Five Facts You Didn’t Know About the BBB

1.) We are not a government agency.

2.) Complaints are handled by the Better Business Bureau office in the area where the company is based.

3.) The BBB is not a consumer watchdog.

4.) The BBB doesn’t process employee/employer complaints.

5.) The Better Business Bureau will celebrate our 100th birthday in 2012.

In case you did know all that, my apologies. You get a gold star! Let’s discuss the facts in more detail.

1) The BBB is a non-profit organization with a mission of increasing trust in the marketplace. Sometimes people think we can “shut down” bad companies—we can’t, not directly. Companies receiving a plethora of complaints or a serious pattern are referred to state Attorney Generals and the Federal Trade Commission for this type of action.

2) When you file a complaint, whether you live in Helena, Montana, or Fairbanks, Alaska, your local BBB office will not be handling your complaint if the company you did business with is located in Tucson. The BBB serving that part of Arizona is the one that will handle your complaint. Confusing? Not really. Just go to www.bbb.org to file, and the computer will route your complaint to the right place. Or, call your local office and they’ll direct you.

3) While the BBB does provide many consumer services, like warning you about scams, we provide just as many business services. We are a business organization serving companies and customers alike. We are supported by dues from our Accredited Businesses.

4) The BBB receives many calls from people who are upset about the way a company treats its employees. The BBB does not get involved in these legal issues. The proper agency to file these types of complaints with is your state’s Department of Labor & Industries.

5) The BBB was started in 1912 as an advertising watchdog group, and has evolved steadily into the BBB we know today! Watch this blog for more news about our upcoming centennial celebrations.

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About Holly Doering
Holly Doering has worked for the Better Business Bureau Serving Eastern Washington, North Idaho, and Montana for half a decade. Her areas of expertise include the CORE Values Program (Character, Optimism, Respect, Ethics) for Teens and Charity Review as well as writing and editing. Prior to that, she has written for two newspapers, a local magazine, and taught English at the community college. She is the proud author of a short story in ZYZZYVA literary magazine and has had good luck publishing lots of poetry. Each year she rolls up her sleeves and wades into the autumn Nanowrimo writing madness and has several unfinished novels to her credit.