

GrowStrong Business Fundamentals

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# Course Outline



**GrowStrong**  
Empowering Wine Grape Growers

# The GrowStrong Business Fundamentals course provides essential tools and knowledge to support the growth and sustainability of viticulture businesses.

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The program is structured into two components: **Expert Masterclasses** by the University of Adelaide Business School and a **Business Health Check** provided by Rural Business Support. Both of these components are further supported by Family and Business (FaB) **Dedicated Mentors** who are available for ongoing guidance to help you navigate the course and other situations you are experiencing as a primary producer.

## **Masterclasses with Experts:**

Eight concise sessions by the University of Adelaide Business School. Topics include financial management, legal aspects of the grape and wine industry, crisis mapping and scenario planning, customer relationship building, succession planning and technology integration.

## **Business Health Check:**

In collaboration with the University of Adelaide, Rural Business Support (RBS) will help participants translate the theory explored in various masterclasses into practical strategies for their own businesses or situations, guiding them in developing a clear, actionable plan on a page.

## **Dedicated Mentors:**

Family and Business (FaB) mentors will be available throughout the program. This PIRSA initiated mentor service can help you navigate difficult situations as a primary producer or regionally-based agricultural business owner. As part of the GrowStrong program, FaB mentors will guide participants through the evaluation process and independently review the plan on a page to ensure it meets the funding organisation's intended outcomes.

# University of Adelaide Masterclasses with Experts Overview



The University of Adelaide Masterclasses with Experts form the core element of the GrowStrong Business Fundamentals course. Delivered by leading academics and industry professionals from the University of Adelaide Business School, these eight masterclasses provide practical insights and strategic tools designed to address both immediate challenges and long-term opportunities in the viticulture sector.

Masterclass	Masterclass Title	Presenter/s
01	Crisis Mapping and Scenario Planning	Assoc. Prof. Gary Bowman PhD
02	Financial Management & Budgeting	Dr Michael Browne PhD
03	Legal Aspects of the Grape and Wine Industry and How to Harness the Law to Withstand and Emerge from Crises	Dr Mark Giancaspro LLB (Hons.), LP, PhD
04	Succession and Forward Planning – Answering the What, Why and How Questions	Assoc. Prof. Chris Graves PhD
05	Adopting Technology to Enable Business Transformation	Dr Adrian Johnston PhD Dr Tanya Jane PhD
06	Striking the Right Balance: The Importance of Work-Life Balance and Engaging in Self-Care	Assoc. Prof. Melissa Oxlad BA (Hons), M.Psych (Clin & Hlth), PhD Lorraine Caruso MBA (UoA), GAICD
07	Building Strong Relationships with Customers through Unique Brand Stories, Communication, and Community Engagement	Assoc. Prof. Armando Maria Corsi PhD Assoc. Prof. Rebecca Dolan PhD
08	Need Help? Navigating the Landscape of Resources and Advice Available to Farm Businesses	Nerissa Kilvert Small Business Commissioner, LLB, BBehavSc, Dip Proj Mgt

## Masterclass 01

# Crisis Mapping and Scenario Planning:

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Although a degree of unpredictability has always existed in the agricultural sector (as well as in the broader business environment), the increasing prevalence of VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) is placing additional short- and long-term strain on organisations.

### Participants will learn about the fundamentals of risk mapping and scenario planning to tackle short- and long-term challenges.

**Risk mapping** (and contingency planning) can provide valuable short-term protection, resilience, and recovery from immediate risks. Increased awareness and a clearer understanding of causal impact results in better, faster and more informed decisions in periods of crisis.

**Scenario planning** is a tool that facilitates the exploration of longer-term threats (and opportunities). A structured process that considers multiple, hypothetical and equally plausible futures, scenario planning identifies and explores the evolution of key sources of uncertainty. Scenario planning is a versatile tool that is used across a multitude of industries to build and develop resilience and create sustainable growth.



