Inspire
Business Consulting

Bringing Energy and Understanding to your Business

CAPABILITY STATEMENT

2026

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An introduction to Inspire Business Consulting

Principal Michael Lawrence has over 30 years diverse experience in assisting small and medium businesses (primarily <$25M turnover) with all aspects of their operations, focusing on helping owners increase their understanding of their business, identify bottlenecks to achieving goals and growing their bottom-line profitability. In addition he has collaborated on and delivered a range of regional projects for Councils and not for profit organisations.

This experience has been gained through a wide variety of roles across the Far North and Northwest regions. These have provided practical exposure to not only thousands of businesses across a multitude of industry sectors, but also to relevant government agencies and other stakeholders on Local, State and Federal levels.

Strong involvement in regional development in conjunction with these activities has seen extensive networks developed across various organisations throughout the Far North Queensland (FNQ) and Gulf Savannah regions, including Economic and Regional Development Bodies and Local Tourism Organisations. Michael was a Director of the regional development body Tablelands Futures Corporation for 13 years (7 years as Chair), and spent 3 years on the Tropical Tablelands Tourism board. He is committed to the Atherton Tablelands and broader FNQ region and has been an active member of a variety of school, business and sporting associations, Michael is also a life member of the Atherton State High School P&C Association.

His extensive background as a Commercial Bank Manager is underpinned by a Certified Practicing Accountant (CPA) qualification and a genuine desire to see business owners and projects succeed. This led him to commence Inspire Business Consulting in 2006.

Very strong technical skills, business development experience, and genuine energy, passion and enthusiasm for working with both business operators and regional projects, ensure a professional outcome is achieved. This is further enhanced by involvement as a mentor for programs such as the Queensland Government Mentoring for Growth and local business support activities. Michael retains a practical focus and ensures that all issues are analysed and addressed on a level that can be understood and implemented by owners.

Inspire Business Consulting specialises in strategic analysis and support, providing both the expertise to deliver on regional projects, and the opportunity for business owners to adopt a management perspective in their business, supporting them with analysis and experience to ensure goals are achieved.

Core Competencies

- Business Advisory Services across all sectors; including review and analysis of business position.
- Detailed financial evaluation, management and advice; including comprehensive cash flow budgeting and management.
- Strategic and Business plan development and implementation – Individual businesses through to significant Regional projects.
- Strategic Project development including feasibility analysis and business case development.
- Product and Service development and commercialisation.
- Finance application planning and submission, including review, restructures and negotiations.
- Grant application research, development and submission across all State and Federal funding programmes.

- Business mentoring and coaching, including specific skill development, turnaround management and systems development.
- Application of lean start-up methodology including business model canvas development.
- Stakeholder Engagement.

Overview of Consultants

Michael Lawrence – Principal and Business Strategist



Michael Lawrence is a business strategist, advisor, mentor and problem solver with over 30 years diverse experience in assisting small to medium businesses with all aspects of their operation, with a focus on helping owners increase their understanding of their business and grow their bottom-line profitability. In addition to this, he has collaborated on and delivered a range of regional projects for Councils and not-for-profit organisations. Michael has a strong background and track record in business growth and development, financial analysis, grant writing and regional development.

This experience has been gained through a wide variety of roles across the Far North and Northwest region. These have provided practical exposure to not only thousands of businesses across a multitude of industry sectors, but also to relevant Government agencies and other Stakeholders on a local, state and federal level.

His extensive background as a Commercial Bank Manager, Certified Practicing Accountant (CPA) qualification and genuine desire to support small businesses led him to commence Inspire Business Consulting in 2006. The period since then has been spent working with business owners across all areas of their business, with a focus on financial evaluation, management and advice including profit analysis, cash flow budgeting, credit control and finance applications. This experience has provided both a detailed understanding of and empathy for the advantages and disadvantages of being business owners in today's demanding environment.

Michael's strong technical skills and business development experience, combined with his genuine energy, passion and enthusiasm for working with business operators, ensure a practical professional outcome is achieved. He retains a practical focus and ensures that all issues are analysed and addressed on a level that can be understood and adopted by business owners.

Michael specialises in ongoing strategic analysis and support, providing both the expertise and the opportunity for business owners to adopt a management perspective in their business, supporting them with analysis and experience to ensure their goals are achieved.

