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**APRIL 2019**


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- 14** Best in Reliability
- 16** Best Payroll Providers Providers
- 19** Top 100 People To Know
- 38** Top St. Louis Companies To Know
- 41** St. Louis Business Expo

---

**DEPARTMENTS & COLUMNS**


---

- 6** Publisher's Letter
- 7** Sales Moves
- 7** Ask The Banker
- 8** Entrepreneur's Toolbox
- 8** Mastering LinkedIn
- 8** Building Inner Strength
- 9** Better Your Business
- 10** High-Voltage Marketing
- 10** CultureCentric Leadership
- 11** Marketing Works
- 11** Financial Fitness
- 12** Technology Trends
- 45** Leader Acceleration
- 46** Value Proposition
- 46** The Extraordinary Workplace
- 47** Time With The Boss

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RON AMELN, *president*  
314-569-0076, ext. 100  
ron@sbmon.com

**ADVERTISING**  
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**OUR EDITORIAL FOCUS**

Our country was founded by visionaries who believed in free enterprise through individual determination. We support that spirit and hold that the future of our area lies in the growth and development of small businesses and the efforts of entrepreneurs. We are dedicated to supporting and promoting that growth.

*St. Louis Small Business Monthly* is St. Louis' locally owned business publication, bringing business tips, strategies and analysis to the presidents, CEOs, owners and top executives of 16,000 businesses in the St. Louis Metropolitan region. SBM, founded in 1988, publishes every month and also provides information at [www.SBMon.com](http://www.SBMon.com) and through a variety of business-related forums and events.

**ST. LOUIS SMALL BUSINESS INC.**  
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[www.sbmon.com](http://www.sbmon.com) [www.stlouisbusinessexpo.com](http://www.stlouisbusinessexpo.com) [info@sbmon.com](mailto:info@sbmon.com)

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# Congratulations to Vincent Reese



We are proud to congratulate Vincent Reese, the Managing Partner at Mickes O'Toole, on being selected by *St. Louis Small Business Monthly* as a:

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## Helping Businesses Succeed: One Business At A Time

**A**s a business consultant, Jeanet Wade was searching for a way to really make a difference in her clients' success. She found the answer in a book, "Traction," by Gino Wickman.

After reading the book, which outlines a business system known as the Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS), Wade knew this system was the key to helping businesses throughout the region become successful.

"This system is a life changing thing," Wade said. "It fundamentally changes peoples' spirits, and their energy. It's transformative."

She became a Certified EOS Implementer, the only certified implementer in St. Louis, and over the last six years helped over 58 clients achieve results with EOS. As an EOS Certified Implementer, Wade helps companies implement the system through a 24-month journey.



EOS is a comprehensive business system, integrating a holistic business model with a complete set of simple tools and a process to align and synchronize all the pieces of a business.

Wade is doing her part to help area companies succeed.

When asked about their success, many area businesses point to help from others, whether that help comes from trusted advisors like accountants or attorneys, or coaches like Wade.

Our goal with our annual 100 St. Louisans to Know to Succeed in Business feature is to showcase the individuals in St. Louis that are helping businesses of all sizes grow and prosper. Think of this list as your own black book of business champions. It is a way to stop leaving your next big breakthrough to chance.

Let's say you want to know \_\_\_\_\_:

- How to tap into the experience of a military veteran (Dr. William Powell Jr., pg. 26)
- How to utilize the tech community for a large-scale project (Jake Renfro, pg. 28)
- How to learn from the area's only African American bank CEO (Orvin Kimbrough, pg. 22)
- How to use the mind of a problem-solver to revamp your sales and marketing teams (Tara Kinney, pg. 23)
- How to avoid turnover in your business and improve employee morale (Art Snarzyk, pg. 30)

The breadth and depth of entrepreneurial experience is at your fingertips.

However, there is a danger in naming people. You leave people out. People that should absolutely be mentioned. Please know that we are aware of this. If there is someone that you feel should be on the list, send me a message (ron@sbmon.com) with the person's name, title, company name and 150 words as to why they are someone that business owners should know. We will consider them for next year's list. ■

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# The Fat Sales Pipeline vs. the Narrow Pipeline: Which is Better?



**C**onventional wisdom doesn't hold. It's time to bust this myth! The long-standing belief is that you need to have a big fat pipeline. It's what our bosses have told us for years. I remember as a salesperson keeping prospects that weren't going anywhere in my pipeline simply to keep my boss happy.

Fat pipelines wind up doing only one thing — they create havoc and keep you from truly selling. The fat pipeline requires too much time and effort just to keep the leads straight. The result is that you don't have enough time to spend on your best prospects.

For years in my keynotes and trainings, I've advocated that the best approach is to have a narrow pipeline to give you the time you need to spend with your best prospects.

The acid test I use is to look at the percentage of deals you have to discount to close. I use this as a key metric because it says two things.

First, if you're having to discount, it means you have not been able to get the



customer to understand the value of what you offer. This is because you have not

been able to spend enough time with them. Second, discounting to close means you may be prospecting people who don't fit the profile of your perfect customer. This is because you did not segment your leads fast enough to narrow your list to only those that fit your perfect profile.

Ten years ago I subscribed to the fat pipeline theory, but times have changed and the ability to identify leads has never been easier thanks to the internet. This ease of list building has resulted in pipelines becoming bigger, but that doesn't change the reality that you still have only 24 hours in a day. Go ahead and load up on all the hacks and apps you want. It's not going to change the fact that there are only 24 hours in a day.

Narrow pipelines are the new norm. It's not a game of leads; it's a game of leads that match up to your perfect profile.

Yes, I'm aware that as you read this, you might be ready to go ballistic with me or be only upset about how your boss would take this post should you share it with them. Hit me with your toughest concerns. I'll be happy to answer and share more on this issue..■

*Mark Hunter, of The Sales Hunter sales motivation blog, is the author of "High-Profit Prospecting: Powerful Strategies to Find the Best Leads and Drive Breakthrough Sales Results."*

## How Should My Business Be Using Social Media?

Between fears of security breaches and unfavorable customer comments, some small-business owners shy away from social media for their companies. But what are they missing out on?

A recent Pew Research Center study found that seven in 10 Americans now have at least one social media profile. Businesses that lack an online presence, in other words, are missing out on direct access to their customers and the chance to build brand awareness, enhance loyalty and, most important, increase sales.

Ready to take the plunge? Here are some tips to get started.

**1) Start with a plan.** Set goals and objectives that will make a real impact on your business. Acquiring new customers or introducing new merchandise, for example, is more valuable than gaining "likes." Create a social media calendar to track dates for creating and posting content.

**2) Choose platforms that make sense for your business.** Consider your customer demographics and choose the social media platforms in which they are most likely to engage. B2B businesses, for example, may target LinkedIn, while retail businesses may need a Pinterest page.

**3) Write meaningful content.** It's critical to have content that is fresh, timely and appealing to your customers. Overt sales pitches are off-putting. Posts that teach, entertain and amaze are always in style.

**4) Expand your audience.** Build your presence by using social media tools like hashtags, tagging and giveaways to attract new customers. Facebook, for example, makes it easy (for a price) for small businesses to "boost" posts and push them out to the demographic of their choosing. Ask for feedback and thoughtfully respond to criticism to create trusting relationships.

**5) Piggyback on other activities.** Take advantage of national events like Small Business Saturday by running your own content in conjunction with them.

The bottom line: Social media is here to stay. Don't miss out on an audience that's ready and willing to connect with your brand.



*Debi Enders (debi.enders@commercebank.com) is vice president, small business banking at Commerce Bank.*

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## Is This Meeting Really Necessary

Do the comments “Why did we have this meeting?” or “What is the point of this meeting?” sound familiar? Instead of conveying important information to our clients or employees, too often we rush to call meetings that turn out to be unnecessary and unproductive.

If we don't know why we need to have a meeting, then we probably should not meet! The definition of an effective meeting is one that brings the decision makers and influencers together at the right time with a well-defined outcome.

Here are five steps to help ensure that every meeting produces the engaging results you need to move your business forward:

- 1) In clear and concise terms, state the purpose of the meeting and the desired outcome.
- 2) Make a list of each attendee and why this person is needed – e.g., knowledge, influence, decision-making, implementation.
- 3) Organize the logistics – e.g., number of attendees, location, equipment, Wi-Fi.
- 4) Create an agenda that is concise, chronological and well-organized, with time allocated for each topic. Allow time for summary and actions review at the end. Distribute the agenda, along with background material, in advance.
- 5) Always start the meeting on time and establish meeting rules – i.e., stay on subject, offer mutual respect in listening and speaking, and solve problems without blame.

