ASBDC Accreditation Review Instructions for Preparing The Self-Study Guide 2009

Overview

The purpose of the self-study is (1) to provide the accreditation review team with needed information about an SBDC's network of centers, (2) to provide summary evidence whether the SBDC meets the ASBDC accreditation standards, and (3) to identify and share tools and "best practices". The accreditation review team will use the self-study guide to make initial, provisional judgments about the SBDC's quality of operations and compliance with the accreditation standards and to design their approach to the accreditation review. During the onsite portion of the accreditation review, the team will assess and validate the information in the self-study guide.

Prior to writing the self-study guide, the SBDC's leadership should have begun the process of incorporating the ASBDC accreditation standards into its operation. This requires not just familiarity with the standards, but in-depth understanding of them. Sources of information about the accreditation standards include New Lead center Directors Training and ASBDC Accreditation Standards workshops held at the Annual ASBDC Fall Conference each fall, the ASBDC Accreditation Mentor Program (see Lead center Directors page on the ASBDC website), the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence (http://www.quality.nist.gov/), and in some lead centers quality programs affiliated with the Baldrige National Quality Program.

Instructions

The format of the self-study guide has been developed (1) to promote greater understanding within the SBDC of the ASBDC accreditation standards by establishing linkages between standards and between the concepts of approach, deployment, and measurements, (2) to be a useful self-examination tool for the SBDC, and (3) to create for the review team a more comprehensive and coherent story about the SBDC.

SBDCs must use the following format of the self study guide in preparing its self-study.

SBDCs must provide its self-study guide and exhibit documentation to each member of the assigned accreditation team and the ASBDC national office at least 30 days before the start of the accreditation review.

SBDCs should use the accreditation standards preceding each section (**bold type**) and the comments below each section (*italics type*) to frame responses. SBDCs should not attempt to respond to the instructions without first understanding the standards to which it applies.

Self-Study Guide Instructions 2009

The self-study guide is composed of two sections: (1) the SBDC's narrative response and (2) the exhibits that provide evidence to support the narrative response. The narrative responses should respond to the prescribed instructions of the self-study guide and be included as a single document representing the entire SBDC network.

The narrative section of the self-study guide should not exceed fifty pages and may be considerably fewer pages. In some cases, a narrative response may require supporting documentation in the form of exhibits. Key exhibits may include strategic planning documents, client needs assessments, organizational charts, key measures and results or other similar documents.

SBDCs may provide the self study and key exhibits in printed, hardcopy format but are strongly encouraged to provide all materials on a CD-Rom for the review team. Where key exhibits are necessary, the review team recommends linking the exhibit to the narrative source. For reference purposes, an index of attached exhibits is preferred. Other exhibits that are bulky or do not lend themselves to being placed on a CD-ROM should be available at the lead center.

Questions regarding a review or preparation of the self-study should be directed to the review team leader.

Organizational Profile

Objective: *To orient the accreditation review team with the structure, key personnel and background of the SBDC network.*

P.1   Organizational Description
- Provide the SBDC's vision, mission, and values.
- Provide a brief history of the SBDC (e.g. what year did the SBDCs host begin the program?).
- Provide the number of centers, host(s) and locations. Briefly describe the quality of facilities.
- Describe the SBDC's workforce (*e.g.*, whether staff is employed or contracted, *etc.*).
- Provide a copy of the SBDC's organizational chart.
- Provide the name, title, email address and telephone numbers for the following individuals:
    - The individual to whom the SBDC lead center director reports
    - The chief administrator of the host organization.
- Provide a summary of the SBDC's funding, including match.
- Describe significant changes in the organizational structure that have occurred since the last review.
- Describe the SBDC's key customer and stakeholder groups and market segments. ("Key" means generally the most important but no more than three to five.)
- What special programs does the SBDC operate, if any?

- Describe other factors that are important to understanding and evaluating the SBDC program (*e.g*., size and/or population of service area, distribution of population, geography, university or lead center-based program, whether or not service centers are contracted, *etc*.).

P.2   Organizational Challenges
- What are the SBDC's major competitive challenges?
- What are the SBDC's key business, operational and human resource strategic challenges?
- What are the SBDC's key strategic challenges associated with organizational sustainability?

