

The Facts About...

The WNET Roundtable

The Small Business Mentoring Program for Women

If you're a woman who is new to owning a business, seasoned advice from experienced women business owners can be invaluable. The U.S. Small Business Administration established the Women's Network for Entrepreneurial Training in 1988 as a one-to-one mentoring program that matched successful businesswomen with emerging entrepreneurs in mentor/protégée relationships. Then groups of women of varying experiences began to meet and provide support for one another, often bringing in expert speakers, and the WNET Roundtable was born. The format became so widely successful that it is now our standard mentoring program. More than 150 WNET roundtables currently meet nationwide.

WNET is a cooperative effort of the SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership, SBA's Women's Business Center and Small Business Development Center programs, and the Service Corps of Retired Executives. At the roundtables, you may share and learn from experienced women business owners and from the SBA's resource partners and private organizations. These include SCORE and small business development centers, chambers of commerce and universities, as well as women's business and professional organizations. These resource partners can provide additional training and counseling.

Women Helping Women

Through regular, informal meetings with successful women entrepreneurs, you benefit from the advice and personal support of other group members who understand the ups and downs of being a woman business owner. You can gain new perspectives on your business, share your ideas and expertise, set goals for yourself, and make important business contacts. The roundtable also provides an excellent and economical way to get detailed answers to even your most difficult business questions, and to get feedback and fresh ideas.

Public- and private-sector individuals provide a unique array of contacts, services, suggestions

and a support system with greater dimensions than those offered by traditional networking groups.

Who Should Join?

The WNET Roundtable is designed for a woman business owner who:

- has strong entrepreneurial skills and shows potential for continued success;
- is willing to share ideas and to learn from the ideas of others; and
- is willing to commit to regular meetings.

Where Are Roundtables?

Finding out more about the WNET Roundtable is easy. For the location of the group nearest you contact your local SBA district office or contact us at:

Phone: 202-205-6673

E-mail: owbo@sba.gov

Internet: <http://www.onlinewbc.gov/net>

For More Information

SBA offices are located in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam. For the office nearest you, look under "U.S. Government" in your telephone directory, or contact:

- Phone: 1-800 U ASK SBA
- Fax: 202-481-6190
- E-mail: answerdesk@sba.gov
- TDD: 704-344-6640
- Your rights to regulatory fairness:

1-888-REG-FAIR

- Internet

SBA Home page: <http://www.sba.gov>

Gopher: <http://www.sba.gov/gopher>

U.S. Business Advisor: <http://www.business.gov>

SBA Resource Partners

Inquire at your local SBA office for the location nearest you.

- Business Information Centers (BICs)

- Tribal Business Information Centers (TBICs)
- One Stop Capital Shops (OSCSs)
- Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)
- Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs)
- U.S. Export Assistance Centers (USEACs)
- Women's Business Centers (WBCs)

Publications

- The Facts About . . .SBA Publications —
a listing of free SBA publications

Did you know that in fiscal 2000 the SBA —

- backed a record of nearly \$18 billion in financing to America's small businesses?
- approved more than 50,400 small business loans totaling almost \$12.4 billion?
- made more than 4,600 investments worth \$5.6 billion through its venture capital program — a 33 percent gain over fiscal 1999?
- provided more than 28,000 loans totaling approximately \$1 billion to disaster victims for residential, personal-property and business loans?
- extended management and technical assistance to an estimated 1.23 million entrepreneurs through its resource-partner programs?
- responded to almost a quarter million telephone and e-mail inquiries at the SBA Answer Desk?

Did you know that America's

25 million small businesses —

- employ more than 58 percent of the private work force?
- generate more than 51 percent of the nation's gross domestic product?
- are the principal source of new jobs?

All of the SBA's programs and services are provided to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis.

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