ASBDC Accreditation Review
Instructions for Preparing
The Self-Study Guide
2014

Overview

The purpose of the self-study is to (1) provide the accreditation review team with needed information about an SBDC/SBTDC's network of centers, (2) provide summary evidence whether the SBDC/SBTDC meets the ASBDC accreditation standards, and (3) identify and share tools and "best practices." The accreditation review team will use the self-study guide to make initial, provisional judgments about the SBDC/SBTDC's quality of operations and compliance with the accreditation standards and to design their approach to the accreditation review. During the onsite portion of the accreditation review, the team will assess and validate the information in the self-study guide.

Prior to writing the self-study guide, the SBDC/SBTDC's leadership should have begun the process of incorporating the ASBDC accreditation standards into its operations. This requires not just familiarity with the standards, but in-depth understanding of them. Sources of information about the accreditation standards include New State/Regional Directors Training and ASBDC Accreditation Standards workshops held at the Annual ASBDC Fall Conference and Spring Meeting, the ASBDC Accreditation Mentor Program (see the accreditation page on the ASBDC website at www.asbdc-us.org), the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence (www.quality.nist.gov), and the quality programs many states have that are affiliated with the Baldrige National Quality Program.

Instructions

The format of the self-study guide has been developed to (1) promote greater understanding within the SBDC/SBTDC of the ASBDC accreditation standards by establishing linkages between standards and between the concepts of approach, deployment, alignment, measurement and analysis, and learning, (2) be a useful self-examination tool for the SBDC/SBTDC, and (3) create for the review team a more comprehensive and coherent story about the SBDC/SBTDC.

SBDC/SBTDCs MUST USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT IN PREPARING ITS SELF-STUDY:

SBDC/SBTDCs must provide its self-study guide and exhibit documentation to each member of the assigned accreditation team and the ASBDC national office at least 30 days before the start of the accreditation review.

SBDC/SBTDCs should use the accreditation standards preceding each section (**bold type**) and the questions and comments below each section to frame responses. SBDC/SBTDCs should not attempt to respond to the instructions without first understanding the standard to which they apply.

The self-study guide is composed of two sections: (1) the SBDC/SBTDC's narrative response and (2) the exhibits that provide evidence to support the narrative response. The narrative responses should respond to the prescribed instructions of the self-study guide and be included as a single document representing the entire SBDC network. For each standard, the narrative should describe:

– Your **Approach,** which is asking you to describe the process or processes you utilize to manage the network consistent with the accreditation standard.
– Level of **Deployment,** which is asking you to describe if your Approach is in place and working.
– If the process or processes are **Systematic,** meaning regular and recurring.
– How **Individual and Organizational Learning** results from the information and analysis that flows from the process or processes.
– How the important activities related to each process are **Aligned** with the key strategies of the organization, meaning working toward common results.

The narrative section of the self-study guide should not exceed fifty pages and may be considerably **fewer** pages. In some cases, a narrative response may require supporting documentation in the form of exhibits. Key exhibits may include strategic planning documents, client needs assessments, organizational charts, key measures and results or other similar documents.

SBDC/SBTDCs may provide the self-study and key exhibits in printed, hardcopy format but are strongly encouraged to provide all materials in an electronic format for the review team. Where key exhibits are necessary, the review team recommends linking the exhibit to the narrative source. For reference purposes, an index of attached exhibits is preferred. Other exhibits that are bulky or do not lend themselves to being placed on a CD-ROM should be available at the lead center.

Questions regarding a review or preparation of the self-study should be directed to the review team leader.

