



# SPD Gazette

Week of October 30th, 2006  
Issue 8

## Processes

**“What are your key processes?” “How are they related to customer requirements and satisfaction?”** These are questions you might hear from the Accreditation Review Team member that visits your center.

A process is a series of actions that enable the individual and organization to deal with something in a routine way. A documented process describes how you do things. You define a process by identifying the components and organizing them in a meaningful way. Here is an example of a process.

Answering the phone is a key process for the SBDC and is important to customer satisfaction. Though you may see it as minor, it is one of the ways our clients (customers) measure our performance. Here are the steps:

- ***Answer the phone within 3 rings.***
- ***Identify yourself and the organization courteously and in a friendly manner.***
- ***Listen to the caller to determine what he or she needs.***
- ***Ask questions if necessary to clarify the caller's request.***
- ***Consult resource lists if necessary.***
- ***Provide information or refer the caller to an appropriate contact.***
- ***Ask if the caller needs any other information.***
- ***Say goodbye and hang up the phone or transfer the caller to an appropriate person.***

This is a process. It may be simple, but it is important. Consider how a client would feel if the phone rang and rang, or went unanswered. A client's first phone call to the organization will probably shape his or her impression of the SBDC. If your phone interaction with a client meets or exceeds his or her expectations, you'll make a positive impression that might be the basis of a long and continuing relationship. It may even lead to word-of-mouth referrals to friends and relatives, and ultimately to more clients for the SBDC.

**What other key processes are there?** Think about the processes that you use every day. How can you improve the steps you take to do your job more effectively? What impact will the improvement have on customer satisfaction? How do they affect the SBDC as a whole?

## Do You Have a Question About Strategic Planning?

### Do You Have a Question About SBDC's Strategic Planning Process?

At the director's retreat, the Committee fielded several questions from directors regarding the strategic planning process. If you have any questions, send them via email to [spd@mercy.edu](mailto:spd@mercy.edu), and a member of the Committee will answer it in the next issue of the Gazette.

## What's New This Week

### » Marketing

The **Stony Brook SBDC director** coordinated a display of SBDC brochures and insignia at the Community Library Fair. Approximately 100 attendees surveyed the literature and considered starting their own business.

A **Farmingdale SBDC Advisor** participated in a panel discussion and spoke about starting a business at an event held at the Brookhaven Public Library. Panelists included the SBDC Advisor, SBA Regional Administrator Norman Hunt, and a representative from the Long Island Development Center. The panel focused on services provided to aspiring entrepreneurs by government agencies in the area.

A **Stony Brook SBDC Advisor** moderated a panel of experts on the subject of "Blogging As Part Of Your Publicity Campaign". This workshop was part of a full day media event which attracted newspeople from radio, TV, and the Internet. It provided a forum for small business owners to learn how to promote and draw positive media attention to the small business community.

A **Farmingdale SBDC Advisor** represented the SBDC at a community civic event organized by State Senator Charles Fuschillo. Participants included representatives from community groups, civic organizations, government agencies (local, state, and federal), and more than 2,000 local residents.

### » Sponsors, Host Institutions, Partners and Alliances

The **Director of the Farmingdale SBDC** met with the local representative of the U.S. Department of Commerce. During this meeting it was discovered that the DOC was looking for office space. The director coordinated the effort to make incubator space on campus available at a slightly discounted cost to the DOC. The campus accepted the offer and the DOC is expected to take the space.

The newest **Business Advisor at Stony Brook SBDC** attended the US SBA New York district office's workshop called "Are you making good use of your 8(a), HUB Zone, SDB Certification? How to do business with the Federal Government" on October 25th, at 26 Federal Plaza in NYC. The advisor shared the information at a staff meeting and the workshop information was added to the Stony Brook SBDC library for advisor's reference.

### » Technology

The **SBDC at Farmingdale** hosted a joint staff meeting with the **SBDC at Stony Brook** via video-conferencing technology to discuss processes and best practices. The directors reported that it was interesting to review the similarities and differences in processes at the two centers.

The **SBDC at Farmingdale** had three new computers installed with the latest Microsoft software.

## » Professional Development & Staff Retention

The **2007 Staff Training event** will be hosted by the Binghamton and Mohawk Valley regional centers in early May in Binghamton. Each year SBDC staff from around the state meet to attend educational sessions, share best practices, and network with colleagues. The host directors and Professional Development Committee are working together to put together a program. Several advisors have volunteered to work on a Program Planning Committee, identifying speakers and organizing the schedule of sessions.

## About the Gazette

The SPD Gazette is a brief newsletter distributed via email and posted on the Internal Web Site. It will feature a column to be titled, *What's New This Week*, in which the network will share best practices in strategic objectives. A series of articles in the Gazette will explain the program's statewide approach to strategic objectives in six key areas:

- **Marketing**
- **Professional Development and Certification**
- **Program Development: Products and Services**
- **Special Projects**
- **Strategic Partners and Alliances**
- **Technology, Information and Communication**

For more information or answers to your questions, call Tom Morley at **914-375-2107** or email him at [SPD@Mercy.edu](mailto:SPD@Mercy.edu)

**Send your report forms to [SPD@mercy.edu](mailto:SPD@mercy.edu)**