



Practice



The view from:

Dublin: **Stewart Dunne** FCCA, partner, **BDO**

Q What business lessons have you learned?

A I've learnt the importance of continuing to focus on client service, regardless of the downturn. As an adviser, the more time I spend client facing, the more I learn about their businesses and the better I can help them find solutions. Through building close relationships with clients you build up knowledge of their organisation, their trust and, eventually, become an important part of their business. This is the best way to deliver quality advisory service. The early '80s are not dissimilar to the times we find ourselves in today. Many companies (including our own) grew out of these difficult times and seized opportunities as they presented themselves. My role is to understand what business owners need to, firstly, survive and, ultimately, grow their business.

Q What tips would you pass on to others?

A You have to actively participate in a partnership – it is about give and take. It is about being a team player and being the best professional that you can be. Being mindful that, at certain times in the business cycle, when your area may be performing well, other areas will need your support. It's important to build a team to ensure that you can continue to deliver the level of service expected by your clients. As a professional, working with professionals, you must understand and support people in their career progression and provide a platform to help them reach their potential.

Q What has been the hardest part in terms of growing the business?

A We have had to go 'back to basics' and focus on our core business of audit, tax and advisory. In a very competitive market, the challenge facing us is to ensure that we always put the needs of our clients first. We realise that there are opportunities for us and for our clients in the downturn, we just need to think outside of the box sometimes to see them.

Q Tell us about BDO?

A I'd like to think that we are not just another large global accounting firm. Our partners and staff are focused on building strong relationships with our clients and working together to bring solutions to their various needs. We look to find solutions to the issues they face in both the short and longer term and really get to know their business. When we talk to our clients about how they see **BDO**, they consistently tell us that we deliver solutions and are focused on adding value to their business.

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