



## Request for Proposal for the 2012 Business Education Series

### **Overview:**

The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce has made a commitment to supporting member business development by organizing the Business Education Series. This program will offer 2 monthly seminars and workshops on topics of interest to small businesses. The chamber seeks members to serve as presenters in this program. Selected presenters will volunteer to conduct workshops and seminars of approximately two hours in length, to be scheduled on Thursday mornings from 8:00a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Applicants can submit proposals for multiple topics.

### **Goals of the Business Education Series:**

- Provide Chamber members and non- members with opportunities for practical, up-to date information and training on topics of interest to small business.
- Provide members who have subject matter expertise the opportunity to interact with other members and to increase their exposure in the community.
- Provide “strictly business” focused networking opportunities with businesses.

### **Vendor responsibilities:**

- Provide a high quality educational workshop with two hours of content up to 30 participants.
- Provide all materials for the session for participants.
- Coordinate with Chamber staff regarding any special equipment needs.
- Provide a company logo and biography for marketing purposes.

### **Chamber responsibilities:**

- Aggressively promote the educational series through a variety of Chamber communication pieces.
- Promote vendor’s name and subject matter on the Chamber’s website.
- Register participants and provide vendor with attendee list for event follow-up
- Coordinate with vendor regarding special equipment and material needs.

## **Chamber communication pieces:**

- Monthly calendar faxed to more than 1500 Chamber member businesses.
- Broadcast Email: Individual event promotion emails to approximately 5000 Chamber members.
- Monthly Business Education Series fax: Listing detailed information for the next month's classes to over 1500 Chamber member businesses.
- Two Online Events Calendars: All classes are listed on the Chamber's website and the Small Business Development Center of Hampton Roads' website.
- All Chamber events are sent to The Virginian- Pilot and Inside Business publications; for possible inclusion in their upcoming calendar events.
- Printed Color Brochure: The Chamber produces a color brochure annually with the Business Education Series Schedule distributed in a variety of ways to our membership and prospective members.

## **As part of your RFP, please provide the following:**

### **1. General Background Information**

- Provide the name, address and phone number for the presenter and for the person who will be responsible for following-up on this proposal (if not the presenter)
- Describe your business products and/or services
- Describe your experience as a practitioner and/or presenter in your proposed topic area(s).
- What experience have you had leading business seminars or workshops? Please attach resumes of all potential presenters with information about past facilitation experience.
- Include a brief bio (50 words or less) that could be used in promotional materials.
- Confirm your willingness to present your workshop(s) as an unpaid volunteer.

### **2. Seminar or Workshop Proposal- Please complete the attached application**

- Provide the program title, (may be changed for promotional purposes)
- Provide suggestions on who the audience should be, for example- Small Business Owners and/or mid level management, Sales folks, etc...

- Learning objectives- please give at least three objectives the class participants can expect from your presentation.
- Sample agenda for your two-hour seminar(s) or workshop(s).
- Include a brief program description (50 words or less) that could be used in promotional materials for each seminar/workshop
- Describe any audio-visual requirements and the resources you have to meet them for each seminar/workshop.

### **3. Program Topics**

The Business Education Series topics target the key areas that members have expressed interest in developing. Select from the following topic areas and feel free to propose additional seminars or workshops that you believe would be of interest to the small business community.

#### **Business Basics**

Accounting Fundamentals  
Lease Agreements and Options  
Tax Issues  
Legal Issues associated with small business ownership  
Other Business Administration topics

#### **Employment Basics**

Recruitment Strategies  
Interviewing and Selection  
Legal Issues of Hiring and Firing  
Maintaining Personnel files  
Compensation and benefits  
Personnel policies  
Other employment topics

#### **Sales and Marketing**

Marketing Basics  
Developing Marketing Plans  
Producing your own marketing materials  
Identifying/Locating prospective customers  
Overcoming Sales Objections  
Building and retaining a diverse customer base  
Writing Press Releases/Staying in the news  
Selling skills and strategies  
Networking skills  
Other sales and marketing topics

#### **Technology**

Networking decisions and issues  
Web Site decisions and Issues, ie: Hosting, design, use, etc  
Other technology topics

### **The People side of Business**

Interpersonal communication skills  
Retaining & Motivating employees  
Setting up employees for Success  
Providing Performance feedback  
How to relate to difficult people  
Handling Performance problems  
Building a strong team of employees  
Negotiation skills  
Managing conflict  
Time management  
Managing Change  
Building & Managing a diverse workforce  
Other people management topics

### **Growing your business**

Strategic Planning  
Developing a Business Plan  
Expanding technology to support business growth  
People challenges related to business growth  
Maintaining Customer relations  
Creating a Healthy culture in your organization  
Other Business Growth Topics

## **4. Selection Criteria**

The following criteria will be used to select presenters for the Business Education Series.

- All presenters must be members of the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce.  
\*\*Nonmembers interested in serving as a presenter can join the Chamber during the RFP period.\*\*
- Presenters must have expertise in the topics being presented, and demonstrate their ability to tailor the session to the needs of businesses.
- Presenter qualifications will demonstrate competencies in presentation and workshop facilitation.
- Program design and materials will be evaluated for clarity, quality and learning design.
- Presenter must be willing to volunteer her/his time and resources to design and deliver the seminar(s)/workshop(s).

## **5. Proposal Submission**

Mail, fax or e-mail your proposal/application to: Sandy Sekeet, Business Education Series, Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce, 500 East Main St., Norfolk, VA 23510, Fax: 757-622-5563, EMail:ssekeet@hrccva.com

Proposals/Applications needed by October 18, 2011.

## **6. Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **Who is the target audience for the seminars?**

Seminars are promoted to Chamber members and non-members. By nature, the seminars will be of more value to small and mid-size businesses that have smaller training budgets, as well as to middle managers of large companies who often miss out on such seminars due to cost, course availability, time constraints, etc.

### **When are courses offered?**

The Chamber will offer three courses each month on the second and fourth Thursday mornings from 7:45-8:00am Registration/Networking 8:00am – 10:00 am class.

### **Where will seminars be held?**

All classes/seminars will be held at the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce office, 500 East Main St. Norfolk Suite 700.

### **How long does each seminar last?**

Seminars should last 90-120 minutes. Occasionally, there may be a seminar that requires more time. Such seminars will either be offered in their entirety or broken into segments offered in consecutive weeks.

### **How much does it cost to attend the educational seminars?**

Attendance fees will be kept to minimal levels that cover costs for beverages, copying, etc. Members \$15 Future Members \$45.

### **How much does it cost to be a presenter?**

There is no cost for presenters other than normal costs associated with preparing for seminars. Likewise, there is no monetary compensation to presenters in exchange for their services. Members with specific subject matter expertise volunteer as instructors. The Chamber markets the seminars and provides for administration of a high-quality education series.

### **Does this compete with my (or other) business?**

The Chamber provides member-to-member seminars that are intended to be introductory in nature and will provide high take away value given their brief length. Many Chamber members offer much more in-depth and extensive training in both non-profit and for-profit settings. The Chamber will strive to make members and seminar attendees aware of the wealth of expertise that exists within its membership for education and training.