

January, 2012 - When did this happen? Most business owners have been extremely busy for this past year trimming expenses, cross training their employees, turning inventory into dollars, exploring new markets and hanging on to their valued customers. They have been too busy to see that another year is upon them. So is it good that they survived for another turn at making a profit? Most would positively agree that the answer is YES!

Our SBDC has facilitated in many focus groups with business owners and here is what they have told us:

1. Pay attention to your cash position – know where you are financially each and every day!
2. Stay on top of receivables – these valued customers are not valued if they do not pay!
3. Train and empower your employees to positively affect sales and optimize customer service.
4. Have a written plan and then work your plan – have goals and have celebrations when goals are met.
5. Meet with other business owners – engage their help and exchange tips on success
6. Have multiple revenue streams – in this economy what once worked, maybe does not now, but perhaps a new opportunity will be the one.
7. Use low cost or no cost services like the SBDC – we have a wealth of professional talent, no cost, just honest input.
8. Make sure you still have that passion to excel at providing your product or service – the persona of the owner will be the person of your business – embrace it and have a Successful 2012.



Small Business Bulletin

13th Annual



Saturday, January 28, 2012
at FGCU- Student Union

If there is any place you should be in the New Year as a small business owner or entrepreneur, it should be at the Small Business Development Center's 13th Annual Entrepreneur's Law School on Saturday, January 28th. This all-day workshop is an opportunity to get your small business legal questions answered by professionals in the field of law.

Choose from tracks of 50 minutes each on subjects such as legal contracts, commercial leases, legal structures, business continuity, employment law, foreclosures, and more!

Entrepreneur's Law School will take place at Florida Gulf Coast University Student Union Ballroom from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. The day will kick off with a continental breakfast sponsored by Costco at 8:30am, sessions conducted by the attorneys, then lunch with the attorneys and guest speaker Dr. Wilson Bradshaw, president Florida Gulf Coast University. The afternoon session includes a dynamic panel discussion on the effects of small business bankruptcy from a legal, tax, finance, and insurance perspective. In addition to the workshops, a mini tradeshow will take place.

Past attendees, Terry and Kay Wynter from Terry Wynter Auto Service Center, Inc had this to say regarding the law school, "**We are looking forward to the 2012 Entrepreneur Law School as we always benefit from the vast amount of legal expertise shared in the presentations and the opportunity to network with other business owners. This event is an extraordinary value for anyone that owns a small business.**"

Our main sponsor is Pavese Law Firm and additional sponsors include *Relevanza*, (Social Media Sponsor) *Markham Norton Mosteller Wright & Company, P.A.*, *Great Florida Insurance*, and *Wells Fargo Bank*.

Cost to attend the all day workshop is \$99 in advance and includes continental breakfast and full lunch. Walk-in fee is \$199.

Register at sbdc-lawschool.com or call the main office at 239.745.3700 for more information.

Business and Breakfast



The 6th annual Business and Breakfast was held on November 5th at Southwest Florida Enterprise Center. Thank you to Fifth Third Bank and Costco for helping to make this a special day for small business owners in Southwest Florida.

Start, Grow and Succeed!

SBDC INFORMATION

Address of the main office:

FGCU Campus - Lutgert Hall, 2nd Floor
10501 FGCU Blvd. S. Fort Myers, FL 33965

Phone Number: (239) 745-3700

Fax Phone: (239) 745-3710

Website: www.sbdc.fgcu.edu

Seminar Registration Page:

