tantrum? That some of your team may just be along for the ride?

If your teams don't understand your vision, your ambitions for the future of your accounting firm AND their careers, you may feel like you are dragging them along with you, like a toddler around a supermarket. Which isn't much fun for anyone.

For professional accounting firms there is no shortcut; no Ocado. You have to take your teams with you. It is vital that they know where they are now, where you want them to get to and yes, what's in it for them. It is also vital that they are given the skills necessary to help them, and you, get there.







## ARMADILLO TOP TIP:



### Success always comes back to the team around you

There are plenty of hacks and tips to free up pockets of time in the day-to-day running of your firm. But most of those hacks come back to having confidence in the team around you. The confidence to delegate.

You can achieve greater efficiency with systems and processes, but you need to have the right people in place to follow them.

You can outsource areas of the business, but make sure you have the right people in the right seats internally first. It's worth making sure the individuals on your team are doing their best and most fulfilling work before looking outwards.

Whatever vision you have for the future of your firm, getting there depends on creating a learning environment and developing the people around you.

So why not get started? Check out the Armadillo Academy to see how you can start building a stronger team from within and free up more time in your accountancy firm.







# ARMADILLO TOP TIP:



## Have a plan

1. Create a plan. It is the exercise of creating a plan that will help give you focus. You are unlikely to hit a target you haven't set. Set targets for turnover, profitability, type of clients (quality), size of practice (team members), your (limited) involvement and your exit plan. Every athlete who ever won a medal had a target to aim for, yet many businesses go through life just hoping to get through the week, without ever knowing what they are aiming at.
2. Involve your team in the goals for the business. It is a common complaint from business owners that the rest of the team aren't as enthused and dedicated as the owner. Well little wonder if they don't know what game they are playing, what the rules are, which direction they are aiming and what the score is. You wouldn't be much enthused and energised playing any game if that was the extent of your involvement. Is it any wonder that some only work for the salary and not the business?
3. Make a plan to look after yourself. If you are not careful then instead of running a business you might just be creating a J.O.B for yourself. Some say J.O.B stands for just over broke. It could be just on the way to broken. Running an accounting business, any business, can be demanding. Ideally you should plan for you staying out of the day to day running and plan for your exit one day. You are a business owner not an employee. If you can't do that or don't want to do that, then at least plan time to look after you. Without your physical and mental health, you won't have a business.

The goal always belongs at the beginning.

You can find out more about us at [www.armadilloacademy.co.uk](http://www.armadilloacademy.co.uk)







# ARMADILLO TOP TIP:



## Marketing

One of the key things that can be overlooked when it comes to driving a business is investing in your marketing. This an essential pillar that can add a huge amount of value to the services/products you are offering. The exciting thing about promoting your brand is that there is a multitude of platforms you can use to get your message across. *Offline Media:* Print Adverts, Newspapers, Magazine, Brochures, Leaflets, Posters, Billboards. *Online Media:* Email, Website, Social Media, Digital Banners, SEO, Blogs, Webinars, SMS

### THE FIRST PRINCIPAL – KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE!

The foundation of any marketing strategy is understanding your target audience and demographic. What's their age, interests, job titles, location, gender etc. Knowing this information will help you target your marketing when offering your business as the solution.

### THE SECOND PRINCIPAL – WHAT IS THE END GOAL?

Planning and identifying what you want to achieve will help you map out the user journey and create a cycle of marketing material to send and follow up with. Always do some market research and competitor analysis to help achieve your goals.

### THE THIRD PRINCIPAL – EFFECTIVE EXECUTION

Quality over quantity. Ensure the content you are producing is authentic to your brand. Communication is key when it comes to building any relationship so it shouldn't be any different when trying to captivate your audience.

### THE FOURTH PRINCIPAL – ANALYSE & REPORTING

It is vital you understand if your marketing is effective and working. Set KPIs against your sources to see if your business is growing leads, data, followers, email open rates, engagement, enquiries.

Lastly, have fun and get creative!

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# TAX SUPPORT

**TAX DOESN'T HAVE TO BE TAXING.  
OR SO WE WERE TOLD.**

And yet the 2022 Finance Act alone consists of 104 sections and 18 schedules. It includes 76,001 words. Over 400,000 characters. The sheer scale of tax legislation means that Tax is incredibly taxing. It is complex, taxing (in both senses of that word), for lay people and professionals alike.

We all need help sometimes.

Armadillo members have tax expertise on hand when you really need it. Our Tax Partner Service provides accountants with an expert second opinion on complex tax matters, saving hours of research time. Armadillo supports our members by offering an additional level of expertise for complex tax matters; be that a formal written answer, or simply a quick call and reassuring second opinion. We can be that friend to call; someone to lean on. Genuine tax support.