**Assoc. Prof. Gary Bowman, PhD**

Gary is the MBA Director at Adelaide Business School and an Associate Professor in Strategic Management. Gary's teaching and research spans the fields of risk and strategy, specialising in crises and scenario-informed planning processes. Prior to joining Adelaide, Gary held academic positions at Bond University in Queensland (Australia), the University of St Andrews (UK), and the University of Cambridge (UK). He also has extensive private and public sector experience.

## Masterclass 02

# Financial Management and Budgeting

This masterclass focuses on improving your financial literacy, so you understand how to assess your business's financial performance and financial standing.

**Participants will learn how to read and interpret commonly used financial reports, such as an income statement and a balance sheet, and undertake fundamental financial analysis to evaluate your business's financial health.**

Participants will also learn the importance of cash flow management and how to undertake cash flow forecasts as part of managing the liquidity of your business.

This masterclass is designed as a hands-on session where participants will have an opportunity to apply the concepts covered to a real farm business case study.

The content of the masterclass will be aligned to the regulations set in the Wine Grapes Industry Act.



**Dr Michael Browne, PhD**

Michael is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Business School of the University of Adelaide. Michael was previously a partner of a Big 4 accounting firm, where he advised private and family businesses on issues including management, strategy, corporate finance, taxation and accounting compliance. Michael's clients were in a broad range of industries, including many in wine and grape growing. Since retiring from practice, Michael has conducted further study and research into family business, completing his Bachelor of Business (Honours) in 2015, and PhD on family businesses in 2022, where he focused on the business models of family wine businesses.

## Masterclass 03

# Legal aspects of the Grape and Wine Industry and How to Harness the Law to Withstand and Emerge from crises

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This masterclass will explore how commercial law impacts upon farming businesses, particularly those operating within the grape and wine industry.

**Specifically, it will focus on the practical and legal measures these businesses can implement to avoid unwanted liability and to better prepare for, withstand, and emerge stronger from shocks and crisis events.**

Topics to be covered include contracting issues (for growers and wineries, such as for grape purchase agreements), legal safeguards and risk management, taxation liability and strategies, navigating the sale of goods (grapes) and securities legislation, competition and consumer law, and the ACCC's review of the wine grape industry.



**Dr Mark Giancaspro, LLB (Hons.), LP, PhD**

Mark is a Senior Lecturer and practising commercial lawyer at the University of Adelaide Law School. He holds an honours degree in Laws and Legal Practice from Flinders University and a PhD from the University of Adelaide. His teaching and research expertise are in contract law, competition and consumer law and sports law. He provides training and advice to domestic and international commercial law firms and is a member of the Law Council of Australia, the Australian Commercial Law Association and the International Association of Consumer Law.

## Masterclass 04

# Succession and Forward Planning- Answering the What, Why and How Questions

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Many farm business owners will face the issue of succession or exit (i.e., ownership transition) over the next decade. The successful transition of farm businesses is critical for the financial and psychological well-being of the owners, their families and the communities in which they are based. Despite this, available statistics suggest many are unprepared for this event, either because of uncertainty about preparing for transition or avoiding the associated financial, legal and family complexities.

**In this masterclass, participants will learn more about the transition options available to farm business owners.**

This includes understanding the different aspects of succession planning, developing, and evaluating the capabilities required for the NextGen of the family to assume leadership and ownership responsibilities, and the common challenges faced and how to address them. The masterclass also outlines alternative forward and exit options available to farm business owners.

A guest speaker who has recently undergone a transition event will share their journey, including tips for others when planning for this critical stage of the lifecycle of the business.



**Assoc. Prof. Chris Graves PhD**

Chris is a Chartered Accountant, Head of the Entrepreneurship discipline and Director of the Family Business Education and Research Group [FBERG] at the University of Adelaide Business School. Chris has 'real life' experience in working with family businesses as an accountant in public practice, and through consulting work for KPMG Australia. Chris is a recognised leader in the family business community, serving as an ambassador for the Family Business Association (FBA) and the academic director and facilitator of FBA's Advisor Accreditation program.