So, before you call your next meeting, ask yourself, *Is this meeting really necessary?*

Hosting an effective meeting helps everyone be more productive. When I follow the above steps, I find that participation increases and morale improves. Remember that a successful meeting occurs when those involved agree that the right agenda was addressed by the right people at the right time with the right approach so that the meeting produced the desired result.

James H. Canada is managing partner/CEO for Alliance Technologies LLC, ITEN mentor and author of “Corporate to Entrepreneur: Strategies for Success.” Contact Jim at [james.canada@alliancetechnologiesllc.com](mailto:james.canada@alliancetechnologiesllc.com), 636-734-2337 or [www.alliancetechnologiesllc.com](http://www.alliancetechnologiesllc.com).



# Should You Upgrade to LinkedIn Premium

Considering LinkedIn premium for your business? Here are the costs per person and the pros and cons for each option.

### Business Premium - \$59.99/month

**PROS:** See “everyone” who visits your profile, send 15 InMail messages/month, gain business insights on prospect companies, enjoy unlimited people browsing and the benefits of Job Seeker Premium (high job positioning, learn salary ranges and sought-after skills for positions), plus gain access to LinkedIn Learning courses.

**CONS:** Anonymous profile visitors remain anonymous, 15 InMails are not that many, no access to advanced search filters.

### Sales Navigator - \$64.99/month

**PROS:** See who visited your profile, send 20 InMails/month, enjoy unlimited people browsing plus Job Seeker Premium, take LinkedIn Learning courses and benefit from Lead Builder to create custom lead lists and find decision makers using advanced search filters.

**CONS:** Pricey, anonymous visitors re-

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main anonymous and (in my opinion) its advanced search filters don't always yield optimum results.

### Recruiter Lite - \$99.95/month

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**CONS:** Pricey, anonymous visitors remain anonymous and (in my opinion) its advanced search filters don't always yield

great results.

Prices are higher if you are paying monthly. Team/enterprise features and pricing are available.

So, should you upgrade? Maybe! Try a 30-day free trial through LinkedIn before deciding. ■

Kathy Bernard ([kathy@wiseru.com](mailto:kathy@wiseru.com)), CEO of WiserU.com, is a St. Louis-based LinkedIn expert/trainer who equips businesses to maximize LinkedIn for sales, marketing, or fundraising.

## BUILDING INNER STRENGTH

BY DR. DEB CARLIN

# The Psychology of Business



Define business for yourself in this very moment.

Is it something serious and deeply meaningful? Are the stakes high because of what you do and the outcomes you produce? Is it serious because of the money you need to make? Your perceptions about what constitutes business are important for you to understand because they formulate your perceptions and create your attitude daily.

What's the impact of your mind on your business life? Are your thoughts running you, or are you running them? Most often, we forget that we are the screenwriter, actor, director and producer of our mentality. The psychology of business is merely a reflection of the psychology of

how we operate our life overall.

If you've forgotten the art of fun and happiness, relaxation and daydreaming, your life has become a rugged journey and you will benefit from a routine that takes you into a daily return to a childlike existence where you allow healthy playtime. Seriously.

In some of the most impressive leadership centers, I've found toys inviting the serious to allow their playfulness. It's healthy to resume a once-upon-a-time childlike imagination of fun and simple pleasures. Why resist?

Our work, no matter what we do, offers the opportunity to think with the best parts of our brain, but when we get consumed by it, we get drained and uneasy

and then we lose ourselves into some form of stress, and that leads nowhere happy. It is at that point that we become at risk for unhealthy choices about how to find a release – an innocent drink, simple flirtation, shopping spree. Any one of these can be seemingly harmless but often evolve into habits that lead to trouble if they are escapes.

Intentional play is a solution. Allow it – like a coffee break daily. ■

Deb Carlin is president of Partners In Excellence LLC. Awarded numerous accolades for her leadership, writing, speaking and teaching, she holds an MS in statistical analysis and research methodology and a PhD in psychology, both from Saint Louis University. “Build the Strength Within” was her 11th book. For more information, visit [www.drdebcarlin.com](http://www.drdebcarlin.com).



# Hidden Costs That Are Busting Your Profits

**T**he never-ending quest to boost your company's financial growth and profitability has many obstacles. Some hurdles are obvious but unavoidable, such as increases in the cost of raw materials, or increased tax burdens. Other threats to your profits prove to be less visible. What are the most common profit busters and how can you take action to put your money back where it belongs?

## Taxes

Reviewing tax strategies annually, along with a midyear touch-base, is a good idea. Your banker can provide you some insights on how this might impact your financial position, but your accountant is always a smart place to begin. Some business leaders are surprised to learn that state and local taxes are where the most opportunities exist. Certain states allow tax credits that will reduce the amount of income tax you owe. Oppor-

tunities include credits around renewable energy, historic preservation and even film production. In addition, many cities and counties will offer tax incentives designed to encourage expansion.

## Fraud

An Association of Certified Fraud Examiners study estimates that typical organizations lose an average of 5% of revenue annually due to fraud. They also found that companies with fewer than 100 employees are particularly vulnerable because they are less likely to implement anti-fraud controls that can detect fraud sooner. While your banking partner should have many fraud detection tools in place, the burden of a fraudulent event still rests with you, so it is important to utilize as many preventive tools as possible.

## Operational Inefficiencies

If your company's processes and procedures add up to be as thick as the old

yellow phone book, you may be distracting your employees from delivering on company goals. Conversely, some smaller businesses lack the needed policies and procedures that could help them run a tighter, more profitable shop.

Employee onboarding is a prime example of something that can be either process-heavy or sorely lacking. Some organizations have weeklong orientations. Others consist of showing the employee the location of their desk and the coffee machine, and they're off and running. Most employees would likely agree that the ideal is to strike a balance.

Collection procedures are another common opportunity for improvement. For example, if you have receivables that are accumulating and may go otherwise unpaid, a collection agency could be a wise investment. They may get 30 cents on the dollar, but that is money you might not have other-

wise.

## Employee Turnover

Employee turnover is riddled with hidden costs that may not be something you've factored into overall profitability. The biggest chunk, of course, is the time it takes to hire and train new staff. Could you automate your hiring efforts such as job posting, resume collection and pre-interview questions through an online job site?

## Unprofitable Clients

There are many reasons a once-promising client can turn into a financial drain. Fixing these situations can be one of the most direct ways to positively impact your bottom line. It can be tough to part ways with a client, but the impact can be substantial. ■

*Mark Lawson is Director of Treasury Management for Enterprise Bank & Trust.*

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## A Culture of Better People



The idea that companies are currently in a talent war is an understatement. The reality is that the talent war has been going on forever. The successful companies recognized this a long time ago and have been strengthening their strategies and tactics for years. The best business schools always have great companies recruiting the best students. School boards used to be filled with company executives to ensure that the talent pool would be ready for industry. Steel town executives made sure the local students would be ready to staff the steel mills. They wanted the right people to sustain their success.

Employees must have the right attitude. Hire for the right attitude and cognitive ability first, then train them to do the job, because having someone who is an expert, yet has a bad attitude moves an organization backward. The most important person to focus on is the owner or leader. A leader of a company must emulate all the values of the organization and must continue to develop themselves. The leader must make sure the next level of leadership should be better than themselves; smarter and better qualified. Giving smart people the best opportunities will endear them to the company. Great leaders have enough confidence in themselves and their mission to make sure they hire the best people.

It is not just about having the right person for the job but making sure that the company is filled with the highest caliber at all levels. The first question for every leader should be “who should do it?”, not “what should be done?”. Everything else will work out unless you do not have the right people.

Remember Jim Collin’s powerful statement: **Great vision without great people is irrelevant.**

Jonathan Jones (Jonathan.jones@vistagechair.com or 314-608-0783) is a CEO peer group chair/coach for Vistage International.



# Businesses Play With Fire When They Stay Stuck in the Marketing Past

**A** talented young digital marketer applied for a job at a publishing company and sent samples of his work.

He didn’t get the job, but he got a nice rejection email from the company’s sales manager.

“Thanks very much for sending us samples of your work. You’re very talented,” the sales manager said. “I feel your strength lies in film and digital, and our market responds to print.”

Hmmmm.

I don’t know the sales manager or his market. Maybe, just maybe, his market responds to print and not to digital.

But this sales manager reminds me of lots of marketers I’ve met over the years, marketers who have said:

“I don’t need a website. My customers find me through the Yellow Pages.”

“Email? My customers don’t like email.”

“Social media? That’s only for young people. My market responds to direct mail and phone calls.”

