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Business Development Network

Summer 2007

Volume 3, Issue 3



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Endeavor Center wins national award

The Ohio State University Endeavor Center recently received high honors when the U.S. Commerce Department announced the organization as the winner of the 2007 Excellence in Economic Development Award for rural economic development. The award recognizes The Ohio State University Endeavor Center's commitment to sound, research-based, market driven economic development in helping grow the local economy. Nominations are made in specific categories announced each year and nominees are evaluated by a Selection Panel appointed by the Assistant Secretary for Economic Development.

"The winners of EDA's Excellence Awards represent the best and brightest economic development methods and practices in use today. Their commitment to sound, research-based, market driven economic development is helping America's communities grow their economies and create jobs. I am grateful for their participation in our national awards program," said U.S. Assistant Secretary for Economic Development Sandy K. Baruah.

"I could not be more proud of the Endeavor Center. This is a world-class facility, very deserving of this award," said U.S. Representative Jean Schmidt. "This facility is creating jobs, promoting entrepreneurship, and improving Pike County. I commend them, and will work with them to continue their great work."

Jerry Driggs, manager of the Endeavor Center, said this award speaks well of at least three specific groups. "Firstly, it speaks well of those who originally had the vision of what positive impact an incubator could have on the local economy and community. An immense amount of planning, researching and persistence was demonstrated by the many folks who carried this vision for an incubator from its infancy to the reality of the beautiful facility we have today. This award validates their vision and the hard work that made the vision a tangible reality."

"Secondly, this award speaks loudly about the industrious, innovative business partners who have created, and are sustaining, the energy and success the Endeavor Center is experiencing," Driggs said. "The business partners occupying the facility today, and those who have already graduated, are directly responsible for creating the success stories and growth for which we are being recognized."

As a final point, Driggs said this award acknowledges a team effort. From the South Centers staff, to the Endeavor Center Operational Council, to those individuals involved with the daily operation of the facility, this effort has truly been a community-wide project.

"As Coach Tressel says, there are no individual touchdowns. Every touchdown is a team effort. This is just as true in the Endeavor Center as it is at the Horseshoe," Driggs said. "Thank you for the part you have played in the success of The Ohio State University Endeavor Center, and in the resulting receipt of this EDA award."

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Your hiring process is your first impression

By David Boulay

Finding and retaining qualified employees is commonly cited as one of the most significant workforce issues facing employers. Recruitment and hiring processes are essential to finding employees. These processes are important first impressions that a potential employee has with your company.

To gain every advantage as an employer, it is essential to create a good first impression when interviewing potential employees. While we are spending time finding the right person, potential employees are looking for the right workplace. What does your recruitment and hiring process say about you and your business? Does it convey the message you need to attract the right employees?

A recent survey identified some first impressions that bother job seekers. These bothersome employer habits include when the interviewer:

- Acts as if there is no time to talk
- Withholds information about the position
- Shows up late for the interview
- Talks about oneself instead of learning about the job seeker
- Appears unprepared
- Asks personal questions

Source: Slugging through the war for talent

Give your company every possible advantage to hire qualified employees, Start by creating a great first impression. Establish a professional interview environment by avoiding these habits.

“Cleaning up” your small business

By Christie Welch

With the arrival of spring, many people begin the process of cleaning their homes, but what about your small business? Most small business owners have those items that need attention, but you can't seem to find the time to 'clean up' these projects. Now that your spring cleaning is finished at home, consider 'summer' cleaning for your small business.

Now is a great time to be dusting off the business plan, marketing plan, or cleaning up those financial statements. Why now? Summer is a great time to take into account where you are today and where you want to be by the end of the year. Many things are still fresh in your mind. After all, you just went through many of these records to finalize your business tax returns. You probably have items needing attention that are being put off until 'some day'.

While preparing your records for tax returns, did you find yourself thinking "I thought we did more business this past year," or "Wow! What a great year!" Are you on track to repeat this success? Do you have a plan to improve your bottom line? Don't let another year slip by without addressing those 'some day' issues. They don't have to be as overwhelming as they seem.

We can help. Would you like help finalizing or updating that business plan or marketing plan? Need an outside perspective on the financials of your small business? Would you like to have a measurable way to track your goals? Call today to schedule an appointment for no-cost, confidential business consulting.

The Ohio State University South Centers Business Development Network has the resources to assist you. To schedule an appointment, contact the OSU South Centers Business Development Network at 800-860-7232 EXT 111.

Call now to 'clean up' those 'some day' tasks. By doing so now, you can reduce stress, clean up your small business, and enjoy the summer!

PACE: A Program for Acquiring Competence in Entrepreneurship

PACE is a modularized competency-based program of instruction for entrepreneurship first developed in the 1980s. PACE offers 22 modules on every facet of entrepreneurship and can be taught individually or as a comprehensive course. Through an intensive collaborative effort with the Center on Education and Training for Employment, the OSU South Centers updated the contents of PACE.

Technical writers and subject matter experts worked closely through the details of each of the 22 modules to update content, clarify language, add new resources for the modules, and develop an entirely new module on the subject of e-commerce.

As a result of this project,

- An updated competency-based entrepreneurship curriculum was produced to address the flexibility necessary for various student requirements, educational settings, and individual career development.
- The team identified a gap in the curriculum and developed a new module that addresses e-commerce.
- Through the train-the-trainer program, Extension educators will become familiar with using PACE and establish methods to integrate PACE curriculum into their community initiatives.
- Additional versions of PACE are under consideration, such as an interactive CD.

