

TSB SPOTLIGHT WILLIAMS GROUP RECEIVES 2008 BEST OF DES MOINES AWARD

Certified TSB, The William's Group has been selected for the 2008 Best of Des Moines Award in the Management Training category by the U.S. Local Business Association (USLBA). The USLBA "Best of Local Business" Award Program recognizes outstanding local businesses throughout the country. Each year, the USLBA identifies companies that they believe have achieved exceptional marketing success in their local community and business category. These local companies enhance the positive image of small business through service to their customers and community.

Various sources of information were gathered and analyzed to choose the winners in each category. The 2008 USLBA Award Program focused on quality, not quantity. Winners are determined based on the information gathered both internally by the USLBA and by data provided by third parties.

ABOUT U.S. LOCAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (USLBA)

U.S. Local Business Association (USLBA) is a Washington D.C. based organization funded by local businesses operating in towns, large and small, across America. The purpose of USLBA is to promote local business through public relations, marketing and advertising. The USLBA was established to recognize the best of local businesses in their community. The organization works exclusively with local business owners, trade groups, professional associations, chambers of commerce and other business advertising and marketing groups. Its mission is to be an advocate for small and medium size businesses and business entrepreneurs across America.

SOURCE: U.S. Local Business Association

Meet Lori A. Young

The Targeted Small Business program is happy to welcome Lori A. Young to the team as the new Marketing & Compliance Manager. Lori started on Dec 1, 2008 and is responsible for marketing the TSB program statewide and working with state agencies to set, monitor and achieve their procurement goals, as mandated by Iowa law.

Lori is a native of Des Moines and a graduate of Tech High School and Grand View College, with a major in Business Administration. For 22 years she worked for Principal Financial Group in various capacities in their Retirement & Investor Services business unit. Recently, she was a Communications Strategist for The Principal focusing on communication and marketing strategy development for retail annuity sales across the U.S. She has experience in project management, copywriting, communications and editing.

Lori says, "After a long tenure working with private business-to-business marketing communications, I'm excited about using my skills and experience in a new arena with a new audience for a new purpose: helping targeted



small businesses in Iowa achieve their dreams. I'm looking forward to learning from TSB's veteran financial manager, Donna Lowery, about how we can better serve the needs of targeted small business owners in Iowa."

In her free time, Lori writes poetry, paints and sketches, and volunteers in the community. She is active in her church as well and is the mother of two sons, Julian (23) and Jordan (17).

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JANUARY 2009

I'll Make Me a World in Iowa Festival – Saturday, Jan. 31, Polk County Convention Complex, Des Moines, IA

Visit the Targeted Small Business and Iowans for Social & Economic Development booth at "I'll Make Me a World in Iowa", Saturday, January 31, 2009 from 10:00 am to 4:30 p.m. Come reacquaint yourself with our many services and see a demo of the exclusive 48-hour Procurement website with business opportunities available from dozens of State Agencies. Ask questions of our area of Technical Assistance providers and

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Knock-Knock. Who's There? Opportunity!

If opportunity was knocking at your door, would you answer it? Of course you would. Well, then don't miss out on the opportunity to do business with dozens of state agencies who may need your products or services.

Targeted Small Businesses (TSB) that are certified have an advantage – preferred access to over 30 state agencies and community colleges and exclusive, advance notice of bids for services. Don't miss out on this opportunity. Here are some wise moves to take advantage of these benefits of being a certified TSB:

- Check the 48-hour website daily for any bids that may be out there to see if you have a product or service to offer.
- Contact the Targeted Small Business program for a complete listing of the names and addresses of various state agencies and start marketing directly to them! We will even give you the actual contact names of the purchasing agents. They want to hear from you!

In a March 2008 survey, 39 state agencies said they need more information on TSBs and feel TSBs need to actively market themselves and their services more.

