



Business Talk, A UH SBDC Star Member E-Newsletter

January 2011

Spotlight on SBDC Client...Great Clips

Congratulations to our Rising Star!!!



Friendly Staff...Affordable Haircuts

Kelly Williams' first brush with entrepreneurship came at the tender age of 12 when he had his own paper route. As he grew older, so did his interest in owning a business, and he took classes in entrepreneurship in high school and as a student at the University of Southern California. But when he graduated, the path he took led him into corporate America as a data quality strategist. Still, entrepreneurship remained a part of his life when his corporate position gave him the opportunity to direct multiple business spin-offs, helping him learn all about launching and operating a new business.

In This Issue:

Spotlight on SBDC Client... Great Clips

Small Businesses New Year's Resolutions

Small Business Contracting News for the New Year

Featured Seminars:

Supervising and Working with
Generational Differences
January 13th
9:00-11:00 am



"STEPS" for Organizing Your
Business
January 20th
9:00 am - Noon



Do You Have What it Takes to

Over the years, Kelly did an exciting stint in India but also went through two corporate downsizings. This made him realize it would be a good idea to transition to other opportunities. He began to work with a headhunter for franchisors and found a great opportunity to purchase an existing Great Clips hair salon in the Copperfield area of northwest Houston. He very quickly acquired a second franchise in Imperial Oaks.

[Read More.](#)

Read about other [successful small business clients](#) and how the University of Houston Small Business Development Center helped them start or grow their businesses.

Small Businesses New Year's Resolutions

So have you made your New Year's Resolutions yet? If you're struggling, here are a few suggestions on making manageable-but-valuable promises to yourself and your business:

- I will ask every employee for one suggestion on how we can make it easier for our customers and prospects to do business with us. I will reward those employees whose suggestions we use.
- I'll learn how to use social media to become a better listener and find like-minded people and businesses.
- I will include more than senior staff in brainstorming sessions for a fresh voice.
- I'll form a customer feedback group – inviting some of our best customers to dinner to give us unfiltered feedback about what we could be doing better.
- I'll look for ways to develop a more evocative, generous referral program. Maybe I'll start by asking my newly-formed customer feedback group ...
- I will immediately ask my receptionist(s) what the 5-10 most often asked questions are from people calling, and I will make sure those questions are answered (and easy to find) on our website.
- I'll ask my employees what charities matter to them, and we'll find ways to help them.
- I will consider a professional website assessment.
- I'll interview five senior citizens and five teenagers to get their views on how the world's changing.

Open a Restaurant?

January 25th
3:00 – 5:00 pm



Visit us on the Web!

Login online to access special features only available to Star Members, or tell a colleague about the vital business information and expert assistance they can find at the UH Small Business Development Center.



The UH SBDC is a center of the University of Houston SBDC Network. The UH SBDC Network serves 32 counties in Southeast Texas. SBDC programs are nondiscriminatory and available to individuals with disabilities. Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. All opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA. The University of Houston is an EEO/AA institution. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. Contact UH SBDC at 713-752-8488 for accommodations.

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
C. T. BAUER COLLEGE of BUSINESS

- I'll use a news reader to push at least five articles a day towards me I should read but would never have the time to find on my own.
- I'll make it a point to introduce two of my professional friends to each other if only because I think they'd dig each other.
- I'll encourage my employees to each submit one idea for how our company can be more generous to local charities next year. I'll reward the best ideas.
- I will conduct review sessions of each major initiative or promotion immediately following its execution to start planning how to improve it the next time we do it.
- I will charge someone to research media channels other than TV, radio, outdoor, and newspaper.

There are lots more -- but these are all simple and cheap and smart. Hope one or more of them find their way home to you. It's not too late to get started. The best day to get started was yesterday. Luckily for all of us, the second-best is.....today.

Contributed by Tim Miles, who helps small businesses across the U.S. and Canada do more with less. See more from Tim on his website, [The Daily Blur](#).

Small Businesses Contracting News for the New Year

Veteran-owned businesses – Veterans who have listed their businesses in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Vendor Information Pages (VIP) database but have not yet requested verification, risk losing their eligibility to claim Veteran status in Federal contracting if they do not apply for verification by March 2011. The VA is required by law to verify that all the firms listed in the VIP database are indeed qualifying Veteran-owned businesses, which are only those owned and operated by Veterans, service-disabled Veterans, and surviving eligible spouses. According to the VA, of the approximately 24,000 firms listed in the database, only about 6000 have been verified. Click [here](#) for more information.

Women-owned businesses – 2011 promises to bring more opportunities in Federal contracting to women-owned businesses. The U.S. Small Business Administration is implementing a program allowing women-owned firms to self-certify or certify with a third-party certifier in order to be eligible to compete for certain set-aside contracts and contracting preferences. Those that self-



certify will be required to submit additional documentation verifying their women-owned small business status. Click [here](#) for more information.

Small disadvantaged businesses – Businesses that are owned and actively managed by certain individuals including women, minorities or the disabled can now self-certify as to their disadvantaged status. The U.S. Small Business Administration discontinued their formal Small Disadvantaged Business certification program for such businesses in 2008. An eligible firm can self-certify when bidding on a specific Federal contract, or self-certify as part of their registration in the [Central Contractor Registration \(CCR\)](#) database, required for any business wanting to do business with the Federal government. Many businesses that qualify as small disadvantaged businesses would also be eligible for the SBA's 8(a) Business Development Program, which does require a formal certification. Click [here](#) for more information.

Contact the University of Houston Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC), a specialty program of the UH SBDC, at sbdcptac@uh.edu if you need help properly classifying your business or want to learn more about the advantages of being certified.

*UH SBDC Business Talk Newsletter published by
Kimberly Smith, Marketing & Publicity, UH SBDC Network*