



Louisiana Small Business Dev.Center

#4 Plan cycle - 4

Plan cycle 2019/2020

7/1/19 - 6/30/20

Introduction

The mission of the Louisiana Small Business Development Center network is to facilitate the formation and growth of small businesses through individual consulting services, entrepreneurial training programs, and business information resources to develop and diversify the Louisiana economy. The Louisiana Small Business Development Center mission is one of the programs offered by McNeese State University in support of entrepreneurship and small business development. Louisiana Small Business Development Center services are specifically designed to meet the needs of regional economic development (small business development, support for entrepreneurs, problem-solving). Louisiana Small Business Development Center stakeholders include clients, funding partners, and Louisiana and federal legislators.

Performance Objective 1 Facilitate the formation and growth of small businesses through counseling services for entrepreneurs in the five parishes of Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, and Jeff Davis.

1 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Counsel at least 50 long-term counseling clients.

These are clients with whom we've had five or more hours of preparation and contact counseling time this federal fiscal year.

1.1 Data

2017-2018:

Through July 11, 2017, the Center has counseled 57 clients in this category. We estimate the final figure to be at least 75.

2018-2019:

2019-2020:

Through July 8, 2020, the Center has counseled 33 clients in this category. We estimate the final figure to be approximately 44.

1.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2017-2018:

This benchmark is sent under our contract to operate the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese. It is a portion of the statewide co-negotiated with the U.S. Small Business Administration. This is an important goal because it reflects long-term relationships with business owners; long-term relationships are statistically more likely to boost economic performance of the businesses.

2018-2019:

2019-2020:

We continue to develop relationships with clients in the SWLA region, giving us the opportunity to work with them long-term. This benchmark is sent under our contract to operate the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese. It is a portion of the statewide co-negotiated with the U.S. Small Business Administration. This is an important goal because it reflects long-term relationships with business owners; long-term relationships are statistically more likely to boost economic performance of the businesses.

To continue to meet this goal, we review reports of clients who are near to fitting this category and make sure that we continue to work with them; this additional counseling gets the client over the threshold for this measure.

2 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Counsel at least 275 total clients each fiscal year.

2.1 Data

2017-2018:

Through July 11, 2017, the Center has counseled 298 clients in this category. We estimate the final figure to be approximately 325.

2018-2019:

2019-2020:

Through July 8, 2020, the Center has counseled 334 clients in this category. We estimate the final figure to be approximately 445.

2.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2017-2018:

The Center Director is working with the Office of Public Relations to create more exciting interviews with KPLC to promote center activities. The sessions offer an opportunity to showcase Center clients and build awareness of Louisiana Small Business Development Center services. The Center's Business Consultant maintains a regular weekly schedule of outreach to bankers in the five-parish area. The Center Director has appeared on KPLC-TV several times in fiscal year 2017-2018, and had interviews on Cumulus Radio and KBYS-FM to publicize Louisiana Small Business Development Center services and events, and she anticipates at least one more appearance during this reporting period. The Center Director writes a column in the business section of the American Press once each month; the column assists in building awareness of the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese and the services and workshops it provides. The Center Director and Business Consultant have spoken to meetings of civic groups to publicize Louisiana Small Business Development Center services. The Office of Public Relations produces news releases to publicize Center events. The Center sends out e-blasts to clients and uses social media to provide information about Louisiana Small Business Development Center services and events.

2018-2019:

2019-2020:

The LSBDC team continues its marketing efforts to make our community aware of the Louisiana Small Business Development Center services. The Center Director has appeared on KPLC-TV several times in fiscal year 2019-2020. The Center Director writes a column in the business section of the American Press once each month; the column assists in building awareness of the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese and the services and workshops it provides. The center continues to work hand-in-hand with local organizations to reach potential clients. The Office of Public Relations produces news releases to publicize Center events. The Center continues to utilize email marketing to communicate with contacts and social media to share up-to-date information with the community about Louisiana Small Business Development Center services and events.

The Office of Public Relations puts the LSBDC on their publicity schedule for an appearance on KPLC and with KBYS each quarter. The LSBDC staff includes an individual who is responsible for social media marketing; she reviews engagement by viewers and works to improve this measure. She is also a member of a statewide LSBDC team that develops marketing tools. The LSBDC will continue to take advantage of previous efforts for marketing, as well.

Performance Objective 2 Facilitate the formation and growth of small businesses by providing training to entrepreneurs.

1 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Have at least 323 attendees at training events each fiscal year.

1.1 Data

2017-2018:

Through July 11, 2018, the Center has recorded 413 attendees at its training events. We estimate final figures to be at least 500 attendees.

2018-2019:

2019-2020:

Through July 8, 2020, the Center has recorded 206 attendees at its training events. We estimate final figures to be approximately 270 attendees.

1.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2017-2018:

The use of social media has improved attendance at workshops over previous years; we will continue to use social media to increase the number of entrepreneurs who attend our events. We are working with additional community groups such as Lake Charles North Redevelopment Authority to expand our audience and increase attendance.

Of special interest:

In spring of 2018, staff from the New Orleans office of the U.S. Small Business Administration presented three workshops on certifications that assist small businesses in obtaining contracts with the federal government. The fourth workshop on government contracting is scheduled for August 17, 2018; as of July 11, 13 business owners have registered to attend, with the final number expected to be much larger.

The Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese co-hosted nine workshops with the Lake Charles North Redevelopment Authority and other community partners. These efforts are aimed to build entrepreneurship in the underserved minority community in north Lake Charles.

