



Ask SCORE for Business Advice

Seminars on Your Schedule

By Tina Dettman-Bielefeldt

Business owners are inundated with the opportunity to attend seminars. While the topics might be of great interest, it is often difficult for small business owners to break away from work. SCORE has a solution that allows you to take a seminar at your convenience.

On the national SCORE website (www.SCORE.org), entrepreneurs may select from 26 on-line courses at the virtual learning center. All seminars are free and feature topics in three areas: Starting Your Business; Managing Your Finances, and Foundations of Marketing. Spanish and English sessions are available.

In the Starting Your Business section, you can learn how to create a business plan, conduct a marketing analysis, analyze your competition, create a strategic plan, select a legal structure, maintain an agile business, and protect your business with patents, copyrights, and trademarks.

The Managing Your Finances section will lead you through the steps of preparing a budget, profit and loss statement, and balance sheet. You will gain information on creating a profitable business, partners and investors, assessing financial needs, and analyzing financial ratios.

Foundations of Marketing teaches you how to price products and services, promote and advertise, build a brand, market on the web, attract and retain customers, and identify sales strategy.

Each section is easy to navigate and gives you the opportunity to select areas of interest. Most of the training includes a video, examples, case studies, and work sheets.

If the on-line training results in questions, there is an opportunity to ask for e-mail counseling. Volunteers from throughout the country including several from the Green Bay SCORE Chapter are matched with clients depending on their areas of expertise. E-mail counseling may be one-time or on going. If a counselor feels that someone else may have better expertise, the client might be forwarded to another expert.

A new section of the SCORE site is dedicated to female entrepreneurs and includes a blog where women can share their business experiences. "By women and for women," it

features insights, advice, and opinions. Women who register will receive regular updates on new features and free downloads.

If you are extremely rushed for time, there are a number of super quick guides. “In just 60-seconds, we’ll show you how to be vigilant about cash flow,” the site promises. Short programs are offered in developing various business skills, determining if you can afford to start a business, creating a profit and loss statement, planning advertising, and collecting payments.

With all of the quick learning opportunities, you be able to obtain business tips day or night. However, if you’ve experienced the convenience of the web site but would like to meet face-to-face with a real person, it’s time to schedule a free session with the local SCORE counselors. Counseling is offered two afternoons a week and several evenings a month. Register on-line at www.greenbayscore.org

For further information about SCORE, contact Cindy Gokey at 920-496-8930 at the Business Assistance Center at NWTC.

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