ASBDC
Accreditation Committee
2014 STATE/REGION SBDC/SBTDC SELF STUDY GUIDE

PLEASE PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW DESCRIPTION OF YOUR SBDC/SBTDC ADDRESSING THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

- BRIEF OVERVIEW OF YOUR STATE/REGIONAL ECONOMY
- IDENTIFY KEY STAKEHOLDERS
- BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE PROGRAM'S HISTORY INCLUDING START-UP DATE AND FUNDING PARTNERS
- PROVIDE YOUR
  - o VISION
  - o MISSION
  - o VALUES
- SERVICE AREA & OFFICE LOCATIONS STATEWIDE/REGIONWIDE
  - o LOCATION OF STATE/REGION HEADQUARTERS
  - o LOCATION OF YOUR SBDC/SBTDC CENTERS
- DESCRIBE YOUR WORKFORCE INDICATING IF THEY ARE EMPLOYEES OR CONTRACTORS
  - o LEAD OFFICE STAFF
  - o CENTER DIRECTORS AND CENTER STAFFING
  - o ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
- DESCRIBE ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES SINCE THE LAST ACCREDITATION REVIEW INCLUDING:
  - o RESULTS/CORRECTIVE ACTIONS
  - o ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OR KEY LEADERS CHANGES
- DESCRIBE ANY COMPETITIVE CHALLENGES INCLUDING:
  - o KEY BUSINESS, OPERATIONAL, HUMAN RESOURCES CHALLENGES
  - o SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGE
- PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING PROFILE TEMPLATE PROVIDING HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR SBDC/SBTDC:

Please complete this profile by filling in the blanks and providing your State/Regional SBDC/SBTDC information in the template below.

- Counseling Hours _____Prep Hours _____ (latest fiscal/calendar year without travel)

- Number of Clients_____(latest fiscal/calendar year)

Highlights of the (State/Regional) SBDC/SBTDC Network		
Date Program Started		
Key Funding Stakeholders	Key Funding Sources & Amounts State SBA Other Program Income	FY/CY 201__
Key Client Segments		
Staff	Consultants: Professional: Leadership: Non-Exempt: Specialty: Support:	
Service Centers		
Service Area		
Total Clients Served	CY/FY 201__ _____ Distinct Consulting Clients _____ Total Training Participants _____ Total	
Service Hours	CY/FY 201__ _____ Consulting and Preparation (no travel) Hours Delivered. Average Hours per Client _____	
Special Programs		
Mission, Vision and Values		
Strategic Challenges		
Strategic Advantages		
State/Region's Economy		
State/Region Population		
State/Region Employment		
State/Region Small Businesses		

1.0 LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

Objective: *Create an environment in which the lead center director and other program leaders routinely address organizational values, ethical behavior and performance expectations.*

1.1 SENIOR LEADERSHIP AUTHORITY

SBDC/SBTDC senior leaders must have authority to make key decisions for:
- **Guiding and sustaining the SBDC/SBTDC organization to align it with key stakeholders and support organizations,**
- **Setting strategic direction,**
- **Managing operations,**
- **Allocating resources,**
- **Managing the SBDC/SBTDC budget,**
- **Determining the appropriate organizational structure and reporting relationships,**
- **Determining the optimal location of centers,**
- **Designing personnel requirements and duties**
- **Negotiating and interacting with key stakeholders, and**
- **Setting and reviewing performance expectations, including performance expectations that are part of the SBA Cooperative Agreement as well as performance expectations of other key funding sources.**

- CONFIRM THE AUTHORITY OF THE SENIOR LEADERS OF THE SBDC/SBTDC TO MAKE KEY DECISIONS FOR GUIDING AND SUSTAINING THE ORGANIZATION CONSISTENT WITH THIS STANDARD.

1.2 SENIOR LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

The SBDC/SBTDC leadership system creates an environment in which the Lead Center Director and other program leaders routinely guide and sustain the SBDC/SBTDC organization, communicate with the workforce, encourage high performance, advance organizational values, and promote ethical behavior.

SBDC/SBTDC leaders must systematically:
- **Set direction,**
- **Address current and future opportunities,**
- **Set standards for organizational values and promote ethical behavior,**
- **Have processes in place that ensure sound fiscal and contractual management of the SBDC/SBTDC program,**
- **Communicate and deploy performance expectations, and**
- **Review performance to understand the health of the organization and to enable translation of performance findings and learning into priorities for improvement and innovation.**

SBDC/SBTDC senior leaders must ensure that the SBDC/SBTDC operates in compliance with:

- **Federal laws and regulations, and**
- **The Notice of Award and Program Announcement.**

SBDC/SBTDC senior leaders must support and participate in the common interests of the Association of Small Business Development Centers including political objectives, national initiatives and financial obligations.

