

What is GO HelpDesk? A program that provides an opportunity to conduct an independent business needs assessment for local companies. Cadets learning about small business management will lead the business needs assessment supervised by Dr. Desplaces. This is not an internship program.

Who: Charleston area businesses who are interested in having an independent review of their business operation who are open to hearing new ideas. Cadets do not just evaluate the company; they must research actionable solutions and must present details/steps/actions for potential implementation. Businesses must be businesses that have 2+ employees who have a storefront/public hours. No home operated businesses (safety of our Cadets). Ideally, a mix of retail, food, and beverage, and other types of business would make this an authentic learning opportunity for all. The final list of participants will be selected by the instructor in partnership with Mrs. Jordan. Competing companies will be avoided if at all possible to avoid any conflict of interest.

When: Interested business owners commit to 3-4 times during the next three months to meet cadets virtually (Covid-19 guidelines in effect) to review their business, provide them an orientation, share details on daily operations. Owners or their representatives must attend the presentation of the findings by Cadets schedule November 24 at 8 am.

Interested business owners should plan to attend the online/zoom orientation session scheduled for Wednesday, September 9th at 8:30 am using the following link:

<https://citadelonline.zoom.us/j/91367140348?pwd=bHE2RlFnaIR4RVdJaW5iWEVUQkU3UT09>

Sincerely,

David

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Business Needs Assessment Project

Small businesses work very hard to establish their businesses and create a market presence. Yet they face many challenges:

- What are the current needs of their business?
- How are my customers' needs changing?
- What are my competitors doing to meet the changing needs of consumers?
- What new technologies and products are on the horizon?
- What are the early warning signals for emerging technologies or competitor actions?

The Baker School of Business has established a process for providing support to small, but growing businesses. A group of students and professors will work as consultants to your business by conducting a detailed Business Needs Analysis – identifying the most important challenges for businesses and making actionable recommendations.

Business Assistance Process

1. Municipality/Agency generates a list of businesses requesting assistance after Orientation.
2. The College and the municipality select companies to participate based on a need to provide a representative cross-section of the municipality's businesses.
3. Selected businesses sign a commitment letter to work with the students to meet the objectives of the assessment.
4. Students complete the business matching forms including a resume including participating in a client fair in class (selecting at least 3 businesses – special form to be used businesses are not involved).
5. Students sign commitment/expectation agreement, and are trained on client relations.
6. The Citadel and instructor match students and businesses.
7. **Kick off event attended by all via zoom.**
8. Students provide weekly oral reports to instructor.
9. **Students conduct needs assessment and goals survey.**
10. **Students turn in needs assessment and signed confidentiality agreement**
11. Students analyze needs and offer recommendations - turn in interim report and present preliminary results to class for feedback.
12. Students research actionable and prioritized recommendations including details regarding resource requirements.
13. Students turn in draft of their business assessment and cover letter.
14. Professor gives feedback to the students.
15. Students edit and print final report and letter. Students student experience survey.
16. Students present their findings to professor.
17. **Client feedback on student's interaction and professionalism.**
18. **Students present findings to business owners by presenting 4-5 PowerPoint slides per project and provide report via zoom.**