- In a survey of State Agencies, the top 10 service categories are the ones that reflect the services/goods/products they usually purchase:
 - Information Technology
 - Advertising, PR, promotions
 - Construction - general
 - Health care and related services
 - Printing/publishing
 - Construction – general
 - Consulting
 - Manufacturing
 - Food service and catering
 - Consulting
 - Graphics and design
 - Distribution

Agencies also reported that they need other types of goods and services, including:

- Building maintenance material
- Safety equipment
- Office furniture
- Court reporting
- Clothing
- Yard maintenance
- Parts for equipment
- Housekeeping supplies
- Copy paper
- Travel Services

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stop by for a free gift, while they last!

I'll Make Me a World in Iowa is a diverse collaboration of Iowans, which highlights African-American arts, culture and contributions through education, awareness and preservation during an annual enrichment celebration and with ongoing educational outreach.

Joining IDED at the table will be Iowans for Social & Economic Development, a non-profit agency that provides microenterprise training and specialty workshops, business consultation and coaching, and business assistance with marketing plan development.

FEBRUARY 2009

Women Mean Business Summit • Thursday, Feb. 26, 2009,

presented by the National Association of Women Business Owners – Central Iowa Chapter.

Hear featured speaker, author and consultant, Mary Cantando engage you with



her insight on the power and potential of women business owners. She'll expose the excuses that we make that block our goals. Discover ways to differentiate your business from competitors and target new clients in your niche.

Visit www.nawbo-ci.org for tickets and more information.

MARCH 2009

Entrefest 2009 - March 5-6, 2009- Coralville, Iowa Marriot. Be part of Iowa's Conference for Small Business Owners. It promises information on:

- **Money:** New Funding Sources
- **Marketing:** Don't just survive, THRIVE!
- **Growing Your Business in Turbulent Times!**
- **Inspiration, Networking, Learning!**



Go to www.entrefest.com for full details and conference registration.

CHECK HERE FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

www.iowalifechanging.com/business/tsb.html



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How to Make a Powerful First Impression

By Robert Jones

www.entrepreneur.com

Business owners find they can never truly clock out. Wherever they go and whomever they meet, entrepreneurs are walking billboards for their companies. In a tough economy, where advertising budgets are cut to the bone, that kind of person-to-person marketing is more important than ever. But if you're a billboard, how can you be sure you're communicating the right message? How do you get people to notice you without offending, boring or confusing them?

BODY LANGUAGE

Lillian Bjorseth, a communications consultant and author of *Breakthrough Networking*, says people decide many things about you within 10 seconds of seeing you—usually before you even open your mouth. That's why entrepreneurs should always be conscious of their aura, she says.

"The aura is the area around you that you create by what you wear, how you act, how you look," she says. "It all goes together to make one impression. You could wear a very expensive suit, but if you stand slumped over with your head down, you won't give a confident aura."

Though every person's aura is complex and unique, Bjorseth says entrepreneurs can focus on a few simple, non-verbal priorities to appear confident and in control. First, don't slip into a room "all smiles." Instead, "claim your space" in the room by planting your feet six inches to eight inches apart, one slightly ahead of the other—a stance that will make you feel grounded and confident.

After you've established eye contact, Bjorseth says a smile will create an upbeat, positive environment. Maintain eye contact 85 percent of the time during a conversation, she recommends. Doing so will make you seem trustworthy and it will demonstrate that you're interested in what the other person has to say.

To avoid a fumbling introduction, Bjorseth

says every entrepreneur should have in mind a "verbal business card"—a quick, 30-word summary of who you are and what you can do.

Focus on benefits for the other person rather than job titles or even company names, she recommends. "You want to make sure people remember you as opposed to others who do the same thing you do."

CONVERSATION

When it's time to move beyond the handshake stage, simple conversational skills are the key to a successful first meeting, says Rosalie Maggio, bestselling author of *How to Say It* and *The Art of Talking to Anyone*.

"Prepare in advance, then just try to forget yourself," she says. "Being too self-conscious is the quickest way to shoot yourself in the foot.

Remember that it's about the other person—that's the best possible way to make a positive first impression."