- DESCRIBE HOW THE LEADERSHIP TEAM ROUTINELY GUIDES AND SUSTAINS THE SBDC/SBTDC ORGANIZATION.

- DISCUSS HOW THE LEADERSHIP TEAM SYSTEMATICALLY SETS DIRECTION AND IDENTIFIES CURRENT AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES.

- DESCRIBE HOW THE LEADERSHIP TEAM SETS STANDARDS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES AND PROMOTES ETHICAL BEHAVIOR.

- DECRIBE THE PROCESSES IN PLACE TO ENSURE SOUND FISCAL, CONTRACTUAL AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT.

- DESCRIBE HOW THE SBDC/SBTDC LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATES AND DEPLOYS PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS, MONITORS PERFORMANCE AND UTILIZES PERFORMANCE FINDINGS TO DRIVE PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT AND TO ENCOURAGE INNOVATION.

- DESCRIBE HOW THE LEADERSHIP TEAM CONTRIBUTES TO AND SUPPORTS THE COMMON INTEREST OF THE NATIONAL SBDC ORGANIZATION.

- PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF THE SBDC/SBTDC OPERATING IN COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL LAWS, REGULATIONS, THE PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT, AND NOTICE OF AWARD.

2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING

Objective: *Develop systematic, well defined and well understood decision making processes which focus on long-term sustainability and result in the development of mid to long term strategies and action plans, and align the organization in pursuit of its long-term strategies. The strategic planning process may vary based upon the needs, size, challenges and opportunities within the SBDC/SBTDC lead center.*

2.1 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

2.1(a) STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Strategic planning must demonstrate a systematic (regular and continual) approach to collecting and analyzing relevant data and information to identify key success factors for SBDC/SBTDC sustainability and development of key strategic objectives.

- DESCRIBE YOUR SYSTEMATIC PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING STRATEGY FOR YOUR SBDC/SBTDC.

- DESCRIBE YOUR APPROACH TO COLLECTING AND ANALYZING RELEVANT DATA AND INFORMATION THAT HELPS IDENTIFY KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR SUSTAINING THE PROGRAM AND DEVELOPING KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.

2.1(b) STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The SBDC/SBTDC's strategic planning process must identify key strategic objectives, measures, timetables for accomplishment, and the most important goals for the strategic objectives.

- IDENTIFY AND PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF YOUR SBDC/SBTDC KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, MEASURES AND TIMETABLES FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT.

- WHAT ARE YOUR MOST IMPORTANT GOALS FOR THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES IDENTIFIED?

2.2 STRATEGY DEPLOYMENT

A systematic (regular and continual) and well understood process must be in place to:
- **Convert strategic objectives into actions,**
- **Modify actions if circumstances require a shift,**
- **Define innovations in products and services which are driven by client and stakeholder needs,**
- **Define key performance measures and indicators for tracking progress, and**
- **Define requirements in financial, technological and key human resource planning.**

- DESCRIBE HOW YOU CONVERT STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES INTO ACTION AND MODIFY ACTIONS IF A SHIFT IS REQUIRED BY THE MARKET OR STAKEHOLDER.

- DESCRIBE WHAT PROCESSES ARE IN PLACE TO HELP DEFINE NEEDED INNOVATIONS IN PRODUCTS AND SERVICES THAT ARE DRIVEN BY CUSTOMERS OR STAKEHOLDER NEEDS.

- DESCRIBE YOUR PROCESS FOR DEFINING YOUR KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND INDICATORS FOR TRACKING PROGRESS OF YOUR PERFORMANCE.

- HOW DO YOU ENSURE YOUR FINANCIAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND KEY HUMAN RESOURCES ALIGN WITH YOUR STRATEGY TO PRODUCE YOUR DESIRED OUTCOMES?