1.0   LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

Objective: *Create an environment in which the lead center director, and other program leaders routinely address organizational values, ethical behavior and performance expectations.*

1.1   Senior Leadership

The SBDC leadership system creates an environment in which a lead center director and other program leaders routinely guide and sustain the SBDC organization, communicate with the workforce and encourage high performance, organizational values and ethical behavior.

SBDC leaders must systematically:
- **Set direction,**
- **Address current and future opportunities,**
- **Communicate and deploy performance expectations, and**
- **Review performance to understand the health of the organization and to enable translation of performance findings into priorities for improvement and innovation.**

Approach:

- How do senior leaders create a sustainable organization and build understanding of short and long-term factors that affect the SBDC's organization and marketplace?
- Describe the vision of the senior leaders of the SBDC and how it reflects a determination of key customer/stakeholder needs balanced with an assessment of the SBDC's resources.

- Describe or illustrate how senior leaders routinely guide decision-making within the SBDC organization.
- How does the process of decision-making reinforce and align with the values and expectations of senior leadership and of the SBDC?
- Describe how senior leaders inform and obtain feedback from workforce. What actions do the SBDC's senior leaders take to ensure that the workforce is empowered and motivated to be innovative and to achieve high performance?
- How do senior leaders routinely monitor performance results to drive continuous improvement?

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

1.2 Role of Senior Leadership

SBDC senior leaders must align the SBDC with key stakeholders and support organizations. Where the SBDC has common interests with the national SBDC Program, SBDC senior leaders must cooperate in order to further common interests.

SBDC senior leaders must operate in compliance with:
- **Federal laws and regulations, and**
- **The Notice of Award and Program Announcement.**

The SBDC must have systems in place that ensure sound fiscal, contractual and operational management of it programs and must have control of the SBDC's budget.

Approach:

- Describe how SBDC senior leaders support the common interests and participate in the governance of the national SBDC Program.
- Describe how SBDC leaders set performance expectations and maintain accountability for performance.
- What network structures are in place to ensure compliance with federal laws, regulations, and program requirements?
- What network structures are in place to demonstrate control and ensure sound fiscal, contractual and operational management of the SBDC's programs and budget?

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

What the accreditation team looks for:

The following apply to all accreditation processes:

- *Process-based approaches well ordered, repeatable, and produce data and information so that learning is possible.*
- *Approaches key to the operation of the organization, systematic, well defined, appropriate, and effective.*
- *Deployment of the approaches, their actions and their concepts at all appropriate levels in the SBDC organization. Ideally, learning and integration are present with innovation that improves performance results.*
- *Alignment of the approaches consistent with plans, processes, information, resource decisions, actions, results, and analyses to support key organizational goals.*

A leadership system addressing values, performance expectations and client and stakeholder needs and effectively communicates to all appropriate workforce, partners and stakeholders.

A leadership system that guides and aligns an SBDC by:

- *Engaging senior leaders, key stakeholders, and partners in developing short and long-term organizational strategy.*
- *Creating multiple channels of communication of information and feedback from leadership to all parts of the organization, stakeholders, and partners.*
- *Creating a culture of innovation that encourages new and improved methods of doing business.*
- *Developing multiple channels to evaluate the effectiveness of the leadership system and to identify opportunities for improvement.*
- *Reviewing results regularly pertaining to key organizational measures and using such reviews to set and prioritize improvement options.*
- *Formalizing a process for allocating resources to support plans and improvement priorities.*
- *Establishing a management structure that provides clear lines of authority, responsibility and communication and fosters strong organizational relationships.*

2.0   STRATEGIC PLANNING

Objectives: *Implement a well-defined process to establish long-term strategy and short-term action plans for greater impact. Align the organization in pursuit of its long-term strategy. The strategic planning process may vary based upon the needs, size and conditions within the SBDC lead center or region.*

2.1 Strategy Development Process

- **SBDC must have an established process for development of strategy and strategic objectives, including how to address SBDC strategic challenges.**
- **Strategic planning must demonstrate a systematic approach to collecting and analyzing relevant data and information to identify and integrate the key factors and associated metrics important to the SBDC's future success (*i.e.* focus on enhancing client success and expanding impact).**
- **SBDC must have a planning process that identifies key strategic objectives, timetables for accomplishment and the most important goals for the strategic objectives.**

Approach:

- Describe the SBDC's strategic planning model. Include the individuals involved at each level of the process.
- Describe the process the SBDC uses to obtain feedback and updates for the planning process.
- Provide documentation for the most recently updated strategies.

