

# From one franchise to another –

## choosing Get Ahead after a varied career

Sarah Yandell joined Get Ahead in 2020 as regional director for our Suffolk and Essex territory. Before that, she'd worked in the travel industry; a career spanning hotel sales; worldwide contracting for a retail travel agency; running a specialist tour operator and being a personal travel counsellor. She shared her experiences with us and explained why Get Ahead was the right choice for her.

### What was your job before you joined Get Ahead?

I co-founded a specialist tour operator back in 2003 which was sold in 2015. I then bought into one of the UK's largest travel franchise businesses. I went back to employment in 2018 to run a small local tour operator, but being furloughed in 2020 gave me the opportunity to look at new opportunities that would allow me to make use of my previous senior management experience.

### What aspects of your previous roles did you want to hold onto?

I loved the flexibility of running my own business – it worked well for me and my daughter. Having owned a franchise before, I saw all the advantages of buying into an established business and a known brand. Being able to work from home was a huge advantage too.

From my travel industry career, I'd built up experience of managing a team, and learned that I enjoyed working with other people. I also realised that I was glad to come away from hands-on roles as I was more interested in business management. I also enjoyed facilitating a team to deliver results for my clients.

### How had your other roles held you back?

In spite of the travel franchise offering me flexibility, I also found it quite lonely. There was only minimal support, and it was such a large company that I didn't really feel part of a team. In addition, delivering all the work myself after having strategic roles in a business felt like a step back. I never felt the staff at the head office understood what the day-to-day was like for the franchisees as they were employees and had not experienced the challenges of running their own business.

### What appealed to you about Get Ahead?

For me, Get Ahead provided the perfect balance. It was an established business so I didn't need to start from scratch. But in spite of that, it was small enough that I could slot into the team of franchisees and contribute to the business' strategic direction. Rebecca Newenham started off running Get Ahead Guildford before she decided to franchise the business, so she understands what the role is really like. That means she can give us all the support we need, without any of the pressure.

Get Ahead gave me the freedom to work flexibly – some other businesses give their franchisees targets, but at Get Ahead, we are free to grow and scale our businesses however we like. Unlike employment, I can manage my team my way. If I've found an approach that works, I have the freedom to implement it without having to get anyone else's approval.

### What have you gained from joining Get Ahead?

I've always enjoyed networking, and it's a key part of making a Get Ahead franchise work. I've found I love finding out about other people's businesses, and listening to entrepreneurs' ups and downs. Best of all, I get to help them solve their problems and make their businesses a success.

Get Ahead gave me everything I hoped it would – being furloughed was a blessing in disguise! Now I'm an established part of the Suffolk and Essex business network, supported by a great team of virtual experts and with lots of happy clients.



You can find out more about our franchise opportunities [here](#) or call 01483 332 220 to discuss in more detail.

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