

BEAR MCBLACK, PhD (in progress), MBA, BSc (Hons)

+44 (0)7565 007732 | bearmcblack@gmail.com | [linkedin.com/in/bearmcblack](https://www.linkedin.com/in/bearmcblack)

GROWTH & DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION LEADER | AI IN BUSINESS STRATEGY

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Strategic business transformation leader with over 25 years of commercial experience, including deep expertise in environmental services. Following a deliberate career pivot, Bear McBlack completed a consecutive academic progression—BSc (Hons), MBA, & PhD (in progress)—alongside specialised training in AI business applications to transition into growth strategy & digital transformation leadership.

Recognised for delivering multi-million-pound revenue growth & spearheading organisational change, Bear excels at translating operational challenges into strategic solutions. Known for building & inspiring high-performing teams, Bear integrates cutting-edge doctoral research in Generative AI with hands-on leadership to drive sustainable competitive advantage & innovation across marketing & sales functions.

SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

Commercial Impact

- **£2.1m in new revenue generated** within nine months by executing targeted enterprise growth strategies (SUEZ, 2015-2018)
- **34% increase in client retention** achieved through the design & implementation of a transformational account management framework (Biffa, 2018-2019).
- **15% uplift in lead-to-sale conversion** delivered via CRM & marketing automation system transformation (Thrivology, 2020).

Recognition & Awards

- Awarded a **PhD Full Scholarship** (2023) for research on AI in marketing adoption, University of Hertfordshire.
- **Graduated top of MBA cohort** (2023) & earned **First Class Honours** in BSc (Hons) (2022), University of Bedfordshire.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Chief Growth Officer (CGO)

The Thrivology Company Ltd | Dec 2019 – Present | Boutique Growth Consultancy for Tech SMEs | Bedfordshire, UK

Leading the company's growth engine, digital strategy, & technology integration to establish the firm as a trusted scale partner for start-ups & SMEs.

- **Direct** all commercial operations, overseeing P&L, managing cross-functional teams, & developing strategic plans to ensure sustainable & profitable growth.
- **Architect** & execute data-driven digital strategies focused on SEO & AI-driven client acquisition, resulting in measurable new business & increased market share.
- **Engineer** scalable technology systems, including CRM & web platforms, to reduce manual workflows by 20% & significantly enhance client retention.
- **Leverage** doctoral research & cutting-edge LLMs to embed AI-driven automation across marketing & sales, boosting both operational efficiency & lead conversion rates.

Business Improvement Manager

Biffa | May 2018 – Sep 2019 | UK's Leading Waste Management Group (FTSE 250) | Hertfordshire, UK

Managed customer retention & account profitability for the South Midlands Area.

- **Improved** account retention by 34% through process redesign & introduction of a new client management

database.

- **Strengthened** senior leadership decision-making with data analytics frameworks & automated performance reporting.
- **Acted** as key liaison between enterprise clients & operational teams, resolving complex service challenges during major system transitions.

Corporate Account Manager

SUEZ | Jul 2015 – Apr 2018 | Global Environmental Services Leader (FTSE 250) | London, UK

Managed the London University Purchasing Consortium portfolio, optimising waste management & environmental impact.

- **Secured** £2.1m in new revenue within nine months by converting market analysis into high-value contracts.
- **Led** digital transformation projects that improved customer experience & reduced process inefficiencies.
- **Negotiated** profitable contracts & enhanced environmental/commercial outcomes through data-backed stakeholder engagement.

Earlier Career

- **Area Business Manager | Egbert Taylor | 2014 – 2015:** Drove regional sales growth across London & the South East, securing large-scale contracts with UK local authorities & retailers like Costco.
- **Key Account Manager | Biffa | 2010 – 2014:** Managed 42 strategic client accounts & reversed a 2-year trend of client churn, achieving the highest retention scores in the region.
- **Account Manager | Veolia | 2004 – 2010:** Delivered £415k in new revenue in the first year & pioneered the adoption of a new CRM system.
- **Store Manager | Dixons Retail | 1997 – 2004:** Advanced on a fast-track management programme, leading sales, operations, & staff development across high-performing retail branches.

