

The vision of the New York SBDC is to create economic sustainability for all New Yorkers – one business at a time.

The mission of the New York SBDC is to provide professional business advisement, education, network resources and to advocate for small business and entrepreneurs.

Feedback is Critical to Improving Performance

Effective and timely feedback is a critical component of a successful organization. Strong organizations engage their staff members, encouraging them to provide meaningful feedback in the form of suggestions through formal and informal means. Timely and constructive feedback can help an organization effectively respond to changes in its external environment and enhance its capabilities by improving organizational structures, human resource management, communication systems, and managerial processes.

The feedback can be formal, like the annual questionnaire the Central Office sends out on Survey Monkey or supervisor - employee meetings about job performance. More often, the feedback is collected on an informal basis, during project meetings, staff meetings, or during ad hoc (spontaneous) conversations at the office. It can be reactive – in response to a problem or issue; or proactive – to improve a process or procedure before any problem occurs.

All too often, organizations focus only on what isn't working, and forget to consider the procedures that work well. The reality is that it's important to also look at what works well, and to figure out why. By doing so, organizations can find ways to improve upon those systems, and they can use them as a guide for success in other areas. By focusing on the positive, you will find that even more solutions can be found than when you simply concentrating on what doesn't work.

But when it comes to problem-solving, staff members can be an organization's most valuable asset. It makes sense that those who are closest to the work are most likely to see opportunities for innovative solutions and improved performance in a variety of functions including customer service and operations. For example, as an organization grows and managers have more details to manage, it can be easy for them to forget what it was like working with clients every day. And it's possible that things changed. Managers should ask the staff how they would improve customer service. What do the customers complain about most? What do they seem to like? How can we better serve the customers – give them what they need and want?

The survival and success of any organization depends on whether or not the staff members at all levels remain engaged and invested in the organization by contributing their best ideas. It is vital for the organization's leaders to create a sense of community to increase the energy, enthusiasm, and commitment of the staff to improve performance and outcomes.

When have you provided feedback to your supervisor?

From the e-newsletters:

PA, WI, NY, CA Universities Launch Initiatives to Fuel Entrepreneurial Economy

In an effort to help spur economic prosperity, several universities have unveiled new initiatives to connect potential entrepreneurs with university resources and help integrate the entrepreneurs into their region's innovation ecosystem. In partnership with other organizations, these programs are intended to position each respective university as a driver of regional economic development through the provision of education, training initiatives and other support services. The initiatives include new programs at Clarion University in Pennsylvania, Carroll University in Wisconsin and New York University (NYU). In an effort to centralize entrepreneurial support efforts at NYU, the university will establish the Mark and Debra Leslie Entrepreneurs Lab (Leslie eLab) – a 5,900-square-foot space with a dedicated staff to support the entrepreneurial efforts of researchers, students and faculty from the 15 colleges that comprise NYU. Not only will the Leslie eLab provide access to university programs and resources, it will help integrate innovation ecosystem in the city in effort to support economic prosperity. It also will offer meeting space, co-working areas and a fabrication lab. For more information, visit [the blog at the SSTI website](#). [From the *SSTI Weekly Digest* for March 13, 2014]

NY Budget Advances State's Research, High-Tech Agenda

Many of the proposals put forth by Gov. Andrew Cuomo for growing New York's innovation economy were fulfilled or received ongoing support in the enacted FY15 budget. This includes a final installment of \$680 million to complete the Buffalo Billion initiative, new rounds of funding for the Regional Economic Development Councils, SUNY and CUNY challenge grants, and tax breaks for manufacturers. Lawmakers also approved funding for a new genomic medicine network and STEM scholarship program.

You can read the governor's press announcements at his website:

[Governor Cuomo and Legislative Leaders Announce Passage of 2014-15 Budget](#)

[Additional Highlights from the 2014-15 State Budget Agreement](#)

You can review the FY15 NYS enacted budget [here](#). [From the *SSTI Weekly Digest* for April 3, 2014]

WHAT'S NEW THIS WEEK?

Each of the focus areas listed in this section contain descriptions of activities relating to SBDC's key objectives and are the basis of the metrics by which our Strategic Plan implementation is measured and assessed.

Primary Program Operations, Advisement Products and Services

In February, Canton SBDC Advisor Michelle Collins attended a planning meeting for the Akwesasne Business Expo to discuss plans for the event and ways the SBDC can assist businesses in that community to prepare for the expo, which is slated to be held in the coming year. Also in attendance were representatives from St. Regis Mohawk Tribe Office of Economic Development, Akwesasne Chamber of Commerce, and Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. SBDC proposed a series of training events and individual assistance to help businesses in preparing for the expo.

In February, Stony Brook SBDC Advisor Ronni Rosen facilitated at the monthly meeting of the Business Solutions Roundtable, a monthly networking group that has been meeting regularly at the SBDC since 2006. Generally, the group has about 20 people attend, but at some meetings there are as many as 30 participants. The group decided that it should reach out and recruit some new members, and that at every

meeting one participant will take 15 minutes to do a presentation to the group.