All of these people may as well have said: “I don’t know or understand digital marketing. I’m comfortable with what I know. I’ll stick with that.”

I have nothing against print advertising, direct mail, telephone calls and other “offline” marketing channels — as long as they work. In many cases, they can work. But it’s getting harder.

I also am not one of those guys who says, “You have to try this latest digital marketing channel because ‘everybody’ is killing it.”

Social media, podcasting, paid search email and other digital media channels are not right for everyone.

But I’ve seen too many businesses fall behind because they’re stuck in old ways.

I’m friends with a guy who used to run an envelope business. He was so busy marketing his business the old way,



searching for prospects who wanted to market their businesses the old way that he didn’t notice that email and other digital channels were killing his envelope business. Then it was too late, and he was out of business.

That guy who passed on a website and kept investing in the Yellow Pages? He’s out of business too.

Maybe the sales manager at the publishing house has tried digital marketing. Maybe he has devised great strategies, employed smart tactics and learned that his market truly responds only to print.

But I doubt it.

If I were in the sales manager’s shoes, I would hire that smart young digital

marketer. I would tell that marketer not to dump print altogether. I would encourage that marketer to find ways to use digital channels to complement the print marketing — and vice versa.

I would require the marketer to set goals and measure results. That way, when I say either, “It worked” or “It didn’t work,” I’ll have data to support the claim.

But I’m not that sales manager. All I can do is hope the guy’s still in business five years from now. ■

Tom Ruwitch is the president and founder of MarketVolt, an interactive marketing firm. For more business-building marketing resources by Tom Ruwitch, go to [MarketVolt.com/resources](http://MarketVolt.com/resources).



# What to Do When Your Brand Stops Working

If only we could get in a time machine and go back twenty years. I think that is what my friend was thinking. We had been talking about her role as a marketer for a Midwest-based financial firm. The conversation was about some of the difficulty the organization was facing with its brand. For so long, the brand position had worked. The company had steady growth, and then it stopped working. Or, at least that is what it seemed.

After a couple of strategically valuable acquisitions, her organization was facing challenges that were volatile and complex. The complexity involved issues with the humans from the acquired firms. As much as the mechanics of the acquisitions made sense, the acquired locations suffered: no growth, low morale, high turnover.

Twenty years ago, she would have solved this problem with communications — just tell employees and the world how awesome you are and leverage those communications with advertising.

But my friend knew that we do not live in the world of twenty years ago. And now there is an increased visibility into organizations. That means that a lack of employee alignment and poor customer experiences are more quickly made known to the world — and they are leveraged far more than any manufactured brand communications.

In short: Everyone can see all your insides. Your brand is no longer managing perception rooted in clever communications. Your brand is a natural outcome of your culture. The change you hope to create on your outsides has to start with your insides.

The deepest challenge my friend faced is that even that understanding is not enough. The elements of culture exist at a level that is not easily visible. So the best way she could access them, in their truest forms, is through stories. From ancient Greeks to present-day hip-hop, we are beings driven to seek and understand the



complexities of our lives through stories.

My friend realized that her job as a leader was to create an environment in which people (the beings that she counted on to deliver the brand promise) have the space, time and tools needed to tell stories — to each other and to outside audiences as well.

Maybe you are at the crossroads she was facing, or maybe you are feeling like your brand is stuck. Either way, here are the steps she followed:

**Step One: Craft behavior statements**

Using the abstract values as a framework, begin to create story-based behavior statements. Example: “Do Good,” becomes “Do the next right thing.” This can be accomplished by interrogating employees using the abstract values and asking them when those values are present. What does it look like? Who was involved? You will begin to get stories that have behaviors instead of invisible intentions.

**Step Two: Exchange of stories internally.**

Create a way for humans in your organization to share stories based on the behavior statements. Since behaviors can be observed, you can begin the process of making connections between day-in-day-out work and its significance to the brand and strategic direction of your organizations.

**Step Three: Ritualize the telling of stories.**

To make the process long-lasting, you can use two devices humans understand — rituals and symbols. Make intentional time for people to gather and share behavior-statement-based stories. And you can even badge or recognize the best storytellers or exemplars of your values. This turns mundane meetings into ceremonies recognizing individuals or teams. Let them recognize one another for winning behaviors. ■

Jeremy Nulik ([jeremy@bigwidesky.com](mailto:jeremy@bigwidesky.com)) is evangelist prime at bigwidesky, a human business consultancy, in St. Louis, Mo.

## Unconscious Bias Can Hinder Business Success

Dozens of unconscious biases exist in our workplaces. Bias can reduce trust between team members, stifle performance and limit profitable opportunities. However, businesses can take feasible steps to combat unconscious bias and its effects.

People often rely on assumptions or preferences when they're faced with a lack of information, time or memory. Consider the following example of status quo bias:

An employee presents new project-tracking software to a manager. The software has the potential to make the business 10 percent more efficient. Even so, the manager decides against it, feeling the stress of another round of client meetings beginning soon and reasoning that the business has been profitable so far.

The preference for what has already worked might initially save valuable time and money. However, it could also give competing companies a chance to get ahead. When we revert to our worldview or past experiences — including assumptions about gender, age or race — to make decisions, it can hurt our chances of success.

Fortunately, current research offers proven solutions that allow us to design our environments, processes and systems for greater equality. At 7:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 21, as part of The Bridge, the Brown Smith Wallace women's initiative event series, Siri Chilazi will present “What Works: Practical Tools to Combat Unconscious Bias in the Workplace.”

Chilazi will discuss the latest insights from behavioral research and show how they can help us close inequality gaps through improved talent management and inclusive culture. The event is free to attend, but registration is required. Sign up at [brownsmithwallace.com/TheBridge](http://brownsmithwallace.com/TheBridge). ■

Karen Stern, CPA, ([ksstern@bswllc.com](mailto:ksstern@bswllc.com)), partner in charge, Brown Smith Wallace Entrepreneurial Services Group, provides tax and accounting services for companies ranging from startups to \$20 million in revenue.



# Business Process Improvement With Business Manager 365

BY SCOTT M. LEWIS

As Business Manager 365 continued to grow and expand throughout our business, it really drove our continued business process improvement practices. It also showed us why these processes are increasingly important to the long-term success of our business.

It wasn't about how we thought the business was going to be run; it became about how our business was actually running and making us profitable or not. We wanted to know from the team in the field, accounting, project management and others how the business was running.

It soon became a challenge to solve real business issues with automation and software to streamline and manage every aspect of the business. It was critically important to know and understand the challenges that we all face when running a growing service-based business — from the biggest corporate-wide issues down to the smallest individual inefficient things that cost us time and money and impact our ability to serve our customers.

It has been interesting to work with business owners all over the country. It is sometimes surprising how little some owners know about how their business actually operates. This is not a negative. It is simply the evolutionary process of business mixed with individuals and the processes they go through to become successful or complete a job.

Business Manager 365 has over 18 years of development and practical application, with ongoing development focused on continuously observing how people work in a service-based business. Through our development processes, we have tried to break down these work processes to the lowest common point and dissect every task or process that employees go through in every operational department. Once we have broken down the tasks and processes, we can try to focus on how to improve them. This includes streamlining workflow, increasing information sharing, and using automation and business intelligence to reduce

mistakes and eliminate duplication.

Service-based businesses are difficult to run and manage because they are primarily human-based businesses, both internally and externally. Add to that lots of logistical moving parts that can increase the complexity business operations tremendously. Now mix the human aspect of running the business with solid data collection and transition that information into making good business decisions. It will come down to how to quantify the data and analytics of how your business is operating. Managing data and instituting a process improvement methodology are critical to the long-term success and growth of the company.

In a service-based business, where does this data come from? In most cases, the answer is nowhere. Or it is an accumulation of four or five separate software packages that do not work together to solve real business problems, such as having a data-driven work process that manages escalations, scheduling, project management, human resources, time and attendance, and other areas of the business that may be affected by a simple change in the active data.

When you look at data and what it does for your business, something as simple as someone calling in sick can have a huge impact on the activities of the day. What job duties were they supposed to have done that day? What's the impact on special projects? What can be rescheduled? What has to be reassigned because it can't wait for the next day? Then there are all the back-end accounting processes of managing a simple sick day. This is one very simple example of the complexities of running a service-based business.

When you think of software, what is it really supposed to do for your business? We all hope it creates an opportunity to improve work processes. Streamline operations. Reduce costs through process improvement. And so on.