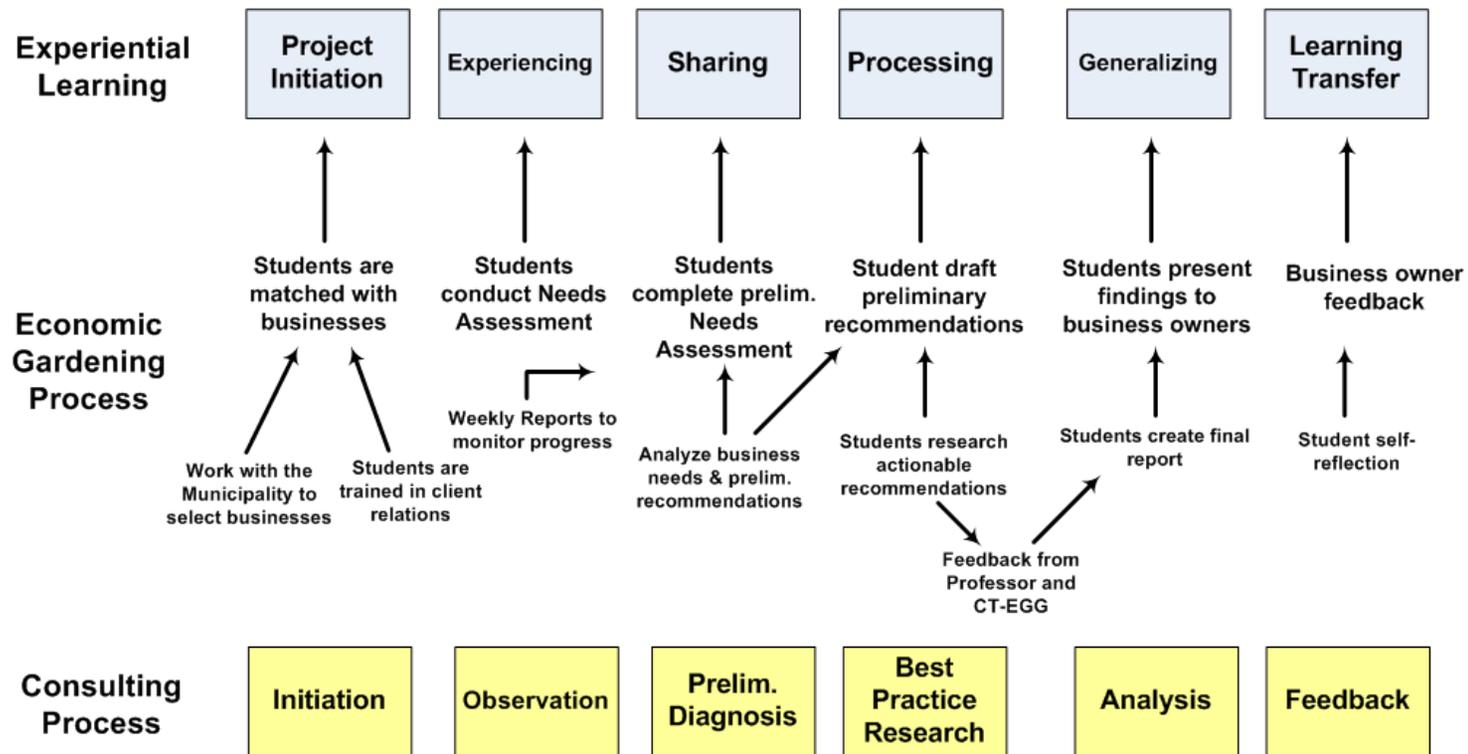
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19. The Citadel administers a 360-degree feedback form and engagement survey.

Business Needs Assessment Project

Teaching Entrepreneurship Through Service Learning





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Dear Charleston Area Business Owner:

The Baker School of Business at The Citadel in partnership with local program are conducting an Entrepreneurial Business Needs Assessment Project in Charleston. This program would match selected businesses with 4-5 undergraduate students enrolled in a Small Business Management course. There is no charge for you to participate, only a commitment of your time and experience. We see this as a “win-win” for all involved and here is why:

For the Students:

1. Provides a mentoring environment for students to learn from experienced small business owners.
2. Allows students to collect and process “real and on-site” business data that will be the basis for their final term project assessment report.
3. Exposes students to a variety of small business environments and real world situations related to visual merchandising, customer service, inventory and cash flow, and employee management.

For YOU the business owners:

1. Provides you with a 10-15-page summary report that includes a personalized small business assessment, ideas and opportunities for market growth, customer generation, marketing opportunities and ideas on how to increase your profitability.
2. You will be providing a community service by helping student to get a good start and learn from your years of experience as a small business owner.
3. Brings newsworthy exposure to your business and Charleston Area – your business will be featured at the special kick-off and wrap-up functions via zoom. Media outlets will be informed of this project and associated activities.

READ ON if this sounds like a project you are interested in!

In order to complete this project in a timely manner these Baker School of Business students have to get going RIGHT AWAY! You as a participating business owner must agree to commit to the following schedule and areas of involvement:

Please check the boxes to show you agree to meet all four of the following minimum requirements of participation.

- Attend a “getting to know you KICK OFF” session at the The Citadel via zoom to meet your student team and interview with the project leaders and possible press.
- Schedule meeting with your student team to discuss specifics about your business within the first week of the project via zoom.
- Allow your student team to shadow/interview you and/or your employees during a regular work day routine for an average of 2-3 hours per week total. You will finalize a schedule that fits all with the students assigned to your business.
- Attend the “WRAP UP PRESENTATION” conducted by all the student teams on Decmeber 8th via zoom.

YES! I agree that this is a great learning and business growth opportunity. I look forward to participating and meeting my student team via zoom!

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Name of Business: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email _____

Management and Entrepreneurship, Tommy and Victoria Baker School of Business

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GO HelpDesk

Consulting Contract

We understand that:

1. This is a class assignment requiring timely data collection and interaction. Students and business representative(s) must be available on a regular basis for this project to be successful. Students will be actively visiting/contacting businesses for the first 4 weeks. Follow-ups may or may not happen as students will be working with instructor to develop actionable solutions – including researching best practices.
2. Student consultants are required to conduct a business needs assessment. A business needs assessment consists of a systematic analysis of the business operations. Although businesses might have pressing issues related to their operations, students must conduct a comprehensive review of the operations (following a standard approach), which might include focusing on areas that may not first appear as a relevant. This process is necessary to guarantee standardization of course content delivery and grading.
3. Business owners or representatives will be invited to attend a summary presentation of the students' findings where they will be given an electronic copy of the report November 24th.

4. Client/ Organization Name: _____

Client Signature: _____ Date _____

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

Faculty Signature: _____ Date _____