**LET THE SBA HELP YOUR SMALL BUSINESS!**

By: Lana M. Glovach, U.S. Small Business Administration

Through every phase of your business lifecycle, the [U.S. Small Business Administration](https://www.sba.gov/) (SBA) is your small business ally! The SBA is a Cabinet-level federal agency with a mission to help small businesses start, grow, expand, and recover. It accomplishes that mission by offering a variety of programs and services that increase a small business owner’s confidence and business smarts, build capacity as that business develops, reimagine its potential as it branches out, and triumph over adversity. In short, the SBA powers the American Dream!

What are those programs and services? There are too many to list here, but here’s a sample:

* Technical Business Training and Mentoring: High-quality training (free or at low cost) and one-on-one mentoring (free) tailored to the specific needs of small business owners. Training topics include fundamentals such as the steps to starting a business, the legal and tax considerations of different business structures, business plan basics, and record-keeping and accounting, as well as specialized subjects like marketing and brand building, social media, and financing preparation and strategies.
* Access to Funding: Microloans ($500 up to $50,000) and SBA-guaranteed loans (up to $5.5 million) with competitive terms, lower down payments, and more relaxed cash flow requirements, as well as financial counseling and education. There is a broad range of permissible uses for the loan proceeds, including launching a business, day-to-day expenses, buying inventory and equipment, and purchasing, renovating or buying facilities.
* Disaster Preparedness and Financial Assistance: Preparedness resources and information that can help your small business prepare for a disaster, whether it’s a flood, winter weather, a hurricane, or a cyber security incident. Also, low-interest, long-term disaster loans for physical damage and economic injury made directly to small businesses, homeowners, and renters located in declared disaster areas.

As Benjamin Franklin observed, “if you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.” Let the SBA help your small business plan for success! Assistance is available in languages other than English, including Spanish, and all SBA programs and services are extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis.

We’ll explore some of these topics in more detail in subsequent articles. To learn more about the SBA’s programs and services before then, please contact Lana Glovach, SBA Economic Development Specialist, at lana.glovach@sba.gov or 401-528-4575.