



New Life Plastic Recycling

Susan Newman
Burlington
www.newlifeplastics.com

she has received a variety of SBTDC services and has attended SBTDC-sponsored events like Marketplace, a regional "reverse" trade show that allows small business owners the opportunity to meet national contracting officers.

In 2003, Susan met her current SBTDC counselor, Mac McCumber. By then, her business was established and profitable. However, increasing business led to the need for more staff and marketing. She knew the SBTDC would likely have the expertise to assist with human resources issues, and Mac was just the person she needed.

On Mac's first visit to NLPR, they toured the facility and reviewed the current business needs. Effective employee management and hiring was a priority. Mac suggested that Susan develop performance management forms for bilingual staff, an employee handbook, and a commission structure for sales staff.

Over time, they worked to develop and use techniques to improve NLPR workforce. Mac and Susan worked on interviewing strategies that would help her hire the best candidates for open positions. Mac also scheduled Susan and her managers to take The Attentional & Interpersonal Style Inventory (TAIS) and attend SymmeTree. SymmeTree is an interactive, two-day executive program that identifies change management skills and allows participants to experience and practice them. These tools were important in increasing staff morale and building a team that works together efficiently.

NLPR sales have grown from \$0 to over \$1 million from 1998 to 2006. The company now has a more skillfully trained workforce of 18 employees. Susan has big plans for the business including the expansion of her current business space and entry into the wood pallet recycling market.

With all the SBTDC assistance Susan has received, she is grateful and considers Mac a counselor and friend. "I can't describe how valuable the support I receive from Mac and the SBTDC is to me. Knowing that the SBTDC is there is comforting."



"I should be the poster child for the SBTDC!"

ADVICE

Get all the help you can, and be prepared to starve or go on a strict diet.

Contact people who can help you like the SBTDC.

With over 10 years of experience in the industry, Susan Newman moved to North Carolina to take a job at a plastics recycling company. She had high hopes for the job. However the business soon failed. The single mother was left with two options – pull her children out of their new school and relocate again, or start her own plastics recycling business. She chose the latter.

In 1998, Susan started New Life Plastic Recycling, Inc. (NLPR). NLPR only recycles post-industrial plastics, as opposed to post-consumer products like laundry detergent bottles and milk jugs. After receiving these materials at a nominal or no cost, they are processed into small pieces. From that point, the processed materials are sent to various locations to be used in the production of other plastic products ranging from shipping containers to DVD covers to truck bed liners.

"This business is a walking miracle. I should be the poster child for the SBTDC!"

Susan will be the first to tell you that the SBTDC has assisted her since the very rocky start. For over 9 years,

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