

2008 “Excellence in Downtown Revitalization” Award Winner

Ellensburg’s “Brown Bag Business Basics” Provides Low Cost Business Retention Tool



“Brown Bag Business Basics” Participants

Project Overview

As a young organization on a limited budget, the Ellensburg Downtown Association (EDA) was looking for a cost-effective business retention training opportunity. In partnership with the Ellensburg Public Library, the Downtown Association successfully launched its “Brown Bag Business Basics” series, a monthly tutorial and book review for their economic restructuring committee and downtown business owners.

The series provided a forum for business owners and committee members to read and discuss pre-assigned books on topics ranging from developing effective business plans to achieving retail success. Brown Bag members discussed a book of the month at each session. The Downtown Association also arranged local radio interviews with nine of the first twelve authors including Mark Sanborn (Fred Factor) and Chris Anderson (The Long Trail).

Funding

The EDA allocated \$300 for the series. The library donated the meeting space and ordered a copy of each book title for their new Business Resource section. The EDA also provided a list of the titles to each of the local bookstores.

The Result

The series provided an opportunity for the EDA to meet with downtown business owners on a monthly basis and was a low-cost business retention and recruitment tool. Businesses received information on a variety of topics to help them be more successful, and two new businesses opened in downtown Ellensburg shortly after attending the Brown Bag meetings.

Contact the Ellensburg Downtown Association at 509-962-6246 for more information.