

ASBDC ACCREDITATION STANDARDS
New York SBDC
October 21-25, 2002

1.0 Leadership and Organizational Issues

1.1 Status and Recognition

1.1.1 Leadership System

The SBDC leadership system creates an environment in which state directors and other program leaders:

- Establish a clear focus on customers and stakeholders that sets and communicates direction and considers stakeholders.
- Routinely communicate and reinforce values and performance expectations.
- Maintain a climate conducive to learning in which people who deliver services are being trained and systematically learn from local, state and national SBDC organizational knowledge.
- Establish and reinforce an environment for employee empowerment and stimulate learning and innovation.
- Encourage and support organizational and employee learning.
- Participate and use results of feedback from employees, customers, clients and stakeholders.
- Use a system to nurture individuals to be future leaders in the system.

Comments

The NY SBDC is a large, mature program. Its leadership system, including the State Director, lead center staff and field network center directors, are highly motivated and committed to the SBDC. There is a clear focus on customers and stakeholders, active communications, adequate feedback systems and a commitment to learning.

The standard is met.

1.1.2 Organizational Performance Review

SBDC leaders should systematically set direction, address current and future opportunities, communicate and deploy performance expectations.

SBDC leaders should systematically review performance to understand the health of the organization and to enable translation of performance findings into priorities for improvement and innovation.

Comments

The SBDC's leadership sets clear direction and effectively communicates expectations. Performance of the network is systematically reviewed.

The standard is met.

1.1.3 State Director Reporting Relationship

The SBDC Director within an educational institution must report to the school or college dean or an equivalent or higher level administrator. In a non-educational organization, the SBDC Director must report to an individual who is no lower than the third level of management or administration within the host institution or agency.

Comments

The State Director reports to Dr. Rick Steiner, Senior Associate Provost, System Administration for the State University of New York. The Director also interacts regularly with other senior level administrators at the system offices.

The standard is met.

1.1.4 Budget

The SBDC must have a separate budget and identity and must not be an indistinguishable part of a larger unit. The SBDC must demonstrate that it has systems and structure capable of overseeing and managing its budgets. The SBDC state director must be in control of these budgets.

Comments

The SBDC has a separate, identifiable budget. It has appropriate systems and review procedures in place to effectively overseeing and managing the budget.

The standard is met.

1.1.5 Direct Funding Support

Support for the SBDC should be demonstrated by the direct funding from either state or local government and the SBDC network, including the host institution, a private foundation or the private sector. The SBDC must document that there is direct match from eligible sources.

Comments

The SBDC has reasonable direct funding support through the SUNY system as a State line item within the University's U-Wide budget that meet funding requirements. Additional direct funding support is provided by host institution matching funds. The SBDC also receives occasional direct supplemental funding through the legislature, host counties, foundations and the private sector.

The standard is met.

Recommendation

Changes in the level of SBA funding for the NY SBDC resulted from the 2000 Census. The reduction in SBA funding for the SBDC has been masked by the receipt of supplemental funding to respond to the 9/11 disaster. The SBDC should develop and communicate to its host institution and network a plan for future funding which recognizes the reduced level of funding to be provided by SBA.

A second recommendation is that the SBDC revisit its current practice of allowing from 5% to 15% of host institution administrators' salaries to be used as part of its match at each field center. At minimum, the SBDC should assure that this approach is audit permissible and can be documented.

1.1.6 Chief Administrator Support

The SBDC must show that the participating institutions and the chief administrators understand and support the SBDC and that the SBDC has become an acknowledged component of the participating institutions' educational and/or economic development efforts.

Comments

There is ample evidence that the Chancellor of the SUNY system is well aware of and supportive of the SBDC.

The standard is met.

1.2 Network Delivery System

Organizational Structure

1.2.1 The SBDC's organizational structure must be consistent with the SBDC's mission, goals and funding ability. The SBDC must be capable of supporting the strategic plan and show that staff deployment is consistent to effectively support the SBDC.

Comments

The lead center and field network are adequate to support an effective SBDC program. The Review Team has concerns with respect to “span of control” issues arising from having 23 regional centers and five to six lead center staff reporting to the State Director. While other senior staff at the lead center support the State Director and regularly interact with field offices, they do not have direct field oversight roles.

The standard is met.

Recommendation

The Team highly recommends that the NY SBDC revisit its lead center staffing and possible expanded delegations of authority to staff as appropriate to reduce the number of direct reports to the State Director.

