

SMALL BUSINESS BRIEF

WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN THE SMALL BUSINESS INSTITUTE DIRECTORS' ASSOCIATION (SBIDA)

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INTRODUCTION

The Small Business Directors' Association (SBIDA) is a non-profit professional association whose mission is to strengthen the small business/entrepreneurship sector of the free enterprise system, provide entrepreneurship education, and support economic development and diversification through teaching, consulting, training, and field research.

I won't go into great detail about SBIDA's history (over 25 years old), its impact on small businesses through its Small Business Institute™ program (Matthews, 1998), or its impact on literally thousands of students (for further information about these topics, please visit our web site: www.sbida.org). Instead, I want to speak to our future.

THE SBI PROGRAM

SBIDA is probably best known for its premier field case student consulting program, the Small Business Institute™ (SBI). The SBI Program takes upper-level undergraduates and graduates and out into the business community to serve as student consultants, under direct faculty supervision. This experiential learning experience results in what I call a "Win⁴ Program," in that the following four constituencies all benefit:

➤ **For Faculty**

- SBI clients' problems offer opportunities for incorporating real-life examples in lecture material.
- SBI clients' problems and their solutions offer substantial research opportunities which can lead to publishable articles.
- Working with SBI clients and coaching student teams provides faculty with the venue to discover and implement solutions and to serve as a vital linkage to the local business community.

➤ **For Students**

- The SBI Program offers students a chance to gain hands-on experience with small business.
- The SBI Program provides the critical experiential training to supplement textbook and classroom knowledge, leading students to greater opportunities in a large or small company.
- Participation in the SBI Program helps students decide if they should start a business, and/or enhance their family firms.

➤ **For Colleges and Universities**

- The SBI Program is an excellent means for a school to provide community service and to enhance its outreach activities.
- The SBI Program enhances the credibility of its curriculum for both existing and prospective students.
- The SBI Program enhances the recognition of the school among its constituents, which can lead to more financial contributions and grant opportunities.

➤ **For Businesses/Organizations**

- Businesses receive low cost or free consulting.
- Businesses receive a substantial, in-depth analysis designed to enhance its operations.

(Source: Benefits of Offering a Small Business Institute™, SBIDA web site)

Does a SBI Program sound attractive? It should be to AACSB institutions, given that part of the AACSB requirements is the ability to demonstrate relevancy and linkages to the business community. Can an SBI program help you do this? Absolutely. Who can help you develop/run a SBI program? SBIDA. For this reason alone, you should join SBIDA.

OTHER BENEFITS

However, our benefits do not stop there. Most college and university faculty operate on a triad, in that teaching, scholarly activity, and value/service are all required. A SBIDA membership helps you accomplish all three. SBIDA activities enrich classroom pedagogy, provide professional development opportunities, enhance small business/entrepreneurial knowledge, and encourage publications.

For example, consider the *Journal of Small Business Strategy (JSBS)*, our flagship publication. The *JSBS* is included in a SBIDA membership, providing you with an invaluable resource, a possible outlet for your publications, or an opportunity for editorial board service. Membership also includes SBI director and student manuals, a SBI fundraising guide, and a marketing ideas guide that culls the best practices from our hundreds of members.

A SBIDA membership continues to be better and better. This year, we began a program that will certify our members as small business counselors. We offer a national competition for student consulting case of the year, which recognizes excellence in students and their faculty. Our annual conferences (regional and national) explore issues and trends for small, entrepreneurial, and family-owned businesses.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If I have whetted your interest, then you should learn how SBIDA and you can be a perfect fit. Contact me at (609) 895-5522, or cookr@rider.edu, for more information. Membership is currently \$100 a year for U.S. members and \$125 a year for international members. Don't wait, you never know what you might miss!

REFERENCES

- Benefits of offering a Small Business Institute™, [SBIDA Benefits](http://www.cba.uc.edu/cbainfo/sbida/benefits.htm).
<http://www.cba.uc.edu/cbainfo/sbida/benefits.htm> (19 May 1999).
- Matthews, C. H. (1998). The Small Business Institute™ program: High impact entrepreneurship education. *Journal of Small Business Strategy*, 9 (2), 14-22.

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