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

What the team looks for in this section:

- *What systematic process the SBDC uses to make strategic decisions.*
- *How the SBDC gathers, analyzes, reviews, and uses customer and stakeholder, market, operational, organizational and employee data.*
- *Evidence that the SBDC has allocated resources effectively to achieve its strategy and implement its action plans.*
- *Evidence that, key stakeholders, as appropriate, and staff participate in the strategic planning process and are provided opportunities for comments and feedback. ("Key" means generally the most important but no more than three to five.)*
- *Evidence all staff at all levels of the organization understand how their individual work contributes to the organization achieving its goals and fulfilling its plans.*

2.2 Strategy Deployment

- **A defined process must be in place that:**

  o **Converts strategic objectives into action,**
  o **Modifies action if circumstances require a shift,**
  o **Defines changes in products and services,**
  o **Defines key performance measures and indicators for tracking progress,**
  o **Defines requirements in financial and key human resource planning.**

Approach:

Describe the process for assuring deployment and alignment of the strategies throughout the SBDC. Normally, this would include actions, responsibility, time-lines, resource allocation, performance measurements, monitoring, feedback, and learning improvement.

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

What the accreditation team looks for:
- *The extent to which strategies and strategic objectives are implemented.*
- *A method to establish action plans at each level of the SBDC so that it is aligned in pursuit of its strategy, including measures, targets, schedules and resource allocation.*
- *The mechanisms to monitor performance measurements and actions and to solicit feedback.*
- *An understanding throughout the organization of how individuals contribute to achieving organizational goals and strategies.*

3.0 CUSTOMER AND STAKEHOLDER FOCUS

Objective: *Identify and segment customers, markets and key stakeholders; determine requirements, expectations and preferences for each; build relationships; and determine satisfaction.*

3.1 Knowledge of Customers and Stakeholders Needs and Expectations

SBDC should demonstrate it has a systematic process or processes to determine requirements, expectations, and preferences of customers, stakeholders and

markets to ensure the continuing relevance of SBDC products and services and the development of new SBDC business opportunities.

Approach

- Describe the SBDC's systematic processes for obtaining knowledge of the needs and expectations of customers, the small business community and market opportunities.
- Describe the process for analyzing the data obtained and determining its relevance to the SBDC.
- Describe the process for reviewing the above approaches and modifying them as necessary.
- How are customer groups and market segments determined?
- How are priorities established for customer groups and market segments?

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

3.2 Management of Customers and Key Stakeholders Satisfaction and Relationship

3.2(a) Relationships

SBDC must have deployed systematic processes for building relationships to acquire customers and key stakeholders.

SBDC must have deployed systematic processes that drive continuous improvement for:
- **Managing satisfaction and**
- **Managing feedback and complaints.**

Approach:

Based on the target or key customers desired, describe how such *customers* are acquired and relationships nurtured.
- Include systematic process on how satisfaction is managed and
- Include how feedback and complaints are used to drive continuous improvement.

Based on the target or key stakeholders desired, describe how such *stakeholder* relationships are nurtured.
- Include systematic process on how satisfaction is managed and
- Include how feedback and complaints are used to drive continuous improvement.

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

3.2(b) Satisfaction Determination

SBDC must have in place systematic approaches to determining customer and stakeholder satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

- **Methodology should ensure that the measurement captures actionable information for use in exceeding customers' and stakeholders' expectations.**
- **Evidence should be available regarding how customer and stakeholder satisfaction and dissatisfaction information is used for improvement.**

Approach:

- Describe the methodology, including how the SBDC addresses the differences where appropriate among key customer segments, regarding satisfaction.
- Explain how satisfaction data is analyzed and used for improvement or new strategies.