If you are interested in learning more about PACE, contact David Boulay at OSU South Centers Business Development Network at 800-860-7232 EXT 228.

Assistance for tobacco diversification grant applicants

The Business Development Network at The Ohio State University South Centers will again be conducting confidential, one-on-one consulting for tobacco quota owners, growers, and tenants who are eligible to apply for this year's Southern Ohio Agricultural and Community Development Foundation (SOACDF) Agricultural Diversification Project grants. There is no direct cost to the quota owners/growers/tenants for assistance with the development of their diversification project, cash flow projections, and written business plan.

Applications will be accepted at the SOACDF from August 1 to August 31, 2007.

In July, the SOACDF will hold **general information meetings** throughout the region. Those interested in learning more about SOACDF grant programs may attend any of these area meetings:

- **Thursday, July 5, 2 pm – Southern State Community College, Hillsboro**
- **Thursday, July 5, 6:30 pm – North Adams High School**
- **Tuesday, July 10, 6:30 pm – Gallia County Fairgrounds**
- **Wednesday, July 11, 2 pm – Felicity-Franklin High School, Felicity**
- **Wednesday, July 11, 6:30 pm – Brown County Fairground, Rhonemus Hall, Georgetown**
- **Thursday, July 12, 2 pm – Jackson County Extension Office, Jackson**
- **Thursday, July 12, 6:30 pm – Scioto County FSA Office, Lucasville**
- **Monday, July 16, 6:30 pm – Noble County SWCD Office, Caldwell**

Potential grant applicants seeking assistance in preparing their application and business plan are highly encouraged to attend any of the **initial business planning** events listed below:

- **Thursday, July 12, 6:30 pm – Brown County Fairground, Rhonemus Hall, Georgetown**
- **Tuesday, July 17, 6:30 pm – Rio Grande University, Bob Evans Farms Hall Rm. 116, Rio Grande**
- **Monday, July 23, 6:30 pm – Adams County Extension/Economic Development Conference Room, 215 N. Cross St., West Union**
- **Thursday, July 26, 6:30 pm – OSU South Centers, Endeavor Center Room 160, Piketon**

To allow sufficient time to prepare the required information for the grant application, tobacco quota owners/growers/tenants interested in meeting with a business consultant at a location in their county are encouraged to schedule an appointment as soon as possible. **It is recommended that initial counseling appointments be scheduled prior to August 15, to allow time for subsequent follow-up appointments to complete the plan.**

OSU South Centers resources include one-on-one consulting, a CD with a business plan template and financial worksheets, program materials available at local OSU County Extension offices, and a web site with project ideas and business planning tools: <http://tobaccodiversification.osu.edu> .

This program is being offered in cooperation with the Southern Ohio Agricultural and Community Development Foundation and The OSU South Centers. The consulting is part of an on-going, comprehensive resource program designed by the OSU South Centers to assist Ohio tobacco farm families with diversification and new enterprise development. For more information, directions to the business planning sessions, or to schedule an appointment with a business counselor, contact Joy Bauman at the OSU South Centers. Contact Bauman by telephone at 740-289-3727 EXT 111 or 800-860-7232 (Ohio only), or e-mail to jbauman@ag.osu.edu .

SmallBizU generating online buzz

In March 2007, the OSU South Centers Business Development Network unveiled SmallBizU. SmallBizU is an online academy created especially for the education and training needs of small businesses and entrepreneurs. Since that time over 130 individuals have completed courses in marketing, accounting, and legal issues.

One course participant said, "The SmallBizU course was a very useful tool for helping me learn about business financing options and where to find the money."

SmallBizU seeks to teach entrepreneurs the 3M's- Money, Marketing and Management. This is achieved by delivering 20 core courses that teach business principles. Each online course contains animated slides accompanied by voice-over narration, PowerPoint presentations, worksheets, interactive tools, and access to a comprehensive knowledgebase.

Experience on-line learning yourself. We are offering a free course entitled, "Finding Money to Start a Business." To access SmallBizU visit www.southcenters.osu.edu/benet . For more information contact Kelly O'Bryant at 740-289-3727 EXT 235 or obryant.6@osu.edu .

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Sign-up to receive future newsletters and announcements electronically! Contact Joy at:

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We're on the web!

<http://southcenters.osu.edu/benet/>

Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. The Ohio SBDC program is also funded in part by the Ohio Department of Development. All opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. For arrangements, call the Ohio SBDC at 614-466-2711 or (800) 848-1300, ext. 6-2711 or via email at www.odod.state.oh.us/sbdc.

Summer Schedule of Business Training Events

July 24	Building Your Own Business Ross County Chamber of Commerce, 9 am - 12 noon	Gain the tools for developing your business. The key focus will be on money, marketing, and management.	\$20
August 21	Building a Drug-Free Workplace OSU South Centers Endeavor Center, 9 am - 12 noon	Learn how to develop policies and procedures for implementing a Drug-Free Workplace Program.	Free
September 5	Building Your Own Business Gallia County Economic Development Office, 9 am - 11 am	Gain the tools for developing your business. The key focus will be on money, marketing, and management.	\$20
September 13	Starting a Non-Profit Business Scioto Foundation, Portsmouth, 1 pm - 4 pm	Information on forming and managing a not-for-profit business or organization.	\$10
October 1	Fall eVantage Class Starts (meets every week for 6 weeks) OSU South Centers Endeavor Center, 9 am - 12 noon	Gain skills to develop and maintain a website for your business. Contact Brooke Betts at 740-289-2071 EXT 337 for details.	\$500