



VCCS Training

Three members from the Department of Economic Inclusion spent three days undergoing intense training on the City's Vendor Compliance and Certification System (VCCS). The training, which took place in Scottsdale, Arizona, covered everything the VCCS system can and will do for its users.

"I found the training very rewarding," said DEI Deputy Director, Edgar DeVeyra. "I was able to talk with staff there about what we are doing here in Cincinnati, and ask questions about ideas, issues and concerns we have back at home. I was then able to learn some new programming that I could initiate when I returned."

DeVeyra and Development Manager, Lydgia Sartor were both recognized for being Power Users on the VCCS system, which means they both have broad use experience and have spent a great deal of time on it. Also attending the event was Community Liaison Valeria Cummings Swope.

The three will now be helping the entire staff as they undergo training later in the month of June.



Let's Get Those Mowers Running

One area the Department of Economic Inclusion has been working tirelessly to fill are opportunities dealing with the hundreds of acres of land the City has that needs lawn care services. To help build capacity for some

minority-owned lawn care services, DEI held an informational meeting to see what it could do to help these businesses get their mowers running.



DEI's Community Liaison Valeria Cummings Swope explained about certification and the place to go on the purchasing Web site to see when RFPs dealing with lawn care become available. Buyer, Annette Gordon, walked participants through an RFP explaining what needs to be included in each bid, how to complete those RFPs and answered questions individuals had about filling out the paperwork.





The Man Behind the Badge

For nearly 25-years Cincinnati Police officer Wiley Ross protected the lives of others. It was a career he enjoyed and dedicated his life to. But one day Wiley woke up, looked in the mirror and realized his life was starting to take him in another direction.

“It began when I got my Bachelor’s degree in Criminal Justice,” said Wiley. “The pull got stronger as I worked on my Masters in Public Administration. I developed an interest in government and a desire to make a career change.”

That’s when Wiley says he learned about the newly created Department of Economic Inclusion with the City of Cincinnati and it intrigued him. So he talked with DEI Director, Thomas Corey about possible positions and then decided to come on board as a contract compliance officer.

“My position allows me to interact with just about every department in the City as well as with small business owners,” said Wiley. “I have to ensure rules and regulations are followed. But I also get to help small businesses, especially minority-owned and women-owned businesses get what may be their first chance to do business with the City. It’s great work with great results.”

So what does Wiley like to do when he’s not at work? Would you believe shopping? Wiley says there’s nothing more invigorating than finding that

bargain. He also enjoys spending time with his twins who will soon be heading off to college.

“It’ll be a new chapter for all of us,” said Wiley. “The kids will get a real chance to spread their wings and I’ll just be the nervous parent at home.”

DEI Hires A Winner



Congratulations to Department of Economic Inclusion new employee, Dan Bower. Dan received the Most Outstanding Government Staffer award from the CDC Association of Greater Cincinnati for his work on the City's Trevarren Flats project. Dan now works for DEI as a Development Manager





Director's Corner

Thomas Corey

Department of Economic Inclusion

OUTSOURCING – A GROWTH STRATEGY

Most small business owners are great at delivering their core product or services, but many mistakenly believe they can and must do it all. Small companies routinely try to manage payroll processing, marketing, accounting, and bookkeeping functions in-house. Trying to do it all can be a recipe for failure. Smart business owners outsource the back-office tasks they do not have the necessary training or experience to perform well or cannot devote sufficient time to see through to completion.

Often small business owners hold the view that outsourcing is a strategy reserved for big businesses. But for some small firms outsourcing can make a powerful and positive impact on their growth, productivity and bottom lines. “Progressive entrepreneurs realize the unstoppable power of outsourcing to handle aspects of their business that are essential but simply don’t make sense for them to deal with personally,” says David Walsh, author of *Source Control*, an e-book on effective small business outsourcing.

When it’s appropriate to outsource is different for every company. However, if you cannot accurately determine whether you made a profit last month or last year, or whether you made a profit or showed a loss in any one period, outsourcing may be in order. When you are unable to both manage the day-to-day business of your company and devote sufficient time and attention to grow your business, it may be time to consider outsourcing.

For very small businesses, which are the concern of this article, outsourcing the bookkeeping function is highly recommended. Bookkeeping is a task most small business owners push to the bottom of the pile because they don't like to do it. Unfortunately, this practice does not provide any insight as to whether you are making a profit or losing your shirt. Kerry Postel, a professional bookkeeper and CEO of a successful bookkeeping firm, says that a good bookkeeper can help grow your business in the following ways:

1. When you know your expenses you can determine where you need to cut costs.
2. When you know your expenses you can determine where you may need to spend more to increase your sales.
3. When you know your sales you can see where you are at and determine where you want to be and plan as to how you can increase sales.
4. You can determine breakeven point and decide as to whether you need to increase your prices or not.
5. May be you need to decrease your prices as you are overcharging and therefore not getting as many sales as you could if you reduced your prices.

Finding the right bookkeeper is the next step. Your network of friends, business owners, lawyer, or banker is a good starting point. Online networks such as LinkedIn and Twitter are also a good source. Know what you are looking for in a good bookkeeper, for example, acceptable fee arrangement (flat fee versus hourly rate), scope of services offered, and willingness to customize bookkeeping services to meet your needs.

In today's competitive environment small businesses must employ strategies that increase efficiency and profitably. Outsourcing can shift your focus toward work that increases the bottom line, allowing you to spend more time doing

what you do best and to make more money in the process.



Ask the Insurance Man

E. Wayne Sloan
Commercial/Business Liability Specialist

What does Commercial General Liability (CGL) cover?

Liability insurance does not cover your personal liability. Liability insurance covers bodily injury and property damage caused by the insured or anyone acting on behalf of the insured, or activity the business could be held liable. Several examples are the hiring of sub-contractors or joining with others in common activities such as sponsorships - resulting from failure to act reasonably (negligence). There are specific liability coverages for certain businesses like auto dealers, auto repair shops, cyber liability, data breach, machine shops, contractors, and condos. Important to note, that liability insurance can be written for all businesses

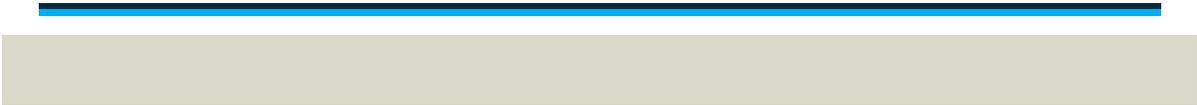
A critical and often overlooked reason to have Commercial General Liability insurance is legal defense coverage. This coverage defends frivolous law suits too.

Your defense coverage includes:

- Attorney fees (including cost of legal staff and expenses)
- Court costs of the applicable jurisdiction
- Costs of filing necessary legal papers
- If applicable, costs of expert witnesses
- Costs associated with investigation, etc.

Wayne Sloan, Commercial/Business Liability Specialist

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