But how do you measure that result? When measuring return on investment, the basic formula is (Gain on Investment



Minus Cost of Investment) Divided by Cost of Investment. However, in service-based businesses, which are heavily driven by the human cost, this can be a little more difficult to calculate. It involves the soft dollars of increased productivity, improved time management and learning about behavioral issues faster, which allows you to correct sooner. It also involves capturing intellectual customer knowledge and employee knowledge to reduce future time lost and discovering what you should have already known about your customers.

Business Manager 365 has grown out of solving these and many other real business issues over the last 18 years of development. Now it is being made available to other service-based businesses with the hopes that it will empower others to grow and manage their businesses to a higher level. ■

Scott Lewis is the president and CEO of Winning Technologies Group of Companies, which includes Liberty One Software. Scott has more than 30 years of experience in the technology industry and is a nationally recognized speaker and author. He has worked with businesses to empower them to use technology to improve work processes, increase productivity and reduce costs. Winning Technologies' goal is to work with companies on the selection, implementation, management and support of technology resources. Learn more about Winning Technologies at [www.winningtech.com](http://www.winningtech.com) or by calling 877-379-8279.

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## Best in Reliability

Regardless of the project, the businesses you choose to partner with must follow through on commitments. The following companies were voted the most reliable in St. Louis. Make sure you check out the **Awards** page at [www.sbmon.com](http://www.sbmon.com) to stay up to date with other **Best in Business** nominations for 2019.

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American Eagle Credit Union	314.771.7700 ameaglecu.org	● 1001 Lynch St. St. Louis, MO 63118
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ATB Technologies	314.690.2705 atb-tech.com	● 14567 N. Outer Forty Rd., #525 Chesterfield, MO 63017
Baird Kurtz & Dodson	314.231.5544 bkd.com	● 501 N. Broadway, #600 St. Louis, MO 63102
Beanstalk Web Solutions	314.736.4430 beanstalkwebsolutions.com	● 54 W. Moody Ave. Webster Groves, MO 63119
CertifiedNets	314.292.6260 certified-nets.com	● 1353 Baur Rd. St. Louis, MO 63132
Cole & Company P.C.	314.892.6700 cole-cpa.com	● 5518 Telegraph Rd., #201 St. Louis, MO 63129
GadellNet	314.942.7485 gadellnet.com	● 1520 S. Vandeventer Ave. St. Louis, MO 63110
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Parkside Financial Bank & Trust	314.290.8600 pfbt.com	● 8112 Maryland Ave., #101 Clayton, MO 63105
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### Chad Richter

HeplerBroom Law Firm

Years of experience: 5

What are the biggest challenges facing business owners when it comes to estate planning?

One of the biggest challenges some business owners face in the estate planning process is determining who will carry on the business, which often leads to procrastination. Instead, business owners need to understand the most important aspect of estate planning is having a plan in place that will facilitate a smooth transition and minimize costs regardless of who will carry on the business.

What's the No. 1 piece of advice you would give to business owners when it comes to estate planning?

There are two people you need to trust: your attorney and your personal representative. Without proper guidance and the right individuals to carry out your estate and business succession plan, the administration of your estate may be derailed leaving your beneficiaries the gift of headaches and litigation instead of the wealth and opportunities intended for them.

What's the biggest mistake you've seen business owners make, and what advice would you give to solve the problem?

Business owners fail to implement training and transition plans to provide for an orderly business continuation. After the owner's death in these cases, their spouse is left to deal with the business without any knowledge of its value or the ability to run the business even in the short term. As such the estate will receive a substantially discounted price for the business.

Where does your motivation to help businesses come from?

My background in accounting and experience in trust and estate litigation, as well as issues encountered in trust and estate administration, drives me to provide business owners with informed and prudent estate and business succession plans to minimize taxes and avoid litigation costs. There is nothing more unfortunate than a business failing or facing financial hardships due to poor planning.



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Biermann Accounting Services, LLC	636.225.6555 biermannaccounting.com	● 1799 A Smizer Station Rd. Fenton, MO 63026
CBIZ	314.692.2249 cbiz.com	● 625 Maryville Centre Dr., #200 St. Louis, MO 63141
Cornerstone Employer Solutions	314.222.5770 cornerstoneemploy.com	● 721 Emerson Rd., #500 St. Louis, MO 63141
Eckelkamp & Associates CPA's P.C.	314.849.7555 eacfo.com	● 9109 Watson Rd., #300 St. Louis, MO 63126
Heartland Payroll Services	314.709.7006	● 757 Spirit of St. Louis Blvd. Chesterfield, MO 63005
HireLevel	618.655.1212 hirelevel.com	● 5214 Chain of Rocks Rd. Edwardsville, IL 62025
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Rickhoff & Associates	618.632.1994 rickhoff.com	● 1107 Frontage Rd. O'Fallon, IL 62269
Sederburg & Associates	636.587.0570 taxaccountantsmo.com	● 3023 North St. Peters Parkway St. Peters, MO 63376
STL Tax	314.645.1614 stltax.com	● 8128 Gravois Rd. St. Louis, MO 63123
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## CREATING SOME LUCK

**What does it take to succeed in business?** A combination of hard work, knowledge, persistence, dedication, luck and a great contact list. We here at SBM can't help you with the luck part, but we can help you with the contact list.

We know that all it takes sometimes is an introduction to the right person at the right time and things can just come together. That is why we have decided to help you stack the odds in your favor by compiling this list you hold in your hands (or read on the screen if that is your thing). With the 100 St. Louisans to Know to Succeed in Business, you now have access to the kind of people that will get you some of the needed perspective that is crucial to success.

The more of these people that you choose to get to know, the better the chances you have of creating your own luck. **People like Jeanet Wade, featured on our cover. Wade was so impressed with the book, "Traction," by Gino Wickman and its business operating system, EOS, she became a certified implementer to teach the system to business owners. Adopting the system has improved her clients' top line revenues by an average of 20.4%.** "This system is a life-changing thing," Wade said. "It fundamentally changes people's spirits and their energy. It's transformative."

The most fun part of this feature is getting all the names and faces of people like Wade in one place. How were these individuals chosen? A group of community leaders identified the individuals for the edition. They are all key executives, financiers, notable achievers, connectors and other business-community leaders. The judges chose the individuals based on their contributions to the area businesses and the overall business community.

It is not difficult to come up with 100 names and personalities for this list. What is difficult is paring it down to 100. That being said, we know that there is someone that you feel should be on this list. Someone who is a no-brainer ... an influencer who has meant so much to so many business owners. Please send me an email ([ron@sbmon.com](mailto:ron@sbmon.com)). Let me know the name, title, company and a brief (150 word) description as to why that person is someone that St. Louisans should know. Happy connecting -

Ron Ameln  
President, St. Louis Small Business Monthly

### Carlton Adams

*Express Scripts*



Carlton Adams is the vice president of pharma revenue and invoicing at Express Scripts. Adams manages all aspects of the firm's pharma invoicing program, which includes

strategic planning, operations and auditing. As a skilled leader, he works closely with associates to improve engagement and optimize performance. Adams is involved in the community through several nonprofits, and he has worked with companies of all sizes to advance diversity.

### David Berger

*St. Louis-Jefferson Solid Waste Management District*



David Berger is the executive director at the St. Louis-Jefferson Solid Waste Management District.

### Kathy Bernard

*WiserU*



Kathy Bernard is the CEO of WiserU LLC as well as a gifted speaker, LinkedIn expert/trainer, author and career coach. She trains groups and individuals to maximize LinkedIn

for sales, marketing, recruiting or job searching. Bernard is also a leading speaker on getting job seekers into high-paying careers and is the creator of the groundbreaking WiserU Career System to land and excel at high-paying jobs. Before launching WiserU, Bernard was an award-winning communications leader, racking up 27 awards with Enterprise Holdings, CBS Radio, Caleres and the Equipment Dealers Association. She has personally career-coached more than 1,000 job seekers, reached over 1.4 million people through her popular WiserUTips.com blog and led more than 500 weekly webinars on JobTransition.TV.

### Matt Badler

*Twain Financial Partners*



Matt Badler is a co-founder and managing director of Twain. Badler focuses on new opportunities and corporate strategy while overseeing the investments

and corporate accounting departments. Before life at Twain, Badler was a VP of U.S. Bancorp Community Development Corp. (USBCDC) and served in many roles within the organization. He spent his final two years at USBCDC working on the new business development team, which led to the formation of Twain. Before working at USBCDC, Badler worked for an investment bank and a hedge fund. He is on the boards of Arch Grants and the Saint Louis Fashion Fund and is a member of YPO St. Louis.