2018-2019:

2019-2020:

The use of social media and email marketing continues to improve attendance at workshops; we will continue to use these avenues to increase the number of entrepreneurs who attend our events and webinars. We are working with additional groups such as Lake Charles North Redevelopment Authority and SWLA Alliance to increase our reach and to work collaboratively.

Of special interest:

We continue to offer specialized training to small business owners and potential entrepreneurs, primarily via webinar format. We hope to resume in-person learning when appropriate, and will continue to offer relevant material. The necessary transition to providing online services has allowed us to continue addressing our clients needs, and we plan to provide ongoing training for the entrepreneurs in our community.

We have provided multiple workshops on how businesses can survive the COVID-19 crisis and how to avail themselves of disaster relief programs. We will continue to provide these relevant training opportunities to our clients, as well as specific training on financial practices for small business.

To improve for the future, we are reviewing workshops presented by other SBDCs across the state and country and developing a list of presenters who can provide information that business owners need to survive the pandemic.

Performance Objective 3 Perform outreach to communities in the parishes of Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, and Jeff Davis to support the growth and success of small businesses.

1 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Staff members from the Louisiana Small Business Development Center will visit other communities besides Lake Charles in the five-parish area covered by the Center (Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, and Jeff Davis) at least 27 times each fiscal year.

1.1 Data

2017-2018:

The Center's Business Consultant traveled at least three days each month (usually Tuesday or Wednesday) to visit towns other than Lake Charles in the five-parish area. She met clients and visited banks and economic development entities.

2018-2019:

2019-2020:

The Center's Business Consultant continued to travel at least three days each month, usually 4, to visit towns other than Lake Charles in the five-parish area before the COVID-19 crisis. She met clients and visited banks and economic development entities. Moving forward, the hope is to return to this method. However, virtual contact will be the primary source of communication with rural areas for the time being.

1.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2017-2018:

The center will schedule workshops in communities outside of Lake Charles. The Center's Business Consultant will continue to schedule travel at least three days each month to visit towns other than Lake Charles in the five-parish area. The Consultant will meet clients and visit bankers, city officials, and economic development representatives as well as accountants and others who work with small businesses.

2018-2019:

2019-2020:

The center will resume scheduling workshops in communities outside of Lake Charles, when appropriate and according to health and safety recommendations. Training currently being provided online in webinar format that can be accessed by clients in any area of the state. The Center's Business Consultant will resume scheduling travel at least three days each month to visit towns other than Lake Charles in the five-parish area, when appropriate and according to health and safety recommendations. The Consultant will meet clients and visit bankers, city officials, and economic development representatives as well as accountants and others who work with small businesses.

Performance Objective 4 Work with local bankers to improve availability of capital to entrepreneurs by providing information to bankers about the needs of the entrepreneurial community.

1 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Communicate with at least 20 representatives of at least 15 banks each fiscal year.

1.1 Data

2017-2018:

The Business Consultant visits bankers at least three days each month. In fiscal year 2017-2018, bankers participated in four "Starting and Financing a Small Business" workshops.

2018-2019:

2019-2020:

The Business Consultant visited bankers at least three days each month before COVID-19. During this economic challenge, the team at Louisiana Small Business Development Center has been in contact with several bankers to stay up-to-date with relief efforts and opportunities for business

owners. Several bankers have relied upon the LSBDC consultants as a resource to help their customers navigate financial difficulties caused by the pandemic.

1.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2017-2018:

Continue to visit banks when visiting local communities, and talk with bankers at public events and economic development activities. Schedule banker training events with SBA, Louisiana Economic Development, and FDIC. Invite bankers to participate in the Center's monthly "Starting and Financing a Small Business" workshop.

2018-2019:

2019-2020:

The Business Consultant will resume visiting banks when visiting local communities, as appropriate and according to health and safety recommendations. A line of communication will remain open, during and following this economic challenge.

Performance Objective 5 Support the development of the Southwest Louisiana Entrepreneurial and Economic Development (SEED) Center as a hub of economic development.

1 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Develop SEED Center Incubator tenants as Louisiana Small Business Development Center clients and achieve economic impact.

1.1 Data

2017-2018:

In fiscal year 2017-2018, the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese has worked individually with nine current and prospective Incubator clients, providing counseling services to help them grow their businesses. The Incubator includes the Louisiana Small Business Development Center as a resource for their tenants and encourages them to discuss plans and problems with Louisiana Small Business Development Center staff members. The Louisiana Small Business Development Center supports the competition by publicizing it among clients and attending the program. In April, 2018, SEED Center Business Incubator Pitch competition, three of the participants have worked or are working with the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese.

2018-2019:

2019-2020:

The Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese continues to work individually with current and prospective Incubator clients, providing counseling services to help them grow their businesses. The Incubator includes the Louisiana Small Business Development Center as a resource for their tenants and encourages them to discuss plans and problems with Louisiana Small Business Development Center staff members. The Louisiana Small Business Development Center supported the competition by publicizing it among clients, but due to COVID-19, the 2020 SEED Center Business Incubator Pitch competition was cancelled.

1.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2017-2018:

The Center Director and Business Consultant will continue to encourage Incubator clients to take advantage of Louisiana Small Business Development Center services. The staff members will also encourage clients to move into the Incubator if appropriate for their business.

2018-2019:

2019-2020:

The LSBDC team will continue to encourage Incubator clients to take advantage of Louisiana Small Business Development Center services, as well as encourage counseling clients to move into the Incubator if appropriate for their business.