

THE FIRST COMMUNITY BANK SCORE AWARD

It is that time of the year when there is a chill in the air which forebodes of winter. The omnipresent color in the trees leaves us breathless. We reminisce about the past summer and the wonderful times we shared with friends and family. We also wonder why there seemed to be no summer this year. When, for the last decade, we have enjoyed warm days with some even hot, little rain, and cool nights for a peaceful sleep. But now we have to prepare for the cold months ahead. If we procrastinate and do not get ready for what the “Farmers” say is another above average cold and snowy winter, maybe even worse than last winter, then we will pay dearly for our inaction.

Some companies have not procrastinated. They have been proactive in 2014 and have weathered their unique storms. They accomplished these propitious outcomes by seeking assistance and professional advice from the SCORE counselors in Petoskey. With difficulty, they have admitted that they are not omniscient; and that they need some advice in their respective businesses. They have taken the time to listen and to learn from the accolades received due to their business efforts in the past; but more importantly, they have listened and evaluated the critics of their actions or inactions in their respective businesses. Due to their acceptance of these feedbacks and after many sessions with our SCORE counselors, they have taken these suggestions and recommendations and have implemented them in their respective businesses. This is no easy task. Change is quite difficult.

As in any situation, there are a few companies that always stand out from the pack. They are the ones that seem to be much better than average. They have the characteristics and business acumen that every business wants to emulate. In the two previous years, there were two companies that have exhibited these outstanding traits. The first was Van Dam Custom Boats in Boyne City and, then, the following year Julienne Tomatoes in Petoskey. They requested assistance in marketing, personnel, finance, and some recommendations for a succession plan. Over a lengthy period of time, with many trials and errors, they implemented these ideas and recommendations which they felt enhanced their respective businesses. For a more in depth description of their success stories, you can discover their unique stories in the Petoskey News Review by utilizing the paper’s search engine under the title-First Community Bank SCORE Award.

But, we have been discussing the past. Let's enter the present and discuss what your company can do to qualify for this coveted award. First, you have to decide that you need some professional business advice. Then, you have to call Peter Iverson at the Petoskey Regional Chamber of Commerce at 231-347-4150 to schedule a confidential meeting with SCORE. If all of this comes to fruition, then next year your business may be awarded the \$1,500 cash award from SCORE and the First Community Bank.

We hope to hear from you!

Stephen Billings
SCORE Counselor