

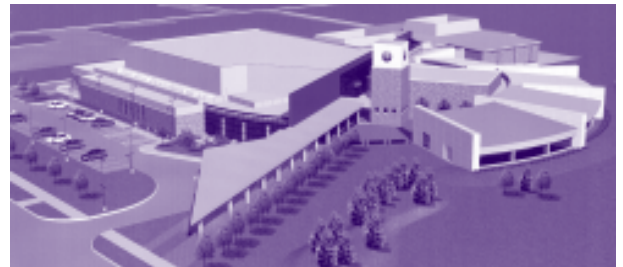
FYI For Your Information

June 2003

A Letter from the Director

Dear Business Development Center Customer:

As you are aware, budget cuts and the economic environment are affecting virtually every aspect of our professional and personal activities these days. Higher education is no exception. Like you, Schoolcraft College is examining how to become more efficient for the long run and still offer valuable products and services to its customers.



To that end and in response to market needs, we want our customers to know that the BDC is undergoing changes, beginning with a new direction in leadership. Staffing changes and a new location also play an integral part in our future.

As a public institution, our issues and considerations often receive media scrutiny even before they are weighed internally, and long before they are made final by our board of trustees. We wanted to share this news with you first and have you understand that we have begun this process of change.

We have an important relationship with your company and we'd like to make three things very clear:

- 1) There will be no interruption in the services we provide to you.
- 2) Schoolcraft College has a commitment to providing education and training services for business and industry in this community, and it will continue to do so.
- 3) The move to the VisTaTech Center will offer our customers integrated technology within an innovative learning environment.

These are challenging times for all of us, but managing change to bring about better efficiencies, new services and improved delivery, is a proven business strategy that can create a brighter future for each of us and our community as a whole.

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 734-462-4441.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shirley Zappala".

Shirley Zappala
Director, Business and Industrial Services
Schoolcraft College



**Schoolcraft
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**Business
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Center**

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Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer

Anna Bier, Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center

Congress created the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs to stimulate technology innovation and increase private sector commercialization through existing and start-up small technology-based businesses.

These three-phase programs are spread over 10 federal agencies: the Departments of Defense, Energy, Agriculture, Commerce, Transportation, Education, Health and Human Services, NASA, the National Science Foundation, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

There is more than \$1.4 billion available to small technology businesses through these programs. With the awards come recognition, verification and visibility, providing a potential leveraging tool to attract venture capital, angel financing and other sources of money, as well as developing partnerships with the government, universities, hospitals and large corporations.

In return, the government does not want any part of your company, your research, or your intellectual property, but a viable product to go to market.

Under these programs, all the government wants is that you commercialize. Of course, commercialization is what your small company wants too. Perfect fit, right? So what's the catch? Nothing more than your small technology business is used to doing – lots of extra work.

Each of the 10 agencies solicits different research and development topics. The small company responds with a short proposal which the agency then evaluates and awards on technical merit, commercialization potential and societal benefit.

In approximately 25 pages, you, the small company, must prove unequivocally to the agency that your ideas, research plans and commercialization prospects are superior to hundreds, even thousands, of other companies applying to the same agency.

Here are some tips from the Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center on how to get a piece of this huge federal pie:

- Find out the availability of each agency solicitation and proposal deadline by visiting www.sbirworld.com, a SBIR/STTR cross-agency Website. There is a wealth of information at this site to help you negotiate the details of SBIR/STTR funding.
- Get the solicitations and read them thoroughly to find out if they have a topic in which your idea will fit. Remember that research areas can span many agencies, so be open minded and do not focus only on the most obvious agency for your idea.



- Call the agency program manager to determine your fit within the agency and to provide useful connections both within the agency and across other agencies.
- Contact anyone who offers advice, support or training to get an award. There are many university, private sector and state resources, such as the Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center (www.misbtdc.org), that assist in the SBIR/STTR proposal process.
- Remember that the Congressional objective of both SBIR and STTR is to commercialize products. You must convey this intention in a detailed, well thought-out plan included in your proposal. Do not depend solely on SBIR/STTR funding to get your product to market.
- Follow the directions supplied in the solicitation. Up to 40 percent of submitted proposals are eliminated for not adhering to the solicitation rules, and never make it to a technology or commercialization review.

- Be persistent. Even if your idea is not funded the first time, get the agency reviews, follow their recommendations, get more advice from your support systems, revise your proposal, and try and try again.

The Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center provides counsel, training, research and advocacy for Michigan's new business ventures, existing small businesses, expanding new businesses, new technology companies and innovators. The MI-SBTDC is housed at the Grand Valley State University Seidman School of Business in Grand Rapids. As host of the MI-SBTDC State Headquarters, the Seidman School of Business oversees the 12-region MI-SBTDC network and more than 60 satellite and affiliate offices. Entrepreneurs and small business owners may access the services of their nearest MI-SBTDC by calling 616-336-7480 or clicking on www.misbtdc.org.

How to Start a Small Business: from Vision to Reality

This three-hour seminar is designed for those interested in learning a practical step-by-step process for starting a new business. The session will provide participants with a network and resources to use when questions arise. \$20/person.

June 4, 2003	9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
July 9, 2003	9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
August 6, 2003	9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
June 18, 2003	6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
July 23, 2003	6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
August 20, 2003	6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED for all seminars

For more information contact the Business Development Center at 734-462-4438.

How to Write a Business Plan: Your Road Map to Success

This one-time seminar provides an overview of what is included in a dynamic business plan. It is designed for new and existing business owners who do not currently have a business plan in place. Attendees will receive worksheets that outline the basic items in a business plan, allowing you to complete the plan on your own.

\$35/person

July 16, 2003
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

OR

August 13, 2003
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

10 Ways to Avoid Common Contractor Mistakes

George W. Ash, Dykema Gossett PLLC

Companies can significantly increase the likelihood of their success in obtaining, performing and making a profit working for the U.S. Government if they follow sound business procedures and avoid several common mistakes. Recently, Dykema Gossett attorneys presented a panel discussion on the 10 common mistakes made by government contractors, and provided advice on how to avoid them. Following the advice in this list will enhance your chances for dealing successfully with government agencies.

1. Read the solicitation/contract.
2. Take advantage of commercial item contracting.
3. Make your technical and cost proposals consistent.
4. Avoid the incumbent contractor's typical mistakes in responding to the follow-on request for proposal.
5. Protect your intellectual property.
6. Be mindful of the requirements of a timely protest.
7. Draft good subcontracts.
8. Understand contracting officer authority.

9. Anticipate contract changes and manage them to your advantage.

10. If doing cost reimbursement work, institute financial management procedures.

Bonus: Have a compliance program.

The interesting conclusion you draw from the list is that each piece of advice is actually quite basic — obvious even to inexperienced contractors and fairly easy to remedy. On the other hand, collectively the advice represents the root cause of most problems our clients bring to us.

It is possible to win a government contract, perform it, and be successful financially, but if you ignore the areas addressed above, at some point you will almost certainly have a problem that may well threaten your company's reputation or even its existence. Attending to these basic issues won't guarantee success, but will certainly improve your chances.

George W. Ash is a member of the law firm of Dykema Gossett PLLC in Detroit, where he specializes in government procurement issues. He may be reached at 313-568-6797.

Note: This update provides information of general interest presented in summary form, and does not constitute individual legal advice.

Government Contracting Seminar

June 12, July 17, OR August 14, 2003
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
\$35/person

Did you know that the Federal Government purchases more than \$200 billion of goods and services every year? Find out what it takes to successfully sell your goods and services to the Federal Government and the State of Michigan. In addition, learn about the services and resources the Business Development Center has available to help your company with the contracting process.

Registration Assistance

June 19, July 24, OR August 21, 2003
8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
\$15/person

Business Development Center clients looking for assistance completing their Central Contractor Registration (CCR), SBA's Procurement Marketing and Access Network (Pro-NET), or any other online registration are invited to the BDC's open lab. Counselors will be available to help clients understand and complete their registrations, using the BDC's computer lab.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED for all seminars

For more information contact the Business Development Center at 734-462-4438.

2003 Michigan Business Opportunity Forum:

Bridging the gap between your business and public sector buyers

July 29, 2003

9:00 a.m. – Noon

No admission charge

Schoolcraft College VisTaTech Center

Federal, state and local agencies spend millions of dollars every year buying everything from alarms to asbestos removal to pavement and painting from suppliers.

The time has never been better to network with public sector buyers who can help you grow your business.

With no lengthy formal presentations, you will have ample opportunity to meet one-on-one or around the table with buyers from various state and local government offices. Representatives from the Small Business Administration and Internal Revenue Service will be available with up-to-date information and answers to your questions.

