



SPD Gazette

Issue 3

Professional Development and Staff Retention

The topic of the week is professional development and retention – the second of the six core concepts of our Strategic Plan. The strategy is to:

Recognize and understand the employment environment of the Regional SBDC to better identify resources, programs and efforts that will enhance the skills of staff, improve retention of skilled staff, and continuously develop the skills, knowledge, creative and critical thinking skills of the staff. Further, develop procedures to ensure access and availability of all tools necessary to improve job performance such as computer systems and communications to minimize daily challenges to performing SBDC's mission.

The Objectives:

- Promote a management and work environment supportive and encouraging of professional development, certification, and continuous enhancement of technical and communication skills.
- Develop processes to foster work environments with high morale and job satisfaction.

- Establish recognition programs to promote awareness of the value and significance of the individual's role in helping clients to achieve success.
 - Identify training programs available and relevant to Staff and their specific work assignments or topical areas along with the resources necessary to obtain the training.
 - Develop training and developmental opportunities consistent with the guidelines and processes of statewide staff training and Advisor Certification programs.
 - Coordinate with the Professional Development Committee to develop standardized training modules, timelines and procedures to assure a consistent skill base and program understanding among staff.
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What's New This Week

Marketing - In June, the Niagara SBDC participated in the following promotional activities: The director of the SBDC conducted a presentation on "Leadership in Small Business" to Leadership Niagara. The director spoke to the Lockport Manufacturing Council about services available through the SBDC. The director participated in a networking event sponsored by the Niagara USA Chamber, speaking about SBDC services and providing a display booth to provide further information. The director spoke at the Niagara Business Expo in Niagara Falls, and coordinated a display booth to provide additional information to the prospective entrepreneurs.

Special Projects - The Niagara SBDC is updating its Small Business Fact Sheet (for local counties), Small Business Start-up Kit, and Example Loan Proposal Financial Analysis. Drafts of each of the informational guides have been completed and are ready for review. The publications provide clients with current information to assist them as they prepare for and plan for their businesses.

Sponsors, Host Institutions, Partners and Alliances - In August of 2006 the Niagara SBDC, along with other Western New York Regional SBDC Centers, renewed an alliance agreement with the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA). The agreement calls for all parties involved in the alliance to work together to provide information and training to small businesses in Western New York that seek to improve their existing safety and health programs.

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 Objectives (statewide implications)
- 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

NYS SBDC Professional Development Committee

As you may know, the program's Professional Development Committee (PDC) has been active for more than a decade. The Committee developed the Business Advisor Certification Program and works closely with host directors and program planning committees to plan the annual staff development event. The Committee Chair is Lucille Wesnofske (Farmingdale) and current members include Bill Brigham (Albany), Al Titone (York-Queens), Bonnie Gestwicki (Corning), Jan Pisanczyn (Brockport), Rick Gorko (Niagara), and Dee Clark (North Country). If you have any suggestions about training opportunities for SBDC staff, contact Lucille, or any of the Committee members.

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