In February, Canton SBDC Advisor Michelle Collins was guest speaker at an Entrepreneurship Course offered by Adirondack Economic Development Corp. (AEDC), a regional funding and economic development agency. She spoke about SBDC services, the importance of business planning, and market research.

In February, the Canton SBDC presented a workshop in Gouverneur titled "Surviving Downtown Construction" that was designed to help businesses plan for and overcome obstacles resulting from a major road construction project scheduled to go through the community's main business corridor. SBDC partnered with the Gouverneur Chamber of Commerce and the Gouverneur Area Development Corp. to present the program to approximately 15 attendees.

Marketspace & Position

In February, the Brooklyn SBDC supported and Access to Capital Seminar sponsored by the Southwest Business Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC). The event was planned to reach small business owners in Bay Ridge, Sunset Park, Red Hook and the greater South Brooklyn communities. Director Piechota addressed attendees as a panelist, alongside lender representatives from Accion Financial, Alma Bank, and the SBIDC. The event was very successful - more than twenty attendees participated in the lively discussion. The SBIDC is a strategic partner of the Brooklyn SBDC since Super Storm Sandy occurred in 2012. The two organizations join forces often and the SBIDC provides office space for the SBDC's Red Hook Outreach office in the southwest corner of Brooklyn.

In February, Staten Island Advisor Joseph Bottega participated in "The Lender's Seminar" at The Jewish Community Center. The event was sponsored and in partnership between the SBDC and the SBA. Larry Pontillo of the SBA was the keynote speaker at the event which was well attended.

In February, Mid-Hudson SBDC Advisor Cathy Terrizzi published the article "Establishing and Maintaining Business Credit" in the business section of the *Times Herald Record*. The article was also published in the web-based version of the paper.

In March, the Rockland SBDC exhibited at the largest business expo in the county in space donated by the County Association. About 2,000 people attended and the SBDC had an opportunity to reach a large local audience of primarily small businesses and discuss SBDC assistance services, including specialized disaster services and programs. Many potential new clients were contacted.

In March, the Canton SBDC hosted its semi-annual Women's Business Bootcamp Luncheon. The day's event included a panel presentation on "Best Practices for Facebook," which was conducted by several local business women that are active with social media. The event drew 45 attendees, 22 of which participated in a "mini-marketplace" to display and sell their products and services.

In March, Rockland SBDC Director Tom Morley conducted a social media presentation at SBA's Small Business Expo and Conference 2014.

Professional Development and Intellectual Capital

In February, Mid-Hudson SBDC Advisor Cynthia Clune attended the "UVANY Venture Forum: Newburgh Angel Investing in the Hudson Valley" at SUNY New Paltz. The forum included a panel of angel investors and entrepreneur presentations. Ms. Clune attended the event to gain knowledge on the process connected to accessing this valuable financing resource and the types of businesses targeted by the investors.

Sponsors, Host Institutions, and, Partners, Alliances

In February, Brooklyn SBDC Director Rob Piechota worked with NYC District SBA Acting Director Adalberto Quijada and his leadership team to formulate a strategy for team building and process as his team entered into a growth and change phase. The team worked through a chartering exercise to build consensus on values, vision, and mission for the next 12 to 18 months. The acting SBA director planned to return to his home district in Santa Ana, California within 90 days. This work was intended to foster a clearer picture of the team's culture so that no matter what changes occur, the leadership team can continue to execute key strategies within the agreed-upon framework discussed.

In February and March, Canton SBDC Advisor Michelle Collins met with Betty Connolly, SUNY Canton Director of Community Outreach, and officials from various agencies of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe to discuss bringing educational program and trades training to the tribal community. SUNY Canton staff

member Art Garno discussed various training programs that could be offered to the construction industry in the community and made connections with various agencies that could sponsor and help facilitate the training.

In February, Brooklyn SBDC Director Rob Piechota participated in a "Red Hook Resiliency" meeting, a full public meeting that featured speakers from HUD Rebuild by Design, Brooklyn Greenway Initiative and others. Key local elected official staffs were present, as were clients of the Brooklyn SBDC. The Red Hook resiliency program is designed to inform all stakeholders of the proposed use of block grant money earmarked for NYC and its use in the Red Hook community.

In March, Mid-Hudson SBDC Advisor Cynthia Clune participated in the Minority and Women Business Committee Meeting at the Orange County Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Clune has been a Member of the Committee for an extended period of time. The participation allows networking within the committee group and also through the committee's outreach efforts into both the Minority and Women business communities.

In March, Brooklyn SBDC Director Rob Piechota participated in a roundtable held by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce. The purpose of the roundtable was to discuss business issues, concerns and opportunities so as to better align monetary policy with the needs of the Brooklyn business community. Several small business owners offered insights regarding challenges in the Brooklyn market place. Director Piechota addressed the ongoing challenges with access to capital for clients, as well as the specialized needs of small business owners in the aftermath of Super Storm Sandy.

