

Five Things to Look for When You Are Seeking A Business Loan

**By Tamara Gurney, President & CEO
Mission Valley Bank**

If you run a growing business, you will probably need financing. But when you look for a business loan, there are several things that are at least as important as the loan itself. These things involve the relationship you will have with your business bank and how they can help you over the long term. Here are five things to look for when you are seeking business growth financing:

1. A banker who understands your business – Unfortunately, many banks just don't take the time to understand how your business works or what you really need from your bank. You deserve better and you should insist on it. As the client, you should expect someone who learns about the special needs of your business and the kind of specific solutions that will assure your business success.
2. A professional relationship with decision makers -- Your banker should not just be a messenger between you and those who make lending decisions. You deserve to work with a professional who has a role in the decision making process and who relates to the specific requirements of your business.
3. A customized package of services – You should expect more than a banking program where one size fits all. You should be able to select just what you need -- no more and no less -- and pricing should also fit your business. No two businesses are alike and banking services should reflect that fact.
4. Highly responsive service – Sometimes the best business opportunities just won't wait and the ability to seize new opportunities can significantly impact your company's bottom line. You should expect a bank that responds promptly and decisively to turn opportunity into reality.
5. A plan for a successful future – You expect to grow and succeed and your banker should help provide for that success. This requires planning for the financial resources you need for today and in the future.

Business Banking Customers should expect more from their bank than just a business loan. There are many ways a good banking relationship can help your business and you have the right to expect the level of service your deserve. These five areas of service are a good place to start.

Tamara Gurney is the President & CEO of Mission Valley Bank, an independent, business bank serving clients in the San Fernando Valley. She can be reached at (818) 394-2300.