1.2.2 The SBDC director must demonstrate sufficient authority, communication and oversight over all SBDC units as established by contractual arrangement or agreements. The lead center should demonstrate the availability of sufficient resources to manage the SBDC. The director should also justify the overall structure of his/her SBDC. There must be evidence of an open and effective communication process throughout the network.

Comments

The State Director has sufficient authority and oversight of all units of the SBDC.

The standard is met.

1.3 Advisory Boards

1.3.1 Advisory Boards shall represent the service area and shall be composed of a predominant number (greater than 50 percent) of small business owners and representatives of the small business community.

Comments

The SBDC has an active Board comprised of a majority of small business owners.

The standard is met.

1.3.2 While optional, where centers have established local advisory boards, their membership shall be composed predominately (greater than 50 percent) of small business owners and representatives of the small business community.

Comments

Local boards are not required.

The standard is met.

2.0 Strategic Planning

2.1 Strategy Development—build into planning

The SBDC must have a written strategic plan and evidence its use in guiding the SBDC's future development and current operations. Development of the plan should be a systematic process that assembles and evaluates customer and stakeholder needs, the operating environment, risk, SBDC capabilities, vision and mission and employee input. The strategic plan should include, but not be limited to, the following areas of concern:

- Vision for the future
- Role of the SBDC in its state's economic development effort
- Objectives of SBA, the host institution and other funding partners
- Role of the SBDC within host institutions
- A list of services offered by the SBDC, including
 - Focus of services relative to customer needs
 - The proportion of resources allocated to each service
- Quality improvement and control system
- Short- and long-term goals
- Integration of appropriate elements of the national delivery system program into the operation of the system
- Meeting certification standards
- Specific schedules for implementation of (*action plans*) specific strategies and/or objectives for providing professional quality basic services along with the responsible office(s). Action plans should include measures, targets, schedules and resource allocation.

There should be evidence that the strategic plan is being utilized to guide the program and evidence of input and design from all levels of program staff.

Comments

The SBDC has a written strategic plan, which meets the requirements of the ASBDC standards. The plan is used to guide the program.

The standard is met.

2.2 Strategic Planning Process

The SBDC must have a systematic process that is used to drive appropriate changes in the program. Changes should be based on a systematic analysis of internal and external factors.

The process should determine:

- Long-term strategy (2-5 years)
- Short-term goals (12 months or less); these goals should be aligned with and prioritized from long-term strategy.
- Action plans

The process should involve:

- State director and cross section of the SBDC network
- The district director's input where SBA's needs are considered in the process.
- The process should result in written documentation describing the needs of key stakeholders (SBA, State, etc.).

Comments

The plan was systematically developed. This included broad based opportunities for input from the entire SBDC network.

The standard is met.

2.3 The Strategic Plan

The strategic plan must address and contain:

- Vision of the future.
- Identified markets (customers) and delivery of key services to those markets.
- Clear identification of strategic objectives with short-term goals to meet strategic objectives.
- Specific schedules for implementation of action plans, specific strategies and objectives for providing professional quality basic services. Action plans should include targets, measures, timelines, required resources and individuals or offices that are responsible.

Comments

The plan meets the requirements of the standards. Strategic objectives are clearly identified, goals are set and timelines and responsibility for action are in place.

The standard is met.

2.4 Strategic Plan Deployment

- The strategic plan must be deployed throughout the network. If there is a separate operating plan, there should be evidence that the operating plan is in alignment with the strategic plan and other management decisions and policies.
- There must be evidence of an effort to meet action item deadlines.
- There must be evidence that persons at all levels of the organization have an understanding and commitment to their role in the strategic plan.
- There should be a systematic process to track and monitor progress and make changes as necessary.

Comments

The plan is effectively deployed across the SBDC network. There is regular review of progress against the plan at both the lead center and in the field.

The standard is met.

3.0 Client and Stakeholder Focus

3.1 Knowledge of Client Needs and Expectations

The SBDC should demonstrate it has a systematic process or processes to analyze the needs of its small business community. Further, the SBDC must demonstrate it utilized the results of the analyses to develop and deliver programs to meet identified needs. The needs analysis need not be a formal research effort, nor must it be a state or regional-wide analysis. It must, however, be designed so as to obtain information from relevant public, private and education institutions, as well as from owners of small businesses, in order to identify and develop valuable services for the SBDC to offer.

Research on client needs and expectations should include a systematic process for gaining customers' knowledge that:

- Uses multiple listening posts.
- Determines key customer requirements.
- Determines product/service features of most importance to customers.

