

Structured Growth, Clear Vision: TAG Drink's Transformation with GROWTH Hillingdon

TAG Drinks is an artisan tea-and-coffee café in Eastcote, founded by Hovig Yardim. Frustrated by the lack of specialty tea options, Hovig spent years perfecting a patented barista-style tea-latte process—built on secret blends and split-blend production—to deliver a café experience tea-drinkers can't replicate at home. Alongside that, TAG Drinks offers high-quality coffee, cakes, sandwiches and warm hospitality, making every visit feel like sitting round the family dinner table.

Hovig's Challenge

As a scientist-turned-entrepreneur, Hovig wasn't formally trained in business and found himself "dunked under water" without clear priorities. Despite pulling 12–14-hour days, most of his time was spent firefighting—fixing machines, chasing urgent tasks and responding to external crises like cost-of-living pressures—rather than working on strategic growth. Hovig also suffered from anxiety and overwhelm coming from feeling responsible for the team, customers and his family.

Hovig Joined the GROWTH Hillingdon Business Support Programme

Hovig was clear that he needed help. So when he saw the Business Support Programme, he applied straightaway. "Having access to people more experienced in running a business made applying a no-brainer," Hovig commented.

Structured Time Management

Working one-to-one with mentor Kim Wilcox, Hovig learned to block his diary into strategic slots, marketing, team catch-ups, financial review, rather than reacting to every breakdown.

RESULTS & IMPACT

- **Clear roadmap:** Time-blocking and staged goals replaced firefighting, so Hovig now directs his effort to tasks that move TAG Drinks forward.
- **Stronger team development:** From 5 to 10 staff; new systems (till, SOPs) co-designed with managers for more effective delegation.
- **Boosted confidence:** Without the programme, Hovig admits he wouldn't have applied for the Hillingdon Business Awards—now he's a winner with a trophy to share with the team.
- **Revitalised growth vision:** Plans for TAG 2, TAG 3 and beyond are now back on track with clear milestones, rather than drifting week to week.

Long-Term Roadmapping

By setting three-, five- and ten-year goals and working backwards, Hovig regained the clarity he had at TAG Drinks' inception, rather than simply "going with the river."

Mentor Accountability & Wellbeing

Kim's empathy around anxiety destigmatised Hovig's concerns, and proved that "you can lead a horse to water, but you're the one who has to drink it," reinforcing self-responsibility without pressure to be a 24/7 robot.

Peer Network & Workshops

TAG's virtual assistant and leadership team attended workshops—from LinkedIn strategy to social-media analytics—so insights filtered through every level of the café.

Looking Ahead

Confidence restored by his programme experience, Hovig is now rebuilding TAG Drink's systems to scale to multiple sites. He's embedding structured one-to-ones, delegating with confidence and keeping that family-table hospitality at TAG's heart.

"The programme has set me up for success. Without it, I would still be working 60-hour weeks and feeling like I was no further forward. If you ever get the chance to be on such a programme, I'd say go for it. You can never have too many tools in the toolbox. Why would you say no to tailored, one-to-one business guidance?"



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