

Fresh Ties links experience with young go-getters

A JOINT initiative to spur entrepreneurship has been launched by online networking site freshties.com and Young Enterprise Wales. Freshties.com is a website founded by former City lawyer Ashish Poddar which allows users to share advice on how to make the best decisions in education, business and life.

He has now linked with the entrepreneurship charity to allow the website's users to take part in a mentoring programme to encourage and guide future business leaders.

Mr Poddar said many people in busy situations could not afford the time to give one-on-one counselling, but they could easily an-

swer questions and give advice using the Abergavenny-based enterprises's website.

Darren Notley, South Wales regional manager for Young Enterprise, agreed, saying, "Many business people lack the time rather than the desire to become a mentor. Even an hour a week can be too much given existing work commitments, and that's a shame given the wealth of experience they can offer. That's why I was so excited to get involved with Fresh Ties."

Mr Poddar said, "Fresh Ties provides a simple, informal and easily accessible way to share concerns, get encouragement, find out what being an entrepreneur

entails, and deal with the basics."

Nathan Morgan, chief executive of Newport-based IT consultancy, Yongala, said he would have benefited from such a service.

"It's the simple things that count, like getting in touch with other people who really understand your experiences," he said. "Initially, I was faced with a lot of new challenges. That's where Fresh Ties would have been perfect – an informal way to share experiences and gain insights. I think the website ethos of people helping people and enabling others to realise their goals by providing appropriate, experienced help will inspire people."

"Hopefully, this will provide budding entrepreneurs with the confidence to set up their own business at any stage of life."

Becoming a mentor involves registering at Freshties.com, identifying yourself as a business mentor in your member profile. People needing your experience can then perform searches online.

Lyn Maloney, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent area board chairman of Young Enterprise said, "This is so beneficial for young people, or anyone, to get insights from other entrepreneurs as a little encouragement can make the world of difference."



CAPTAINS OF ENTERPRISE Ashish Poddar, right, and Darren Notley