Comments

The SBDC employs multiple approaches, both formal and informal to assess client needs. Results of these are used to guide the development and delivery of services.

The standard is met.

3.2 Stakeholder Satisfaction and Relationship Enhancement

3.2.1 Stakeholder Feedback.

There must be a system to provide financial and other supporters of the SBDC with the results of the SBDC's efforts. This should include, but is not limited to, the following: SBA District Office, host institution, state government, Congressional offices, and other financial supporters.

Research on stakeholder satisfaction and relationship enhancement should determine the drivers of stakeholder funding decisions to enable analysis and appropriate actions. At a minimum the SBDC should:

- Gather information on stakeholder relationships and satisfaction.
- Analyze data collected and draw conclusions.
- Act on conclusions and align to actions

Comments

The SBDC clearly identifies key stakeholders at both the state and local levels. It routinely interacts with these for their input and provides them with effective feedback on SBDC performance.

The standard is met.

4.0 Program Performance Standards

4.1 Analysis and Review of Performance

4.1.1 Internal Evaluation System

There should be an internal evaluation system within the SBDC that, at a minimum, monitors each of these standards and provides (where appropriate) for corrective action. This monitoring system should be institutionalized within the SBDC. The lead center must undertake oversight and evaluation activities consistent with a continuous improvement and total quality management approach. A system of center reviews and corrective action follow-up should be in place. The lead center must develop standards relative to the cost of counseling and training which should be tied to the strategic plan.

Comments

The NY SBDC has one of the more extensive internal evaluation systems in the country. This system is well understood and is clearly used to monitor and evaluate performance.

The standard is met.

4.1.2 Development of a Performance Measurement System

There should be clear definition of performance measurements to enable all staff to understand their need to measure and pace performance. Measurement should be in place in the following areas:

- Quality of products and service.
- Customer and client satisfaction.
- Budget management and results achieved from expenditures.
- Achievement of strategy.

Key strategy should have measures that enable understanding if the strategy is being accomplished as planned.

Comments

The SBDC's direct performance measurement system is detailed. This includes a weighted averaging system which ranks field center performance. Elements of the performance management system might be considered best practices with the national SBDC program.

The standard is met.

4.1.3 Cost Effectiveness and Economic Impact

The SBDC management should have a system of measuring and tracking cost effectiveness and impact of the program. The SBDC should participate in the periodic national SBDC impact surveys. Additionally, state economic impact studies should be developed as necessary to ensure state-based comparison capability for the SBDC.

Comments

The SBDC's performance measurement system includes both cost effectiveness and economic impact components. While this system is effective, the Review Team is concerned that only the capital formation related activity of the field network is counted as contributing economic impact. Clearly, the SBDC has broader economic impact or certainly should since capital formation activity accounts for only a portion of SBDC services. As important, capital formation performance is the only portion of SBDC services included in the weighted averaging system of ranking for centers – again only a portion of what they actually do.

The standard is met.

4.1.4 At a minimum, SBDCs will record the number of requests to which they respond as information transfer actions.

Comments

The SBDC records the number of information requests.

The standard is met.

5.0 Staff and Counselor Utilization

5.1 Work Systems

The staffing pattern of the SBDC must be adequate in size and must be appropriately organized to effectively manage the program. Standard management functions of grants and budget management, program development, monitoring quality control, MIS management and others are organized by the lead center. Many SBDCs utilize an associate/assistant director to meet the requirement to effectively manage the program. Typically, SBDCs include sub-center directors. Neither position is required, but the SBDC must demonstrate that the staffing pattern is appropriate and adequate. The SBDC and each of its centers and specialty programs must have in place explicit processes for assignment and monitoring of workload in order to deliver services in the most efficient and effective manner possible. These processes should be consistent with the focus of services contained in the strategic plan. All of the resources described in this section must be considered in light of the overall staffing pattern and the effectiveness of the SBDC, as currently organized, to achieve the goals of its strategic plan. The following describes the general responsibilities and knowledge base of personnel in the SBDC.

5.1.1 State/Regional Director.

The State/Regional Director should have at minimum a master's degree in business or other directly related field and exhibit progressively responsible experience or have appropriate business or administrative experience which demonstrates the knowledge and abilities required to: (1) direct, coordinate and manage a multi-faceted, multi-location business development program; (2) direct, coordinate and manage human and administrative resources; (3) understand the full range of business development and business management methods; and (4) demonstrate skills in establishing and maintaining effective support and working relationships with a variety of public and private stakeholder partners that are needed for a successful SBDC.