## Masterclass 05

# Adopting Technology to Enable Business Transformation

Adoption of technology can mean many things to Agricultural businesses, from building a functional website and using cloud-based accounting right through to deep AgTech solutions such as automation, Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning, and blockchain technology.

**Whatever the size of the business, or where it sits in the agricultural supply chain, for successful digital adoption in the ag sector, business owners need to understand how technology can impact their business and how to leverage it for success.**

This masterclass will assist you to assess your business and support its growth by identifying specific technology interventions which will enable progress.



**Dr Adrian Johnston, PhD**

Adrian is the CTO and Co-Founder of Xamin\*, an AI startup focused on business AI adoption. He has led AI product development at GamerAI for E-Sports and LifeWhisperer for IVF outcomes. Adrian holds a PhD from the Australian Institute for Machine Learning (University of Adelaide), teaches AI for Business at Adelaide Business School, and is the Tech Expert at ThinkLab..



**Dr. Tanya Jane, PhD**

Tanya completed her PhD at the University of Adelaide, studying the genetic causes of Alzheimer's disease. After a career shift during the pandemic, she co-founded Xamin, an Adelaide-based startup making AI accessible to businesses and scientists across Australia. Tanya has also supported the University of Adelaide's startup incubator, ThinkLab, and engages with the entrepreneurial community, rural business leaders, and the public



## Masterclass 06

# Personal and Business Wellbeing

In our new world of continuous disruption, high expectation, and managing increasingly complex stakeholder groups, and trade and environmental factors, our ability to monitor and manage our personal and business wellbeing is often challenged.

**Key topics covered concerning personal wellbeing include definitions, early warning signs of changes in wellbeing and ways to support your wellbeing. Additionally, this masterclass focuses on business wellbeing and leading wellbeing in your business.**

Participants will leave with practical personalised plans they can use to assist with their self-care, and personal and business wellbeing.



**Assoc. Prof. Melissa Oxlad, BA(Hons), M.Psych (Clin & Hlth), PhD**

Melissa is the Program Director of the Master of Psychology (Health) at the University of Adelaide. Additionally, she is a registered Clinical and Health Psychologist with extensive experience supporting individuals and families to optimise health and wellbeing. Her research explores health and wellbeing and health-related education. Melissa is the Editor in Chief of *Australian Psychologist* and the author of more than 75 publications.



**Lorraine Caruso MBA (UoA), GAICD**

Lorraine is the MBA Online Director and Course Coordinator for Fundamentals of Leadership in the Executive MBA at the University of Adelaide. A seasoned business leader, she has held roles including CEO, National Operations, National Sales and Marketing, Corporate HR Manager, and Board Chair. Lorraine helps organisations strengthen strategy, governance, leadership, operations, stakeholder engagement, and team development.

## Masterclass 07

# Building Strong Relationships with Customers through Unique Brand Stories, Communication, and Community Engagement

This masterclass introduces participants to three overarching topics related to cultivating and developing strong relationships with existing and new customers. This includes identifying unique and distinctive brand stories, understanding how to effectively communicate and share those stories, and how to identify and facilitate connections with potential customers through community engagement\*.

**The masterclass will begin with a discussion on the importance of identifying and developing unique brand stories to share through effective storytelling practices.**

We will then cover different communication strategies and platforms available to share these stories with potential customers. Lastly, we will cover the importance of community engagement\* to identify and connect with a new or existing portfolio of customers.

\*The community engagement component can be tailored for each cohort through utilisation of guest speakers from each regional area.



**Assoc. Prof. Armando Maria Corsi, PhD**

Armando is the Director of the Wine Business Group at the University of Adelaide, specialising in consumer behaviour research on wine and premium foods. He has led major projects, including tracking the Chinese wine market and enhancing wine education for Asian consumers. His work also explores perceptions of Australian wine and its competitors in the US and UK.