Qualifications:

- Certified Practising Accountant
- Bachelor of Business (Accounting)
- Commissioner for Declarations

Experience

- Strategic project development across various sectors and locations. Projects are largely confidential however details can be supplied on request. They have included strategic business cases or commercial assessments across;
    - Manufacturing
    - Aviation
    - Agriculture value adding
    - Sports facilities
    - Tourism facility development
    - New product development

    - Regional project assessment for local government
- Ongoing monthly business support, mentoring and coaching for existing businesses in FNQ
- Mentor for Start-up and Innovation Tablelands - https://www.startuptablelands.org/mentors/
- Queensland Government – Mentoring for Growth Panel – panel member
- Provision of one-on-one support to individual businesses under several Gulf Savannah Development/Tablelands Futures Corporation Small Business Advice Programs, funded by AusIndustry;
    - January 2016 - 2018
    - December 2012 - 2014
    - January 2011 – June 2012
    - April 2009 – December 2010
- Delivery of Small Business workshops for the Queensland Government Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), covering all aspects of successfully operating a small business (2003 – 2012)
- Small Business Solutions mentor for Far North Queensland.
- Completed delivery of a 2-year training and mentoring project across the Atherton Tablelands and Gulf Savannah for the Tablelands Futures Corporation (2006 – 2008); involving the provision of one-on-one mentoring support to existing small businesses, as well as the delivery of over 40 relevant skills development training workshops.
- Assistance with funding applications for both State and Australian Government programs.

Bob Cobavie – Senior Business Strategist and Contractor



Recognised as one of northern Australia's leading business, corporate, and strategic development Advisors, Bob draws on four decades of diversified and practical experience in business development, operations, and management to assist the growth and development of businesses ranging from new start-ups, sole traders, SME's, and large corporates.

Bob has held positions as a Senior Executive and leader in significant and diversified Agribusiness Corporations for over 21 years and following then as a Business Strategist and Corporate Advisor for 24 years, Bob demonstrates a strong track record of working with and assisting a vast range of business and industry types. These industry sectors include tourism and hospitality, primary production and aquaculture, forestry, manufacturing, information technology, commercialising new and innovative products and services, education and training, aviation, engineering, food manufacturing, building and construction, waste management, transport and logistics and Government sector agencies.

Bob's passion and enthusiasm for business and business improvement is driven by the satisfaction of seeing the results achieved by Outsource Management's many clients, and the inspiration that comes from individual and network relationships that have been built up and sustained over many years.

Associations, memberships, & leaderships:

- Practising Marketer.
- Member: FNQ Agricultural Supply Chain Study 2019.
- Founding Member: Department of State Development (Previously DEEDI), TNQ "Business Mentoring for Growth Group" and "Mentoring for Investment", and since convenor 2007 to 2018.
- Founding Member: Atherton Tablelands Business Development Group, (two years).
- Past: Chairman of the Management Excellence Awards, TNQ, (five years).
- Past: Director of Northern Australia Pool Development Fund.
- Past: Free Enterprise Director on the Board of the Tablelands Promotion Bureau.
- Past: Vice Chair of the Australian Institute of Management, TNQ, five years.
- Past: Member Invest TNQ taskforce, 2009.
- Past: Free Enterprise Member and Advisor on the Tropical Innovation Awards working Committee.

Core Competencies:

- Business mentoring - coaching, turnaround management and business rescue.
- Business monitoring and reporting systems.
- Business reinvigoration, opportunity identification and attraction.
- Business risk assessment, risk auditing, risk mitigation and elimination.
- Commercialisation of new products and services.
- Customer service - plans, sales and marketing strategies.
- Environmental management planning.
- Financial management.
- Human resources - team development, mentoring, leadership training & cultural redevelopment.
- Occupational health and safety management; compliance, auditing, risk identification and elimination.
- Preparing businesses to investment readiness standards.
- Code compliant systems and procedures - occupational health and safety management; compliance, auditing, risk identification and elimination.
- Government grant writing and tender development.
- Strategic planning and developing bankable Business Plans.
- Systems development and training.

IBC Recent Project Examples

General

Client's industry:	Structural Engineering and fabrication
Project description/ methodology:	IBC was engaged to provide support to the management team of the business in conjunction with a grant application opportunity. This included review and updating of the work already completed by the business which incorporated; • Existing Business plan review • Cashflow forecast – planning and assessment • Employment and job creation opportunities – provide a structure to analyse the prospective outcomes within a framework applicable to the grant application. • Grant application – provide specific feedback and direction on priority areas and direct the business focus, as well as an objective viewpoint to ensure all key areas were addressed. • The aim was to work in conjunction with business owners to provide high level experience, objectivity and perspective on the strategic documents being prepared, and make the relevant changes were necessary. In addition extensive feedback and direction was provided in relation to the grant application and subsequent attachments and supporting details.
Project outcomes:	The client utilised the process to finalise the strategic direction of the business, assess future workforce needs and complete the grant application process. This was subsequently successful and relevant grant funds received.
Year of project:	2025

