

AtWork Personnel Services

"We're at Work for You." That's the slogan of AtWork Personnel Services, a staffing solutions company specializing in light industrial and clerical placements, owned and operated by Unnati Patel. She purchased the AtWork franchise covering the Orlando market more than a year ago and now has her business growing at 300% per year and, while she expects that will slow down, projects to double her business by the end of next year.



Patel will tell you that she hasn't done it alone. She has received assistance from the Florida SBDC at the University of Central Florida (FSBDC at UCF) and one of its consultants, Steve South, who she credits with making all the difference. Working together, they significantly improved her company's proposal development process and created a structured business development program, both of which have helped drive AtWork's rapid growth.



MEET UNNATI PATEL

"I wish I had known about the FSBDC before I was actually in business. I would have used their consulting services, taken all their courses and learned exactly what I needed to know to start my business. It would have been so much easier and so much faster if I'd gone to the FSBDC."

"It's been fantastic. It's like I have access to unlimited resources from the FSBDC as far as building my business," Patel says. "How to approach clients. How to retain customers. Everything I ask for from Steve, I get including new and better ideas about all kinds of business issues. In fact, the FSBDC's support has helped me win some big contracts."

"When I started, I knew the staffing business but not the sales side of the operation. Steve helped me to present myself to clients in a way that demonstrates to them how my services can help them grow their businesses," continued Patel.

AtWork has grown in Orlando because Patel has built her business the old-fashioned way: by prospecting for customers. Making cold calls. Knocking on doors. And her success has not gone unnoticed. Some of the marketing and business development processes that she and South developed have been adopted by the AtWork Group, her franchisor, and rolled out to franchisees. She has earned their recognition, as well, having been awarded the AtWork Group's "Rising Star Award," a prize given annually to the fastest growing new franchise in their system.

"To any entrepreneur and business owner out there, I want to say this: utilize the FSBDC's resources as much as you can. And, for the entrepreneurs, do it before you start your business," Patel continued. "I wish I had known about the FSBDC before I was actually in business. I would have used their consulting services, taken all their courses and learned exactly what I needed to know to start my business. As it was, I spent months and months figuring things out on my own. It would have been so much easier and so much faster if I'd gone to the FSBDC."

"I'm glad that my company and my franchisor owns our slogan, "We're at Work for You." Because, if we didn't, based on all the assistance I have already received and the additional support I expect to receive in the future from Steve South and the FSBDC, I'd be worried we could lose it. The FSBDC at UCF could definitely make the same claim, and they deserve to," concluded Patel.

Providing the tools, strategies, and expertise to help Florida's business community thrive.

State Designated as Florida's Principal Provider of Business Assistance [288.001, Fla. Stat.]

The Florida SBDC at UCF is a member of the Florida SBDC Network, a statewide service network funded in part through cooperative agreements with the U.S. SBA, Defense Logistics Agency, State of Florida, and other private and public partners; hosted by the University of West Florida; and nationally accredited by the Association of SBDCs.

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