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The Eastside “Hot 100” Pilot Program Accelerates Local Businesses

Businesses face a lot of challenges on the path to fame and fortune, but becoming a high-performance business is a process, not luck. To help local businesses accelerate the high-performance process, a group of local organizations are launching the Eastside “Hot 100,” program, which consists of a half-day workshop titled; *How to Build a Hot 100 Business*, at Bellevue Community College, and at least one year of follow-up assistance.

The focus is on businesses with revenues of \$150,000 to \$10 million.

The goal is to help 100 local business owners and managers accelerate the development of their businesses, and increase total revenues of the group by \$100 million or more within several years. Experience indicates the process will also increase local jobs and tax revenues.

The sponsors of the program are Bellevue Community College, the Washington Small Business Development Center at BCC, Viking Bank, EastsideBusiness.com, and the Offices of Economic Development for the Cities of Bellevue and Kirkland.

From Zero to Millions

Donn Harvey, CEO of Protingent Staffing, (formerly Techlink NW) is an example of what an Eastside “Hot 100” business can become. Quitting his corporate job and starting out of his home office in 2002, Harvey has grown to a 70 person business with reported revenues of \$8.6 million in 2005. Harvey provides engineers for hardware and software product development. Revenue growth for 2006 is expected to be 50% or more.



“High-performance business practices helped us build a foundation to support our rapid growth”

Donn Harvey, CEO
Protingent Staffing/Techlink NW

The success of Harvey’s company has earned it listings on the Inc. Magazine “Inc 500,” fastest growing private businesses, the Entrepreneur Magazine HOT 100 fastest growing new businesses, and the Puget Sound Business Journal Hot 100 fastest growing private-owned businesses in Washington.

What Really Works

Harvey received help to develop his business from the Washington Small Business Development Center at Bellevue Community College. Corey

Hansen, the center director, had recently started using a proprietary process to assist high-potential clients. The process is now called the High Performance Entrepreneur Action Plan, and was originally developed by a CPA and marketing expert in Bakersfield, California.

Hansen asserts that many business owners can build high-performance businesses, all they need is a little help to get there faster. He has used the high-performance system with both new and existing businesses and the majority are minority and women-owned businesses. Many have annual growth rates of 50% - 300%. An unprecedented number created multimillion dollar growth, even after the business slowdown after 911.



“Many can become high-performance, they just need a little help to get there faster”

**Corey Hansen, Center Director
Washington Small Business
Development Center at Bellevue
Community College**

In 2005, Hansen’s clients increased their revenues an average of 87% to a total of \$42 million, and created or saved 195 jobs. One client outgrew the center’s service by growing over \$50 million in six years and created 70 new jobs. Another increased revenues 750% to \$6.1 million in only 12 months and increased their business valuation from \$5 million to \$70 million. Many increase profitability even faster than their revenues.

Growing 100 Local Businesses

The Eastside “Hot 100” organizers are encouraging local small businesses to

experience the high-performance process, which starts with a four-hour intensive workshop and at least one year of follow up assistance. For those that meet the size criteria of the Small Business Administration, the follow up assistance is free.

The workshop is titled; *Build a Hot 100 Business*, and is offered at Bellevue Community College. The fee for up to three members of the same business is \$499. While any business owner and manager can register for the workshop, only those accepted by application will qualify for the follow up assistance. The first workshop is December 8th then offered monthly until 100 small businesses are accepted into the program. The focus is on businesses with revenues of \$150,000 to \$10 million.

Bankers Encourage High-Performance

Viking Bank is a sponsor of the Eastside HOT 100 program because the program addresses one of the biggest challenges of commercial lending. Bankers help their clients grow with financial services but small business owners face many challenges that cannot be solved with a loan.



“Businesses that are prepared for growth ...are more likely to get funding when they need it.

**Tanya Sugarbaker, Business
Development Officer, Viking Bank**

Tanya Sugarbaker, a business development officer at Viking Bank has worked with hundreds of businesses to fund growth, said; “Businesses that

committed to preparing for growth and building a solid foundation are more likely to get funding when they need it. Businesses that wait until a crisis before seeking competent assistance often wait too long and pay a heavy price, both then and later.”

According to Hansen, becoming high-performance includes having your accountant or banker verify that your internal financial controls and systems are well developed and working properly. “This makes it much easier and faster for lenders to make a loan or for investors to make an investment decision.”

Small Businesses are a Big Part of Economic Development

Ellen Miller-Wolfe, Economic Development Manager of Kirkland has seen the impact of building high performance businesses. Commenting on the Eastside Hot 100 pilot program said; the “ability to take small businesses to the next level is impressive. There is great value for Kirkland businesses who take advantage of the business assessment and follow-up counseling sessions the pilot program affords. The program will likely become a staple in Kirkland’s economic development toolbox.”



“There is great value for Kirkland businesses ...”

Ellen Miller-Wolfe, Economic Development Manager of Kirkland

Robert Derrick, director of the Office of Economic Development of the City of

Bellevue says: “the real drivers of any local economy are the many small businesses in the community. With 80% of economic growth attributable to small business growth, it only makes sense to create programs that help small businesses survive, grow and prosper. It is for these reasons that the Eastside “HOT 100” is a key element in Bellevue’s economic development programs.”



... the Eastside “HOT 100” is a key element in Bellevue’s economic development programs”

Robert Derrick, Director, Office of Economic Development, City of Bellevue

Photo by Beverly F. Corwin

Asked if the program competes with private sector consultants, Hansen commented “it is just the opposite. “This program and others like it make it more likely the business will use private advisors before problems happen, instead of waiting until there is a crisis.”

Best Practices of High Performance Entrepreneurs

The Eastside HOT 100 program also includes a subscription to the online service to benchmark the business against 300 best practices, create a prioritized action plan, and accelerate implementation. The online service has an accompanying book, titled *Best Practices of High Performance Entrepreneurs: Transforming Your Business from High Potential to High Performance*. Copies of the book are available at the BCC North Campus Bookstore. All proceeds from the book are donated to BCC and help support

entrepreneur programs.

New Column on Best Practices

The Eastside Business monthly is a sponsor of the pilot program because the publisher, Joe Kennedy, is committed to local businesses. Commenting on the program, Joe Kennedy said; “As local business owners we make a long-term commitment to our communities. Real growth of locally-owned businesses has a positive benefit beyond just jobs and taxes. This program is helping build roots in our society and healthier communities.”



“The new column will help local businesses even if they are not in the pilot program themselves.”

**Joe Kennedy, Publisher
Eastside Business**

Starting in January 2007, a new column will introduce the best practices of high-performance entrepreneurs, and feature businesses that are in the Eastside “Hot 100” program. Kennedy said; “The new column will help local businesses even if they are not in the pilot program themselves.”

Hansen’s final encouragement to business owners and managers is; “Becoming a high-performance businesses is fundamentally about building systems so your business is more profitable, truly sustainable, and easier to manage. It also means building an enduring legacy. The goal of the Eastside Hot 100 program is to help these businesses get there a lot faster.”

To get an application for the Eastside “Hot 100” program contact Corey Hansen at 425.564.2888 or chansen@bcc.ctc.edu. To register for the “*Build a Hot 100 Business*” workshop, call BCC Customer Service at 425.564.2263.