



Ask SCORE for Business Advice

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Growing Your Business by Tina Dettman-Bielefeldt

Janet Thibert believes that new business owners sometimes need to take a step backward before going forward.

About a year ago, Thibert, who has a doctorate in audiology, opened Advanced Hearing Solutions at 2331 Velp Avenue in Howard. She had researched, taken business classes, met with SCORE counselors, and wrote her business plan. She had a solid road map and was ready to operate a thriving business. That's when Thibert got her first reality check.

"I wish I would have known and believed that it takes a long time to grow a business. I think I was functioning under the assumption that if I worked very, very hard, things would fall into place faster. The reality is that I am building a business not running a race. There is no finish line," she noted.

So, she went back to her SCORE mentors and enrolled in Urban Hope Entrepreneur Center's "Stepping Up to New Opportunities" training series. The program provided her with tools to evaluate her business plan from a more realistic perspective and move it to a reliable pattern of growth. Thibert refined her business plan, and developed a niche in her field.

With extensive training in audiology, she took a close look at her competition and noted the absence of a vestibular specialist. "I had worked at the Mayo Clinic for almost 10 years and specialized in testing and treatment of dizziness and balance disorders," Thibert explained. "This is my strongest clinical skill and I felt that if I was able to build my practice and promote my expertise in this area, I had something that would set me apart from everyone else."

Thibert invested in state of the art test equipment, stays current in the latest technology, and strives to offer excellent products and service at a fair price. A key point of her mission statement is to provide superior customer service with the highest degree of professionalism.

"I feel that if I treat every person the way I would want one of my family members treated, I can't go wrong. Honesty and integrity are the foundation of my business," said

Thibert, a married mother of three. This philosophy has served her well and customer recommendations provide the majority of her business growth.

“This is by far the greatest compliment because it tells me that my patients are happy with the service and products and are willing to send their friends and family members here. For this, I am truly grateful,” Thibert stated.

She is also honored to have been voted a finalist in the Best of the Bay contest after being open for only six months. Despite the challenges of owning a business, Thibert is excited about the future prospects. She says that she has moved from the launch to growth stage.

“It is such an incredible feeling to walk into my office and realize that a little over a year ago, it was just a dream. Now it is a thriving, growing business,” she concluded.

If you'd like help with your growing business, contact the Green Bay Chapter of SCORE. Visit www.greenbayscore.org or call Cindy Gokey at 920-496-8930 for information.

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