www.sbdcseminars.org

Hours of Operation: Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Title	Day/Date/Time	Location & Address	Description
Social Media Boot Camp. Building traffic to your Website through social media outlets	Fridays January 13th, 20th & 27th 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	FGCU Renaissance Center 1010 5th Ave N. Naples, FL 34102	This three-week 9-hr hands on instruction will teach you how to use social media and web optimization for your over-all marketing strategy to increase website traffic. <i>Cost: \$99</i>
Lee County- Doing Business with the Federal Government (Part 1 & 2)	Friday January 13th (Six part series) 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	SW FL Works 4150 Ford Street Extension Fort Myers, FL 33916	Part 1 Introduction to Contracting with the federal government and overview of process such as methods of procurement contacts and more.
Build Your Business Plan. 4- Week Series	Tuesday January 17th, 24th 31st Feb 7th 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.	SBDC Cape Coral Office 1020 Cultural Park Blvd, Unit 3 Cape Coral, FL 33990	This four week series will help you build your business plan that you can utilize in your business and for financing. <i>Cost: \$99</i>
When Disaster Strikes a Family Business	Wednesday, January 18th 11:30 a.m. -1:00 pm.	Crexent Business Center 27499 Riverview Center Blvd Bonita Springs, FL 34134	What methods are available to protect a small business from the uncertainties in the market? <i>Cost \$20</i>
Small Business Resource Network Mixer (SBRN)	Thursday, January 19th 5:30 p.m. -7:00 p.m.	Lee County EDC Office 2201 2nd Street, Fort Myers, FL 33901	Network and Meet with the area's finest professionals in insurance, banking, law and more. <i>\$15 members \$20 non-members</i>
Charlotte County- Overview of Doing Business with the Federal Government	Thursday, January 19th 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce 2702 Tamiami Trail, Pt. Charlotte, FL 33952	This workshop will give a brief overview of contracting, grants and pricing with the federal government.
Lee County- Doing Business with the Federal Government (Part 3 & 4)	Friday, January 20th 1:00 p.m. -3:00 p.m.	SW FL Works 4150 Ford Street Extension Fort Myers, FL 33916	Reading a solicitation an overview of what the Government wants. Successful proposal writing Process and more.
Cape- New Business Chats	Wednesday, January 25th 11:30 a.m 1:00-p.m.	Cape Coral City Hall 1015 Cultural Park Blvd RM 220-A Cape Coral, FL 33990	Thinking of starting a business in Cape Coral then this Q & A style format is just right for you.
Lee-County – Doing Business with the Federal Government (part 5 & 6)	Friday, January 27th 1:00 p.m. -3:00 p.m.	SW FL Works 4150 Ford Street Extension Fort Myers, FL 33916	Part 5 Subcontracting opportunities, overview of government's role, prime contracting and payments. Part 6 - Overview of pricing, profit, cost and best value.
13th annual Entrepreneurs Law School	Saturday, January 28th 9:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m.	FGCU Student Union Ballroom 10501 FGCU Blvd Fort Myers, FL 33965	This all day educational workshop is designed for small business owners and entrepreneurs who want to know about small business law. <i>Cost \$99 includes breakfast and lunch</i>



Charles Harris, President of Bridge Street Coffee & Tea Company

SBDC Small Business Success Story

Bridge Street Coffee & Tea Company is the answer to my desire of owning my own business. I used to "hang out" at the café when I was in high school and eventually got a part time job working there. When I discovered in 2007 the business was for sale I worked with the owners to purchase it.

My long term goal is to purchase the building we are in and offer more diversification to our services and products. I serve a selection of top quality coffees and teas, breakfast sandwiches, muffins, cookies, desserts and daily lunch specials, but hope to eventually add a new and used book store and/or consignment shop.

The layout of the restaurant is designed to let small groups of people meet in an intimate setting, allowing privacy for short business meetings. Friday Mike Night sessions are offered for locals, and I participate in many community activities including Relay for Life, LaBelle School fundraisers, and sponsoring Little League.

I strive for good marketing practices and customer service to keep my customers happy and my doors open. I feel honesty and a talent for knowing what my customers want are two strengths that have made me successful. I also have the support of my mother who often helps me on weekends.

Shortly after I purchased Bridge Street Coffee & Tea in 2007, the SBDC contacted me to discuss my recent purchase of the business and to offer assistance. At the time my business plan was less than basic and SBDC offered suggestions to improve it. I took suggestions and implemented them into my day to day business activity. Since 2007 SBDC has kept me informed of workshops and resources that may benefit my business. I have depended on SBDC to provide assistance, encouragement, and expertise as my business grows.

Thank you SBDC and Janice Groves, CBA, Hendry and Glades County.

