

OSBD Director's Update: Equipping Small Businesses for Tomorrow's Contracts

To expand your operations and gear up for future possibilities, I encourage you to take advantage of workflow automation, streamline your supply chains, and actively seek out government or corporate contracts. By excelling in these areas, you can lay down a robust foundation that enables revenue growth without a corresponding increase in your overall costs.

Developing Your Core Business Skills

Focusing on five essential areas (financial literacy, strategic communication, data-driven problem-solving, leadership, and adaptability) will help strengthen your core business skills and turn high-level concepts into actionable strategies for sustainable growth. To enhance these skills effectively, consider taking these specific steps:

- **Financial Literacy:** Develop your ability to interpret balance sheets, grasp cash flow cycles, and monitor break-even points. I recommend looking for basic accounting courses to help you make well-informed, profitable choices.
- **Strategic Communication:** Work on improving your ability to pitch your ideas, negotiate, and clearly express your value proposition. Cultivating emotional intelligence and conflict resolution will help you build strong relationships both inside and outside your organization.
- **Data-Driven Problem-Solving:** Learn to spot trends and assess risks, even with limited data at your disposal. Utilize your digital skills and analytical thinking to make logical, evidence-based choices.

Scaling Your Workflow & Operations

Scaling your operations means increasing your company's capacity without correspondingly raising your expenses or sacrificing quality. Before you automate repetitive tasks, your best strategy is to map out your current processes, remove bottlenecks, and create standardized procedures.

Important Scaling Techniques for Your Team:

- **Automation:** Reduce your administrative burden and free up your team for strategic expansion by using HR and finance automation tools like Rippling.
- **Supply Chain Enablement:** I encourage you to look into the SBA's Supply Chain Acceleration and Logistics Enablement (SCALE) program, which assists small businesses like yours in overcoming technical and operational obstacles.
- **Team Building:** Assign daily tasks through hiring or contracting out. Look for leaders who can advance their respective departments, freeing you up to concentrate on future business acquisition.

Preparing for Future Opportunities

- **Government Contracting:** Equip your business to win local contracts by identifying your specific NIGP or NAICS codes.

- Teaming and Networking: View your teaming network as essential infrastructure. Foster long-term relationships with major prime contractors, complementary small businesses, and specialized subcontractors to position your business for multi-year contract opportunities.

Here at the School District Office of Small Business Development (OSBD), we are proud to collaborate with small businesses across our community. Our mission is to help you navigate the District's contracting procedures and identify tangible business opportunities. We offer both virtual and in-person Meet & Greets, training sessions, and outreach events aimed at engaging and educating you on exactly how to partner with the School District of Palm Beach County.

I look forward to working together and seeing your business thrive.