3.0 CUSTOMER AND STAKEHOLDER FOCUS

Objective: *Identify and segment clients, markets and key stakeholders; determine needs, requirements, expectations and preferences for each; build relationships; and determine satisfaction.*

3.1 KNOWLEDGE OF CLIENT, STAKEHOLDER, AND MARKET NEEDS, REQUIREMENTS, PREFERENCES, AND EXPECTATIONS

SBDC/SBTDC should demonstrate it has a systematic process or processes to determine needs, requirements, expectations, and preferences of clients, stakeholders and markets to ensure the continuing relevance of SBDC/SBTDC products and services and the development of new SBDC/SBTDC business opportunities.

- DESCRIBE YOUR PROCESS TO DETERMINE NEEDS OF CLIENTS, STAKEHOLDERS AND YOUR MARKET TO ENSURE THAT SBDC/SBTDC PRODUCTS AND SERVICES REMAIN RELEVANT AND ARE MEETING THE NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE MARKET AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS.

- DESCRIBE HOW YOU IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.

3.1(a) CLIENT REQUIREMENTS, NEEDS, AND EXPECTATIONS

SBDC/SBTDCs should have a regular and continual process in place to gather and analyze relevant information regarding key needs and requirements, as well as product and service expectations (preferences) of client segments and key clients.

- DESCRIBE YOUR CONTINUAL PROCESS UTILIZED TO GATHER INFORMATION RELATED TO KEY NEEDS, REQUIREMENTS, PRODUCTS/SERVICES AND EXPECTATIONS OF YOUR IDENTIFIED CLIENT SEGMENTS.

3.1(b) STAKEHOLDER NEEDS, REQUIREMENTS, AND EXPECTATIONS

SBDC/SBTDCs should have a regular and continual process in place to gather and analyze relevant information regarding key needs, requirements, and expectations (preferences) of key stakeholders and resource partners.

- DESCRIBE YOUR CONTINUAL PROCESS UTILIZED TO GATHER INFORMATION RELATED TO KEY NEEDS, REQUIREMENTS, PRODUCTS/SERVICES AND EXPECTATIONS OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCE PARTNERS.

3.1(c) MARKET NEED AND EXPECTATIONS (PERFERENCES)

SBDC/SBTDCs should have a regular and continual process in place to gather and analyze relevant information regarding key needs and expectations (preferences) of the broader small business market in order to identify potential new markets, market segments, or other new business opportunities.

- DESCRIBE THE CONTINUAL PROCESS UTILIZED TO GATHER INFORMATION RELATED TO KEY NEEDS, REQUIREMENTS, PRODUCTS/SERVICES, AND EXPECTATIONS (PERFERENCES) OF THE BROADER SMALL BUSINESS MARKET TO HELP IDENTIFY POTENTIAL NEW MARKETS, SEGMENTS OR OTHER POTENTIAL NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.

3.2 MANAGEMENT OF CUSTOMERS AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS SATISFACTION AND RELATIONSHIP

3.2(a) STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS

SBDC/SBTDCs must have a systematic (regular and continual) process for:
- Building relationships with existing stakeholders and acquiring new stakeholders,
- Enhancing the SBDC/SBTDC's value to key stakeholders,
- Listening to and obtaining feedback from key stakeholders, and
- Assessing, analyzing, and responding to stakeholder satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction. Methodology should capture actionable information for use in meeting or exceeding stakeholders' expectations. Processes should be in place to integrate feedback as part of a continuous improvement system.

- DESCRIBE THE PROCESS USED BY THE SBDC/SBTDC TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXISTING STAKEHOLDERS AND AQUIRE NEW ONES.

- HOW DOES THE SBDC/SBTDC ENHANCE ITS VALUE TO ITS STAKEHOLDERS?

- DESCRIBE HOW YOUR PROGRAM ANALYIZES AND INTEGRATES FEEDBACK TO MANAGE STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION/DISATISFACTION AND ENSURE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

3.2(b) CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

SBDC/SBTDCs must have a systematic (regular and continual) process for:

- Building relationships with existing clients and acquiring new clients,
- Enhancing the SBDC/SBTDC's value to clients,
- Listening to and obtaining feedback from clients, and
- Assessing, analyzing, and responding to client satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction. Methodology should capture actionable information for use in meeting or exceeding clients' expectations. Processes should be in place to integrate feedback as part of a continuous improvement system.

