

### **One phone call: seven years' work**

*The first in an occasional series of brief articles from SEC members explaining how the SEC has helped them. This one is from SEC Chair Nick Zienau.*

I have found that it's not so much that SEC members get a lot of calls, but that every now and then they get one call that opens a whole new world of opportunity.

Seven years ago I was called by the Head of a school in North East London. She wanted some work done with her staff about student behaviour, but didn't like all the formulaic solutions she had previously been offered. I went on to work in the school and they are still a client of mine. After seven years I have been able to help lift their GCSE scores from 40% to 73% A-Cs, which, for the type of school, makes this one of the top 1% of schools in the UK. On the back of this, my consultancy also started a project to create collaboration between neighbouring schools: I have run a project for four years now in which I manage networks of collaboration in different subject areas and around tutoring of students.

The effect of this was to completely transform my performance as a school consultant, and I am now told I am one of the best around. So, the upshot of the one call was: revenue of around £250K over seven years; my reputation and experience enhanced and a lot of satisfaction that I was making a difference. A side-product was that it really helped me with a project in which for four years I have been chief trainer for many cohorts of aspiring school leaders in a fast-track programme run by the DCMS (formerly DfES) and the NCSL (National College for School Leadership), which is now a major revenue stream for our company and again a great source of leads for future opportunities.

The funny thing is that in 15 years of being in SEC it's the only 'cold' approach I have had from a client - and yet what a worthwhile one!