

Sandra Gravenhorst is a successful business owner, running a Chelsea-based telecommunications store for several years. Her customers are mainly Spanish-speaking, but Sandra has noticed a recent change in the store.

“Recently, there have been a lot of different kinds of people coming into my store- Americans, Moroccans, Filipinos,” says Sandra, owner of Telepage Corp. “They don’t speak Spanish so I need to help them in English. **I need to know what to offer them and help them feel more secure in what they are buying.**”

Sandra recognized that she and her employees need English in order to meet customers’ needs and to grow the business. But, Sandra found it impossible to find an English class that was local, after work hours and offered business-relevant topics.

This fall, with the financial support of New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft, English for New Bostonians launched its first ESOL for Entrepreneurs class, right in Sandra’s backyard - downtown Chelsea. Sandra, along with several other ambitious local entrepreneurs, completed the ESOL class, which offered curriculum tailored to the language needs of small business owners like Sandra.

The new program enables students to improve English skills, which in turn allows them to improve their businesses by:

- Expand their markets to include more English speakers;
- Monitor workplace health and safety through better communications;
- Access business assistance resources, such as bank loans and marketing plans

Sandra, featured in our video below, is already starting to notice the difference. **“Now, I understand my business more. I know how I can grow.”**