Testimonial

“This is the most definite place to start when considering opening up a business! They help you with all questions you may have and follow up with you along the way. This is a free service everyone should take advantage of.”

J Blanchard

FEBRUARY 2012

Title	Day/Date/Time	Location & Address	Description
Quick Books Boot Camp-Basics	Fridays February 3rd, 10th, 17th 2:00 p.m. 5:00 p.m.	FGCU Renaissance Center 1010 5th Ave South Naples, FL 37105	This three-week 9hr series will focus on using basics for your business. <i>Cost \$149 for the three week series.</i>
Como Comenzar Su Propia Empresa y Obtener Financiamiento	Wednesday February 8th 5:00 p.m. -7p.m	Florida Community Bank 5240 Golden Gate pkwy, Naples, FL 34116	Este seminario de dos horas es necesario para todos negocios en comienzo.
Writing and Blogging on the web	Thursday, February 9th 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	FGCU Student Union, Room 247 10501 FGCU Blvd Fort Myers, FL 33965	This two-hour workshop taught by a Social media professional will help you learn how to manage blogging and other Social Media demands in today's business environment.
Small Business Success Workshop	Thursday, February 9th 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Glades County Public Library 201 Riverside Drive, Moore Haven, FL 33471	In today's business environment, you have to be savvy and smart. This no cost workshop will educate you on what all small business owners need to know to be on top of their game
Permitting Made Easy	Thursday, February 16 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Cape Coral SBDC Office 1020 Cultural Park Blvd, Unit 3 Cape Coral, FL 33990	This two-hour workshop will assist the small business owner on the permitting process
How to Get Certified As A Minority Enterprise	Tuesday, February 21st 3:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.	Page Field's Base Ops 5200 Captain Channing Page Drive Fort Myers, Florida 33907 (second floor)	Minority Certification step- by step.. DBE, Port Authority, Housing Section 3 Certification, MBE Certification and more. Government Contracts take your business to the next level.
Cape - New Business Chats	Wednesday, February 22nd 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.	Cape Coral City Hall 1015 Cultural Park Blvd RM 220-A Cape Coral, FL 33990	Thinking of starting a business in Cape Coral then this Q & A style format is just right for you.

MARCH 2012

Title	Day/Date/Time	Location & Address	Description
Social Media Boot Camp	Saturdays March 3rd, 10th 17th 9:00 a.m. 12:00 pm..	Check our website for updated location information sbdcseminars.org	This three-week 9-hr hands on instruction to teach you how to use social media and web optimization for your over-all marketing strategy to increase website traffic to your business. <i>Cost: \$99</i>
4-Week Business Plan Series	Thursdays March 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th 8:30 a.m. -10:30 a.m.	FGCU- Renaissance Center 117 Herald Court Punt Gorda, FL 33950	This four-week series will help you build your business plan that you can utilize in your business and for financing. <i>Cost: \$99</i>
FAQ About starting a Business	Wednesday March 14th 8:00 a.m. -10:00 a.m.	Edison State College 1092 East Cowboy Way, Labelle, FL 33935	Thinking of starting a business and have questions, then this seminar is for you. Get your questions answered by Certified Business Analyst.
How to Market your Business in a Difficult Economy	Thursday, March 15th 9:00 a.m.-12:00 pm.	Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce 2702 Tamiami Trial, Port Charlotte, FL 33950	This seminar will answer the Who, What Where and Why questions about starting a business in Charlotte County.
Small Business Resource Mixer (SBRN)	Thursday, March 15th 5:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m.	Holiday Inn- Airport 9931 Interstate Commerce Drive, Fort Myers, FL 33965	Network and Meet with the area's finest professionals in insurance, banking, law and more. <i>\$15 members \$20 non-members</i>
How To Do Business with Lee County Government	Tuesday, March 20th 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.	Page Field's Base Ops 5200 Captain Channing Page Drive Fort Myers, Florida 33907	Learn what it takes to do business with Lee County and other government entities. Meet with procurement departments from the various agencies.
Reading, Understanding and Repairing Your Personal Credit	Monday, March 26th 2:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m.	Downtown Ft. Myers Library 2050 Central Ave Fort Myers, FL 33901	Good Credit is important to everything you do this workshop will teach you how to read repair and understand your credit report.
Cape- New Business Chat's	Wednesday, March 28th 11:30 a.m.-1:00 pm.	Cape Coral City Hall 1015 Cultural Park Blvd RM 220-A Cape Coral, FL 33990	Thinking of starting a business in Cape Coral then this Q & A style format is just right for you.
Quick Books Advanced	Saturdays, March 24th and 31st 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m	FGCU- Renaissance Center 1010 5th Ave S. Naples, FL 34105	This advanced Quick Books class will take you though the next stage of understanding QuickBooks. Cost \$99