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

3.3 Marketing and Promotional Programs.

For marketing and promotional programs, the requirements for designing, managing, and improving the programs must include:

- **A clear integration of strategy, image and a common brand or logo for the SBDC that conveys the SBDC image and identity as a cohesive SBDC network.**
- **Information, materials and signage must convey the identity of a cohesive SBDC network.**
- **Facilities need to be professional in appearance, adequate for the delivery of services, and provide for confidentiality for counseling when offered.**

Approach:

- Describe how the SBDC projects a network image and how it supports integration of strategy, image and a common brand or logo.

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

What the accreditation team looks for:

- *While needs assessments and analysis need not be a formal research effort, nor must they be network wide, they should be designed to collect data in a systematic process that:*
  - *Includes multiple listening posts,*
  - *Determines key customer/stakeholder requirements, and*
  - *Determines product/service features of most importance to key customer and stakeholders.*
- *Data is analyzed and used in the development of strategy.*
- *Evidence indicating that the SBDC has been proactive in selecting particular markets or customer types.*
- *Degree to which key customer/stakeholder requirements have been identified for each market segment the SBDC serves.*
- *Reliability of data, information, and research collected.*
- *Information the SBDC gathers on key customer/stakeholder needs and drivers of satisfaction; how both internal and external information are analyzed to draw conclusions for necessary actions steps.*
- *SBDC must demonstrate it is providing adequate and consistent information on services and impact to customers and stakeholders.*
- *SBDC must show a network strategy to gather and use customer satisfaction data to drive improvement in key products and services.*
- *Internal and external documentation and materials clearly indicating a state-wide branding strategy.*

The team will review:
- *Assessment processes and associated documentation.*
- *The utilization of information obtained and decisions made from assessments in the development of work systems and strategies.*
- *How information from key stakeholders was considered in strategic development.*
- *Evidence that a host brings resources to the SBDC in the forms of educational, financial or political capital.*

4.0 INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS SYSTEM

Objective: *Create a performance management system to permit an understanding of over-all organizational daily performance in operations. Category 4 is the focal point for the alignment of the SBDC organization's operations with its strategic objectives.*

4.1 Development and Implementation of a Performance System

SBDC must demonstrate how the organization measures, analyzes, aligns, reviews, and improves its performance data and information at all levels and in all parts of the SBDC program.

Approach

- Describe SBDC's performance system, including how the SBDC selects, collects, analyzes, and uses data. The performance system data or metrics must align to support organization-wide goals and support daily action, decision-making and innovation.
- What are the SBDC's key performance measures? These metrics should be in alignment with the key strategic objectives.
- How does the SBDC use this data to support decision-making and performance improvement?
- How does the SBDC validate data in key performance measures to ensure quality?
- How does the SBDC ensure the continued availability of data and information, including hardware and software systems, in the event of an emergency (*e.g.*, a disaster plan)?
- How does the SBDC manage the performance system technology?
- How does the SBDC communicate and make information available consistently throughout the organization and to stakeholders and partners?

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

4.2 Measurement of Economic Impact

The SBDC must participate in the periodic national SBDC impact surveys. Additionally, developing lead center economic impact studies is encouraged.

Approach

- Does the SBDC participate in the national SBDC impact survey when conducted?
- Does the SBDC conduct a state economic impact study? How often? What methodology?

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

What the accreditation team looks for:

- *Evidence the data is aggregated, analyzed and used to understand performance, determine cause and effect relationships, and establish improvement actions.*
- *A clearly defined set of measures that reflect overall performance of the organization in areas critical to the success of the program.*
- *Well-defined and consistent methods to collect data pertaining to those measures.*
- *Results analysis permitting an understanding of organizational performance and identification of improvement priorities for program management within alignment of the strategic objectives.*

5.0 STAFFING AND HUMAN RESOURCE UTILIZATION

Objective: *Design work systems that encourage workforce learning and motivation and enable the workforce to develop and utilize their full potential in alignment with the SBDC's overall objectives and action plans. The SBDC's efforts must build and maintain a work environment and workforce support climate conducive to innovation, performance excellence, and to personal and organizational growth. Create and manage human resource systems to achieve high performance. Establish key workforce practices and a support climate that enables personal growth, organizational growth and performance excellence.*

5.1 Work Systems

The SBDC must have work systems, organizational structure and staffing patterns based on analysis of key needs and strategies of the SBDC. This structure must align with the SBDC's strategic objectives and be designed to enable the workforce to achieve high performance while providing an opportunity to develop its full potential. (Compensation, career progression and related workforce practices enable organizations to achieve high performance.)

