

RESOURCES FOR NEW ENTREPRENEURS

Hidden Star
MASTER CLASS SERIES 

Business Advice

There are truly great organizations such as SCORE. (Service Corps of Retired Executives). Typically, these are older folks with an entire career of experience they are willing to give away for free just to help you. In fact, they are prohibited from accepting compensation.

There are many different types of careers and expertise represented in SCORE, and you can request a mentor with—for example—expertise in the automotive repair business. In fact, that is about the only challenge with SCORE. There is so much expertise in various fields, it can take a while to get to someone who knows your space—but it is totally worth it. So let's start there, here is the SCORE website: www.score.org

Small Business Services & Help

The U.S. Small Business Administration has a lot of resources you can easily access and read. This is a great government agency doing a truly remarkable job helping small business and fostering the entrepreneurial spirit. The SBA is a lot more than just loans. Check them out: www.sba.gov

It is a lot of helpful information to take in, but worth the time.

If you live in a city with a Small Business Development Center, you can walk in and get help. They are affiliated with the Small Business Administration and have folks who can direct you to other resources.

Downloadable Forms

There is an amazing array of 122 free, usable downloadable forms from Office Depot—everything from template employee manuals (which you will need) to an income statement template in Excel (which you will need). BIG kudos for Office Depot for making all of this available for free, this is a great resource.

SCORE provides a downloadable Business Plan template. It is long and intense but it can be helpful even if you don't complete everything. SCORE is also a great resource as you go forward. This is a blank template used by thousands of successful business owners: www.score.org/resource/business-plan-template-startup-business

Statistics

For some entrepreneurs it is vitally important to know things about the market and their customers. The federal government has a great site with statistics and actual data about just about everything. It is a lot to take in, but there is a lot of free, very informative data that can help you: www.usa.gov/statistics

Low-Income, Women and Minority Owned Businesses

For low-income and minority entrepreneurs, Hidden Star has great programs to help you. They have a unique approach to helping new businesses get started that can be very beneficial. Check them out and get great help: www.HiddenStar.org

Peer Groups/ Support

Sometimes it is very important to talk with people in the same situation as you, struggling and working to get your business started and growing. Hidden Star provides the Galaxy Forums, an online community where you can get help, give help, get invaluable information, and help your business—and it is free.

Communication

For those of you new to business, one of the common mistakes is bad communication; it can hurt you more than you know. There are some accepted norms on how to write, communicate, and relay information. This is more important than you may think it is. Here is a website with examples of correspondence you will want to visit: [click here](#)

Patents and Trademarks

If you want to know about Patents and Trademarks and how to file and protect your intellectual property/invention, the Patent office website is the place to start: www.uspto.gov

Business Books

If you are a reader, we can recommend a few books you will find useful.

The Lean Start Up by Eric Ries. Here you will learn about starting a company with limited resources and the Minimally Viable Product approach to getting to market.

Measure What Matters by John Doerr. This remarkable book will teach you how to run your new business the same way he taught Google when they started—and many other companies he has helped.

The 22 Immutable Laws of Marketing by Al Ries and Jack Trout. This short, easy-to-read book is a timeless lesson on how businesses actually sell their products and services. It is full of amazing advice and lessons.

There are many more great business books, but if you start with these you will have built the foundation for growing your business.