- DESCRIBE YOUR CONTINUOUS PROCESS FOR BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CLIENTS AND ACQUIRING NEW ONES.

- DESCRIBE YOUR PROCESS FOR GAINING FEEDBACK FROM CUSTOMERS TO ENSURE SATISFACTION AND VALUE TO THE CLIENT.

- SHOW HOW THE SATISFACTION FEEDBACK RESULTS ARE USED TO ENSURE YOU ARE MEETING CLIENT NEEDS AND DRIVING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

3.3 MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL PROGRAMS

The requirements for designing, managing, and improving the marketing and promotional programs must include:
- A separate and identifiable logo or brand used consistently throughout the network including the SBDC or SBTDC name.
- A clear integration of strategy and image for the SBDC/SBTDC that conveys the SBDC/SBTDC image and identity as a cohesive SBDC/SBTDC network.

- **Use of the brand or logo to convey the identity of a cohesive SBDC/SBTDC network on all information, materials, and signage.**
- **Acknowledgement of being an accredited member of the ASBDC where appropriate, and preferably having the approved ASBDC logo on the website of the lead center. (Note: If an SBDC/SBTDC is not accredited, the standard ASBDC logo is to be used instead.)**

- PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF HOW YOUR SBDC/SBTDC HAS INTEGRATED STRATEGY, IMAGE AND A COMMON LOGO THAT CONVEYS THE SBDC/SBTDC IMAGE AS A COHESIVE SBDC/SBTDC NETWORK.

- PROVIDE EVIDENCE THAT THE SBDC/SBTDC MATERIALS AND SIGNAGE CONVEYS A COHESIVE SBDC/SBTDC NETWORK INCLUDING A SEPARATE IDENTIFIABLE LOGO THAT INCLUDES THE SBDC/SBTDC NAME.

- DESCRIBE HOW YOU ACKNOWLEDGE BEING AN ACCREDITED MEMBER OF THE ASBDC. IF NOT CURRENTLY ACCREDITED DESCRIBE HOW YOU DISPLAY THE ASBDC LOGO.

4.0   MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS, AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Objective: *Create a performance management system for driving and managing daily operations and for tracking overall organizational performance. This system includes measurement selection, data collection, analysis, and alignment with key strategic objectives.*

4.1 DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A PERFORMANCE SYSTEM

SBDC/SBTDCs must have processes which identify how the organization selects measures, gathers and analyzes data, aligns, reviews, and utilizes its performance data and information at all levels of the SBDC/SBTDC program to enable learning and continuous improvement.

- DESCRIBE YOUR PERFORMANCE SYSTEM AND SHOW HOW YOU ANALIZE AND UTILIZE THE INFORMATION AT ALL LEVELS OF THE ORGANIZATION TO ENSURE LEARNING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

4.2 SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF DATA

SBDC/SBTDCs must have a system in place to ensure security and confidentiality of electronic and hard copy data.

- DESCRIBE YOUR POLICY SHOWING HOW THE SBDC/SBTDC SECURES AND ENSURES THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF ALL ELECTRONIC AND HARD COPY DATA.

4.3 VALIDATION AND VERIFICATION OF KEY PERFORMANCE RESULTS

SBDC/SBTDCs must have systems in place to validate and/or verify the accuracy of key performance measures and results.

- DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ORGANIZATION VALIDATES/AND OR VERIFIES ITS KEY PERFORMANCE RESULTS.

4.4 MEASUREMENT OF ECONOMIC IMPACT

Each SBDC/SBTDC program must participate in the impact studies of the ASBDC and SBA, and should develop a strategy which works towards a statistically significant number of responses.

- PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF YOUR SBDC/SBTDC'S PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL ASBDC AND SBA IMPACT STUDIES.

- DESCRIBE YOUR STRATEGY AND EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF RESPONSES TO YOUR IMPACT SURVEY.

