



INTRODUCTION TO SCORE

a FREE entrepreneurial mentoring service
sponsored by the US SBA (Small Business Administration)

By Diane Drey

During my life, I've met many entrepreneurs, and I love helping them become more profitable. That's why I want to introduce you to **SCORE**, a **nationwide organization that provides FREE mentoring and education** for business owners. I've been a proud volunteer since 2008!

What is SCORE?

Founded in 1964, SCORE is a **partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)** with over **175 chapters and 7,000 volunteers** nationwide. The national organization's website is www.score.org, but each chapter has its own website that focuses on local activities.

Most volunteers are retired executives who have owned their own businesses or held senior roles at large firms, and some are younger industry experts, particularly in tech. All have a lifetime of experience from having "been there and done that," and they want to help other business owners achieve success. They volunteer their time to assist **startups, growing businesses, and even those planning an exit strategy**, including both for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

What are SCORE's primary services?

Most SCORE chapters offer two main services:

1. Free Business Mentoring

Get matched with a mentor based on your business challenges—marketing, management, finance, legal, social media, funding, acquisition, exit strategy, and more.

- Find a mentor via [SCORE's national website](#) or your **local SCORE chapter**.
- Mentoring is now primarily on Zoom, so you can connect with experts nationwide.
- You can work with multiple mentors if needed.

There is never a charge for mentoring, and there is no limit to the number of sessions you can have. Good mentoring relationships can last for years. **I often tell entrepreneurs I meet that you may have to kiss a few frogs to find your prince (or princess).** The key to a great mentorship? **Find someone who "gets it" and is invested in your success!** See the list at the end of the areas where SCORE could help.

2. Business Workshops

SCORE offers online and in-person workshops on:

- Starting a business
- Marketing & social media
- QuickBooks & business finance
- Business planning & growth strategies

Some are free, while others have a **small fee (\$29–\$69 for a 3-hour session)**. Check out [SCORE NYC's workshop list](#). Many are live classes, but they also have pre-recorded courses which can be taken on demand. The possibilities for learning are endless.



INTRODUCTION TO SCORE

a FREE entrepreneurial mentoring service
sponsored by the US SBA (Small Business Administration)

By Diane Drey

Additional Programs which MAY be available in a local chapter:

- **Business Owners Roundtable** – also called the CEO roundtable. This is usually for established businesses that meet monthly with fellow entrepreneurs in guided discussions led by Score mentors and often include speakers. Groups are intimate and confidential.
- **Advisory Board Service** – A service by which a team of 3-4 SCORE mentors work exclusively with your established company through quarterly on-site meetings, helping the CEO work “on the business rather than in the business”. This service is for larger companies with generally 50+ employees.)
- **Money 101 Education** – a personal financial literacy program broken down into five topic areas – is a great way to get your household finances in shape.

My Story

I operated a third-generation **bottled water manufacturing and distribution business** in New York City for 32 years. If I had known about SCORE while I was running my business, it could have prevented many costly mistakes! After selling the company in 2008, I heard about SCORE while searching for volunteer opportunities. It was a great match, and since I have mentored over **1,000 entrepreneurs, led workshops and designed supplementary programs.**

In 2016, I proudly launched Score’s **Advisory Board Service**, helping mid-sized businesses receive expert guidance without costly consulting fees. In 2019, I launched **Money 101 Education**, a financial literacy program designed to “*TAKE THE FEAR OUT OF FINANCE.*” In 2025, after six years of teaching, I paused live classes to focus on training others on the curriculum. However, the program can be taken “on demand.”

Thinking About Volunteering?

SCORE is an **amazing place to give back!** You’ll:

- **Share your expertise** with business owners.
- **Keep learning** from peers and clients. (including participation in Score workshops)
- **Join a dynamic, supportive community.** (THINK - new friends, great travel and restaurant recommendations from your fellow mentors!)

There’s **flexibility** in how much time you give. Even if you don’t have broad business experience, you can contribute as a **Resource Volunteer** in marketing, event planning, finance, or administration.

SCORE mentors **don’t get paid**—our reward is seeing entrepreneurs thrive. If you’d like to **get involved or learn more, feel free to reach out!**

DIANE DREY

Cell Phone: 917-670-3690

Email: Diane.Drey@scorevolunteer.org

Score Certified Business mentor – since 10/2008

INTRODUCTION TO SCORE

a FREE entrepreneurial mentoring service
sponsored by the US SBA (Small Business Administration)

By Diane Drey

How a SCORE Mentor Can Help Your Business

SCORE mentors provide practical, confidential guidance to entrepreneurs and small business owners at every stage of their journey.

<p>Business Idea & Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify and refine your business idea • Validate market demand and target customers • Develop or improve a business plan • Set realistic goals and milestones 	<p>Leadership & Team Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition from founder to leader • Hiring and delegation guidance • Improve decision-making and accountability • Build a strong business culture
<p>Financial Guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimate startup and operating costs • Improve cash flow management • Understand pricing and profitability • Review financial statements • Prepare for loans or funding discussions 	<p>Growth & Problem Solving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for sustainable growth • Identify risks and opportunities • Work through challenges and pivots • Act as a trusted sounding board
<p>Marketing & Sales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define your value proposition and brand • Identify effective marketing channels • Develop customer acquisition strategies • Improve sales conversations and processes 	<p>Accountability & Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay focused and motivated • Gain confidence as a business owner • Avoid common startup mistakes • Benefit from experienced, objective advice
<p>Operations & Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamline workflows and processes • Improve efficiency and organization • Select tools and technology • Create simple systems that support growth 	<p>AND THE PRICE IS RIGHT FREE for one-on-one confidential mentoring</p>