

# **Management Consulting Resources For Small Businesses**

## **Business Information Center**

The Business Information Center (BIC) provides assistance to current and future entrepreneurs with issues ranging from business planning and financing to marketing and management.

The center offers a reference library with books, videos and computer access, seminars and workshops and counseling.

There is no charge for using any of these services offered and you may visit as often you like Monday through Friday. For more information, contact your local SBA office.

## **Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)**

SCORE, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, is a 13,000member volunteer association sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Since 1964, the association has matched volunteer business management counselors with clients in need of expert advice. SCORE has experts in virtually every area of business management and maintains a national skills roster to help identify the best counselor for a particular client.

Volunteer counselors share their management and technical expertise with both present and prospective small business owners. SCORE volunteers are members of 388 locally organized chapters offering assistance in almost 800 locations throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam.

Every effort is made to match a client's needs with a counselor who is experienced in a comparable line of business. All individual and team SCORE counseling is free; there may be a nominal fee for training workshops and seminars.

Through in-depth counseling and training, SCORE volunteers help prospective and established small business owners and managers identify problems, determine the causes and find solutions.

SCORE chapters offer low-cost pre-business workshops that address topics like assessing entrepreneurial potential, developing a startup checklist, selecting a legal entity, creating a business plan and securing funding. SCORE counselors also help successful firms review their distribution channels, survey expansion, modify products and meet other business challenges.

Other workshops offer experienced business owners information on a myriad of subjects, including starting a home-based business, purchasing a franchise, defining a marketing

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and advertising strategy, implementing a waste reduction plan, setting merchandise prices and beginning an exporting venture.

Any small business can obtain help from SCORE. The approach is confidential and personal. You don't need to be applying for or to have an SBA loan to participate in the program.

### **Small Business Development Centers**

The SBDC network is recognized as one of the finest business outreach programs of its kind in the nation. The SBA provides 50 percent or less of the operating funds for each state SBDC.

General business education, such a management development, technical information and marketing assistance form the bulk of SBDC services. These business education services are offered via one-on-one counseling as well as regularly scheduled training seminars.

The mission of the SBDC network is made up of the following element

- To support entrepreneurship and business expansion through educational opportunities that cover human resources, management, technology, capital formation and infrastructure needs of the business community.
- To address regional economic development needs for information by providing applied economic development research to communities and regions.
- To assist in the expansion of international trade primarily by educating new exporters who need assistance in all elements of exporting.
- To deliver in-house managerial and employee training targeted especially to businesses which have difficulty obtaining affordable training.
- To facilitate the creation of economic development leadership groups that focus on the creation, retention and expansion of business.
- To provide special attention to the needs of minority entrepreneurs by identifying procurement opportunities, locating sources of capital and supporting outreach efforts of historically black colleges and universities
- To assist existing businesses in taking advantage of state and local incentives for job creation, employee training and other expansion efforts.