## Wendy Berry

Cottleville/Weldon Spring  
Chamber of Commerce



Wendy Berry is the executive director of the Cottleville-Weldon Spring Chamber of Commerce. A small but powerful business organization in St. Charles County, the chamber helps business-

es of all sizes interested in the Cottleville-Weldon Spring business atmosphere. The group helps individuals and businesses by creating networking and professional development opportunities.

## Tasha Borglum

Moneta



Tasha Borglum is a financial adviser with Moneta Group. Borglum earned her bachelor's degree in finance, with an accounting minor, and her MBA with a concentration in finance from Missouri State

University. While in school, she worked as an investment assistant at Central Trust and Investment Co. Her role there helped prepare her for the next phase of her life when she joined Moneta Group as a client service manager in 2011. Constantly pursuing opportunities to continue her education and expand her expertise, Borglum earned her certified financial planner designation in 2013 and was promoted to adviser in 2014. She's been active in local charities, including serving as a board member for Kids In The Middle.

## Harvey Brandvein

Anheuser-Busch Employee's  
Credit Union



Harvey Brandvein is the vice president of wealth management for Anheuser-Busch Employee's Credit Union, Purina Credit Union and American Eagle Credit Union. He is responsible for

wealth and insurance product positioning; driving new product development; enhancing the strategies, performance and positioning of wealth initiatives; managing third-party relationships; and administering and developing the various financial products that are offered to membership.

## Scott Brothers

U.S. Bank



Scott Brothers is vice president-portfolio review officer at U.S. Bank. Brothers has more than 20 years of experience in local and nationwide commercial lending and a

deep knowledge of the complete finance process. Owners of businesses of all sizes routinely contact Brothers to discuss ways to make their enterprises thrive.

## Dale Brown

Botz Deal & Co. P.C.



Dale C. Brown is the president of Botz, Deal & Co. P.C., a firm that provides bookkeeping, payroll, QuickBooks and tax services for small

## ADRIAN BRACY

YWCA OF GREATER SAINT LOUIS

Adrian E. Bracy began as the chief executive officer for YWCA Metro St. Louis in August 2009. Although she moved here from Arizona to assume the position, she is no stranger to St. Louis, having previously worked for more than a decade as an executive for the St. Louis Rams. She left to become chief financial officer for the Arizona Cardinals in 2007.

Bracy has more than 20 years of senior management finance experience with professional sports teams that include the St. Louis Rams, Arizona Cardinals and Miami Dolphins/Joe Robbie Stadium. Her strong background in financial management is complimented by her talents for overseeing long-term business objectives, human resources, risk management and building strong relationships with local communities. She has served on a number of nonprofit boards, including that of YWCA Metro St. Louis.

What brings her back to St. Louis is what she says is her calling: "to inspire and make a difference in the lives of women and girls." The YWCA mission, "eliminating racism and empowering women," is the right fit at the right time in her career and life.

Bracy has received many awards throughout her career, including the African-American Women of Distinction Award, the Black Enterprise 50 Most Powerful African Americans in Sports Award, the Black Enterprise 50 Most Powerful Black Women in Business Award, the St. Louis Business Journal's Most Influential Business Women Award and the YWCA Leaders of Distinction Award in Corporate Management.

She is a lifetime member of the National Association of Black Accountants and the National Black MBA Association. She graduated from Morgan State University in Baltimore with a degree in accounting and has a master's degree in business administration from Nova Southeastern University. She also has completed the Harvard Business School and Stanford Graduate School of Business executive leadership programs.



## Jason Brown

Bank of Franklin County



Jason Brown is a commercial lender at the Bank of Franklin County. Bank of Franklin County operates four locations; a mortgage subsidiary, Franklin Mortgage Co.; and

an investment management subsidiary, Missouri Valley Wealth Management. The bank primarily serves northern Franklin, southern Warren and southern St. Charles counties.

businesses, home businesses, nonprofits and governmental agencies. The company also specializes in auditing, compliance, and consulting services for companies ranging from startups to \$200 million entities. He joined the firm in May 1979 and became a partner in 1987. Brown's client responsibilities include working with privately owned businesses and their owners, providing tax planning and preparation services, and assisting clients with buying and selling businesses. He has considerable experience with construction contractors, manufacturers and medical professionals. Brown is a past president of the St. Peters Chamber of Commerce and the St. Peters Rotary Club. He is also active in many other civic boards and community endeavors. He and his family live in St. Peters.

## Robert Browning

*Armstrong Teasdale*



Robert Browning is a member of the tax, public finance, and trust and estates practice areas for the law firm Armstrong Teasdale. Public and private companies of all sizes, in a broad range

of industries, look to him for strategic federal, state, international and local tax advice. Browning routinely represents corporate and individual clients before the IRS, before state taxing authorities and in U.S. Tax Court. For newly emerging businesses, he provides strategies for growth, governance and structure including choice of entity. Then, as businesses mature, he counsels them regarding mergers and acquisitions, dissolution, and valuation analysis. Browning also assists in complex tax and wealth planning, estate planning, and trust administration matters. He develops and implements solutions for high-net-worth clients' complex tax issues, including creating the structures necessary to affect their wealth planning objectives.

## Cathy Campbell

*Providence Bank*



Cathy Campbell is senior vice president of commercial banking at Providence Bank. In this role, Campbell is responsible for originating and maintaining commercial banking

relationships in St. Louis, St. Charles and the surrounding areas. Campbell has over 30 years of banking and lending experience including retail, commercial and private banking. She is a lifetime resident of St. Louis and currently serves on the board of Epworth Children & Family Services.



**ORVIN KIMBROUGH**  
MIDWEST BANKCENTRE

Typically, when a bank's board of directors seeks a new CEO to run its organization, it typically looks for someone who has past bank leadership experience. Not Midwest BankCentre. Last year when the organization sought a new CEO, it didn't go looking for your typical banker. Instead, it wanted someone who could take the organization into the future and help differentiate it from the other 60-plus banks in the region.

Enter Orvin Kimbrough.

Kimbrough, former president and CEO of the United Way of Greater St. Louis, joined the bank as its CEO earlier this year. He is the region's only African-American bank CEO.

"It is natural for organizations to look for someone with banking experience, but the world we live in is changing at rapid clip," Kimbrough said. "Everything is moving so fast. What the bank saw in me is that I'm a relationship guy and I understand how to build exceptional teams, set strategy and I understand how to inspire operational excellence. The bank saw those things in me, but more importantly, the bank is confident in the individuals, who are lifetime bankers, who are here. We have a tremendous

set of lifetime bankers. Combined with their industry knowledge and my entrepreneurial bent, we are seeking to evolve as an organization and to be more competitive."

Kimbrough hopes to capitalize on the same success he had at the United Way. Under his leadership, the United Way of Greater St. Louis advanced from the fifth to the largest United Way in the country in terms of revenue and impact. Part of Kimbrough's success at the United Way came from his ability to build quality, long-term relationships and partnerships within the community.

He hopes to do the same with Midwest BankCentre. His goals for the bank include diversity and diversification.

"We are going to build a profitable and socially conscious bank of the future where diversity and inclusion are a key part of our competitive advantage," he said. "It is not a box to be checked. The products and services we provide will continue to diversify to reflect the broad community that we serve. We want to create the conditions for people to dream big and rise together. We are building the bank of the future."

## Mark Caplinger

*Argent Capital Management*



As chief operating officer at Argent Capital Management, Mark Caplinger is responsible for overseeing the marketing, client service, compliance and operations

functions of the firm. Before joining Argent, Caplinger was the chief investment officer of Mariner Wealth Advisors, where he developed and implemented investment programs for the firm and its clients. Before that, he was with Summit Strategies Group in St. Louis as a senior consultant responsible for some of the firm's largest institutional clients. Caplinger serves on multiple committees of the Ronald McDonald House Charities of St. Louis, and he is an advisory board member of the University of Missouri Trulaske execMBA Program.

## Byron Caskey

*Wells Fargo*



Byron Caskey is a financial adviser with Wells Fargo. He works with a select group of clients to help them build, manage, protect and transition their wealth. He takes

a comprehensive approach by advising on the four pillars of wealth management: investing, liability management, risk management and estate planning strategies. Caskey began in the financial industry in 2008 after graduating from Webster University with a degree in broadcast journalism. However, he chose a career in financial services after the Great Recession affected his family.