The salary of the SBDC director should at a minimum be comparable to annualized average salary of a full professor in the institution hosting the SBDC or parallel positions in the agency/organization hosting the SBDC and the area it services.

Comments

The State Director is long tenured and highly qualified for his position. He is recognized as a leader within the national SBDC program. The Director's salary is low compared

with that of the Directors of other leading SBDCs. It is also low given the budget and organizational size and complexity found at the NY SBDC.

The standard is met.

Recommendation

The Review Team strongly encourages senior administration at SUNY-Central review the compensation level of the State Director and make appropriate upward adjustments.

The Team also recommends that the SBDC, perhaps with SUNY-Central assistance, undertake a review of compensation and benefits of staff across its network to assess where changes might be needed.

5.1.2 Associate/Assistant State Director

Associate/assistant state director should have substantial relevant work experience and education in the area that they will be responsible (e.g., administrative, MIS, specific programmatic responsibilities, etc.). The SBDC associate/assistant state director should have as a minimum a degree in business or another appropriate field.

The salary of the SBDC associate/assistant should be comparable to the annualized salary of an associate/assistant professor in the business school or the equivalent in a state agency.

Comments

The SBDC's Associate State Director has been with the SBDC for a number of years. She has requisite skills and qualifications for a large part of her responsibilities but does not have the business related experience needed to be fully effective in interactions with field centers.

The standard is met.

Recommendation

The Review Team recommends that a professional development plan be implemented to help build and enhance the business management skills of the Associate Director and other lead center administrators. The objective of this would be to better position lead center staff in their oversight and supervisory roles with field center directors – all of whom are broadly experienced.

5.1.3 Center Director.

The SBDC center director should have as a minimum a master's degree in business or another appropriate field and/or appropriate business or administrative experience which

demonstrates the knowledge and ability to: (1) direct, manage and market a program to a geographically dispersed client base; (2) apply business management principles, practices and techniques; (3) design small business education programs; (4) identify problem areas within a small business; (5) develop diversified outreach assistance programs; (6) leverage outside public and private sector resources; and (7) measure and evaluate impact of program delivery.

The salary of the SBDC center director should be comparable to annualized salaries established for similar positions in the area served by that particular center with comparable responsibility. In education institutions, a suggested level to consider is that of the annualized salary of an assistant professor, taking also into consideration the longevity of the director in the program and the professional background of the person who would occupy that position.

Comments

All of the center directors appeared to be well qualified for their positions. A large number have been employed with the SBDC network for a number of years.

The standard is met.

5.1.4 Other SBDC Professional Staff.

Business advisors/counselors, research assistants, program directors, etc. should have appropriate qualifications and experience. Salaries should be comparable to similar positions in the host organization.

Comments

All but one staff member interviewed appeared to be qualified for their positions. Many business advisors have significant business and SBDC experience. Network staff appear engaged and committed to their work.

The standard is met.

5.1.5 Volunteers.

Where called for in the strategic plan, a portion of SBDC services should be provided by appropriately qualified volunteers, including business firms, associations and SCORE.

Comments

The SBDC network makes effective use of volunteers. Most of these are involved in training or on the Advisory Board.

The standard is met.

5.1.6 Approach for Effective Use of Education Institutions and Host Capability

SBDCs should have a focused direction, with documentation, for using host capability. This is likely to include but is not limited to the faculty, students, etc, including both undergraduate and graduate.

SBDC's should provide for a utilization plan and documentation of the use of faculty, students and the unique resources of the host educational institution. The service philosophy of the SBDC should encourage the inclusion of these unique resources in their service delivery plan.

In non-educational host institutions, there should be a plan and documentation of the use of the unique resources available within the host institution. In addition, in the education component of these networks, there should be a plan in place and evidence of utilization of unique education resources.

Comments

Limited use of faculty was found across the network. Most faculty involvement is as instructors of training events. Student involvement was more broadly evidenced. Most centers, including community college centers, had interns (credit and/or assistantship based). At some centers, student involvement was significant. Student work, of course, needs to be well supervised but the involvement of students provides a strong connection to the university/college educational mission and can strengthen the connectivity between the SBDC centers and their hosts.

The standard is met.

5.1.7 Fee Paid Private Sector Consultants.

There should be documentation of the utilization of private sector consultants in the strategic plan.

Comments

Limited, but appropriate, use of fee-paid consultants was found.

The standard is met.