You can find out more about us at [www.armadilloacademy.co.uk](http://www.armadilloacademy.co.uk)







Matt Hall is a Chartered Tax Advisor with over 30 years' experience in the field. He began his career with the then Inland Revenue in 1992 before going on to work for three Top 10 firms; latterly sitting on the National Tax Board of RSM Tenon Plc. Before joining Armadillo Matt ran a specialist tax consultancy business for nearly a decade.



Gordon Berry is also a Chartered Tax Advisor & Chartered Certified Accountant. He understands the challenges smaller firms face with an ever more complex tax system.

Our Tax Partner Service includes:

- One hour of Matt's time each month free of charge via a dedicated helpline or email. This includes any necessary research, calls or online meetings
- A discounted fee for complex issues requiring more than one hour of work per month. A suitable fee is agreed with members in advance of carrying out any work. Matt will consult with third parties on matters outside our own expertise. Any third-party costs are also agreed in advance.
- Access to RPC's Tax Take +
- Robust Fee Protection Insurance from Markel Tax.
- CPD webinars
- Monthly tax case summaries & webinars on topical tax issues
- A weekly roundup of industry related news stories, including the latest developments in tax.
- Budget updates.

Let Armadillo be your tax partner. Find out more at [www.armadilloacademy.co.uk/tax-support/](http://www.armadilloacademy.co.uk/tax-support/)





# DEVELOPING PEOPLE

We work in a profession in which recruitment and promotion are traditionally based on technical excellence. Training is often provided for professional exams but little else with the development of teams often falling on the shoulders of leaders who already have a thousand things to do.

## **Firms can get stuck in the same cycle:**

1. They struggle to instill the right mindset within the firm and team
2. They lack the confidence to invest in tools and people
3. Their people then are ill-equipped to win and retain work
4. This impacts morale and confidence. The quality of work drops further and people leave
5. The partner takes on more work, fills the gaps and it starts again

Breaking the cycle requires developing teams with the right training, tools and mindset.

That requires your commitment. And investment. Like any type of investment, putting time, money, and energy into an employee's development can be anxiety inducing: will my investment pay off? Am I making the right decision, for me and for them?

Studies and experience show that putting effort into your employees' development will have demonstrable benefits for you and your business. A WorldatWork Survey of HR professionals found that promotions and career development opportunities was one of the top five methods for talent retention – more effective than above-market pay or bonuses.

You can find out more at [www.armadilloacademy.co.uk/training/](http://www.armadilloacademy.co.uk/training/)







**Don't just get employees in the door. Give them a reason to stay.**

Your employees are the heart and soul of your business. They're worth the investment. You don't just want to build a team – you want to build a dedicated, talented team that finds their work as meaningful as you. Achieving this requires more than hiring promising employees; it requires a culture where your employees understand how much you value them. It takes planned and proven investment in employees' futures so they not only feel motivated to stay but are bringing more and more value to your business.

At Armadillo Academy, we have four key programs designed to take newly qualified employees in the earliest stages of their career and set them on the path towards managerial or partner roles. Addressing the issue of high staff turnover and helping with your investment in employees. From building commercial acumen, to team management, and all the way to business development, our training programs are the perfect tool for when you're building your dream team.

- Fast Futures
- Developing Managers
- Business Development
- Pathway to Partner

Investing in yourself and your people is key to your success.  
Develop your people with Armadillo Academy.



# WELLBEING



WHEN YOU'RE PUTTING EVERYTHING INTO RUNNING YOUR FIRM, IT CAN BE EASY TO NEGLECT ONE OF YOUR MOST VALUABLE ASSETS: **YOUR HEALTH**

Self care isn't just a zeitgeisty buzzword, it's good business. Prioritising your health and promoting a behaviour of wellness in your workplace means:



Better mental and emotional health



Prevention of stress related physical illness



Clearer decision making and better crisis management



A more productive and supportive workplace



A happier, healthier team



Happier, calmer clients



A more desirable environment for potential clients and hires

The Armadillo wellness programme is a mindfulness toolkit designed for accounting firm owners and their teams. It is run by Gordon Berry, our very own DISC Trainer and Master Practitioner in Neuro-Linguistic-Programming who is also trained in Mindfulness, Hypnosis and a number of other esoteric practices.

You can find out more about us at [www.armadilloacademy.co.uk/wellness/](http://www.armadilloacademy.co.uk/wellness/)

# WELLBEING



This programme, for all Armadillo members, is available to your whole team – happy team, happy clients, happy office, happy owners. Our aim is to give you the tools to reprogramme your mindset and help you deal with whatever life sends your way.

## Armadillo Seven Tips to have a better day:



Make “thank you”  
your first thought  
of the day



Reach for water  
before coffee



Start your morning  
with some light  
exercise



Replace mindless  
scrolling with mindful  
reading



Make a plan for  
the day



Breathe



End your day  
with something  
that makes you  
feel good

Want to improve the wellbeing of yourself and your team? Go to <https://armadilloacademy.co.uk/wellness/>