Don't miss this great opportunity to meet federal, state and local government buyers. Representatives from the following state agencies will be available:

- Career Development
- Corrections
- Transportation
- Management and Budget (Acquisition and Infrastructure Services)
- Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- Procurement Technical Assistance Center
- Small Business and Technology Development Center



Learn.....

- How to register as a vendor with the State of Michigan
- How state and local agencies buy goods and services
- How to access the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) bulletin board system
- How to bid Department of Management and Budget and MDOT design and construction projects
- How to bid for commodities and services through the Department of Management and Budget
- How to access state Websites
- How minority- and women-owned firms can become certified to do business with MDOT
- How to become an MDOT prequalified construction contractor or consultant

For more information contact the Business Development Center at 734-462-4438.

Michigan.gov

MEDC Collaborates to Deliver Small Business Export Assistance

Deanna Richeson, Michigan Economic Development Corporation

A silver lining of collaboration is emerging from under the cloud of current budget constraints and belt-tightening times. In many arenas, one can find strengthened partnerships between groups that once worked almost oblivious to each other. A growing example of this kind of partnering is found in the delivery of Michigan's export assistance services.

As the fourth largest exporting state in the U.S., Michigan products and services land at foreign buyers' doors in countries all over the world. Strong export sales mean strong businesses at home, and thus a stronger Michigan economy.

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) sought creative solutions to continue helping the state's firms with export opportunities when budget projections prohibited hiring more international trade specialists.

MEDC found its answer in collaboration with two already existing statewide networks of business consultants – the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC) and the Small Business and Technology Development Centers (SBTDC).

PTACs specialize in government procurement assistance, and serve a client base of well established businesses – many of which have the capacity to sell to foreign buyers.

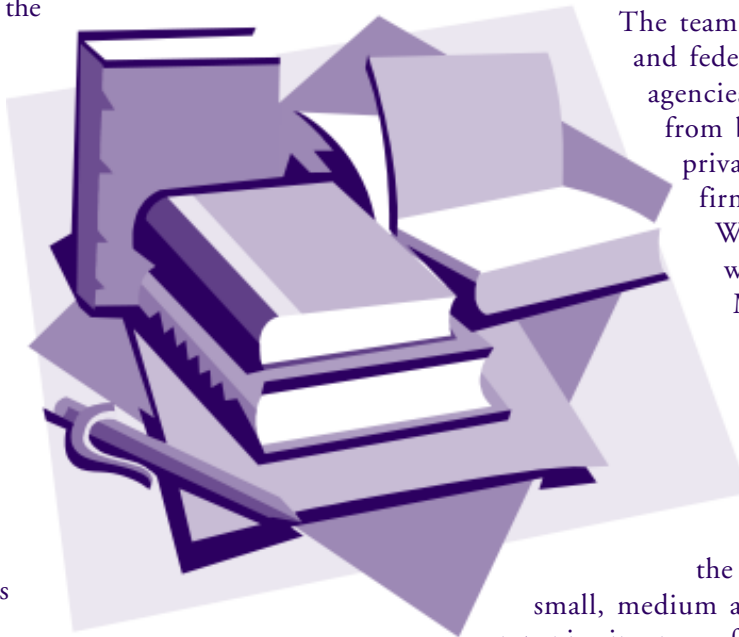
SBTDCs work with a wider variety of companies, often helping individuals who are starting new businesses. These general business consultants assist in business plan writing, cash-flow projections and marketing – expertise that is useful in guiding companies new to exporting. By training these two networks of business counselors, which in turn would assist clients in their area, MEDC saw a much larger reach to small businesses across the state.

By combining the resources of SBTDCs and PTACs, the partnership has grown to include a diverse and impressive team of international trade experts.

The team includes state and federal government agencies, organizations from both public and private sectors, and firms representing West Michigan as well as Southeast Michigan – a concentration of expertise in all aspects of global market expansion.

The team has the capacity to assist small, medium and large companies in areas of specialization, such as international marketing, finance, logistics, cross-cultural communication and foreign government sales. The network can use individual expertise within a system of networked referrals that address specific issues related to international trade.

The collaboration that began at a level between organizations has filtered down to collaboration between individual partners. Business counselors and consultants from separate networks work side-by-side, with one primary focus: to promote international trade and economic development in Michigan.



Upcoming Seminars and Events

ISO User Group Breakfast

May 28 OR June 3, 2003

7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

No admission charge

Do you need ISO certification or help getting lean, but want to avoid high consultant fees? User groups form to benefit their members. In this economy, we recognize that companies are struggling to keep their ISO certifications and lean projects on track and provide employee training without adequate resources. Attend one of our free morning sessions to learn how your company can benefit from user group participation by reducing training costs and sharing ideas and information. To register or for more information, call 734-462-4441.