## Allen Cavedine

AmerenUE



Allen Cavedine is the manager of cybersecurity vulnerability and threat management and engagement at Ameren. Cavedine has been involved in cybersecurity for Ameren since

2017. Previously he worked in information technology and cybersecurity for Boeing for 10 years.

## James Claywell

Claywell Asset Management, LLC



Financial adviser Jim Claywell helps his clients navigate the world of finances and gets them engaged in the process. With over 32 years in the wealth management business, Clay-

well has an extensive background in the financial planning industry. He's owned an investment brokerage firm, spent over 11 years serving clients at Edward Jones and now operates his own investment boutique, affiliated with Raymond James, as a fiduciary adviser and owner. He has expertise in retirement planning, education planning, strategic asset allocation and insurance and works with clients to develop customized strategies that will best suit their needs and goals.

## Clayton Clark

Big Rush Marketing



Clayton Clark is the co-founder of Big Rush Marketing, a digital advertising firm. Clayton fell into the world of digital marketing while working as a

reporter/anchor for KMPH Fox 26 in Fresno, California. After the birth of his daughter, Clayton left television and moved back to his hometown of St. Louis to take a full-time position managing and honing his marketing skills. His experiences include managing large-scale digital advertising campaigns on multiple platforms and social media management. He also sits on the executive board for KEEN St. Louis, helping the organization give kids with physical and developmental disabilities the opportunity to play.

## Dave Collett

RubinBrown

David Collett is a partner in RubinBrown's assurance services and manufacturing and distribution services groups.

His previous experiences and specialties include several large multinational audits acting as a member of the lead engagement team, audits of internal control over financial reporting, income taxes, revenue recognition, stock-based compensation, derivatives, acquisitions and purchase accounting, restructurings, financial statement consolidations and SEC reporting. He has additional experience performing audits on financial information that is published under International Financial Reporting Standards.



## TARA KINNEY

ATOMIC REVENUE

All of Tara Kinney's previous positions had one thing in common: problem solving.

So it shouldn't surprise anyone that her current company, Atomic Revenue, has become a success by solving clients' business problems.

Atomic Revenue is a revenue operations company that specializes in aligning clients' business marketing, sales and customer efforts to drive revenue and profit.

"I've always been a problem solver," Kinney said. "Someone once told me: Sales are really the ability to match a solution to a problem."

Kinney, a Colorado native, moved to St. Louis 10 years ago, sight unseen, after her husband's financial services position was transferred to the area. She purchased the majority interest in Algorithemics in 2015 and rebranded the company as Atomic Revenue. The company's focus on solving business issues was a perfect fit for her experience and skills.

"While other people focus on marketing and sales, customer service, brand and all of the things that

companies are buying and hiring for, we focus on the outcomes that all of those investments are trying to achieve," said Kinney. "We focus on helping companies diagnose and resolve and optimize the way they make money through lead generation and sales conversion and customer advocacy."

Kinney said the stumbling block



for many business owners comes from not looking at revenue holistically. "They are looking at pieces of it (revenue)," she said. "Parts don't make great results. Atomic Revenue looks at how it all fits together. You can have all wonderful pieces to a watch, but if they are not put together properly, it still won't keep time. We break

**"We are redefining the way businesses grow and manage their growth. We're looking to be the future standard by which people look at the work they are doing to produce revenue."**

down the silos so people stop trying to blame one part of their operations and instead look at how all the parts fit together to produce the results."

Kinney is excited about the company's future. In just a few years, the firm has grown to 27 employees scattered around the country.

Said Kinney: "We are redefining the way businesses grow and manage their growth. We're looking to be the future standard by which people look at the work they are doing to produce revenue."

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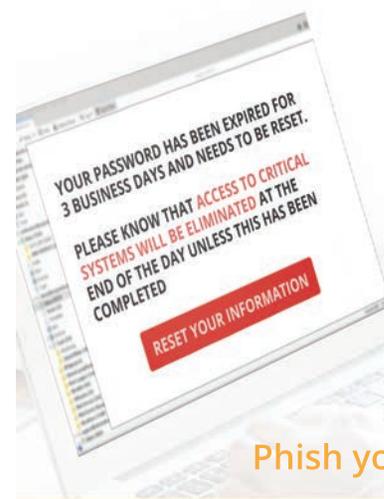
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## Mike Conway

*Acı Plastics, Inc.*

Mike Conway is the COO at ACI Plastics Inc. Since 1967, ACI has become a source for plastic supply and fabrication. ACI enjoys a number of long-term relationships with retailer and fixture manufacturers. The company is based in St. Louis and has four production locations around the country and six sales locations.

## Jim Curran

*Hays Companies of St. Louis*



Jim Curran is senior vice president of Hays Cos. Curran brings over 20 years of experience in employee benefits and insurance consulting and in employee motivation and performance improvement. Before joining Hays, he served in a business development and consulting role with a large national firm where he was responsible for new business generation through myriad disciplines, including employee benefits, commercial insurance, human resource outsourcing, payroll and human capital services.

Before joining Hays, he served in a business development and consulting role with a large national firm where he was responsible for new business generation through myriad disciplines, including employee benefits, commercial insurance, human resource outsourcing, payroll and human capital services.

## Kathy Duck

*O'Fallon Chamber of Commerce*



Kathy Duck is the president and CEO of the O'Fallon (Missouri) Chamber of Commerce & Industries. As president and CEO, Duck's role is to build and implement strate-

gies to strengthen the business community in O'Fallon and surrounding areas. She also focuses on collaborative efforts with neighboring communities to enhance the quality of life in St. Charles County. Duck's previous professional experience includes serving as executive director of small business for the Tulsa Regional Chamber of Commerce in Oklahoma.

## Dwight Erdbuegger

*Cass Commercial Bank*



Dwight Erdbuegger is president of Cass Commercial Bank. He joined the bank as president in July 2018. Erdbuegger has more than 30 years of commercial banking experience

and is actively involved in the St. Louis community. Previously, he was chairman of the equipment finance subsidiary of Commerce Bank. He was also the chief administrative officer for Commerce Bank East Group. He has been involved with Habitat for Humanity and also previously served on the board of directors of FOCUS St. Louis and the Cultural Festivals organization.

## Elizabeth Farmer

*Farmer & Farley, LLC*

Elizabeth L. Farmer is the principal of Farmer & Farley, LLC. The firm, which was founded in May of 2003,

provides complete tax services as well as financial statement preparation, financial projections, cash flow management, and business development planning. During her career as a Certified Public Accountant, Farmer has built a reputation as an expert in tax and business consulting for self-employed businesses and owners of closely held corporations.



During her career as a Certified Public Accountant, Farmer has built a reputation as an expert in tax and business consulting for self-employed businesses and owners of closely held corporations.

## Allison Friedman

*Graybar Electric Company, Inc.*



Allison Friedman is a talent acquisition leader at Graybar Electric Co. Inc., an industrial and electrical supply distributor. Friedman's focus is to develop and lead the overall recruitment strategy at Graybar. She evaluates, implements and improves talent acquisition processes, tools and technologies for increased business success.

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## William Gavin

*Gavin Law Firm*



William Gavin is CEO and managing attorney at Gavin Law Firm LLC. The practice focuses on the litigation of occupational disease claims of railroad employees and the litigation of other

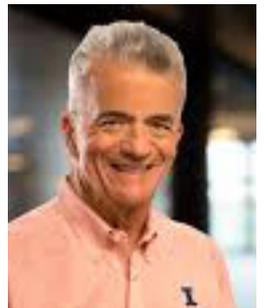
personal injury claims in the areas of toxic substances, products liability, medical malpractice, gas explosions, motor vehicle collisions and general negligence. Gavin has been a volunteer at the YMCA of Southwest Illinois and the Gateway Region YMCA since the 1970s, serving in many positions, from a lifesaving and first aid instructor to chairman of the board of directors.

## Mark Goldenberg

*Goldenberg Heller & Antognoli*

Mark Goldenberg is the founder and managing partner of Goldenberg Heller & Antognoli, a firm that specializes in mesothelioma, personal injury, commercial law, class actions, estate and trust law, and intellectual property law. After becoming a certified public accountant, Goldenberg

decided to attend law school and combine his accounting and legal background to serve clients. He has practiced law for over a quarter of a century with a concentration in commercial and business transactions and litigation, estate planning, tax law, and class action litigation.



## Teri Greige

*Powered by Hope*



Teri Greige is the author of "Powered by Hope: The Teri Greige Story." The book is a poignant and inspiring story of Grieger's triumph over alcoholism and cancer. Readers

discover how her faith, perseverance and determination propelled her from a dire diagnosis to the finish line at an Ironman triathlon and how she continues to inspire millions of people around the world! Grieger has motivated and inspired many business owners and leaders throughout the St. Louis area with her help and guidance.