5.0   WORKFORCE FOCUS

Objective: *Design work systems that encourage workforce learning and motivation and enable the workforce to develop and utilize their full potential in alignment with the SBDC/SBTDC's overall objectives and action plans. The SBDC/SBTDC's efforts must build and maintain a work environment and workforce support climate conducive to innovation, performance excellence, and to personal and organizational growth. Create and manage human resource systems to achieve high performance. Establish key workforce practices and a support climate that enables personal growth, organizational growth and performance excellence.*

5.1 WORK SYSTEMS

The SBDC/SBTDC must have work systems, an organizational structure and staffing patterns based on analysis of key needs and strategies of the SBDC/SBTDC. This structure must align with the SBDC/SBTDC's strategic objectives and be designed to enable the workforce to achieve desired results and effectiveness while providing an opportunity to develop its full potential and achieve high performance.

- DESCRIBE THE SBDC/SBTDC'S WORK SYSTEMS AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE.

- INDICATE HOW THE STRUCTURE ALIGNS WITH YOUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.

- PROVIDE EVIDENCE THE STRUCTURE AND ALIGNMENT ENABLES THE WORKFORCE TO ACHIEVE THE SBDC/SBTDC'S DESIRED RESULTS AND HIGH PERFORMANCE.

5.2 KEY POSITIONS

Lead Center Director and Associate/Assistant Director

The lead center director and associate/assistant director(s) should have at a minimum a master's degree in business or other directly related field, or a bachelor's degree with sufficient and progressively responsible experience, or have appropriate business or administrative experience that demonstrates the knowledge and abilities required to:

- Direct, coordinate and manage a multi-faceted, multi-location organization;

- Direct, coordinate and manage human and administrative resources;

- Understand the full range of business practices and business management methods; and

- Demonstrate skills in establishing and maintaining effective support and working relationships with a variety of public and private stakeholder partners that are needed for alignment with strategic objectives.

The salary of the SBDC/SBTDC lead center director and associate/assistant director(s) should at a minimum be equivalent to the annualized average salary of a full professor or associate professor, respectively, in the institution hosting the SBDC/SBTDC or parallel positions in the agency/organization hosting the SBDC/SBTDC. When the university host is not affiliated with a college, the salaries of the director and associate/assistant director(s) should be comparable to the college of business, college of engineering or equivalent.

The SBDC/SBTDC Network should have a plan or strategy focused on developing leadership skills and succession for key positions throughout the network.

- PROVIDE A LIST OF YOUR KEY POSITIONS ALONG WITH EVIDENCE THAT PERSONNEL HAVE THE APPROPRIATE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TO MANAGE A MULTIFACETED AND MULTI-LOCATION ORGANIZATION.

- DOCUMENT THE SALARIES OF THE KEY POSITIONS IN RELATIONSHIP TO THIS STANDARD.

- DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION PLAN FOR KEY POSITIONS.

5.3 WORKFORCE LEARNING AND GROWTH

Workforce education and training must align with and support the achievement of the SBDC/SBTDC's strategic objectives, including the enhancement of workforce knowledge, skills, and leadership capabilities that contribute to organizational effectiveness and performance improvement.

The SBDC/SBTDC must have a systematic professional development program tied to its strategic objectives and provide evidence of its implementation throughout the network. The program must include:
- Identification of network core competencies for all staff necessary to achieve desired results including specialties such as international trade, technology, and procurement;

- **A method of determining the professional development needs of the workforce;**
- **An on-going workforce education and professional development strategy that meets or demonstrates progress toward achieving identified competencies for both network and individual;**
- **A structured training/orientation program for new members of the workforce; and**
- **An assessment system, including opportunities for feedback, to determine effectiveness of the professional development offerings and make changes when warranted.**

- DESCRIBE YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF HOW IT LINKS TO THE SBDC/SBTDC STRATEGIC PLAN.

- INDICATE HOW YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTE TO DEVELOPING YOUR STAFF'S KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND CORE COMPETENCIES. EXPLAIN HOW THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ENHANCE YOUR ORGANIZATION'S PERFORMANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS.

- DESCRIBE YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM INCLUDING HOW YOU GAIN FEEDBACK RELATED TO YOUR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS HOW YOU DETERMINE YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS.

- PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF YOUR STRUCTURED TRAINING/ORIENTATION FOR NEW EMPLOYEES.

5.4 WORKFORCE ENVIRONMENT AND MOTIVATION

Maintain a work environment and a workforce support climate that contributes to the well-being, satisfaction, and motivation of all personnel and:

- **Ensures and improves workplace health, safety, security, and ergonomics,**
- **Ensures workplace preparedness for disaster or emergencies,**
- **Provides staff an opportunity to periodically give feedback to determine the key factors that affect workforce well-being, satisfaction and motivation,**
- **Supports the workforce via benefits and policies including items such as compensation, career progression and related practices that enables the well-being of the workforce, and**
- **Provides facilities that are professional in appearance, adequate for the delivery of services and allows for confidentiality for counseling.**

- DESCRIBE YOUR FACILITIES, PROVIDING EVIDENCE OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND PROVISIONS FOR CONFIDENTIAL COUNSELING.

- DESCRIBE HOW YOUR SBDC/SBTDC MAINTAINS AN ENVIRONMENT AND WORKFORCE SUPPORT CLIMATE THAT:

- CONTRIBUTES TO THE WELL-BEING, SATISFACTION AND MOTIVATION OF ALL PERSONNEL.
- ENSURES AND IMPROVES WORKPLACE HEALTH, SAFETY, SECURITY, AND ERGONOMICS.
- PERIODICALLY PROVIDES ALL STAFF A MEANS TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK RELATED TO FACTORS AFFECTING THEIR WORK, WORKPLACE AND EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION.
- SUPPORTS POLICIES RELATED TO COMPENSATION AND CAREER PROGRESSION.

6.0 PROGRAM DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT

Objective: *To design key service delivery processes that maximize client value and satisfaction and drive organizational success and sustainability.*

6.1 KEY SBDC/SBTDC SERVICES

Key services must be consistent with the national SBDC/SBTDC mission and align with the SBDC/SBTDC lead center strategy and cooperative agreement. Regular and continual processes for the design, delivery and management of key services must be in place.

For each key service, systematic processes must be in place to:

- Ensure efficient & effective delivery
- Identify client expectations & preferences
- Link to the strategic plan
- Measure effectiveness
- Assess staff performance
- Obtain client feedback & measure client satisfaction
- Gather & analyze performance data
- Use data for continuous improvement
- Improve performance & increase value to clients
- Maintain client confidentiality & avoid conflicts of interest

- DESCRIBE YOUR SBDC/SBTDC REGULAR AND CONTINUOUS KEY SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM.

- DESCRIBE HOW YOUR DELIVERY SYSTEM ALIGNS WITH YOUR OVERALL STRATEGIC PLAN AND FUNDING.

- FOR EACH KEY SERVICE, DESCRIBE THE SYSTEMATIC PROCESSES THAT ARE IN PLACE TO ADDRESS THE BULLETED ITEMS OUTLINED IN STANDARD.

6.2 IF APPLYING OR RENEWING TECHNOLOGY ACCREDITATION SEE TECHNOLOGY SELF STUDY GUIDE

If the SBDC/SBTDC is applying or re-applying for accreditation of a technology program, it must develop its technology program to meet the Guidelines for SBDC/SBTDCs seeking or renewing Technology Accreditation and/or Designation as a Small Business and Technology Development Center (see Appendix A of this document).

7.0 RESULTS

Objective: *To develop a routine and continual process to examine trends of SBDC/SBTDC's organizational performance over time (3-5 years) including stakeholder and customer focused outcomes, process effectiveness outcomes, financial and market outcomes, workforce focused outcomes and leadership outcomes.*

For the SBDC/SBTDC to improve quality and performance, the SBDC/SBTDC must utilize a system to document its work performance and outcomes in order to drive continuous quality improvement. This should include an ability to report on the performance measurement elements set forth in Standards 1 through 6. It must also include an ability to report on common data and results. ("Common data" refers here to data collected and utilized by more than one and often all SBDC/SBTDCs.)

Each of the standards below should be evidenced by tables, charts, graphs or other data with narrative analysis describing how the SBDC/SBTDC uses the data to improve performance and the results of its efforts.