5.1.8 Networking of Private Sector Resources and Public Entities.

To foster broad development and delivery of small business assistance services and to avoid duplication of effort, there should be evidence of extensive networking, linkages, cooperation and integration with the chambers of commerce, business and trade associations and economic development entities, etc.

Comments

Both the lead center and field network centers have extensive interactions with the private sector and public entities. This has led to supplemental funding and to improved collaboration and cooperation among economic development resources.

The standard is met.

5.2 Professional Development

Counselor and Staff Development

The SBDC should have a formal, implemented, professional development program tied to the strategic plan. The program should include:

- ongoing staff education and professional growth.
- explicit provision for a commitment to National Delivery System training.
- a formal training/orientation program for new counselors.

Comments

The SBDC has a formal professional development program. This fully satisfies the requirements of this standard. Many field staff, however, expressed interest in being afforded opportunities for expanded professional development.

The standard is met.

Recommendation

The Review Team would encourage the SBDC to enhance its current professional development system by requiring that all staff develop a brief professional development plan each year in consultation with their supervisors. This will provide important information about staff training needs and better enable the SBDC to be responsive to staff training interest.

6.0 Process Management

6.1 Education Design and Delivery

6.1.1 Counseling

Client counseling is a core SBDC service. Counseling records should indicate high-quality counseling. Procedures to preserve confidentiality should be in use. Clients should receive timely counseling. The SBDC should:

- a) evaluate the quantity and quality of counseling
- b) analyze the quality and impact of counseling
- c) relate counseling activity to the strategic plan
- d) provide counselor-based client feedback

Comments

Business counseling is the priority of the SBDC. Strong counseling levels were found across the network. Evidence of reasonable to high quality counseling was found as well. Written case documentation through the SBDC's MIS system is adequate but case file organization was inconsistent. It does not appear that lead center staff review case files during field center visits, relying instead on the written narratives in the MIS system. Doing so misses much of the richness of counselor-client interactions evidenced in written and electronic communication.

The standard is met.

Recommendation

The Review Team recommends that the SBDC adopt a more systematic approach to case file organization and case documentation. It is also recommended that periodic file reviews be undertaken to enhance quality assurance.

6.1.2 Training and Education

Management education and training is a core SBDC service. A system for evaluating quantity and quality of educational activities should be in use. The reports from the SBDC network, interviews with participants and review of business education programs should indicate programs of high quality that are meeting the needs of the small business community. A basis for decisions made in developing educational programs should be provided. This should relate training activities to the strategic plan for the resources used to conduct training. Provide documentation of an evaluation and assessment system for educational and training activities.

Comments

A reasonable level of good, quality training activity was found across the network. External resources are routinely leveraged to participate directly as instructors and as sponsors. Required training evaluations are used and training files are well documented.

The standard is met.

6.1.3 Special Emphasis and Special Programs

There should be additional identifiable programs (such as international trade, minority, procurement, skills assessment, etc.) that respond to the small business community needs.

The SBDC should participate, to the extent appropriate and practicable, in initiatives undertaken as a part of the National Delivery System. Reasons for specialized programs or election to participate, or not, in elements of the National Delivery System program should be explained in the context of needs assessment and the strategic plan of the SBDC.

Comments

The SBDC has a number of special programs. The larger of these include a Veterans program, a China program, an unemployed business development program known as SEAP (Self-Employment Assistance Program), and a defense conversion support program. Each of these provides supplemental funding for the SBDC. While these programs provide valuable resources and services, none only one of them have has full statewide application. The program is encouraged to seek further program expansion in existing and future specialty areas.

6.1.4 Information Dissemination

There should be identifiable programs for the purpose of establishing effective, convenient and efficient delivery of information to clients, customers, stakeholders and the general public. Staff should understand and encourage the use of the SBDC's information dissemination system.

Comments

Information is made available through websites, printed materials, reports and publications. The SBDC lead center maintains both its own website and websites for its centers. Both the lead center and field centers produce print materials and publications.

The standard is met.

6.1.5 Applied Research

There should be research projects completed or in progress that have direct benefit and service to clients and, where appropriate, that link with state, regional or local agencies or organizations that can provide this research.

Comments

The SBDC has an internal business research unit with four professionals. This unit conducts significant research on behalf of clients and the lead center.

6.2 SBDC Support Processes

a. Management of SBDC Support Processes

6.2.1 Professional Standards.

Safeguards must be established to assure confidentiality of client information, to avoid conflicts of interest and to meet other professional standards of conduct as appropriate to protect SBDC clients and agents of the host institution.

