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What's Different for Your Business in 2012?

SMALL ADJUSTMENTS NOW CAN BRING BIG REWARDS TOMORROW FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

Take a good look back at your operations in the past few years. What did you experience? Were any adjustments made? Having a reflective moment should give you additional insight about operating in a tough economy and the adjustments you will need to make in 2012 to grow and make a profit.

“A problem anticipated is a problem half-solved”

*Peter Drucker (1909 – 2005)
 Writer, Management Consultant*

To effectively lead a business, business owners and key managers must be motivated to improve operating efficiencies, reduce expenses, and maintain and even improve cash flow as much as possible.

Here are a few ideas to consider:

1. Prepare a Budget. Maintaining your company's cash flow is the first order of business. Project your annual cash flow requirements. Many accounting software programs offer a basic cash management feature tool that can help you create projections

for the year ahead based on prior year actual figures.

2. Become a Lower-Cost Producer.

Field labor for most construction companies represents the single most controllable cost. Therefore, research ways to improve field productivity to improve your bottom line.

3. Build Your Team.

You must have a strong management team to achieve profitability. Determine if your current managers have the knowledge and skills to make daily decisions and can be held responsible and accountable for company goals. If your current management team does not fit your agenda, then determine what type of employee you need and provide training or hire someone with experience. Here's the point, investing in a strong management team (field and office), will give you time to focus on your business, such as growing sales or investigating new services.

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4. Communicate Your Big Picture.

Successful businesses hold regular meetings to communicate with their managers and employees. Meetings keep your team focused and on the same stated goals. At these meetings review productivity goals achieved during the past week, plans for the current week, job-cost updates, receivables, cash-flow issues, schedules, submittals, procurement process, and change orders on every project.

5. Become a Networker.

Top business leaders are always open to learning about better ways to do business. They talk with business mentors, read books, participate in industry associations, and attend training workshops and networking opportunities.

6. Build Relationships.

Develop winning strategies to find customers who pay for work based on trust, performance, and knowledge, rather than low price. Build customer relationships that set your company apart.

7. Maximize Cash Flow.

When acquiring large cost items, alter the payment schedule (e.g. tax credits, discounts) to minimize the net bill. Bill all of your customers promptly. In fact, develop a more organized and automated process. Consider hiring a specialist if you have difficulty with collections. Altering the structure of a deal can create significant savings.

Making the necessary adjustments is not easy, but the results will be worth it. And, if successful,

your employees will appreciate the new company growth. Evidence of company growth will certainly refresh employee loyalty and their energy to perform well.

Much Success in 2012!



Victor C. Tyler
Program Manager/ Consultant
DBE Supportive Services

Congratulations... TDOT Civil Rights Office Dean's List

The Tennessee Department of Transportation Civil Rights Office tracks the level of Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) utilization by prime contractors. TDOT's Civil Rights Office is pleased to recognize the following prime contractors for their high level of commitment in utilizing DBEs.

Prime Contractors	Total Prime Contract Amount Awarded	No. of Contracts Awarded to DBEs	Total Contract Amount Awarded to DBEs	% Awarded to DBEs	FFY 2011 Grade
Acuff Interprises, Inc. dba Scott Contractors, Inc	\$ 19,228,458.97	5	\$ 2,161,321.49	11.24%	A+
Bell & Associates Construction	\$ 26,284,622.56	18	\$ 2,800,389.84	10.65%	A+
Greenstar, LLC	\$ 1,956,114.73	3	\$ 196,443.00	10.04%	A+
Highways, Inc	\$ 5,605,912.84	7	\$ 570,000.06	10.17%	A+
J & M Grading Division LLC	\$ 2,633,784.25	6	\$ 263,465.40	10.00%	A+
Jones Brothers, Inc	\$ 23,628,652.13	4	\$ 2,366,352.96	10.01%	A+
McKinnon Construction Company	\$ 2,110,790.75	5	\$ 215,852.61	10.23%	A+
Mountain States Contractors LLC	\$ 2,536,968.78	2	\$ 232,943.35	9.18%	A
Summers-Taylor, Inc	\$ 42,813,630.99	9	\$ 4,070,551.36	9.51%	A
Tinsley Asphalt, LLC	\$ 2,028,460.68	2	\$ 203,038.00	10.01%	A+
Twin K Construction, Inc	\$ 2,334,800.43	7	\$ 233,517.24	10.00%	A+
Volunteer Bridge Construction	\$ 3,463,386.50	7	\$ 347,017.61	10.02%	A+



2012 Tentative DBE Seminars & Workshops Topics



- **Estimating & Bidding Road Construction**
- **Bidding & Pricing Strategies**
- **Construction Project Management**
- **Financial Analysis for Non-Financial Types**
- **Marketing Communications That Gets Their Attention**
- **Effective Business Development Strategies**
- **HR for Small Businesses**
- **Creating a 1-Page Business Strategy**
- **Small Firm Leadership Boot Camp**
- **Small Business Owners Roundtable**
- **2012 DBE Annual Meeting**

Dates and Locations TBA

Fostering Small Business Participation

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) believes that fostering small business participation in a race-neutral way is an important component of a successful Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. For that reason, FHWA is requiring State Departments of Transportation (DOT) to create and implement a parallel small business component to their DBE program.