Client's industry:	Freight and Distribution
Project description/ methodology:	IBC was contracted to work with a freight and distribution company for the provision of business review, financial analysis and management and debt restructure services. In addition operational support was provided across all areas of the business. The engagement covered: • Substantial and comprehensive review of existing business operations, including assessment of key growth strategies. • Development of a detailed action plan to guide priorities in business improvement and growth. • Financial analysis and reporting completed to provide in-depth understanding of current position of the business. • Development and implementation of operational strategies to address required improvement areas. • Development of employment agreements and contracts • Development of organisational chart • Provision of team management, management and leadership guidance.
Project outcomes:	IBC has been engaged to provide ongoing business mentoring and coaching services to this client and continues to work with the business on an at minimum, weekly basis.
Year of project:	2018 – current

Client's industry:	Structural Engineering
Project description/ methodology:	IBC was contracted to develop a comprehensive Business Plan for a marine, civil and structural engineering company in North Queensland. The completed Strategic Business Plan reported on: • Corporate Strategy • Business Strategy • Functional Strategy • Business Definition • Strategic Map • SWOT Analysis • Functional Strategies • Marketing Strategy • Human Resources • Risk Management • Financial Overview • Action Plans and Timeframes • Summary Recommendations. Further support was provided with the completion of a grant application which was subsequently successful.
Project outcomes:	The company is currently working towards the full implementation of the Business Plan recommendations and are working within the Business Plan framework. They have successfully utilised the plan to leverage in excess of $1M in government grant funding, with IBC completing the grant application.
Year of project:	2022 and grant application in 2023.
Document Length:	36 pages, 16 appendices

Client's industry:	Government – Tourism and Conservation
Project description/ methodology:	IBC was contracted to develop a Strategic Business Plan for a Conservation Park in Far North Queensland, for a Local Government council. The park held significant importance to the cultural heritage of the area and IBC sensitively managed the project through ongoing community consultation and inclusion. The completed plan reported on the concept, goals and objectives, funding, consultation and engagement, business profile and structure, the nature of the park and its main activities, products and services, visitor profiles, strategic map, operational plan, marketing strategy, risk management and a listing of recommendations for future actions and activities.
Project outcomes:	Post project completion, the Council has adopted a number of the key recommendations reported on and are continuing to work within the Strategic Business Plan framework.
Year of project:	2018
Document length:	43 pages, 13 appendices

Client's industry:	Product development and commercialisation
Project description/ methodology:	IBC was engaged to develop a Business Case to investigate the potential for and subsequently commercialise a new product invention, including market investigation, completion of prototype, financial assessment and evaluation, initial marketing planning and operational development. Mentoring and coaching was also provided in overall business growth and development and the product was finalised, produced and is now in an active and ongoing growth phase. The project involved the provision of the following professional services: • Review and analysis of the current prototype and marketplace. • Market review and assessment to determine the likelihood of demand for the new product, as well as market size, demographic and purchasing power. • Competitor Analysis. • Cost analysis and review to determine profitability. • Assessment of legal structures to meet current and future needs. • Marketing strategies and activities. • Operational and Management model considerations. • Project planning and mapping for development. • Strategic planning support to drive the growth of the business • Business management skills and knowledge transfer. • Ongoing strategic planning advice, direction, mentoring and coaching.
Project outcomes:	This client's operation is continuing to grow and is increasingly attracting the targeted markets sought. IBC continues to provide business mentoring and coaching services on an as needs basis.
Year of project:	2022

Client's industry:	Local Government – Economic and community development
Project description/ methodology:	IBC was engaged to develop a Concept plan and initial commercial assessment of the value of a regionally significant project, with a focus on exploring the costs and value of potential commercial outcomes that had been identified. This was to be completed within a highly confidential timeframe and structure, and in parallel with other sections of the project. All necessary project and supporting research was undertaken, economic overview, profile assessment and market analysis completed and development opportunities considered as part of the plan recommendations. Funding and grant opportunities were also identified and considered.
Project outcomes:	The client utilised the assessment to form part of the overall economic decision making for the project, which is now in the process of being progressively developed.
Year of project:	2020

