

Company: Capitol Carpets Ltd Contact: Chris Crow, Managing Director

Company Details

Croydon based Capitol Carpets Ltd was established in 1939 specialising in sourcing, supplying and installing a wide range of quality flooring products to commercial and domestic markets in London and the South East and is a fourth generation family business employing 16 staff.

Business Link in London support

Capitol Carpets had a long-standing relationship with Business Link in London. Over the past 10 years, Business Link in London has provided support on benchmarking, business planning and Investors in People. Notably in September 2008, the MD Chris Crow expressed a desire for Capitol Carpets to develop and expand into the public sector. Capitol Carpets was a second tier contractor to London Borough of Wandsworth but Chris wanted to understand what it took to become a direct contractor. In addition, Capitol Carpets' long-standing clients in the commercial sector were increasingly asking that their suppliers provide more evidence about quality, in particular, a requirement to be ISO 9001 accredited. As a result, Business Link in London referred Capitol Carpets to Supply London.

Supply London support

Mary Edwards, a Supply London Supply Chain Adviser was assigned to support Capitol Carpets. Mary, being an ISO 9001 qualified assessor was the best match to Capitol Carpets' needs. Mary met with Chris Crow in October 2008. During that meeting it was identified that there were a number of issues that were preventing Capitol Carpets being successful including a lack of knowledge about what requirements are placed on potential suppliers by the public sector

Mary provided support on **policies** for Health & Safety, Environment, Quality and Equal Opportunities as well as supporting them with the process of gaining ISO 9001:2008 accreditation. Capitol Carpets attended a number of Supply London **workshops** including Winning New Business and Contracts, Implementing a Quality Management System and Bid Writing all of which helped them to refine their business systems and tender writing skills.

Capitol Carpets also registered with **CompeteFor** and in June 2009 attended a **Meet the Buyer** event where they met buyers from the ODA's first tier supply chain.

In March 2009, Supply London identified an **opportunity** to supply and install carpet for Housing Association, Family Mosaic. Capitol Carpets already had experience in this sector and had identified the social housing sector as an area of growth so decided to go ahead and complete the Pre Qualification Questionnaire with the help of their Supply Chain Adviser.

Journey to success

Capitol Carpets successfully passed the PQQ stage, and were invited to tender In May 2009. Throughout the process of writing the tender, Mary provided support and advice by email, telephone as well as by visiting the company.

In June 2009 Capitol Carpets were invited to attend an interview which was to include a presentation as well as Q&A. Members of the Supply London team met with Chris Crow and talked through the questions and possible content that his presentation could include. Supply London arranged for their "Pitching with Purpose" workshop facilitator, McFarlane Leadership to provide individual support ensuring that Chris was as prepared as he could be for the interview.

In July 2009 Capitol Carpets were informed that they had been successful and will start to deliver the contract in September 2009,

"Supply London & Pera have given us the skills & confidence to tender and win public sector contracts that we would never have stood a chance of winning before, the knowledge of their staff and trainers are second to none." Chris Crow, MD, Capitol Carpets

