

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

How to get local business to support library efforts

Background

BTOP grant targeted three populations:

Jobseekers

Senior Citizens

Small Businesses

Who are the players?

Library

- ▣ Director
- ▣ Head of Reference/Adult Services
- ▣ Project Director

Chamber of Commerce

- ▣ Executive Director
- ▣ President

Initial Meeting

- Library wants to offer quality resources and programming to the business community
- Chamber had an interest in working with the library
- Formation of the Business Advisory Group
- Sustainability beyond the life of the grant

Sustainability

- During the grant period, the library allocated \$27, 397 to programming for the target populations
- After September 30, 2012, the Community will be accustomed to this programming and an expectation will have been set
- The Committee needs to begin planning now for how this level of programming can be sustained financially after the grant period has ended.

How do we sustain our success?

- Charging fees for participation
- Allocating additional library resources for programming
- Local business sponsorship of programs

Business Advisory Committee

□ Library

- Director
- Head of Reference/Adult Services
- Project Director

□ Community

- Chamber Executive Director
- Chamber President
- Small Business Administration
- Town of Van Buren Economical Development Agency
- Pathfinder Bank
- Red Mill Inn

Input from the Business Community

Library hosted monthly Chamber luncheon

Project Director facilitated discussion:

- ❑ What programs can the library offer that would be most beneficial to the Business Community?**
- ❑ What can the library do to make attending events more convenient (times, days of the week, etc..)?**

Focus Group Results

- What programs can the library offer?
 - QuickBooks
 - Social Networking
 - Health Benefit options
 - Tax Laws
 - How to Write a Business Plan
 - Small Business Loans

Focus Group Results continued...

- What can the library do to make attending more convenient?
 - ▣ Evening sessions with dinner
 - ▣ Alternate days and between early mornings and weekends
 - ▣ Webinars (with new teleconferencing equipment)
 - ▣ Email upcoming events to business community

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Business Advisory Committee meets at the library monthly to discuss programming ideas.
- The Committee assists in finding speakers for upcoming events.
- The Project Director handles arrangements and publicity.

Small Business Training Tuesdays

- Two events each month through September 2012
- May 17, 2011 Small Business Resource Day
- May 24, 2011 QuickBooks Class
- June 2011 Health Care Reform Legislation
- June 2011 Young Entrepreneurs' Day

Future Events will include...

Microsoft Applications Classes

Social Networking and Marketing

Succession Planning for Your Business

Disaster Preparedness

Business Resource Center

Grant allocates funds for books and media to support local business and job seekers

- A section of the library was renovated from office space to a Business Resource Center, providing one place in the library where all business resources can be found.
- Signage was created to direct the business community and jobseekers to this section.
- A desktop computer was dedicated to this area with a two-hour minimum time limit for the business community or the jobseeker.

Questions and Contact Information

Please call us at 315-635-5631 or email us at

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