

SCORE Article for recruiting

Pay It Forward by Sharing Your Business Expertise

By Jim Darcey, SCORE Volunteer

Chances are, if you own or have owned a business, been involved in sales, finance, management or any other position of responsibility, you have a lot to share in terms of your experience and knowledge.

If you like to help, and would like to aid the success of others in business, volunteering as a mentor with SCORE may be the real sweet spot for you.

Our local SCORE chapter provides business mentoring/consulting services free of charge to those considering starting a new business, as well as those already in business who want assistance in expansion, finance, operations, or any other area.

A resource partner to the Small Business Administration, SCORE is a national organization with over 230 chapters and 10,000 volunteers nationwide, all providing free one on one mentoring services as well an array of educational opportunities via workshops and webinars.

In Oregon SCORE helped in the opening of 343 businesses and the creation of 818 jobs. Collectively, close to 1000 hours of service were provided.

Some mentors are retired, some semi-retired, and some are still active in business. The common thread is an interest in helping others by sharing what they know.

The “perks” are many. It is always empowering to share what you know; you tend to expand your professional knowledge and skills along the way, i.e. “lifelong learning”. You also get to meet more people in the community and connect with other professionals. More personal/social friendships sometimes emerge with others in the group.

You can make a difference in helping with as minimal a time commitment as 4-5 hours per week, totally on your own schedule. New mentors are supported with a well-structured “on boarding” program, as well as connection to more experienced team members who can help and advise.

Here are some thoughts from some mentors sharing their experiences:

“It is a pleasure to be able to share the business knowledge that I have built from decades of work experience”

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“During my business career, I was very fortunate that some wonderful people wanted to help me succeed. Now those folks are indirectly helping SCORE clients succeed with me in the middle. What an amazing circle of life!”

“I get to experience the creativity of working with all types of new and experienced business Clients. Mentoring for SCORE is a great way to give back to my community.”

Of course, the core outcome is results from the help provided. Here are a few of the many comments and feedback we receive from those who have received mentoring:

“I am loving the insight and support to help get me going”

“My mentor listened first and then guided the planning process and helped fill in my blanks. I am extraordinarily grateful for the experienced advice.”

“My mentor is extremely helpful, helped me understand the industry and is helping connect me to the right people to get my business up and running.”

SCORE is expanding. More mentors are needed to handle the many requests for help that are received every month. The application process is very simple and accessible via the website: Willamette.score.org.

Consider becoming part of a group that is helping the business community grow and prosper!