Approach:

- How does the SBDC recruit, hire, and retain new personnel to ensure alignment with the SBDC's strategic objectives?

- Describe how the SBDC efficiently and effectively organizes and manages its work system to include organizational structure, staffing patterns and resource allocations.
- Describe how the work system aligns with the SBDC's strategic objectives and action plans.
- Describe how the work system enables the SBDC's workforce to develop professionally and support workforce practices, resulting in a high performing motivated organization.

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

What the team looks for:

- *Evidence that the organizational structure, key positions, and staffing patterns have been analyzed and are in alignment with the SBDC's strategic objectives.*
- *Evidence of the effectiveness of the work system and its impact on the organization's performance and achievement of the organization's goals and objectives.*
- *Evidence that the work system provides opportunity for communication among workforce and that management listens to workforce, considers their suggestions, and empowers them to implement improvements.*
- *Evidence that the compensation systems are appropriate for the organizational structure and staffing patterns.*
- *Evidence that continuous improvement is achieved through the alignment of professional development offerings and workforce training is driven by SBDC strategic objectives.*

5.1.1 Key Positions

Objective: *Key positions demonstrate appropriate business or administrative experience, knowledge and abilities to direct, coordinate and manage a multifaceted and multi-location organization. Key positions must have ability and skills to coordinate and manage a human resource system, establish and maintain collaborative relationships and understand business practices and management methods. Key positions and responsibilities, capacity, and salaries must be consistent with 13 CFR 130.460(f)(1).*

Lead Center Director and Associate/Assistant Director

The lead center director and associate/assistant director(s) should have at a minimum a master's degree in business or other directly related field or a bachelor's degree with sufficient and progressively responsible experience or have appropriate

business or administrative experience that demonstrates the knowledge and abilities required to:

- **Direct, coordinate and manage a multi-faceted, multi-location organization;**

- **Direct, coordinate and manage human and administrative resources;**

- **Understand the full range of business practices and business management methods; and**

- **Demonstrate skills in establishing and maintaining effective support and working relationships with a variety of public and private stakeholder partners that are needed for alignment with strategic objectives.**

The salary of the SBDC lead center director or associate/assistant director(s) should at a minimum be equivalent to the annualized average salary of a full professor or associate professor, respectively, in the institution hosting the SBDC or parallel positions in the agency/organization hosting the SBDC. Where the host is not affiliated with a college, the salaries of the director or associate/assistant director(s) should be comparable to the college of business, college of engineering or equivalent.

Approach:

- In general, what is the academic and experience level of the SBDC's key director positions (*e.g.,* lead center director, associate/assistant director(s), and service center director(s))?
- In general, how do the salaries of the lead center director and associate/assistant director(s) compare to host institution equivalent positions and related salaries as stated in the standard?

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

What the team looks for:

- *Evidence that the lead center/regional director and other key positions are qualified to fill their respective positions.*
- *Evidence that the key positions are adequate in number and appropriately structured to effectively manage the SBDC program.*
- *That key employee's salaries are consistent with the size of the organization and other equivalent positions in the SBDC network.*

5.2 Workforce Learning and Growth

Objectives: *Provide a method for determining the professional development needs of the workforce that supports the achievement of the SBDC's strategic objectives and contributes to the organization's performance. Provide on-going professional development and training for the workforce that builds its knowledge, skills and capabilities; contributes to achievement of action plans, organizational effectiveness, and career progression; that supports key organizational needs related to the orientation of new members of the workforce, ethical business practices, management, and leadership; and that addresses key needs associated with organizational performance and improvement and changing business and technology environment. Provide an assessment and evaluation process that seeks input and feedback from the entire workforce regarding training needs and evaluation of professional development offerings.*

Workforce education and training must support the achievement of the SBDC's strategic objectives, including the enhancement of workforce knowledge, skills, and enhancing leadership capabilities that contribute to high performance.

