

34th
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ELEVATING TRADE: An America's SBDC Pilot Program focused on International Trade Assistance

Wednesday, May 19th 2021 | 2:00 PM to 2:45 PM

Co-Presenters:

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Agenda

- **The Problem**
- **The Pilot**
- **Lessons Learned**
- **Facilitated Discussion**

The Problem

Patchwork

- The national landscape of SBDC international trade assistance services is a patchwork of models, capabilities, and areas of emphasis.

Inconsistencies

- These inconsistencies and variations in the quality of SBDC international trade counseling services were identified as problematic by trade partners and congressional oversight bodies.



Objectives

- **High-Level:** Designed to better equalize the variances in international trade capabilities amongst SBDC networks aimed at yielding more uniformity in deliverables and broader, more substantive economic impact.
- The overriding objective is to solidify the SBDC as a leading provider of small business trade development.
- **Network Level:** Increase the capacity and effectiveness of trade services for certain prequalified SBDC Networks yielding materially increased economic impact and enhancing the SBDC Network's local standing as a leader in trade development.
- **Meet Demand:** Approximately 15 State Directors raised their hands to get on our radar as Elevating Trade clients after hearing the presentation.



Consulting Approach

Assumptions:

- Problem solving requires valid data
- Effective decision making requires free and open choice
- Effective implementation requires internal commitment

Goals:

- Establish a collaborative relationship
- Solve problems so they stay solved
- Ensure attention is given to both the technical/business problem and the relationship

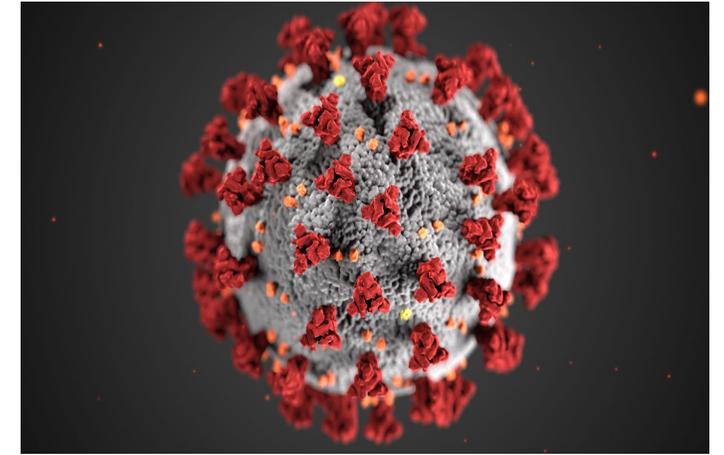
Phases:

- Entry and contracting phase
- Discovery and dialogue phase
- Analysis and recommendation phase
- Engagement and implementation phase



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The Pilot



Key Steps in the Pilot Program included:

- Developed a scope letter to confirm commitment
- Developing a stakeholder interview guide, a list of key stakeholders and interviewing them
- Detailed Assessment and SWOT Analysis
- Highlighting key takeaways and next steps
- Developing a Plan based on impact potential and available resources
- Deployment with timely monitoring and feedback
- Applying Resources (especially support from IISG)
- Conclusion and Recommendations for Continuance
- Periodic Check Ups and Participant Feedback

Lessons Learned

Upon Reflection

- Client engagement is key--it has to be client-driven and in alignment with the client's comfort, needs, capabilities and capacity
- Conducting stakeholder interviews was time intensive, required a high degree of trust in the International Interest Section members

Moving Forward

- Too much attention was placed on analysis and recommendations, and too little attention to implementation. (Magnified by COVID-19)
- Each client is different and unique, so its important to have them express their wants and needs throughout the process



Engagement and Implementation

- The art of bringing people together is termed engagement
- Engagement is an essential aspect of implementation—its bringing people together to create and plan how to make something work
- Any implementation requires not only a shift in what is tangible, such as methods or structure, but also a shift in what is intangible, such as relationships and personal faith and commitment
- SMART = Specific + Measurable + Achievable + Relevant + Timed
- The Baldrige Excellence Framework includes the Criteria for Performance Excellence, core values and concepts, and guidelines for evaluating your processes and results.





Elevating Trade Implementation Plan for the _____ SBDC

Consultants have traditionally given too much attention to analysis and recommendations, and too little attention to the complexity of translating those answers into action. Implementation is the point of Elevating Trade, taking action is the fruit of our labor.

- Review the SWOT analysis and Strategic Factor analysis (problem solving requires valid data)
- In consideration of your meeting for action with your client, refine your recommendations with attention to implementation

Goals & Objectives	Importance High, medium, low	SMART Objectives: Specific + Measurable + Achievable + Relevant + Timed		
		What action is planned?	By when?	Who is responsible?
1 Year Goal:				
1.				
2.				
3.				
2-3 Year Goal:				
1.				
2.				
3.				



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Facilitated Discussion

- Is it important that all SBDCs provide trade assistance beyond referring clients to other federal, state or local trade assistance providers?
- What are reasonable goals for an SBDC to have when it comes to providing international trade assistance, or launching a trade assistance program?
- What role might NASBITE play in supporting the Elevating Trade initiative?

