

Small Business Owner Peer Council - 2014

A Time to Work On Your Business, Not In It

Grow as the Strategic Leader of Your Company

Successfully running your own business can be both a difficult and lonely experience, especially on issues critical to the company and its employees. The Small Business Owner (SBO) Peer Council gathers business owners to help them develop a core of solid business relationships that result both in bottom line benefits and the professional growth of its members.

Advantages

SBO Peer Council provides access to others with similar perspectives and experiences who can offer critical insight and advice, without hidden agendas. Member companies are not competitors nor do they use the venue to sell professional services. The group goes beyond a loose network of associates and becomes a place where trusted advisors can offer mutually valuable insight. The ideal group size is 7-10 committed members.

Accountability and confidentiality between members is one of the critical advantages. As relationships develop, accountability to one another on the issues discussed within the group likewise develops. The group makes a considerable commitment to one another to be present at each and every meeting. Each member brings an expertise and perspective that is unique and the group discussions provide the opportunity to both give and receive.

Discussion topics are based on the interests expressed by the group with Greg Thomas of Engenious Consulting serving as the facilitator. Greg relies on his network of professional contacts to explore topics of interest to the Council members and to provide the latest information on strategically operating a business in a rapidly changing economic environment.

These advantages lead members toward managing change and developing the commitment and accountability to make it happen.

How the SBO Peer Council works

Membership is devoted to the business owner of the company.

Members make a commitment to the importance of attendance and pledge that other items on personal schedules will not take priority.

There are three main components of the Peer Council model.

1. **Quick Start.** This is an opportunity for each member to bring forward a topic that they are currently challenged by and would like some input and insight from the group. Virtually an aspect of running a business is fair game. We stress confidentiality, in that what happens at Peer Council, stays at Peer Council.
2. **Expert Presentations.** When a particular topic comes up during Quick Start, Greg may ask the group if they want to learn more about that issue. If so, Greg will bring in an industry expert to present some best practices in that area and answer questions. This is not to be a commercial for the presenter, but rather an educational opportunity and personal development for the members.
3. **Benchmarking Visits.** Over the course of the year, it is likely that the group will visit two or three of the participating companies on the assigned meeting day. This will give the group the opportunity to see the facility and for the host company to provide a tour and talk in more detail about its initiatives.

Investment Required

For the second half of 2014, each member will be asked to make a 6 month commitment to the group. Cost for each member will be \$540, with half billed in July and the other half billed in October.

Meeting Logistics

The first Tuesday of each month starting in July, 2014

July 8

August 12

September 9

October 14

November 11

December 9

8:30AM – Noon

Mankato – the specific location is still to be determined

Facilitator

Engenious Consulting Owner & President, **Greg Thomas**, has broad business expertise in sales, sales management, marketing, operations and leadership development. Greg helps companies develop solutions to meet goals for growth and productivity. He has worked with a diverse range of companies including retail, manufacturing, service industries and distribution companies giving him a solid background to guide a wide variety of clients into profitable growth. Greg has been a certified Small Business Development Center Consultant since 2011.

Expertise:

Business Growth Planning, Sales Process, Idea Engineering, Sales & Marketing Strategy, Executive Leadership, Business Development, Sales Coaching, CRM Process Implementation

Career:

Enterprise Minnesota – Business Growth Advisor
Sprint - Business Sales Manager
Taylor Corporation - Director of Business Development

Education:

South Central College, Mankato, MN – Bachelors Degree in Marketing

Affiliations and Certifications:

Dale Carnegie Sales Professional Certification
Minnesota State University, Mankato, College of Science, Engineering and Technology Advisory Board
Regional Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation Board of Directors
Greater Mankato Area United Way Marketing Committee Chair and Executive Board Member



Greg Thomas

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