## Danielle Grubbs

*Cushman & Wakefield*

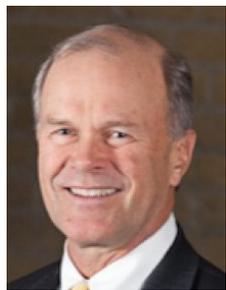


Danielle Grubbs is a director at Cushman & Wakefield, a commercial real estate services company. Grubbs represents local and global clients as a member of the

Bazoian/Mosby team. Her areas of specialization include tenant representation, project leasing, property valuation, project management and market analysis.

## John Haffenreffer

Stifel Bank & Trust



John Haffenreffer is the president and chief credit officer at Stifel Bank & Trust. Haffenreffer, a native of Boston and a Dartmouth College graduate, moved to St. Louis in 1976. He started his banking career at

Centerre Bank in 1979 and joined Southwest Bank in 1989. Haffenreffer formerly was president of the Board of Commissioners of Tower Grove Park and is active in Habitat for Humanity.

## Kelly Hager

Arras Women



Kelly Hager is the CEO and executive producer of Arras Women. Hager is a lifelong resident of the St. Louis area whose parents co-owned the well-known family business Library Ltd.

Bookstore. In 2005

she founded The Kelly Hager Group, a local real estate firm. After a near-death experience in 2010, Hager battled through her adversity and launched her second corporation, Live Team Life. This company encompasses international keynote speaking, business consulting, development and the production of a documentary series, "Arras Women," discussing women's initiatives and celebrating the lives of women who have gone from ordinary to extraordinary.



**WILLIAM POWELL JR**  
CEDGE SOFTWARE CONSULTANTS

**W**hen William Powell Jr. sits down with a startup entrepreneur to help them grow their enterprise, the first question he asks is: What is your plan for the next five to seven years?

"Businesses need to have a strategy that is focused on the long term," Powell said. "Many startups go out of business within the first three to five years primarily because they don't have a strategy for long-term viability of their companies. They only focus on short-term goals and objectives. What I try to do is encourage them and guide them on the importance of creating a strategic plan for five to seven years. It has been my experience that more companies will be successful if they focus on that long-term viability. Then the challenge is creating a business process inside the company that focuses on those goals and objectives that will lead them to long-term revenue streams."

Powell is the chief strategy officer of CEdge Software Consultants. He's not only helped grow the IT consulting firm but has also become an invaluable mentor to many small and large busi-

nesses within the St. Louis region.

His wisdom and mentorship are consistently sought-after by corporate leaders in the areas of business strategy, business development, operations management and personnel management. His ability to provide concrete advice to corporate executives has resulted in many successes for regional businesses.

Powell, a U.S. Air Force veteran, uses his vast experiences to help guide and mentor area business leaders. During his time in the Air Force, Powell ran military airports, spending most of his time living in 14 different countries. When he retired, he started attending college, eventually earning his doctorate at the age of 56 and working as a COO in corporate America.

Powell said he enjoys giving back and sharing his knowledge with area companies. "I really enjoy the challenge of taking a company from a low revenue base and then building that company up so they are more self-sufficient and they don't have to rely on investors so much," Powell said. "They can rely on their revenue stream to do the things that they want."

## David Hamilton

Hamilton Weber LLC



David Hamilton is a partner in the law firm Hamilton Weber LLC. Hamilton concentrates his practice in commercial and general business litigation in federal and state courts. A significant portion of his

practice is also devoted to representing local municipalities as well as serving as a mediator to assist parties in reaching an acceptable settlement of their dispute.

## Mitch Hancock

100th Monkey



Mich Hancock is the founder and owner of 100th Monkey, a social media marketing company. Hancock's company creates, develops and manages an active and

engaging social media presence for both B2B and B2C clients. Hancock is also a sought-after speaker. She is known for giving seminars and workshops to organizations and associations, including the Olin School of Business at Washington University, and she hosts the weekly podcast "MichMash," available on iTunes. Hancock is also executive director and co-founder of TEDxGatewayArch, an innovative and thought-provoking organization devoted to "ideas worth spreading."

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Congratulations to Scott Malin, named one of Small Business Monthly's "Top 100 St. Louisans to Know to Succeed in Business." Scott is a Deputy Managing Partner, on Lathrop Gage's Executive Committee and a member of the Wealth Strategies practice team. Scott advises individuals on the preservation and transfer of wealth in a tax-efficient manner; and business owners on ownership traditions and management matters. He also remains actively engaged in many legal and civic associations in the St. Louis region. We're glad to know him!

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The choice of a lawyer is an important decision and should not be made based solely upon advertisements. Lathrop Gage LLP, 7701 Forsyth Blvd., Suite 500, Clayton, MO 63105. For more information, contact Bennett Keller at 314.613.2800.

## James Heffner

*Danna McKittrick, P.C.*



James Heffner is a principal with Danna McKittrick PC's transactional practice group, concentrating on banking and finance, corporate, and real estate law. Danna McKittrick is a full-

service St. Louis law firm providing legal representation throughout the Midwest.

## Kevin Heneghan

*New Frontier Bank*



Kevin Heneghan is the president, CEO and senior lender at New Frontier Bank. Founded in 1999, the bank was founded with the goal of delivering a local banking option that provides

the best financial services for residents and small businesses in the St. Charles County region. Before joining New Frontier Bank, Heneghan was president/CEO of Superior Bank.

## John Herber

*RubinBrown*



John Herber is the chairman and managing partner of RubinBrown, a certified public accounting and business consulting firm. As a partner, he serves clients in the manufacturing

and distribution industries. His consulting experience includes strategic planning and individual, business and estate tax planning.

## Anne Murphy Hill

*RAHILL Capital LLC*



Anne Murphy Hill is president of RAHILL Capital, which works with property owners and developers who are looking for a cost-effective, streamlined process for securing fund-

ing. Hill brings finance, construction and lending expertise to her position and over 15 years of experience partnering with building owners to identify solutions for their facility needs. Her expertise combines project development, construction, energy efficiency and financing. Before working in the construction and energy efficiency industry, Hill was a management consultant with Deloitte Consulting in San Francisco, specializing in operational and cost efficiency for health care organizations.

## Tracy Howren

*UMB Bank*



Tracy Howren is the vice president and commercial real estate (CRE) officer at UMB Bank. She joined the bank in 2016 to work with the commercial lending team in the St.

Louis area and to expand its reach into the CRE space. As a volunteer, Howren has donated time with Gateway Housing First, whose mission is to provide safe, affordable housing to individuals with a wide range of complex disorders and life situations who struggle to secure or maintain housing. She also spends time working with CREW-St. Louis, which is a networking and professional development organization that aims to transform the commercial real estate industry by advancing women.

## JAKE RENFRO

*1904LABS*

When large enterprises in the St. Louis area are looking for more innovative, specialized software and data solutions, they can either hire technology staff to build those solutions or engage with a trusted vendor to help them. However, tapping into the most talented technology employees is no easy task in the current environment, which makes building solutions internally a challenge.

This is where 1904labs comes in.

1904labs, which launched three years ago, helps some of the world's largest companies innovate further, bringing them the nimbleness of a startup without the challenges or delays associated with building new teams internally. The company can rapidly develop specialized software and data solutions — everything from a proof-of-concept to a ready-to-deploy solution.

"We think of ourselves as a guide," said Jake Renfro, director of business development at 1904labs. "We help IT executives accomplish things they had previously thought impossible, working with them as a trusted advisor."

The name of the company is derived from the 1904 World's Fair, which was held in St. Louis and brought together millions of people to discover the world's latest achievements in technology, fine arts, manu-

facturing, science, civics, foreign policy, and education. 1904labs helps larger enterprises in the area discover the region's vibrant technology community and the problem-solving skills this community brings.

"One problem we set out to solve was how to unlock the power of the startup-minded community who are hesitant to make a move to a large enterprise," Renfro said. "We built our company to be attractive to the startup community, promoting their talent, which is organically focused on modern software and data solutions, and well suited to solve the problems large enterprises need to solve."

As the director of business development, Renfro spends most of his time working with technology leaders in the community, discussing what problems they're trying to solve and determining how 1904labs can help.

"I enjoy seeing the change in our clients mental model as they go from thinking something is impossible to getting it done. It is the look on their face when they realize they will get there, that is really rewarding for me."



## Tracy James

*Legal Services Of Eastern Missouri's Community Economic Development Program*



Tracy James is the managing attorney for the Legal Services of Eastern Missouri's Community Economic Development Microenterprise Program. Under the program,

the organization provides free civil legal assistance to entrepreneurs, small businesses and nonprofits. For nonprofits, the organization represents those who serve and support low-income communities. The services the organization provides include business formation, employment issues, contracts, trademarks, copyrights and trade secrets, commercial leases, real estate purchases, and tax issues.

