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Best for Expert Witness Training - UK

Bond Solon Training Ltd.

Bond Solon is the UK's leading Expert Witness training company and since 1992 have trained tens of thousands of expert witnesses. Managing Director Piers Lawson talks us through how the firm has developed its innovative range of programmes to support non-lawyers who are involved in the legal system in the UK and worldwide.

Bond Solon was established 25 years ago when founder, Mark Solon, identified the need for Expert Witnesses to have training, having seen on many occasions the poor performances of Experts giving evidence. Prior to the firm's inception, formal Expert Witness Training did not exist, as Piers explains.

"In the early 1990's, the legal market was sceptical of Expert Witness training. Despite this, and particularly since the introduction of the Civil Procedure Rules 1999, we have successfully established Expert Witness training as a pre-requisite to undertake the role of an expert witness. Over the years, we have trained many of the UK's leading Experts and have been at the forefront of improving the standards of expert witness evidence in the UK. We have developed a wide range of knowledge and skills based training courses, conferences and qualifications that enable experts to produce useful court compliant evidence. Mark Solon says: "In 2001 we developed the first University Certified programme for Experts in conjunction with Cardiff University Law School, one of the UK's top law schools. The Cardiff University Bond Solon (CUBS) Expert Witness certificate is now recognised as the gold standard in Expert Witness training. We provide lifelong learning support for our expert witness clients and regularly keep them current with new law, cases and regulations. We were the first to organise an annual expert witness conference that is now in its twenty-second year. Around 400 attend to hear senior figures in the law and expert witness world."

Clients are exclusively expert witnesses who need to provide independent opinion evidence to assist the courts, and the fields they cover are varied covering many sectors. They come with a variety of academic and professional backgrounds and a wide range of skills and experience. This means that Bond Solon has to work hard to ensure that they provide every client with the solution which meets their needs. Piers continues: "At Bond Solon is a client focused organisation and we aim to provide a premium experience. We are committed

to building a trusted and ongoing relationship with our clients by delivering on our promises and making every aspect of the interaction with our clients a supportive and positive experience. We listen to our clients in order to understand what training would meet their needs."

Looking to the future of the legal training market, technological innovations will lead to more standardised solutions for the delivery of legal processes. It is said that Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) will become a huge area with enormous potential to meet the needs of the legal system and its users, and as such, in his concluding comments, Mark outlines the importance of Bond Solon remaining at the forefront of innovation in the market and working to ensure that it provides solutions which meet the evolving needs of clients.

"Technology is changing the face of the legal profession and the English Legal System as well as affecting the training arena. Technology has also changed the way our clients learn. This rapid pace of technological change presents a clear challenge and opportunity for us. We need to constantly make sure that our services remain relevant and valued as well as using the latest technological trends to deliver our products.

"Therefore going forward we will be working to ensure that our service offering is at the forefront of industry innovation, increasing our use of developing technologies. As such we will be developing courses to enable experts to continue to perform in line with the development of ODR technology. We are currently developing the National Register of University Certified Expert Witnesses to provide instructing parties with unique access to an extensive list of experts who have all been formally trained, assessed and deemed competent to act as an expert witness. Piers ends: "Alongside this, we are now looking to take our products and systems abroad where the English Legal System operates. This will provide us many exciting opportunities."