The SBDC must have a systematic, implemented, professional development program tied to its strategic objectives. The program must include:
- **A method of determining the educational needs of the workforce,**
- **On-going workforce education and professional development,**
- **A structured training/orientation program for new members of the workforce and**
- **An assessment system, including opportunities for feedback, to determine effectiveness of the educational offerings and make changes when warranted.**

Approach: Address the processes that support the bullet-points in the standard.

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.
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What the team looks for:

- *Evidence that education and training is linked to the strategic objectives and the associated action plans.*
- *Leadership support and funding to support the professional development strategy.*
- *Policies and procedures in place to address orientation for new members of the workforce and other key organizational topics.*
- *Documented results of the professional development activities and summaries of the evaluations and feedback from the workforce that participated.*

5.3 Workforce Environment and Motivation

Objectives: *Explore ways to improve workplace health, safety, security and ergonomics in a proactive way and workplace preparedness for disasters or emergencies. Determine specific factors that affect the workforces' well-being, satisfaction and motivation by developing formal or informal assessment methods to determine workforce satisfaction, well-being, and needs.*

Maintain a work environment and a workforce support climate that contributes to the well-being, satisfaction, and motivation of all personnel:

- **That ensures and improves workplace health, safety, security, and ergonomics.**
- **That ensures workplace preparedness for disaster or emergencies.**
- **That determines the key factors that affect workforce well-being, satisfaction and motivation.**
- **That supports workforce via services, benefits and policies.**

Approach:

- How does the SBDC maintain an open culture, provide a supportive climate and motivating work environment conducive to workforce satisfaction and well being?
- How does the SBDC identify health, safety, security, diversity and ergonomics issues throughout the organization and promote open communications?
- Describe how the SBDC prepares and plans for disaster and emergency.
- How does the SBDC determine factors that affect workforce satisfaction, well-being and motivation?

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

What the team looks for:

- *Evidence of an open workplace environment.*
- *A proactive approach by the SBDC towards workplace health, safety, security, diversity, and ergonomics and towards disaster preparedness.*
- *Identification of factors affecting workforce satisfaction, well-being, and motivation with dedication to continuous improvement in those areas.*

6.0   PROGRAM DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT

Objective: *The SBDC's key work processes are the processes that involve the majority of the organization's workforce and produce customer and stakeholder value. These key work processes are the SBDC's most important product/service design and the most important delivery, business, and support processes.*

6.1 Key SBDC Services
Key services most important to the SBDC's strategy and operations must have systematic well managed key processes for design and delivery:

- *Definition*: **Define the key services, how they are delivered, and how they link to the strategic objectives.**

- *Key Requirements*: **Identify the key requirements of key services based upon input from customers and stakeholders and upon assessment of organizational needs.**

  Measurements: **Establish performance measures that reflect the key requirements of these services. Include:**
  - **Evaluating key quality and quantity of service.**
  - **Analyzing the impact of the service.**
  - **Providing customer feedback loops.**

  Monitoring and Improving
  - *Monitoring:* **Establish methods for monitoring performance of the delivery system associated with this process and actions to be taken when indicators are present establishing that key services *as defined* are not being delivered in a manner that meets requirements.**

  - *Improving:* **Establish methods for evaluating the quality of key services and actions to be taken to improve this service when indicators are present that key services, *even when properly delivered*, are not meeting all requirements.**

Approach:

- Define the key services, how they are delivered and how they link to strategic objectives and operational strategies. ("Key" means generally the most important but no more than three to five.)
- Based upon the SBDC's strategic planning process, describe the desired target customers, their key requirements, and how the SBDC's services/products address those requirements
- Describe how the SBDC implements, manages, evaluates, and improves delivery processes.
- Provide policies and/or describe systems designed to improve performance and assure both quality and timely service delivery.

- Describe how the SBDC assures the confidentiality of client information, controls conflict of interest, and ensures the fulfillment of ethical and other professional standards of conduct.
- Discuss how the SBDC's measures are selected and:
    - Evaluate the quality, impact, and quantity of key services,
    - Evaluate level of customer satisfaction in meeting the key customer requirements,
    - Ensure quality narrative descriptions of counseling.