Each State DOT will add an emphasis on promoting the utilization of small businesses in addition to its current DBE program. By fostering the full utilization of all small businesses, jobs will be retained, created, and/or expanded in the transportation industry. Small businesses drive the American economy.

State DOTs will be required and held accountable to employ strong efforts to encourage small business participation in their contracting activities. Although no specific component would be required, many of the potential strategies are already part of the existing DBE program regulation (49 CFR Part 26) or implementing guidance (e.g., unbundling; race-neutral small business set-asides). This requirement goes into effect on February 28, 2012, and determinations of what is considered a small business will be made by the State DOT.

Although DBEs are small businesses, facilitating participation for small businesses other than DBEs fosters an environment to mobilize all small business entities upwardly. Consequently, a program element that pulls together the various ways that a State DOT reaches out to small businesses and makes it easier for them to compete for DOT-assisted contracts will foster the overall objectives of the DBE program.

Things to note are:

- The implementation of this new small business program thrust does not replace the existing DBE program or otherwise operate as a substitute for the DBE program. It is simply another tool that may offer additional contracting opportunities to small businesses.
- When a State DOT uses a small business program to achieve DBE participation, please note that it may count only the participation of those small businesses that are certified DBEs under 49 CFR Part 26 toward goal projects. Only certified DBEs can do DBE goal work.
- Small Business size standards will be determined by the State DOT; however size standards cannot exceed the size standards established by both the Small Business Administration (SBA) and the federal USDOT DBE program.

FHWA is committed to working with TDOT on its full implementation of this new business element.



Joi Hamilton-Jones
Civil Rights Specialist
Federal Highway Administration



World Class Accounting

As fiscal year 2011 comes to an end, what plans do you have for your accounting department for the New Year? As the owner, did you recognize the need for improvement in some areas of your

firm's accounting department? If so, that's great! A good accounting department requires continuous improvement to become a 'World Class Accounting' department.

As a firm owner, I'm sure you want good financial information to assist in making sound business decisions. Consider your financial statements as your 'business report card' to support those all too important decisions.

As we move into fiscal year 2012, consider these opportunities to achieve a 'World Class Accounting' department:

Internal Control

Internal control (IC) is an accounting method, procedure, or system designed to promote operational efficiency and to safeguard company assets. A good system of IC utilizes the **ARC** concept.

Authorization – having transactions

approved by an appropriate level of management

Reporting – recording properly approved financial transactions in company books

Custody – having physical custody of company assets

ARC ensures no one individual controls or performs all three functions at the same time. IC procedures reduce process variations, which lead to more predictable outcomes.

Personnel

Employees are your most valuable assets as they play a key role in ensuring the long-term sustainability of your company. It is not enough for employees merely to come to work, collect a paycheck and then return home, only to repeat the same routine five days a week. As an owner, take a good look at your accounting department staff. Do employees have adequate technical skills and training to perform their assigned task? Have you provided employees with up-to-date computer systems and software? Can employees benefit from attending workshops designed to increase their knowledge and skills? If so, are you encouraging your accounting staff to take advantage of such opportunities?

Policies and Procedures

I can never overemphasize the importance of maintaining up-to-date accounting policies and procedures. Accounting **policies** are important to your business to maintain consistency in processing financial information. Accounting **procedures** are developed and followed based on company policies. Procedures dictate how your company

records and reports financial information. This becomes very important when a key employee is out sick or on vacation. The backup or replacement person will have step-by-step instructions to process financial information accurately and consistent with company policy.

Financial Statement Review

Financial statement review should be a standard part of your accounting policies and procedures. As an owner, you should have regularly scheduled meetings with members of your accounting staff to review your firm's monthly financial 'report card.' The monthly **balance sheet**, **profit and loss statement** and **job cost** reports should be discussed. Solicit input from your accounting staff regarding concerns or difficulties they may be experiencing in performing their jobs. Always encourage staff to offer recommendations for improvement of current systems and processes.

Let us all be thankful for this new year and look forward to a 'World Class Accounting' department in 2012!