Please check our website www.sbdcseminars.org for additional seminars, cost and any program changes.

RESOURCE PARTNERS



TEXT Winner



Congratulations to Shatyl Leifeld of Remax Realty Group/ The Ellis Team, for winning our SBDC Mobile Text Thanksgiving Turkey giveaway. You can be the next winner by texting TO: 97063 SBDCWIN.



BEAR Real Estate Market Expo

Friday, March 2, 2012
Holiday Inn- Airport
10:00 a.m. 5:00 p.m.

Call: Cathy Bartlett for more information

239-949-4800

catherine.bartlett@thirdfederal.com

The Turning Your Profit To Passion (P2P) was a huge success thanks to our many sponsors, luncheon Speaker (Norman Love) and SBDC staff.



Bonita/Estero Market Pulse

Friday, February 10th, 8:30 a.m.

Florida Gulf Coast University's Student Union Ballroom
For more information contact 239.992.2943

Want More Exposure?

SBDC is looking for a few businesses who are interested in sponsoring various workshops and programs for the 2012 program year, for as little as \$100. Contact Trish Leonard, Marketing & Community Outreach Director at 239.745.3706 or tleonard@fgcu.edu

Save The Date!!

1st annual SBDC Entrepreneur of the Year Award & Dinner

Wednesday, May 23, 2012
6:00 pm.

FGCU Student Union Ballroom

Key Note Speaker: Carl L. Gould
Author of *The Seven Steps of Small Business Success*

For Sponsorship Opportunities
Contact the SBDC at
239.745.3700 or Dregelsk@fgcu.edu

A Voice Crying In The Wilderness

Writing and Blogging on the Web

Thursday, Feb 9th 9:00 m. - 11:00 a.m.

FGCU Student Union RM 247

Writing for the web can feel like that. How can your message compete with the millions of businesses trying to get noticed in the chaos that is cyberspace?

Kitt Walsh, CEO of Behind Blogs, will teach you the basics of how to keep your business in front of your audience on the internet—including the do's and don'ts of writing blogs, comments on other peoples' blogs, articles, sales pitches, copywriting and other forms of communication that used to live on the printed page:

- ▶ Find out the myths about keywords
- ▶ How to use bullets and subheads
- ▶ Why the "I" is all-important
- ▶ What you should know about intellectual property
- ▶ The best uses of social networking

You can also get some of your questions answered like:

- ▶ What is the right length for a blog?
- ▶ How important is LinkedIn? How about a Facebook?
- ▶ Does anyone over the age of 20 really use tweets?
- ▶ Should you hire an ad agency to write for you?

If you can take some constructive criticism, send Kitt a link to your business' website or blog or some content you plan to put on your new website to behindblogs@gmail.com. Send the link before the seminar and Kitt and the group will go over it during the seminar to help you make the content more effective.



Not all words are equal. Learn how not to bore the pants off your audience and still let them know your business is worth a second look.

Kitt Walsh owns a web content company, Behind Blogs (www.behindblogs.com) and is a regular contributor to CNN Money, The Wall Street Journal and is a writer, editor and marketing consultant for magazines, newspapers and private clients around the world.

CLOSURE DATE: January 16, 2012 in observance of Martin Luther King Day.

The SBDC at Florida Gulf Coast University is a member of the Florida SBDC Network, a statewide service network funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

