

DAILY NEWS

**NYC pushing mini M.B.A. courses
for small business owners;
deadline for minority program is
nearing**

**Strategic Steps for Growth teaches minority
and women-owned businesses how to get city
contracts**

By Phyllis Furman / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

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Rob Walsh, commissioner of the NYC Department of Small Business Services, congratulates minority business owner Cheng Ong at Ong's graduation from city program Strategic Steps for Growth.

New York's buzzing with small biz boot camps.

Mayor Bloomberg has announced a new mini M.B.A. course for show business companies just as

the deadline for admission to another entrepreneurship program is drawing near.

Strategic Steps for Growth for Media and Entertainment, the city's latest effort to give small businesses a lift, will start accepting applications in May.

The goal is to speed the expansion of local film, TV, digital media, music and publishing companies while helping them remain competitive in the new media space.

Since the economic downturn hit, the city has been promoting educational programing for small business owners.

Friday is the deadline for the third year of another program called Strategic Steps for Growth, which has spots for 18 student entrepreneurs.

Like the media boot camp, this nine-month course is offered by the city's Department of Small Business Services in partnership with NYU's Leonard N. Stern School of Business. Both charge \$1,000.

But this one is aimed at established minority and women-owned businesses who are seeking ways to jumpstart their growth.

"The goal is to help minority and women-owned businesses grow in New York City, hire more people and get them hooked into the process of government contracting," New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn told the Daily News.

The results have been promising so far, though it is hard to trace the progress directly to the boot camp.

To date, 41 local business owners have graduated and gone on to collectively secure \$1.6 million in new financing, while creating 100 new jobs.

One recent grad is Earlie Butler, the 52-year-old president of Document Integration Technologies, a six-year-old digital writing and paperless forms processing company in Crown Heights.

Butler said Strategic Steps for Growth helped him make the big decision to transition his company from being an equipment reseller to providing software services and support.

In the process, he ended up letting go of three employees, but he expects to grow bigger in the long run.

“We know in the future we will need more people, but the skill sets will be higher,” Butler said.

“Strategic Steps gives you the tools to perform a self assessment of your business.”

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Here are some programs offered by the city and others to pump up small businesses:

*Strategic Steps for Growth: nyc.gov/strategicsteps
(deadline for applications is March 30)*

Strategic Steps for Growth for Media and Entertainment: nyc.gov/nycbusiness (information to be posted soon)

FastTrac: nyc.gov/nycbusiness

*Goldman Sachs' 10,000 Small Businesses:
goldmansachs.com*