Public Libraries in the business of business

Entrepreneurs need you!
Librarians are planners, organizers, curators and researchers
What is YOUR pitch?

Create a thirty second commercial, aka elevator pitch:

“The librarians of the Business Resource and Innovation Center guide entrepreneurs in creating organized, fact based plans to define and achieve success…”
“We provide multiple points of entry for the entrepreneurial journey.”

This pictograph shows the stages of business of our patrons over a period of time. You will want to collect data and be able to show it, not just tell it to your stakeholders.
Services to help, and attract attention:

Headshots
Fridays, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Pitch Corner at BRIC
Programs to attract interest:

**Business and Brews**

- **2nd Wednesdays of the month | 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.**
- **September 14:** Keeping Your Day Job While Starting Your Side Business
- **October 12:** Properly Promoting Your Business and Honing Your Elevator Pitch
- **November 9:** Navigating Your Business Through City Agencies

**Panelists include:**
- Emily Schapira, Philadelphia Energy Authority
- Micah Gold-Markel, Solar-States
- Jack Griffin, Metropolis Farms
- Mark Vanderheim, VP of Energy and Waste, Walmart
- Kristen Saale, Keystone Energy Efficiency Alliance

**Green Economy Fair and Panel Discussion**

- **Friday, March 10, 2017 | 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**
- **Panel discussion: 10:00 a.m. | Montgomery Auditorium**
- **Moderated by:** Julie Zeglen (Generocity)

Meet the entrepreneurs and nonprofit leaders who are growing the green economy of the future both locally and globally.

**Information tables and demonstrations in the Lobby 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**
Programs from partners: Just some of ours...
Series of programs to create a following:

Lunch & Learn @ the BRIC

The Business Resource & Innovation Center (BRIC) offers lunch & learn sessions on the third Thursday of the month. Come to learn a new skill, get hands-on experience, and network with peers.

Computers will be available for hands-on practice but we strongly encourage you to bring your own (fully-charged) laptop, tablet, or mobile device. Don’t forget to bring your lunch! We’ll provide the coffee.

A Free Library library card is required to access wifi. Sessions are free but registration is requested as space is limited. Register at bric.ticketleap.com

Third Thursdays
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

JANUARY 18 Pitch Yourself!
FEBRUARY 15 Create a Logo in Canva
MARCH 15 Create a LinkedIn Profile
APRIL 19 Canva for Social Media
MAY 17 Polishing Your Online Presence
JUNE 21 Google Drive 101
Methods of engagement: the librarian

- **One on one appointments:**

  Planned extended reference interview and instruction in the resources with a focus on an individual or small group need. We emphasize the databases which show entrepreneurs their **COMPETITION**, and where their **CUSTOMERS** are.

- **Librarian Led programs: YOU CAN DO THIS!**

  Learn the resources, **DEMONSTRATE** what they can do and guide groups in their use. Address a general audience, or hone in on particular topics. Start with basic business planning tools (such as the Business Model Canvas) and how to use databases.
Central Library (Business Library) branch libraries

“Internal outreach”

- Offer regular training: include branch colleagues in the training you offer your customers. Invite to schedule one on one appointments and programs. Encourage your training department to include this training in employee professional development.
- Offer to give trainings at staff meetings, or offer a lunch and learn after a general staff meeting (and webinar if you have the technology, which we do not yet).
- Make your website landing page for entrepreneurs (get one!) a training tool for staff. Make it a one stop shop where branch librarians can go, follow the links, and look smart about business resources and planning tools.
Collaboration with partners:

- **Bring in experts.**

  We bring in outside experts for programs in finance, marketing, law, taxes and human resources. We attend the classes and learn from them. This is part of our training. Invite your branch colleagues (“Internal outreach”).

