



2016 BEAR Activity Update

To: BEAR Team
From: Warren Vaughan, BEAR Coordinator
Date: December 8, 2016

Highlights

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Clients	37	52	112	122	114
Actions taken by the team (mentor connections, industry connections, training grant apps filed)	76	170	297 (184 mentor connections, 110 IWT applications, 3 kiva zip applications)	409 (307 mentor connections, 102 IWT applications)	397 (284 mentor connections, 111 IWT applications, 2 kiva zip applications)
IWT Dollars obtained	\$19,000	\$25,000	\$287,000 (110 total applications)	\$190,000 (102 total applications)	\$304,172 (111 applications)
Community/Team members contributing	20	39	60	97	95

Actions taken by the team

Resource Category	Number	Resource Category	Number
IWT applications	111	Social media/digital marketing	4
Industry connections	66	Insurance	4
Marketing strategy	30	business financing	3
Business and growth strategy	24	Understanding business partnerships	3
Financial strategy	26	Attorney	2
Market connections	18	Business efficiencies/operations/systems	2
Website	17	Graphic design	2
Business planning	17	Personal finance	2
Accounting	9	Quickbooks	2
Human resources	9	Internal documents	2
Management/leadership/organization dynamics	13	Kiva Zip	2
Manufacturing	7	Nonprofit connections	2
Board development	7	Real estate	2
Increasing sales	5	Program evaluation	1
Strategic fundraising (nonprofits)	5	Nonprofit audits	1

Explanations of specific categories

Business and growth strategy	This category includes connecting clients with resources who can help them articulate strategy that usually involves a deep understanding of their industry/finances/etc. An example would be connecting Shelter (zip-in inserts for pregnant women's coats) to a variety of BEAR providers. Some of these connections in this category could also be considered "business coaching".
Industry connections	Industry advice/connections is a referral to someone who's already in the industry and who may have already solved challenges faced by the client business. This represents one of the most growing categories of our work.
Marketing/sales strategy	Actions in this category include conversations around developing marketing strategy; understanding the sales conversation and how to close; and getting clear on a target market.
Management/leadership/org dynamics	Actions in these categories include cases where management needed to be strengthened or where solo business owners needed someone to help them understand how best to take leadership in a given situation.
Financial strategy	Actions in this category generally include cases where a client needs to get a better handle on their finances.

Incumbent Worker Training Grants

	2016 Applications	2016 dollars
“local” applications*	53	\$120,811
“non-local” applications*	58	\$183,361
Total	111	\$304,172

**local applications refer to trainings conducted by trainers and businesses in Gallatin County. Most of these were customized and set up by the BEAR team, and most helped train employees on aspects of *running a business*. Non-local applications refer to applications for trainings outside of the county. Most non-local applications helped train employees on *aspects of the industry*.

In Summary

The BEAR team continues to have significant success. We continue to work with a high number of clients, connected those clients with a significant number of resources and mentors, and have brought in a significant amount in training dollars. This is very good stuff.

At this point, our strategy revolves around providing two primary services to local business (and a third we’re experimenting with):

- Connecting those businesses with mentors (i.e., the team and/or other clients);
- Sponsoring businesses in getting training dollars. Sometimes this is industry specific (i.e., helping web developers learn a new coding language), and sometimes it is business specific (i.e., funding customized management or sales training).

We work with anyone that asks, though we tend to be most successful with smaller businesses who have specific and discrete needs.

In order for our success to continue, I see the entire effort dependent on a number of things that will need to continue to be true:

1. We will continue to have access to IWT dollars
2. Our volunteers will continue to want to volunteer their time
3. Businesses will continue to want mentoring services
4. Businesses will continue to need training opportunities
5. Some organization (i.e., the County, Job Service, etc) will continue to support the BEAR program through staff time

One of the things I continue to be most excited about is how we’ve begun to be able to connect clients with each other. This is useful to both existing clients as well as new ones and I want to do more of this.

And finally - you guys are doing amazing. Nice job - and thank you.