

Free advice available for small businesses

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TWO free services are now available to business people who need help to improve.

They are being offered by former Caboolture Business Enterprise Centre chief executive officer Dennis Chiron and ex-CBEC board member Peter Athey.

The first, available to businesses with under 20 employees, gives clients access to business blogs and one-on-one mentoring.

The Online Natural Disaster Assistance Project, funded by the Federal Government, helps businesses in areas affected by last summer's floods and cyclones.

Mr Chiron said the blogs allowed business people to discuss issues among themselves, share ideas and solutions to problems.

He said experts in various aspects of business, such as marketing and finance, also contributed to the blogs and



BUSINESS HELP: Dennis Chiron says many businesses don't know they're in trouble until it's too late.

clients could contact them for specific advice.

The project also gives participants access to mentoring, either face-to-face or via phone or video calls, and to business checkups which can identify areas your business can improve.

Also available is micro-mentoring, which offers small business people expert coaching at a fraction of the normal cost, and the chance to join other business people to discuss issues in small groups.

Mr Athey said these groups gave people the chance to talk about their problems and get not just feedback and ideas, but also support.

Mr Chiron said many businesses did not know they were in trouble until it was too late, and if they did realise they often failed to identify the real causes.

Mr Athey said up to 10 per cent of businesses struggled despite having lots of customers and high turnover.

He said many did not know how to price products or their labour, and many did not have an understanding of business finance.

➔ **For details phone Mr Chiron on 0420 970 160 or email dennis.chiron@belmontbec.com**