7.1 SBDC/SBTDC SERVICE RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

- SUMMARIZE THE KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS IDENTIFIED IN STANDARD 4.1.

- PROVIDE CHARTS AND GRAPHS FOR A MINIMUM 3 YEAR PERIOD SHOWING YOUR LEVEL OF SERVICE PERFORMANCE FOR THE OVERALL ORGANIZATION.

- DESCRIBE HOW THIS TREND INFORMATION IS USED TO MANAGE PERFORMANCE.

- IDENTIFY POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE TRENDS AND PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF HOW THEY DRIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND IMPROVEMENT.

7.2 CUSTOMER FOCUSED RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

- UTILIZING YOUR CLIENT SEGMENTATION STRATEGY AS DESCRIBED IN STANDARD 3, PROVIDE A MINIMUM OF 3 YEARS TREND DATA SHOWING TRENDS IN KEY MEASURES OR INDICATORS OF SERVICE PERFORMANCE FOR YOUR PRODUCT OFFERINGS AND CLIENT SEGMENTS.

- DESCRIBE HOW THE SBDC/SBTDC UTILIZES THIS TREND DATA TO MANAGE PERFORMANCE AND ADDRESS NEGATIVE OR POSITIVE TRENDS.

- GIVE EXAMPLES OF HOW ANALYSIS OF THIS TREND DATA DRIVES IMPROVEMENT IN THE ORGANIZATION OR LEADS TO ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE RESULTING IN IMPROVED ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE.

7.3 MARKET RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

- DESCRIBE PEER OR ASPIRANT ORGANIZATIONS AND IDENTIFY ANY COMPARABLE METRICS OR DATA COLLECTION SOURCES.

- BENCHMARK A MINIMUM OF 3 YEARS TREND DATA COMPARING YOUR SBDC/SBTDC TO A COMPARABLE SBDC/SBTDC OR TO NATIONAL TRENDS.

- DESCRIBE HOW THIS DATA IS REGULARLY USED TO MANAGE PERFORMANCE OF THE SBDC/SBTDC AND EXPLAIN YOUR POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE TRENDS.

- GIVE EXAMPLES OF HOW ANALYSIS OF THIS TREND DATA DRIVES IMPROVEMENT IN THE ORGANIZATION OR HAS LED TO ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE THAT RESULTED IN IMPROVED PERFORMANCE RESULTS.

7.4 HUMAN RESOURCE RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

- DESCRIBE YOUR KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES OR OUTCOMES FOR EMPLOYEE LEARNING, WORKFORCE ENVIRONMENT AND SATISFACTION AS IDENTIFIED IN STANDARDS 5.3 AND 5.4.

- PROVIDE TREND DATA FOR A MINIMUM OF 3 YEARS, SHOWING YOUR SBDC/SBTDC'S CURRENT LEVELS AND TRENDS OF KEY MEASURES OR INDICATORS RELATED TO HUMAN RESOURCE PERFORMANCE.

- DESCRIBE HOW THIS DATA IS REGULARLY USED TO MANAGE PERFORMANCE OF THE SBDC/SBTDC.

- PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF HOW THE ANALYSIS OF THIS DATA HAS DRIVEN IMPROVEMENT OR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES THAT RESULTED IN IMPROVED PERFORMANCE.

- EXPLAIN YOUR POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE TRENDS.

7.5 ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

- DESCRIBE YOUR KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR CALCULATING YOUR SBDC/SBTDC'S RETURN ON INVESTMENT.

- PROVIDE TREND DATA FOR A MINIMUM OF 3 YEARS SHOWING YOUR SBDC/SBTDC'S CURRENT LEVELS AND TRENDS OF KEY MEASURES OR INDICATORS OF ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS.

- DESCRIBE HOW THIS DATA IS REGULARLY USED TO MANAGE PERFORMANCE OF THE SBDC/SBTDC.

- PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF HOW THE ANALYSIS OF THIS DATA HAS DRIVEN IMPROVEMENT OR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES RESULTING IN IMPROVED PERFORMANCE.

- EXPLAIN YOUR POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE TRENDS.