Comments

The SBDC has extensive policies and procedures with respect to professional standards of conduct, including client confidentiality and conflict of interest provisions.

The standard is met.

6.2.2 Fiscal and Contract Management

The SBDC must have in place those systems that ensure sound fiscal and contractual management of its programs. To be eligible for accreditation, the SBDC must have taken appropriate actions to correct any substantive issues identified by the latest SBA Financial Programmatic Examination.

Comments

The SBDC has reasonable systems and procedures in place to ensure sound fiscal and contractual management of its programs. The lead center and field centers are routinely audited by SUNY and pursuant to single audit procedures.

The most recent SBA Financial Examination was conducted over a three-week period (June 24-28, July 8-12, and July 22-26). A lengthy report of findings has been provided to the SBDC. The SBDC has not yet responded, so this examination remains open.

The standard is not met.

Condition

The SBDC must take corrective action to address substantive issues raised in the SBA Examination and respond to the examination report. Closure on this most recent Examination should be reached within six months.

6.2.3 Supplemental Funding Efforts/Private Sector Support

There should be evidence that attempts have been made to obtain contracts and grants, personnel, dollar, or equipment contribution from sources other than SBA. An SBDC should be able to demonstrate a strategy for seeking supplemental funding that is consistent with the SBDC strategic plan.

Comments

The SBDC lead center has been successful in raising reasonable amounts of funds from public and private sources. Local centers are able to secure sponsorship support from banks and others for training programs and events.

The standard is met.

6.2.4 Geographic Coverage.

The service delivery system, mix of and its geographic coverage must be consistent with the organizational structure and effectively relate to the changing needs of the small business community.

Comments

The current distribution of field centers allows the SBDC to provide a reasonable level of services throughout the state.

The standard is met.

6.2.5 Relationship with SBA and SBA Supported Resources

The SBDC director must demonstrate a commitment to establishing and continuing a mutually supportive relationship with the SBA through the district director having responsibility for the center's service area. The SBDC must be knowledgeable about and utilize all appropriate SBA supported resources in providing assistance to its clients.

Comments

The state of New York has three SBA District offices. The Project Officer is based in a branch office (BIC) in Albany. There appears to be a very solid relationship between the District Directors and the SBDC. The Project Officer is responsible for keeping the Districts informed and engaged. The SBDC also has a good working relationship with SCORE across the state.

The standard is met.

6.2.6 Facilities

Facilities and equipment should be adequate. Each service location should be "customer friendly," inviting the entrepreneur or small business owner to the site as a professional source of assistance.

Comments

The lead center's offices in Albany are exceptional. Facilities of the field centers are generally quite good as well – particularly given space constraints typical of growing institutions of higher education.

The standard is met.

6.2.7 Business Information and Resources.

Each office should have access to current information, statistical data and other key resource information needed by small businesses. Evidence should be readily available to demonstrate access and use of external information resources. Access to the Internet is essential.

Comments

The lead center has an excellent library. Other offices have adequate resources and all have Internet access.

The standard is met.

6.2.8 Referral to Private Sector Firms.

There should be lists of local and regional private consultants to whom small businesses can be referred or other documented methods to facilitate referral to the private sector.

Comments

Referrals are made as appropriate.

The standard is met.

6.2.9 Promotional and Public Awareness Efforts

Efforts should be documented by the SBDC to promote its programs and services to the general public and particularly to the small business community. A common brand or logo for the program must be evident throughout the state or region.

Comments

Both the lead center and field centers make extensive efforts to promote SBDC services and programs. The effectiveness of these efforts may be diminished by the limited identity of the SBDC as a statewide resource operated through the SUNY system. Also contributing is the SBDC logo which has limited recognition value and is not always consistently used.

Recommendation

The SBDC should develop and deploy a common, recognizable logo for the network. This should be complemented by a tagline which links the identity of the SBDC to its SUNY system base.

6.2.10 Materials Produced

There should be evidence of production and distribution of publications, pamphlets, brochures, audio/video aids and other materials for use by small business. Materials should convey the identity of a statewide or regional network.

Comments

Few common materials are produced by the lead center. Field centers produce a wide array of materials from brochures to helpful targeted publications. There is a significant opportunity to produce common materials such as a network-wide brochure and other standard publications (e.g. business start-up guide). These could help to build a stronger common identity for the network across the state.

The standard is met.

Recommendation

The SBDC should consider development of common materials. A number of locally produced publications could be used as a basis for this.

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