EDUCATION & RESEARCH

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), AI in Business Analytics, Specialising in AI in Marketing Applications

University of Hertfordshire | Oct 2023 - Present (Full Scholarship Recipient)

- **Research Focus:** Investigating Generative AI adoption within marketing functions of micro-businesses, exploring how firms adapt to create sustainable competitive advantage.
- **Expected Contribution:** Development of the "Generative AI Adaptation Paradox" theory, which provides strategic insights for business leaders & technology providers on how embracing a fluid, dynamic approach to AI integration can unlock sustained value & growth.

Master of Business Administration (MBA) - Marketing

University of Bedfordshire | Oct 2022 - Sep 2023 (Graduated top of cohort)

Bachelor of Science (BSc Hons), Business Management

University of Bedfordshire | Oct 2019 - Sep 2022 (Graduated with First Class Honours)

SKILLS & PROFICIENCIES

Core Competencies & Strategic Leadership

- **AI-Driven Digital Transformation:** Design & execute enterprise strategies that fuse Generative AI, automation, & analytics — translating doctoral research into operational frameworks that drive competitive advantage, sales enablement, & scalable adoption.
- **Commercial Growth & P&L Leadership:** Own end-to-end growth for multi-million-pound portfolios — expanding markets, securing strategic partnerships, & optimising profitability through data-led execution & retention engineering.

- **Organisational Change & Ethical AI Adoption:** Lead complex transformations by embedding AI into process, culture, & compliance — mitigating bias, aligning with brand values, & turning resistance into adoption momentum.
- **Evidence-Based Strategy & Executive Influence:** Transform data into boardroom-grade strategy — architecting dashboards, modelling scenarios, & presenting ROI-driven cases that secure buy-in & accelerate execution.
- **C-Suite Engagement & Stakeholder Alignment:** Command executive conversations by translating technical depth into commercial logic — turning AI capability into compelling business cases that win budgets & board approval.

AI & Advanced Technical Proficiencies

- **Generative AI & LLM Integration:** Deploy & fine-tune leading models (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Grok, Perplexity, DeepSeek) via API & interface — engineering prompts, automating workflows, enriching CRM, & personalising engagement at scale.
- **Business Intelligence & Growth Analytics:** Architect insight engines using SPSS, Qualtrics, GA4, & Looker Studio — modelling behaviour, optimising funnels (A/B, heatmaps), & designing KPI dashboards that drive conversion & retention.
- **CRM & Marketing Automation Architecture:** Build & optimise AI-infused ecosystems in Salesforce, HubSpot, NetSuite — triggering personalised outreach, automating reporting, & lifting lead-to-sale conversion through intelligent orchestration.
- **Technical SEO & Martech Orchestration:** Master organic growth levers, including Core Web Vitals, schema, clustering, and funnel analytics. Connect CRM, email, AI, & analytics into unified engines — reducing manual effort by 20%+ while scaling performance.
- **Low-Code Automation & Agile Delivery:** Design client portals & workflows via Wix, Squarespace, Zapier, & Make. Lead distributed teams using Notion, Asana, M365 — aligning execution, eliminating bottlenecks, & delivering on strategic timelines.
- **Creative Prototyping & Brand Systems:** Leverage Adobe Creative Suite, Canva, & Figma to prototype AI-powered customer experiences, ensuring brand, UX, & automation align in high-impact campaigns.
- **Research & Data Modelling:** Apply PhD-grade methodology (NVivo, MindView, Python/Pandas) to model adoption risk, predict behaviour, & validate strategy — turning academic rigour into commercial edge.

Research & Academic Excellence

- **Originator of the “Generative AI Adaptation Paradox”:** A proprietary framework now guiding enterprise AI adoption — reducing implementation risk, accelerating ROI, & bridging the gap between innovation & execution.
- **Quantitative Strategy Design:** Advanced statistical modelling (SPSS, NVivo) to validate hypotheses, measure impact, & inform high-stakes commercial decisions — grounded in academic rigour, built for boardroom impact.
- **Thought Leadership & Executive Translation:** Distil complexity into clarity — transforming technical & academic insight into persuasive narratives, strategic reports, & stakeholder presentations that drive action & investment.

Languages, Interests & Additional Proficiencies

- **Languages:** English (Native)
- **Professional Interests:** Global business strategy, AI research & application, & thought leadership in digital transformation.
- **Leadership DNA:** Assessed as a natural 'Executive' (ESTJ) with high autonomy, adept at managing complexity & leveraging technology to innovate & lead effectively.
- **Geographic Flexibility:** Available for relocation opportunities | Available for immediate relocation
- **Compensation Expectation:** £90K+ package