



SBDC –Initial Session Guidance / Diagnostic Questions
EXISTING BUSINESS

Purpose: This tool is to be used as a guide to establish a relationship with the client, gather background information to assess the client's needs, and create a plan for working with the client.

A. Open the session with storybook:

- ☐ Review e-center online registration information with client; edit as necessary
- ☐ Ask how client heard about the SBDC
- ☐ Educate client about SBDC and stakeholders
- ☐ Explain our services (no-cost advising/counseling, low-cost training)
- ☐ Set clear expectations of what the SBDC does and what we ask the client to do. Explain that the work we do together is a two-way street – the client needs to commit to doing their part and we commit to doing our part.
- ☐ Discuss client confidentiality, trust and the importance of honesty in the counseling process
- ☐ Set expectation for completion of SBDC surveys, and show survey example
- ☐ Set expectation that impact is collected in the future & show Impact Form
- ☐ Explain that there is no limit to how long client can work with SBDC
- ☐ Introduce yourself and discuss your background (to establish perception of expertise and trust)

B. Collect a detailed client background/history:

1. How long have you been in business?[Click here to enter text.](#)
2. How long have you lived in the area?[Click here to enter text.](#)
3. What is your educational background (formal, trade, on-the-job)?[Click here to enter text.](#)
4. What is your work experience, including volunteer work? [Click here to enter text.](#)
5. What do you like about working in your business? [Click here to enter text.](#)

6. What do you dislike about working in your business? [Click here to enter text.](#)
7. Do you have employees? [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - a. If yes, who supervises them? [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - b. How many employees do you currently have? [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - c. Do you pay your employees through payroll or as contractors? [Click here to enter text.](#)
8. How many hours do you work in your business each week? [Click here to enter text.](#)
9. How do you spend your free time? [Click here to enter text.](#)
10. What is your goal for yourself and your business a year from now and what is your end game?
[Click here to enter text.](#)

C. Identification or analysis of problem or opportunity:

1. What assistance are you seeking from the SBDC? [Click here to enter text.](#)
2. What is the reason you want to expand or improve your business? [Click here to enter text.](#)
3. What steps have you taken so far? [Click here to enter text.](#)
4. What is your timeframe for moving forward? [Click here to enter text.](#)
5. Do you have the time to commit to work on this business project? [Click here to enter text.](#)
6. Describe your product/service. [Click here to enter text.](#)
7. What are your current sales (specify year, month)? [Click here to enter text.](#) Profit? [Click here to enter text.](#)
8. How much money do you take home from your business each month? [Click here to enter text.](#)
9. Are business tax returns filed for all years? (Federal, State, NM GRT?) [Click here to enter text.](#)
10. Who are the owners of the business? [Click here to enter text.](#)

11. What is your legal structure (sole proprietorship, partnership, LLC, corporation)? [Click here to enter text.](#)
12. Who are your customers?[Click here to enter text.](#)
13. Where is your business be located?[Click here to enter text.](#)
14. Who is your competition?[Click here to enter text.](#)
15. If applicable, have you made a list of costs related to expansion/improvement?[Click here to enter text.](#)
16. How do you market your product/service? [Click here to enter text.](#)
17. Who does your bookkeeping? [Click here to enter text.](#)What accounting software do you use?[Click here to enter text.](#)
18. How often do you review your financial statements? [Click here to enter text.](#)Do you understand them?[Click here to enter text.](#)
19. How will you pay for expansion/improvements (collateral for loan, savings, income from job, etc.)?[Click here to enter text.](#)
20. What loan payments do you currently have? [Click here to enter text.](#)What are your credit card balances? [Click here to enter text.](#)Other debts? [Click here to enter text.](#) Are there any debts that were not paid? i.e. student loans[Click here to enter text.](#)

D. Resources:

- ☐ **Basic Steps to Registering Business:** Review document with client.
- ☐ **SBDCnet:** Is a research request submitted? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, SBDCnet research shared with client? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- ☐ **IBISWorld:** Has an IBIS report been discussed and shared with client? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- ☐ **ReferenceUSA:** [Click here to enter text.](#)
- ☐ **DemographicsNow:** [Click here to enter text.](#)
- ☐ **Other resources:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

E. Handouts:

Given to client: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Webpages Reviewed: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Referred to: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Other: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Items to send: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Other: [Click here to enter text.](#)

F. Impact review:

Milestone Potential: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Investment: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Loan: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Jobs: [Click here to enter text.](#)

New Business: [Click here to enter text.](#)

If impact has occurred, Economic Impact Form:

Completed and signed: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Uploaded to Neoserra Milestone and/or Capital Funding: ☐ Yes ☐ No

G. For next session: Scheduled Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#) Time: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Client homework assignment: [Click here to enter text.](#)

SBDC homework assignment: [Click here to enter text.](#)

H. Important: Enter session notes in Neoserra, to include the following:

☐ Description of what happened during session: [Click here to enter text.](#)

☐ Identification or analysis of problem or opportunity: [Click here to enter text.](#)

☐ Actions taken, recommendations made, follow-up, and next step, if any: [Click here to enter text.](#)