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

Learning: How are refinements and innovations to processes, as the result of organizational learning, shared with other relevant work units, improving processes in your organization?

What the accreditation team looks for:

Where the key services include delivery of counseling (required in the Program Announcement), narrative descriptions of counseling sessions are reviewed as a key performance indicator and a level of professionalism:

- *A description of what occurred in the session.*
- *An identification and analysis of the problem or opportunity.*
- *Actions taken, recommendations made, follow-up, and next step, if any.*

The purpose in writing professional narrative descriptions includes the following:

- *The process of writing narrative descriptions is an important part of the consulting process, for in writing the narrative, the counselor takes the time to assimilate and organize what occurred in the session, which is important for planning and understanding the on-going case and maintaining focus on problem-solving.*
- *Narrative descriptions are evidence of professional services being delivered by a counselor and are key to establishing accountability.*
- *Narrative descriptions are a means to provide other counselors a means to familiarize themselves with a case, when necessary (e.g., when doing team consulting).*

6.2 Accreditation of Technology Programs

If the SBDC is applying for an original accreditation or reaccreditation of a technology program, it must develop its technology program so as to meet the Guidelines for SBDCs seeking Technology Accreditation and/or Designation as a Small Business and Technology Development Center (see Appendix A of the Accreditation Standards and separate Technology self study).

7.0 RESULTS

Objective: *Utilize a system for documenting, analyzing, and reporting work performance and economic outcomes to drive continuous improvement.*

For the SBDC to improve quality and performance, the SBDC must utilize a system in place to document its work performance and outcomes in order to drive continuous quality improvement. This should include an ability to report on the performance measurement elements set forth in Standards 1 through 6. It must also include an ability to report on common data and results. ("Common data" refers here to data collected and utilized by more than one and often all SBDCs.)

Approach:

- Results are the outputs and outcomes in achieving the requirements in items 7.1 – 7.5. Address each item below. Use graphs and tables where appropriate. Items 7.1 through 7.5 should address the following four factors used to evaluate results:
  - The current level of performance. Describe how leaders ensure performance results align with established performance objectives.
  - The rate (*i.e.*, the slope of trend data) and breadth (*i.e.*, the extent of deployment) of the performance improvements. Describe how SBDC leaders analyze and manage data to ensure performance is managed within the SBDC organization to support the achievement of established objectives.
  - The performance relative to appropriate comparisons and/or benchmarks.
  - The linkage of outcome measurements (often through segmentation) such as key customer, product and service, market, process, with action plan performance requirements identified in Categories 1– 6.
- Include the key measurements, a brief analysis, and how the data is used to change behavior or modify the direction of the SBDC network vis-à-vis the strategic plan and/or action plan.

Deployment:

- To what extent are the approaches implemented (not-deployed, early stage, partially or fully deployed)?
- Provide evidence through description and/or exhibits where available. This information can be integrated with the discussions under approaches.

7.1 SBDC Service Results and Outcomes

- Identify and summarize the SBDCs key service performance results.
- What are the SBDC's current level and trends in key measures or indicators of service performance?
- Key measures or indicators should include those mandated by funding sources.

7.2 Customer-Focused Results and Outcomes

- Identify and summarize the organization's key customer results and trends, including customer satisfaction.
- What are the SBDC's current level and trends in key measures or indicators of service performance?
- How well does it meet what the customer wants?

7.3 Market Results and Outcomes

- Summarize the SBDC's market place performance results by key customer or market segments as identified in the SBDC's strategy.

7.4 Human Resource Results and Outcomes

- Summarize the organization's key workforce results, including employee learning, development, diversity and satisfaction.

7.5 Organizational Effectiveness Results and Outcomes

- Summarize the SBDC's return on investment in the form of results or other key measures as appropriate.
- Summarize performance data including mandated performance measurements from funding sources.
- Summarize any other key operations performance results that contribute to the improvement of SBDC effectiveness.
- Summarize any other results for key measures or indicators of accomplishment of the SBDC's strategies and action planning.

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