

STARTING AND GROWING A BUSINESS

INFOCEPT SEMINAR CURRICULUM – SUMMER 2025

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| Overview and Objectives: | <p>Thinking of starting a new business or growing and transforming an existing business? It's a daunting, yet very rewarding and exciting journey! Improve your chances of entrepreneurial success by exploring best practices, discussing contemporary business issues, sharing experiences, and learning about locally available resources.</p> <p>Topics include defining your brand, business planning, marketing and customer service, operations, finance, technology and several innovative strategies to sustain growth. Several contemporary topics are discussed, including workforce diversity and how technology is changing the nature of business. Group discussions will also provide an opportunity for participants to share some of their experiences.</p> <p>Each section will be presented with an introduction to the topic with discussions, cases and other reference material. At completion of the course, the participant will have a basic understanding of how to start and grow a business, resources available and a network of other individuals with whom to share experiences.</p> |
| Audience: | <p>This course will be useful to entrepreneurs and innovators who want to understand the basics of starting, sustaining and growing a business and where to get help in the journey.</p> |
| Schedule / Preparation: | <p><i>Schedule TBD</i></p> <p>Lecture, reference material and interactive class discussions. Bring questions to ask and experiences to share.</p> |
| Class Material: | <p>E-mail of courseware and any pertinent reference material provided to students at class conclusion or accessible via the Infocept.net website.</p> |
| Instructor Bio: <i>Dom Boffa</i> | <p>Dom's passion is assisting businesses to fully use innovative people, process design and enabling digital technologies to drive growth, productivity and sustained competitive advantage in a responsible way. He has held several executive leadership roles at GE, Lockheed Martin and Aramark, is an advisor for the Delaware Valley University SBEC program, and volunteer coordinator of the Entrepreneurial Advisory Program for the Central Bucks County (PA) Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p>Dom holds BS and MS degrees and is a graduate of the GE Management Institute and the IBM Advanced Business Institute. He is an industry advisor, mentor and guest lecturer for the Penn State School of Hospitality Management Entrepreneurship & Innovation (ENTI) program. Dom's thought leadership and professional contributions have been highlighted in several industry publications. He is the owner of Infocept Systems, Inc.</p> |

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Week 1. Getting Yourself Started (75 minutes)

- Introductions, Course Goals and Objectives
- Your Passion, Your Brand, Your Business Plan
- Funding Sources & Strategies
- Regional and Local Resources
- Discussion and Feedback

Week 2. The Consumer Side of Business (75 minutes)

- The Business Model
- Sales & Marketing
- Customer Service and Consumer Engagement
- Discussion and Feedback

Week 3. The Operating Side of Business (75 minutes)

- Operations Management Processes
- Financial Management and Cash Flow
- Discussion and Feedback

Week 4. Building and Managing Your Team (75 minutes)

- Finding and Retaining Talent
- Workforce Diversity
- Rewards, Recognition and Employee Engagement
- Taking Care of Yourself!
- Discussion & Feedback

Week 5. The Impact of Technology (75 minutes)

- Digital Marketing and Social Media Systems
- Operational Management and Administrative Systems
- Data, Analytics and Insights
- Discussion and Feedback

Week 6. Managing Growth (75 minutes)

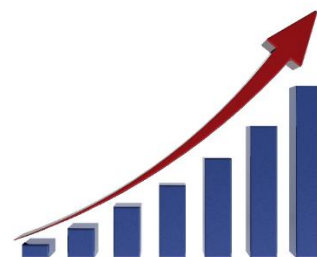
- The Elements and the Finances of Growth
- Managing Through Change
- Discussion and Feedback

Week 7. Creating Competitive Advantage (75 minutes)

- The Role of Innovation – *Think Like an Entrepreneur!*
- Into the 'Blue Ocean'
- Industry Case Studies and *'The Florist'* Conclusion
- Discussion and Feedback

Week 8. Open Forum (75 minutes)

- Mergers, Acquisitions and Business Transition – *Passing the Torch*
- Open Discussion & Course Feedback



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Additional Course Resources:

- *Growing A Business*, Paul Hawken (1987), Text and PBS Series
- *Entrepreneur's Guide*, PA Office of Community and Economic Development (SBEC)
- *Financial Accounting for Dummies*, Maire Loughran (2011)
- Various HBR Articles
 - Michael Porter – *How Competitive Forces Shape Strategy* (HBR, 1979)
 - Warren McFarlan – *Information Technology Changes the Way You Compete* (HBR, 1984)
 - Michael Porter & Victor Millar – *How Information Gives You Competitive Advantage* (HBR, 1985)
 - James Cash & Benn Konsynski – *IS Redraws Competitive Boundaries* (HBR, 1985)
 - Ref. Material and Links to SBA, SCORE, etc.
- SCORE Info (Ray Valukonis)
 - Business Plan Template
- SBA Info (Sonia Smith)
- CBCC Membership Info (Amanda Soler)
- DVU SBEC Information (Bill Viel)
- Lender Information
 - Dave Provost Dave Ohman (Univest Bank) – Small Business Startups
 - Tom Maclin (Monument Bank) – Existing Businesses / Expansions / Real Estate
 - BBT Bank (Mike Rainone) Small business Center – Full Service / Wealth Mgt.
<https://www.bbt.com/business/small-business-resource-center/default.page>
- Bucks County Entrepreneur's Network (BCEN) – Dublin TEC Information (Anne Kuznicki)
- Cases
 - GE IOT / Predix
 - SABRE
 - Blue Ocean Summary
 - Other recent game-changers – Amazon/Whole Foods; Google, etc.

Additional Ideas:

- Bring in a subject matter / guest lecturers (CBCC member; SBA, SCORE, SBEC, etc.)
- 'Meet the Chamber' Tours at CBCC, SCORE or local biz
- Special Interest topics
- Each participant brings in a business article and we discuss what is really going on behind the scenes at that company