

The 30-second Business Interview:

Deepak Poddar, Managing Director of Little Einstein's Kindergarten Limited

What is the biggest business decision you have had to make over the last year? Explain the process and the results.

It was buying the former Harlequin nurseries in Glasgow, then a year later Wonderland nurseries in a £3m deal. I then invested heavily with the aim of making my company the field-leader in Scotland. We have made great progress – but have much more to do.

Awards – ego trips for the bosses or good for companies?

They can be ego trips, but used adroitly as a marketing tool they can work to good effect as a platform from which to develop the business.

Corporate entertainment – a waste of money or can it bring in business? If so, how?

It's never a waste of money if done properly: networking is vitally important, and communication leads ultimately to new business – so go for it!

Favourite and least favourite part of your job?

Favourite is seeing children's smiling faces – the job is about education and development, but it's carried out through enjoyment, which is so very important in young lives. Least favourite is dealing with some aspects of officialdom which hinder rather than help.

If money was no object, what would you do or buy?

I would finance a major initiative to help children with physical disabilities, and in my existing work I'd automatically be thinking in terms of developing a bigger group.

What makes a good manager?

Fully understanding your responsibilities – and the importance of solid teamwork, efficient organisation, good people management, and, certainly, when to delegate.

What's left for you to achieve?

Masses! I'm "just starting out" in terms of what I hope to achieve.

Most embarrassing moment?

Luckily I'm not that self-conscious, so that moment has still to happen!

Most amazing thing that's ever happened to you?

The birth of my children.

Best car ever driven?

A BMW X5 4I with 21-inch alloys and sport suspension.

Favourite restaurant in Scotland?

La Fiorentina in Glasgow – same excellent quality every time.

Worst habit/best trait?

Worst is my impatience – best is maybe my “flexibility”: I get on well with colleagues.

Why are you good at what you do?

I’m passionately committed to meeting the needs of young children through nursery care – it is a hugely important job, a massive responsibility, and for me it’s much more than just a business.

What will an SNP administration do for the Scottish economy?

Ask me after the event! All any business operators wants are the optimum conditions which will allow his or her firm to work well.