In March, Mid-Hudson SBDC Director Arnaldo Schwerert participated in a meeting of Pattern for Progress in Poughkeepsie. About 350 business leaders and elected officials attended the event. Feature speakers included the County Executives for Ulster, Orange and Dutchess counties plus the Sullivan County Chairman of the Legislature.

Special Projects

Disaster Assistance

In February, Staten Island SBDC Advisor Joseph Bottega attended a meeting at the Office of The President of the College of Staten Island that included members of the CSI faculty and college & community leaders. The presentation and discussion pertained to emergency preparedness in the event of another disaster or hurricane. The following topics were discussed: signage identification of flood zones on the map of Staten Island, evacuation sites, and traffic issues that might arise during a crisis. There was also discussion about how to respond to another crisis, with emphasis on obtaining more assistance from political leaders on Staten Island, and the need to be more proactive in addressing the importance of an emergency plan for both residents and small businesses.

In March, Brooklyn SBDC Advisor Greg Canizio spoke about flood insurance at a Legal Aid Society workshop, "Protecting Your Business and its Assets: Insurance and Disaster." This program was held in cooperation with Congressman Hakeem Jeffries and Councilman Mary Treyger. Advisor Canizio provided information and advice regarding flood Insurance: types of coverage available, what is and is not covered, and important facts about a policy. Advisor Canizio was able to talk to approximately 10 attendees on a one on one base at the conclusion of the workshop.

Hispanic Outreach

Stony Brook SBDC Business Advisor Jesus Riano, through the regional center's Hispanic initiative, has been working with the General Consulate of the Ecuador to create programs of the cooperation toward the Consulate's community of entrepreneurs and existing business owners. After more than 8 months of meetings and discussions, the Consulate requested its Office of Trade and International Business - PRO Ecuador - work on an agreement with the Stony Brook SBDC to design programs of technical assistance in international trade, business planning, marketing and legal structure. A first draft of the MOU was sent for review and revision by both organizations. After the MOU is signed, the first program will be delivered in the second semester in 2014.

Procurement

In February, Stony Brook SBDC Advisor Ann Garbarino participated in a planning meeting for the 2014 Long Island Community and Economic Dev Conference, which will be co-hosted in June by the Stony Brook University and New Millennium Development. The procurement conference will feature speakers sharing information about the SBU incubator program and LIHTI, among other topics.

Veterans

In February, Brooklyn SBDC Director Rob Piechota and Veteran Business Outreach Coordinator Amy Amoroso participated in an event at the NY State Capitol in support of veterans. State Senator Greg Ball, (40th District) spearheaded a day at the Capitol promoting interest in the State passing legislation on behalf of Veteran Set-Asides in NY State contracting processes. Joining Senator Ball were several key NY State legislators and numerous veterans from around the state attesting to the importance and validity of such an effort. 44 states in the US have legislation providing for such set-asides. However in NY State, which has the fourth largest veteran population of any state, no special provision exists to enable Service Disabled Veterans Owned Businesses, (SDVOB) to compete for state contracts in a similar fashion to Women or Minority owned businesses.

In February, Mid-Hudson SBDC Advisor Cathy Terrizzi participated in the presentation of "Operation Boots to Business from service to startup" at the US Military Academy at West Point. Presenters Eric Wikston, the Director of NJ Veterans Business Outreach Center, Ryan Letts, SBDC Veteran Business Outreach, Frank Dito, SBA Business Development Specialist and Veteran Affairs Officer were all on hand for the event. The goal of the program is to present an overview to assist participants in the steps, stages and activities related to launching a business as a post military career. Cathy's seminar dealt with identifying local resources to active military leaving service and how the SBDC can help with starting a business.

In March, Brooklyn SBDC Director Rob Piechota testified in front of the New York City Council's Veterans Committee at the request of Chair Eric Ulrich. Director Piechota addressed the merits of City Council Resolution 143 to support an endorsement of NY State S1707 and A4098. These Senate and Assembly versions support the provision for a tax exemption for any small business that hires veterans. Director Piechota provided testimony with Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce representative Avi Leshes. The discussion following the testimony was very upbeat and insightful as Councilmen Eric Ulrich- Queens, Paul Vallone- Queens, Carlos Menchaca-Red Hook, Andrew Cohen- The Bronx and Alan Maisel- Brooklyn- all asked questions with Mr. Vallone being the most outspoken about wanting more creative ideas to make NYC more supportive to Veterans and Veterans in business.

Young Entrepreneurs

In March, the Stony Brook SBDC participated in the university's annual business plan competition now called the "Wolfie Launch Entrepreneur Challenge at Stony Brook University." Advisor Ann Garbarino coached the first place winner and Advisor Susan Nastro coached the second place winner. Winners went on to a regional competition in Farmingdale in April. 20 students came to the SBDC for assistance with their presentation and business plan preparation.

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 Projects
- Strategic Partners and Alliances
- Technology, Information and Communication

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