

EDGE classes help women set goals, expand business

By Robin Westfield

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A year ago, Christine Sommers found herself trying to organize her business and get a grip on advertising her fairly new business, All about Caring In-Home Services.

Most of that changed when, during a trip to her banker, she was told of the Enhancing, Developing, Growing, Entrepreneurs class.

EDGE classes cover how to get realistic goals for a business, predict cash flow, establish a budget and identify a market. The final result will be a complete, comprehensive business plan that is tailored to the individual enterprise.

"The Chamber of Commerce office referred me to the class before," Sommers said. "I don't know whether it was I didn't feel ready or feel it was necessary to take the class."

Sommers enrolled in the 12-week class, and, "I worked harder during those twelve weeks than I did in college."

"It was well worth it," Sommer said. She said that if anyone is going to run or is thinking about opening a business, taking the EDGE class is an important key.

"They taught me how to get over hurdles easier and quicker." Sommers said.

During the course of the 12 weeks, Sommers learned how to write a detailed business plan that bankers look at in order to finance a business, which is an important skill.

Sommers also learned how to market her new business and evaluate budgets and land that right kind of advertising that would be appealing to potential clients.

A year ago, All about Caring had 11 clients. Today the service has more than 30.

"My monthly income has more than tripled," Sommers said. "I recommend that class highly."

Since completing the class, Sommers has referred the class to three other business owners.

"I have called people I know," Sommers said, "But they're famous for saying they don't have time. I made the time with my busy schedule because my business was that important to me."

For more information about EDGE classes, call Connie Francis, University of Nebraska Extension Educator at 432.2683 or cfrancis1@unl.edu. The next class begins Aug. 19 and meets once each week from 6 to 9:30 p.m. for 12 weeks. An Ag EDGE class begins Nov. 6.