NASA Information and Opportunities

June 3, 2003

1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

\$40 per person

NASA's Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, Ohio will provide information on current opportunities for small businesses. The center defines and develops advanced new propulsion, power and communications technologies. Information will include opportunities on the Web, buying practices, and commodities purchased. The session will conclude with questions and answers.

Technology-based manufacturers, high-end information technology software developers and integrators, communication technology, environmental and engineering companies are encouraged to attend. For more information on products and services procured by NASA's Glenn Research Center, visit:

http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/Procure/doin_bus.htm

Team SBA Financing Roundtable

June 5, 2003

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

No admission charge

If you are starting or expanding a business and need financing, attend a TEAM SBA Financing Roundtable. You will meet with bankers, SBA loans officers, and small business consultants to discuss your financing needs. The roundtables are limited to a small number of business owners, and you must register to attend. Call the SBA at 313-226-6075 to register.

Certified: Woman Business Enterprise

August 20, 2003

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

\$25 per person

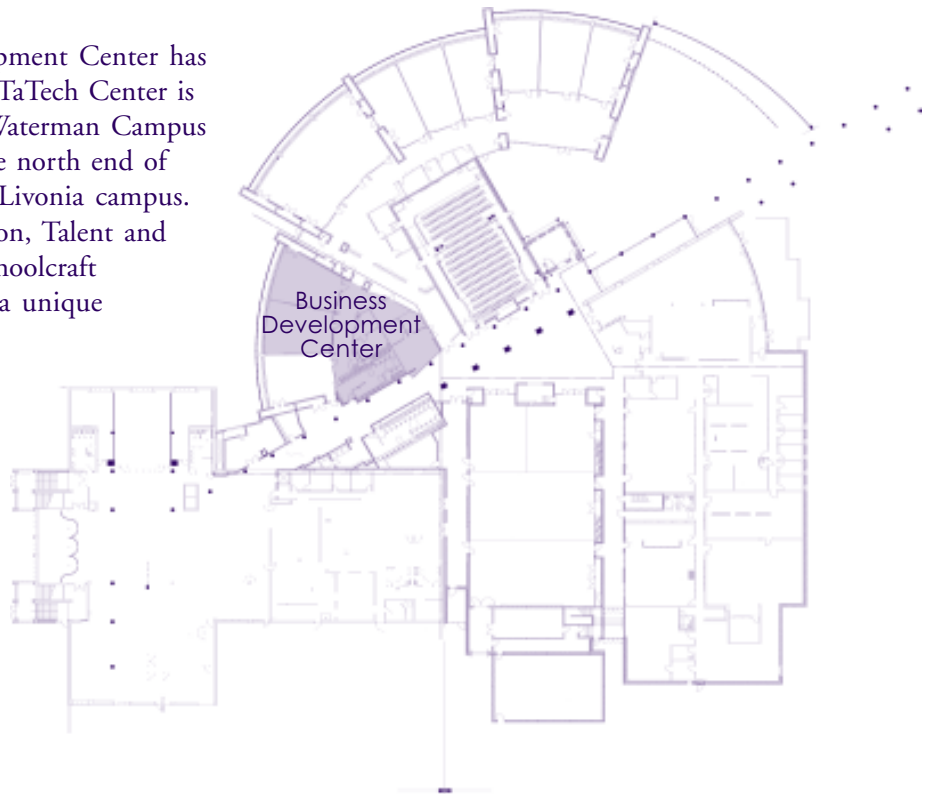
The Michigan Women's Business Council invites women business owners to an orientation session to learn what it means to be certified as a Woman Business Enterprise. If you have a product or service that you would like to market to American corporations, here is your chance to explore certification. The Michigan Women's Business Council is a program of the Center for Empowerment and Economic Development, an SBA Women's Business Center. Call the Michigan Women's Business Council at 734-677-1444 to register.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED for all seminars

For more information on any of these seminars, contact the Business Development Center at 734-462-4438

Business Development Center's new home in the VisTaTech Center

The Business Development Center has a new home! The VisTaTech Center is an extension of the Waterman Campus Center, located on the north end of Schoolcraft College's Livonia campus. VisTaTech is the Vision, Talent and Technology of the Schoolcraft community, creating a unique venue for education/business/community partnerships. Our mailing address and phone numbers remain the same.



Schoolcraft College

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