- **Offer to host networking events.**

  Tell partners that in the public library meetings need to be open to the public. This gets the library known as a networking place, and may bring our partners new constituents.
Digital engagement:

- **Website** with up to date calendar.
- Essential to have an “**Entrepreneur Page**”, keep it up to date, create robust links and send traffic to it and make it a useful starting place and training tool for outreach, both “Internal”, among library staff, and “External” presentations.
- **Social media**: Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest are places to attract attention and share skills. Encourage branch staff to “friend” and “follow” your pages, so they stay passively informed about resources and services for entrepreneurs.
- **Monthly newsletter (with calendar)** through Constant Contact or other service. Ask branch colleagues to sign up for your newsletter (“Internal outreach”)
Know the resources: Free! Free! Free!

- You and your patrons are already paying for useful government data!

Even if your library is not paying for ANY learning platforms or subscription databases. There are many resources for you to share as the neighborhood curator of useful information. Offer librarian led classes in finding quality information. There is demographic data, business data and real estate data. www.census.gov, www.census.gov\naics, www.zillow.com, www.trulia.com, This is where much of the paid subscription services get their data. They add value by organizing it in more user friendly ways.

- www.google.com

Don’t forget about “Get your Business online” (with Google): www.google\GYBO. Learn how to use ALL the Googledocs.

- State and Local government business services and databases belong to YOU.

You are already paying for them. Ask for help from the mayor, town supervisor, or whoever you have to gain access and assistance with analysis. Tell them you are working on programming to support local entrepreneurs, and they should be all over helping you.
Ask for trials of subscription databases.

You are a future customer!

- Plan your trial time well by scheduling plenty of time to evaluate DB.
- Maybe compare and contrast two of them.
- Bring in Board members, Library Friends, library patrons, any other stakeholders to play with them. Offer interesting local search suggestions.
- Have them come to a board meeting or other venues to advocate for purchase, and for the library as a valued source of curated information and guidance in using it.
Some examples of databases and learning platforms:

(Especially useful for entrepreneurs. In alphabetical order)

- Business Decision
- Business Insights Global
- Business Plan Handbook
- GCF Learnfree
- KhanAcademy.com
- Lynda.com
- Mergent Intellect
- Policy Map
- Reference USA
- Simply Analytics

(We don’t have all of these. You will evaluate what is most useful and cost effective for your users.)
Business planning: you can get entrepreneurs started

Offer a basic introduction to business planning and data resources.

Become comfortable with a business planning tool. We use the Business Model Canvas from the book *Business model generation* (Osterwalder and Pigneur, Wiley, 2010)
Practice business planning on your own organization
What is your marketing budget?

Don’t laugh. Is your board, town, city, etc expecting that people already know what you can do for them?

They probably don’t know!

How do you let the people in your entrepreneurial ecosystem (your town, neighborhood, city) know what you can do for them?
Create credibility for your library

- Get out there and show off. Demonstrate your research skills. (Demonstration: Business Decision)
- Whatever your salary is, consider a part of it the Marketing budget of your library, and be intentional about it.
Create business cards for yourself, and your social media

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Parkway Central Library
Business Resource & Innovation Center
1901 Vine Street | 2nd Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1189
www.freelibrary.org/bric

Business Resource & Innovation Center
freelibrary.org/business
facebook.com/filpbusiness
twitter.com/filpbusiness
pinterest.com/filpbusiness

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1901 Vine Street | 2nd Floor
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215-686-5394
Resources to get help:

- Find your local partners. SCORE, SBA, University SBCDC, Local government Business/Entrepreneur Office. Find the local providers of business assistance.
- Go to your state government website www.[yourstate].gov. We have good information for entrepreneurs in Pennsylvania. You probably do too.
“Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery”: Steal from us!

www.freelibrary.org/BRIC
My BRIC colleagues have a forthcoming e-book:

Taking care of business in the 21st Century: a new library model for entrepreneurs

By Gillian Robbins, Caitlin Seifritz and Caity Tingo

www.ala.org/pla/resources/publications/books

Direct link will be provided when available.