

# Success takes more than numbers

**S**aul David knows from experience that starting and growing a successful business requires a game plan. In 2004, Saul worked as a logistics coordinator for a local transportation company, assisting in all aspects of shipping loads with 53-foot dry vans. With extensive training from his mentor and manager at the time, Chad Campbell, he discovered some inefficiency problems and weaknesses in the industry. He thought that these could be resolved and capitalized on by opening his own freight brokerage company. When he was laid off from his job, Saul teamed up with his father Raul David, a retired military veteran, to try to make this dream a reality.

They first approached the Veterans Administration for funding for the business. The VA advised them they needed a business plan, before they would even talk with them. Since this was Saul's project, it was up to him to find out what a business plan was and how to write one. Saul's spiral notes on scratch paper would not be sufficient to realize his dream. With no tools or resources to help him reach the next level, he turned to the Business Assistance Center. Saul registered for every class the BAC had to offer— Business Plan I, II, and III, Marketing, Cash Flow Management, and Financial Forecasting — then he began writing his business plan.

"The more research I conducted, the more problems came to light" says Saul. "I became reluctant and discouraged." His wife Denise urged him to continue to pursue his dream. She put her career on hold, and worked full-time by his side to make the dream a reality.

With renewed support from his wife, it was back to BAC for one-on-one counseling. The BAC's trainers and a close friend of the family and successful business man, Toby Copeland, helped shed further light on all aspects of owning and operating a business. His writing and research helped him discover opportunities and challenges he had not been aware of and helped him restructure his cash flow projections.

"I had gotten so far in writing the business plan, I thought I could go straight to the bank" laughed Saul. When the business plan was finally finished he took it to three different banks, all of which required him to have 20 percent cash to put into the business. With little capital to invest, Saul saved his business plan on a memory stick, which he wore as a necklace around his neck, and started shopping for venture capitalist. By chance, he ran into an investor who was looking to get into the industry. He plugged in the business plan in two seconds and was up and rolling in two weeks. Today, TLI Transportation owns three rigs, and works with a brokerage firm in west Fort Worth.



*Saul David sits behind the wheel of one of TLI Transportation's three big rigs.*

Saul is back at the BAC for assistance in expanding his business into Logistic Training and Consulting. His cell phone rings constantly while he sits in the Center's lunch room with his laptop. He is able to use the Business Information Center library to hone his knowledge of the industry by reading such reference manuals as *Step by Step: The Freight Brokerage Business*.

TLI Transportation Services, LLC is a thriving trucking business development company. They have recently opened an office in Fort Worth at 3621 McCart Avenue, which serves as the company's training facility. The company markets to owner operators, fleet owners and budding transportation entrepreneurs. The site has eight laptop stations to assist students with hands-on software training. The company also exhibits at truck shows and advertises in industry publications, and on line at [www.tlitransportationservices.com](http://www.tlitransportationservices.com).

"It takes more than numbers to be successful," Saul says. "Everything we do is based on what I learned at the BAC. I am constantly rewriting our business plan, from marketing, to cash flow management to development of our niche."

## BAC workshops will be evolving in 2009

In an effort to streamline services and increase efficiencies, several City of Fort Worth departments are being re-organized or combined effective with the new fiscal year beginning October 1. With the merging of the Economic & Community Development and Housing Departments, the Business Assistance Center will be broadening its focus to be more responsive to emerging economic trends in Tarrant County. The BAC will employ new strategies to better serve the needs of established businesses and thereby spur economic growth. Areas to be covered in new classes will include the building and construction industries, as well as issues related to human resources and bonding.

Beginning in 2009, the BAC will offer several new series of workshops two or three times a year.

### Communication Series

- Verbal communication
- Written communication
- Presentation skills
- Communicating with internal and external clients

### Computer Series

- (Microsoft Programs):**
- Word
  - Excel
  - PowerPoint

### Marketing Series

- Media Relations
- Public Relations
- Advertising
- Sales and marketing strategies

The BAC Web site will be the primary vehicle available to learn about new workshops, classes and developments at the Fort Worth Business Assistance Center. Log on to [www.fwbac.com](http://www.fwbac.com) to keep abreast of activities at the BAC.