

SCORE Business Review

What is it?

The SCORE Business Review Program is an in-depth confidential assessment process targeted towards small companies that have been in business for two or more years, have annual sales ranging from a few hundred thousands of dollars to a couple of million dollars and are trying to solve problems and/or get to the next level of growth.

The objective is to provide guidance to owners/management helping to improve the overall management of the company by advising on operational and strategic issues.

What's Involved?

The Business Review Program involves a detailed review, on a confidential basis, of companies desiring this service. The review would take place at the business site. The program is action-oriented with up to three SCORE counselors participating. The review could either address the complete business or be focused on one or more problem areas such as marketing, operations, logistics, finance, cost containment, strategic planning, government contracting, etc.

Business reviews may take two forms: either a short-term intensive effort at the client's site (involving one or more sessions) or a series of sessions over a six month or longer period. The former is best suited when one specific issue or strategy is involved and the intent is to fix a problem. The latter approach is best when there are several interrelated issues and the goal is to solve problems and/or map out a growth strategy.

The Process

A one-hour meeting in our Chapter office is the first step where the Business Review Program can be discussed, the company issue(s) identified and the next steps determined. A written agreement will be generated which will state the objectives of the review and the timeline with a Final Report to be made by SCORE. Company personnel must be made aware of the necessity for complete candor and the company must allow financial disclosures when they are pertinent to the problem and/or strategies involved.

The short-term Business Review would involve company personnel as determined by the owner/CEO. Appropriate briefings would be made by key company personnel and a thorough one-day effort by company and SCORE personnel will usually be sufficient. Follow-up meetings of limited scope may be necessary.

An ongoing Business Review focuses on the Business Process. There is an agreed agenda, the CEO and his/her key direct reports attend each session (particularly the first session) and presentations are made from each of the key functional areas. These are action-oriented sessions. Action items are taken by the owner/CEO and followed up at subsequent reviews. Business reviews are problem focused; they are not show and tell sessions. Strong emphasis is placed on areas where individuals need help; staff members are encouraged to ask for help; thus improving communication and effectiveness of the management team.

About SCORE and the Sandhills Counseling Team

SCORE is a nation-wide, non-profit organization working in partnership with the Small Business Administration (SBA) to help small businesses achieve success. The Sandhills Chapter has about 20 volunteer counselors who have owned businesses, managed businesses and/or served in a variety of key functional positions in a wide spectrum of disciplines. The volunteers have executed a code of ethics agreement with National SCORE that includes the confidentiality of all dealings with our clients.