

Improving your Business with a SCORE Business Scan

The SCORE Business Scan is a process whereby a team of experienced SCORE counselors are assigned to review your business from a total perspective at a limited snapshot in time. It is designed to provide you a picture of your business as viewed through the eyes of experienced counselors as they compare your management, operations, marketing and finances with like and similar business.

This Business Scan itself is divided into five sections;

- Background**
- Management**
- Operations**
- Marketing**
- Finance**

Each section is designed to analyze your specific business and present you a summary of the Counselors findings and represents in their best judgment as to the status of the conditions present during their evaluation. Often information or data was not available to the counselors or they were not fully aware that the information existed. Therefore when the counselors identify shortfalls or areas where additional metrics or improved tracking methods are recommended, the owner should carefully determine if the current data truly satisfies the shortfalls identified.

The Business Scan is intended to highlight areas of your business where further evaluation may be warranted. It is not intended to dictate where the owner or management should make changes to the business or its operations without a careful review. If after review you decide that changes are in order the SCORE business scan team can help you develop action plans and implement the changes, as you may desire.

The business scan process will begin with a kickoff meeting in your facilities where background data about the business will be requested to be provided to the SCORE business scan team.

This data includes;
any marketing material that has been produced,
promotional data that may have been published,
your mission statement (if available),
key metrics that are used by you or management,
your employee handbook if one exists and
your financial data for the last three years.

At this initial kickoff meeting the SCORE counselors will provide you an agenda and a scenario of events that will follow the kickoff meeting. They will go over the guidelines that they will follow to insure that they are satisfactory to you the owner. Based on the SCORE counselors findings they may request interviews with your staff and employees, operational tours, or other fact-finding meetings.

At all times during the business scan you the owner will be the final determinant as to the level of involvement by you or your employees. The lead counselor will coordinate all activities through you or your designee and will be responsible for keeping you informed about the status of the team. Normally the business scan takes about 30 days from start to completion however much of that time is taken by the team doing outside research and counseling team meetings.

The business scan will be provided to you in a written format with the finding of the team and their conclusions and recommendations. The team will debrief you and whomever you desire by stepping through each section of the business scan to give you the understanding how they arrived at their conclusions and subsequent recommendations.

The business scanning process contains five distinctive phases;

- 1. The introduction and kickoff meeting where the guideline to be followed are agreed upon**
- 2. The diagnosis or fact finding period where as much information as possible is gathered and investigated**
- 3. The action planning phase where specific actions are reviewed for impact and results**
- 4. The implementation phase where the agreed actions are implemented**
- 5. The termination where the process is considered accomplished.**

At any time during this process you may decide to have you or your employees become more involved in the process and conclude your involvement with the SCORE business scan team.

At all times the SCORE business scanning team has but one goal in mind and that is to help you in any way we can to foster and strengthen your business. You control the business scanning process as you desire.