Marshall Tabb

Financial Management & Leadership Coaching
DBE Supportive Services

TDOT DBE Supportive Services BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

- Business Planning
- Financial Analysis
- Leadership Development
- Business Coaching

ONE-ON-ONE TRAINING

- Strategic Marketing
- Accounting Software
- Construction Accounting
- Bidding & Estimating
- Project Management
- Contracts & Specifications
- Construction Plan Reading
- Project Controls



Welcome New DBEs

Region 1

Closser Lubrication Services, Inc.

Diane Closser

Lubrication Related Services

Dykes Trucking, Inc.

Kim Dykes

General Freight Trucking, Local

Region 3

Design Consultants, Inc.

Kenneth Ellzy

Civil Engineering Services

Electric and Air Services, Inc.

Kelly Holmes

Mechanical and Electrical Contractors, Airport Runway Lighting, Highway and Street Lighting Installation, Traffic Control Lights Installation, Building Construction, Power and Communication Line and Related Structures

GISbiz, Inc.

Babu Krishnasamy

Information Technology Consulting, Software Application Development and Geographic Information Services Consulting

Jabez Group Indeed, Inc.

Karen Dorroll

General Contracting, Construction, Poured Concrete Foundation and Structures Contractors, Drywall Installation, Painting and Wall Covering, Flooring, Tile and Terrazzo Contractors, Excavation and Construction Management

Rock-Tenn Contractors, Inc.

Michelle Dwyer

Excavation Contractors, Site Work, Clearing, Grading and Light Utilities Work

Wright & Associates

Lorenzo Wright

Residential, Small Commercial Contractor for New Construction, Remodeling Additions

Region 4

Better Backflow Testing, Inc.

Greg Taylor

Electrical Contractor, HVAC, Commercial and Residential Plumbing Contractor and Backflow Testing, General Contractor, Landscaping Services

T.I.E. Construction, LLC

Tomas I. Enriquez

General Contractor, Commercial and Residential Construction

Recently Renewed Firms

Region 1

B & B Lawn Services, Inc.

Mr. Baffin R. Harper, Sr.

Erosion Control, Commercial Landscaping and Mowing, Traffic Control

Daynesi, Inc.

Daksha Shah

Engineering Services

Elvado Environmental, LLC

Jill A. Mortimore

Environmental Consulting Services

San² Inc.

Ashok Chatra

Transportation Traffic/Planning Consulting and Import/Export of Durable Goods

Region 2

Roberts Seeding and Sod, Inc.

Theresa Roberts

Landscaping, Sodding, Seeding, and Erosion Control

Summit Concrete & Construction

Samuel Petty

Poured Concrete Foundations and Structures Contractor

Region 3

Ace Contractors, Inc.

Chandan Chaudhuri

Construction (Mainly Concrete and Asphalt); Remodeling Work (Framing, Roofing and Grading)

Callan Corporation

Kevin A. Artis

All Other Specialty Trade Contractors

I.C.F. Builders & Consultants, Inc.

Roger Ligon, Sr.

General Construction

Sunago Builders, Inc.

Michael Tucker

General Construction, Sidewalks, Curb and Gutter, Sawing, Cutting and Coring

Region 4

D & D Trucking Co. of Tenn.

Kim Dudley

Trucking and Hauling

Interstate Transportation, LLC

Marsha Via

Transportation: Hauling Asphalt, Sand, and Gravel

Johnson Heating and Air

Donnie Johnson

Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning Contractors

Self + Tucker & Architects, Inc.

Juan R. Self

Architecture, Interior Design, Master Planning



Scheduled 2012 Letting Dates

- Feb 10
- Mar 23
- May 4
- June 8
- Aug 3
- Sept 14
- Oct 26
- Dec 7

Congratulations!

Kimberly, Inc. and Superior Traffic Control-Memphis, Inc. Two of TDOT's Certified DBEs

Kimberly Danson, owner of Kimberly, Inc., was recognized by the Tennessee Road Builders Association and presented the 2010 Annual Safety Award Platinum Level for having her team members work 118,546 man-hours with a "zero" frequency of accidents. Rebecca Woods, owner of Superior Traffic Control-Memphis, Inc., was awarded the Tennessee Road Builders Association Subcontractor of the Year Award in 2010. These awards were given in 2011 for their accomplishments in 2010.



Kimberly Danson **Rebecca Woods**

INTERESTING QUOTE:

“Never forget that the ultimate goal is not to develop the perfect business plan or the most elegant business model, it is to identify a need in the market and build a profitable business that meets this need.”

– Jeff Cornwall, writing at *The Entrepreneurial Mind*

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