Client's industry:	Government – Tourism.
Project description/ methodology:	IBC was contracted by a to develop a comprehensive Business Plan for a regionally significant community and tourism project for a Local Government Council. IBC was contracted for the development of a number of projects for the facility, however specifically the Business Plan included the following key components: o The Concept o Business Definition o Strategic Map o Operational Plan o Marketing Plan o The project o Purpose and goals o Situation analysis o Competitive analysis o Key markets o Marketing strategies o Promotion: o Price – revenue opportunities. o Risk Management o Financial Management and forecasting o Stakeholder Engagement
Project outcomes:	Post project completion, the Council has adopted a number of the key recommendations reported on and are continuing to work within the Business Plan framework.
Year of project:	2018
Document length:	66 pages, 9 appendices

Client's industry:	Aircraft Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul
Project description/ methodology:	IBC was contracted to develop a comprehensive Business Plan for an MRO service provider in North Queensland, to outline and underpin a substantial funding request for significant expansion. The completed Business Plan reported on: • Situation Analysis • Market research and future opportunities • Competitive Strategy and Competitor analysis • Project development • Employment outcomes and priorities • Economic, Social and Environmental benefits to the broader Qld economy. • Marketing Strategy • Capacity and Capability • Financial modelling and ROI • Action Plans and Timeframes • Summary Recommendations. Further support was provided with the completion of a grant application.
Project outcomes:	Completed Business plan was utilised to clarify future growth opportunities and continue to leverage funding.
Year of project:	2022

Client's industry:	Retail, Service and automotive
Project description/ methodology:	IBC was contracted to undertake an initial business review to assess the current position and future potential of a well-established business. This included the following; • Review of existing operational processes as required. • Organisation and structure, • Existing debt structures and pricing • Financial analysis and review, including product margins and costing of future opportunities • Financial projections • Support in dealing with existing contractors and major suppliers. • Ongoing mentoring and business support.
Project outcomes:	On completion of the review a series of recommendations were implemented to achieve the business goals. IBC was engaged to provide ongoing business mentoring and coaching services to this client and continued to work with the business on an ongoing basis. This included preparation for and negotiation of sale options which were completed in 2025.
Year of project:	2018 – 2025.

Indigenous Clients

Due to contractual obligations to maintain client confidentiality, complete client projects are unable to be listed. However IBC has undertaken many projects with indigenous groups, organisations and businesses. The following outline some examples of this work;

Indigenous Industry/Sector	Scope of project	Outcomes	Year
Service delivery including retail, mobile food services, cafés and mechanical. Agriculture.	Review of existing work completed, identification of and support with practical 'next steps' and implementation. Financial viability confirmation and tender submission support	Initial assessment and refinement of business opportunities led to successful grant applications and business commencement. In some cases not proceeding with the business concept, including an understanding of the reasoning for this, was a successful outcome for participants.	2023-current
Fishing	Completion of multiple business plans for new business opportunities in the fishing sector..	Market research and assessment of business owner needs and commercial opportunity. Development of business case to review and outline viability, and underpin future funding applications.	2023 – 2025
Land Management (Business)	Work with experienced group to assess an existing commercial opportunity, map out the steps for future growth and complete full Strategic Business plan. Provide skills development through the process.	Development of 5 year Strategic Business Plan to outline the commercial opportunity, future growth and underpin a request for finance.	2021
Business and Community growth	Strategic plan development, in conjunction with board of organisation.	Developed sessions to engage board members from different areas. Reviewed and developed priorities, engaged all stakeholders and generated consensus agreement.	2020
Community development	Develop and deliver a workshop for far north community group to assess significant commercial opportunity. Review proposal, identify community members needs and wants, develop succinct document for provision to stakeholders including State Government.	Completion of strategic document to capture community opportunities, concerns and future aspirations, for submission into consultative process.	2018

Areas of Operation

IBC predominantly works with clients across Far North Queensland, with a focus on the Atherton Tablelands, Cairns, Cape York/Torres Strait and Gulf Savannah regions. This also expands to Townville and Mount Isa areas, with significant experience in these communities.

Confidentiality and cybersecurity

- Confidentiality is at the core of all activities and information within the IBC business. It is a critical element and central to all that we do.
- We manage and maintain confidential information on behalf of our clients and this is done in conjunction with the latest cybersecurity principles, with strict protocols around information access and software utilisation and protection.

Next Steps

IBC provides an initial one – two hour no cost and obligation free consultation to discuss your needs and opportunities and how we can add value to your business. If you would like to talk to us please contact Michael Lawrence on the details below.

Contact Details

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Please also refer to LinkedIn profile for further details