

Business Retention & Expansion Program

A healthy local economy and an improved business climate are the goals of the Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) Visitation program. The program promotes job growth by helping communities identify the concerns and barriers to survival and growth facing local businesses. This approach focuses on existing businesses. Studies show that 40% to 80% of all new jobs are created by existing firms than by new business attraction. Furthermore, business attraction efforts are less likely to be successful if existing businesses are unhappy with the local business climate.

BR&E Process in 3 Steps

1. **Firm Visits:** Local community leaders receive training on how to conduct the local BR&E Visitation program. After receiving training, *Volunteer Visitors* call on businesses and interview the firm manager or owner. A proven survey tailored to local communities is used for the interviews. The survey pinpoints business needs, concerns and development plans. Individual firm data is kept confidential.
 - a. *Immediate Follow-Up:* A local *Task Force* reviews the survey results and responds to the needs and concerns expressed by businesses. Support from resources within and outside the community becomes mobilized.
2. **Strategic Planning:** University faculty or other experts computerize the information and prepare an initial draft report for the *Task Force*. The report includes data analysis and suggests recommendations for improving the local business climate. The *Task Force* uses this report, its knowledge of the community, and a strategic planning process to develop an action plan.
3. **Implementation:** The action planning process fosters the development of local implementation teams. These teams spearhead efforts to achieve the goals in the action plans. Local businesses and a variety of agencies may be drawn into the process by these teams.

Timeframe: The BR&E program will take 2 to 3 years to complete (**Year 1-Steps 1-2, Year 2-3-Step 3**).

The fee for the Business Retention & Expansion program varies depending on the scope of work. For more information contact:

Andre L. Garron, AICP, Regional Economic Development Specialist
UNH Cooperative Extension
204B Nesmith Hall / 131 Main Street
Durham NH 03824
Tel: 603 862 5171 or Email: andre.garron@unh.edu
www.extension.unh.edu

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Business Retention & Expansion Strategies (BR&E) Program

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