To help shift focus to the other person, Maggio says a bit of small talk is appropriate in almost every setting. When meeting someone new, the conversation should resemble a tennis match, with each participant taking a quick swing before sending it back to the other person. Too many Americans confuse their sports metaphors, treating a conversation "more like golf, where you just keep hitting your own ball over and over again . . . If you've talked for more than a minute, it's too long."

From formal pitches to impromptu meetings at a trade show, no two conversations will ever be the same.

But Maggio says one element is critical no matter what the setting: the ability to show appreciation.

"In every conversation, include at least one appreciative remark," she says. Praise the other person's business acumen, charity work, or even her taste in shoes. As long as the appreciation is brief, sincere, and specific, the feeling will be remembered long after the words are forgotten."

VOICE

Beyond body language and conversational skills, the actual tone of your voice is an important part of the impression you create, says Sandra McKnight, owner of Voice Power Studios in Santa Fe, N.M.

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IOWA'S TOP STATE AGENCIES FOR PROCUREMENT OF TARGETED SMALL BUSINESSES

The Iowa Department of Economic Development is proud to recognize the following state agencies that not only met, but shattered, their Fiscal Year 2008 (ending 6-30-08) goals for utilizing Targeted Small Businesses for their supplier needs. Congratulations and much appreciation goes to:

AGENCY	EXCEEDED FY08 GOALS BY
Department of Transportation	\$2,227,081
Division of Architecture & Engineering	\$1,221,239
Board of Regents	\$1,203,464
Public Defense	\$945,799
Department of Human Services	\$424,812
Natural Resources	\$269,899
Iowa Public Television	\$132,354
Public Defender	\$121,567
Economic Development	\$117,298

We applaud these state agencies for exceeding their FY08 procurement goals by such large amounts. They have proven that there is much opportunity to do business with the State of Iowa and there are agencies that need the quality goods and services offered by Iowa's TSBs.

And the Award Goes To...

The Targeted Small Business Program was proud to award \$115,000 to the following business owners during the months of December 2008 and January 2009:

December 2008 Financial Awards

Ponderosa Family Chiropractic (Dr. Kellie K. Hoover) of Des Moines, \$15,000

The Hearing Clinic (Stacy Reinhart and Sara Michael) of Windsor Heights, \$40,000

January 2009 Financial Awards

Xtreme Limousine (Kim Cunningham) of Boone, \$35,000

Premier Flooring of Iowa (Erica Baarda and Tim Powell) of West Des Moines, \$25,000

Please join us in celebrating these small business owners and for their continued success!

How to Make a Powerful First Impression

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"In face-to-face conversation, the other person first sees you, then hears the tone of your voice, and only then listens to your words. It can create a negative impression very easily if you're not in control of the way you speak."

Entrepreneurs who speak in monotone will be perceived as uninspiring, while those who speak too quietly will come across as uncertain. But the most common problem, McKnight says, is speed-talking, which dilutes the message and makes the speaker sound anxious.

"Bright people have a tendency to talk fast because their minds move fast," she says. "But it's not about data dumping. It's about communicating so that you're understood."

To ensure that you're speaking at the right pace, McKnight suggests reading aloud from a book for 60 seconds. When time is up, go back and count the words in the selection you just read. The ideal speaking pace, she says, is about 145 words per minute—but don't forget that you probably speak even faster than you read.

The keys to creating a positive first impression aren't secrets that are hidden away and accessible only through visits to an oracle or a high-priced seminar. Body language, conversation and voice are three of the most important aspects of a first impression. The bad news is too many people think they lack skill in these areas. The good news is that most anyone can practice each of them and master their first impression.

Certification: If you're not a Certified TSB, you should be!

A certified TSB is a step ahead of the competition as one of an elite group that has exclusive access to the 48-hour TSB website. This TSB website is where all State bids are placed before the general public can access them. With that jump start, a certified TSB can take the opportunity to do its research, evaluate its ability to provide the service, check competitive pricing and send in a bid in a timely manner. In an economic down turn, being one step ahead can make all the difference! Take the first step to certify your TSB by contacting Mary Montgomery, with the Department of Inspection and Appeals via e-mail at Mary.Montgomery@dia.iowa.gov or by phone at 515.281-5796.