**Assoc. Prof. Rebecca Dolan, PhD**

Rebecca is an Associate Professor of Wine Business and Marketing at The University of Adelaide Business School, and the Associate Dean (International) of the Faculty of Arts, Business, Law and Economics (ABLE) at the University of Adelaide. Rebecca is also the Program Director of Wine Business and Marketing at the University of Adelaide. Rebecca's expertise centres on the intricacies of customer relationships, engagement strategies and digital communication.

## Masterclass 08

# Need help? Navigating the Landscape of Resources and Advice Available to Farm Businesses

Government at the local, state, and federal levels make a range of resources and advice available to farm business owners to assist them in managing and growing their farm business.

In addition, industry associations and private providers also provide assistance. The challenge is navigating this landscape of available resources and advice to find the help you need when you need it.

**This masterclass provides a broad overview of the range of resources and advice available to farm business owners. The masterclass will also offer valuable strategies for cutting through the complexity to find and access the resources and assistance you need when you need it.**



**Nerissa Kilvert, Small Business Commissioner  
LLB, BBehavSc, Dip Proj Mgt**

Nerissa Kilvert has been the South Australian Small Business Commissioner since 2021. The role of Small Business Commissioner includes facilitating the resolution of complaints, alternative dispute resolution for business disputes, providing information to small businesses and advocating on their behalf. Nerissa has significant leadership experience and management expertise.

# Business Health Check Overview



**RURAL BUSINESS  
SUPPORT**

In collaboration with the University of Adelaide Business School, Rural Business Support (RBS) will help participants translate the theory explored in various masterclasses into practical strategies for their own businesses or situations, guiding them in developing a clear, actionable plan on a page.

**RBS will be available to assist participants on training days and can also provide support outside of these sessions, either in person or online.**



**Facilitator: Tim Modra, Agribusiness Coach**

Tim is a highly experienced agribusiness coach and qualified Rural Financial Counsellor, dedicated to supporting primary producers through his work at Rural Business Support.

With a Bachelor of Science and a Master's in Agricultural Business Management, Tim has a strong technical foundation and a deep understanding of rural financial management. His career spans a broad range of agricultural industries, including viticulture, livestock, cropping, and horticulture. He has also worked in agribusiness finance across both commercial and not-for-profit sectors, equipping him with valuable insights into financial sustainability for farming businesses.

Tim's practical, hands-on approach and extensive industry knowledge make him a trusted resource for primary producers looking to strengthen their financial position and build long-term resilience.

# Dedicated Mentors Overview



**Government  
of South Australia**

Department of Primary  
Industries and Regions

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## **Family and Business (FaB) mentors will be available throughout the program.**

As part of the GrowStrong program FaB mentors will guide participants through the evaluation process at the beginning and the end of the program. Participants will be assigned a FaB mentor who will complete an independent review of the plan on a page to ensure that it and the program have achieved the intended outcomes (as required by the funding organisation).

**The PIRSA initiated FaB Mentor service has been established to support SA farmers and rural communities during challenging times, such as drought, severe floods or storms, fruit fly outbreaks, bushfire events or other adversities.**

FaB Mentors are experienced individuals that will listen and help you find ways to manage your situation. Mentors liaise with government and non-government service providers and can help you provide connections to services including:

- Funding and support measures available to primary producers
- Financial counselling
- Local health networks
- Emotional wellbeing and counselling services
- Government and non-government assistance
- Community organisations and assistance

**Our immersive training experiences are packed with practical tools and invaluable knowledge that will equip your viticulture business to meet the demands of grape growing for the immediate and long term future.**

**Spaces are Limited - Reserve Yours Today!**

For inquiries and registrations, visit our website at:

<https://www.wgcsa.com.au/growstrong-2025.html>

or contact us at:

[projects@wgcsa.com.au](mailto:projects@wgcsa.com.au)

Join The GrowStrong Program and make the most of this unique opportunity.

This program is supported by the Wine Grape Council of South Australia, through funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and the Government of South Australia.