**William James**  
BKD, LLP



William James is a transfer pricing partner at BKD LLP, a firm that provides tax, audit and consulting services. James leads a national group of transfer pricing practitioners, located in multiple BKD offices, who develop, document and defend clients' transfer pricing arrangements. He also serves as the global chairman of Praxity's Transfer Pricing Expert Working Group, which is responsible for new business generation, technical oversight and management of transfer pricing projects.

**Erin Joy**  
Black Dress Circle



A strategic consultant, trusted confidant, and straightforward advisor, Erin Joy has made it her life's mission to provide female business owners with the resources, services, and support they need to be successful in business and life. She is founder and CEO of Black Dress Circle®, a facilitated, member-driven entrepreneur roundtable program where women business owners discuss issues, share experiences, frame decisions, and leverage collective knowledge alongside others who understand the unique challenges of managing emerging and evolving companies. This program has improved the productivity, efficiency, and profitability of organizations across many industries. Joy has received multi-year recognition as a top consultant in the St. Louis area, was designated one of the top 100 St. Louisans to know in 2016, and received the Enterprising Women of the Year Champion Award in 2019. She received a Master of Arts in human resources management from Washington University in St. Louis, and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in business psychology from The Chicago School of Professional Psychology.

and in assisting clients in strengthening their project management processes and systems. Justis applies a goals-driven approach for strategic and tactical issues so the right solutions, at the right cost, with the right timing are applied.

for numerous Edward Jones investment locations and working directly with general partners and regional leaders. Since then, he has continued to build a successful track record based on his strategic hands-on approach, exceptional customer service and, as a St. Louis native, his extensive local knowledge. He is currently a principal at Avison Young, a full-service commercial real estate firm..

**Rusty Keeley**  
Keeley Companies



Rusty Keeley is the CEO of Keeley Cos., which encompasses L. Keeley Construction, ADB Cos., ZeroDay Technology Solutions, Inspired Solutions and Keeley Development Group. Keeley Cos. specializes in offering unified and collaborative solutions within the following industries: construction, infrastructure, technology, supply chain management and development. Keeley participates in the leadership of YPO and serves on the boards of Reliance Bank, the St. Patrick Center and Concordance Academy. He is a co-chair and on the board of the World Pediatric Project WPP. He is also actively involved with and supports the United Way, Catholic Charities, Good Shepherd, Cardinal Glennon, KIDstruction, Extra Life, JDRC, St. Louis Children's Hospital, Pedal the Cause, local food pantries and many others.

**Vin Ko**  
St. Louis Mosaic Project



Vin Ko joined the St. Louis Mosaic Project as senior program manager at the beginning of 2015. In this position, Ko ensures the success of Mosaic's targeted programs by managing and supporting the more than 700 Mosaic ambassadors, regional entrepreneurs and international student retention initiatives in St. Louis. Under the leadership of Executive Director Betsy Cohen, he leverages targeted digital media campaigns to grow Mosaic's many initiatives. Ko's professional experience and dedication to the international community play a crucial role in supporting the Mosaic Project's goal of making St. Louis the fastest-growing major region for immigration by 2020. Ko is also a member of the board of directors for the Asian American Chamber of Commerce.

**Jassen Johnson**  
Renaissance Development



Jassen Johnson founded Renaissance Development in 2004. Johnson locates and structures development projects, bringing together a network of

investors, clients, tenants, financial institutions and local officials to structure successful projects across the city of St. Louis. He has years of experience in urban redevelopment facilitation, design, sales and leasing, and he has helped facilitate many recognizable development projects in St. Louis.

**Glen Justis**  
Experience On Demand



Glen Justis is senior partner at Experience On Demand. In this role, Justis assists clients with issues where strategy, economics and risk management intersect. He is an expert in project management

**Brian Kelley**  
Avison Young-St. Louis



Brian Kelley launched his commercial real estate career in 2004, overseeing leasing, negotiation, construction and installation of space

## Todd Korte

*The Korte Company*



Todd Korte is president and CEO of The Korte Co., a design-build construction company. Korte is responsible for the overall production, marketing and control

of The Korte Co. as well as the firm's extensive research and development efforts. With more than 31 years of experience in the construction industry, he has performed a variety of duties throughout his career, including project engineer, estimator, special services team member, project manager and vice president.

## Dan Kraus

*BMO Harris Bank*



Dan Kraus is a commercial banking market executive at BMO Harris Bank. In this role, Kraus provides access to ideas, strategies and solutions to efficiently meet the financing needs of private

and publicly traded companies in the greater St. Louis area across distribution, engineering and construction, industrial services, manufacturing, and transportation and logistics. Kraus joined the bank in 2014. Previously he was with U.S. Bank.

## ART SNARZYK

INNERVIEW ADVISORS

**W**hen area business owners are struggling to hire the best employees or they are worried about creating a culture that will keep their best employees, they know the ramifications of not solving these problems. Poor hires and high turnover can crush a culture and a bottom line. Some companies wing it; others search for a solution.

Enter The Turnover Terminator.

Art Snarzyk, owner of the consulting firm InnerView Advisors, is working with companies throughout the region to build better hiring systems and culture to avoid turnover. The nickname Turnover Terminator was given to Snarzyk by a client after he helped reduce the client's turnover issues.

"Many businesses think hiring is just a crapshoot," Snarzyk says. "You put somebody in place and hope for the best. You hope they make it past the honeymoon period. But it doesn't have to be that way."

Snarzyk got involved in employee turnover after running his own painting contracting business, a company he grew from the ground up. He used a particular system of hiring to find the right painters, and he experienced little turnover. At the same time, he watched the revolving door outside

his competitors' offices, with employees constantly leaving. He thought he might be on to something. As he started sharing more of his ideas and expertise on hiring, he decided to become a consultant and help other companies lower their turnover.

"When I was a painting contractor, I didn't hire painters," he says. "I hired people. I wanted to first know if they were a good fit, and if they could represent me well in an office or home. The best technician available may not be the best fit for your culture."

Snarzyk works with companies of all sizes and speaks on hiring and culture at events throughout the country. He uses a variety of assessments and his personal experience and skills to help guide clients in the hiring and culture-building process.

Said Snarzyk: "Now is the time to start building the culture so you don't have to worry about turnover. If companies are not coming up to speed on what culture means and what it means to them, they will be left behind."



## Anh Le

*Anh Le, CPA*



Anh Le is the owner of Anh Le, CPA, an accounting, tax and wealth management firm he began 12 years ago. The company has five Southern Illinois locations and one in Missouri. Le's job is to help owners focus on their businesses so they can grow them. He has particularly flourished by helping bilingual customers, mainly Spanish- and Vietnamese-speaking owners. He has a

full staff of bilingual professionals with advanced degrees to serve the growing diversified population in the region.

## Robert Lefton

*Psychological Associates, Inc.*



As co-founder, chairman and CEO of Psychological Associates Inc., Robert Lefton is an icon in his industry and an active consultant and coach on the executive level.

Psychological Associates works with large and small companies to help select, develop and retain their best talent. As co-founder of Psychological Associates and one of the original developers of Dimensional Training, he has conducted many seminars. Today he is a consultant to senior executives for many corporations, including Fortune 500 companies. He has consulted with and served on the faculties of Washington University, the Motorola Executive Institute, the Alcoa Executive Institute and CEO International Inc. He has also served on the boards of directors of both public and privately held companies. As an expert in human development, Lefton is a frequent speaker, contributor and co-author of five books.

## Janet Leigh

*Gabriel Group*



Janet Leigh is the director of business development at Gabriel Group, which specializes in developing integrated marketing campaigns for nonprofit, financial services, manufacturing and gaming partners

through strategy, creative service, analysis and production.

## Sam Maiden Jr.

*John Beal Roofing*



Sam Maiden Jr. is CEO of John Beal Roofing. Before he was named CEO in 2014, he was director of marketing for the company. John Beal Roofing began in 1947 and provides both residential and

commercial roofing services. John Beal has offices in Kansas City; Wichita, Kansas; and Carbondale, Illinois, and the company has been named one of the top 100 roofing contractors in the United States by Roofing Contractor magazine.

## Scott Malin

*Lathrop Gage LLP*



Scott Malin is the deputy managing partner of the law firm Lathrop Gage LLP. He is a member of the firm's executive committee and is also a member of the wealth strategies

practice area. His

practice focuses on succession planning, estate planning and administration, taxation, charitable planning, and general business law for individuals, privately held businesses and families. Within those practice areas, Malin counsels clients on the preservation and transfer of wealth in a tax-efficient manner and advises business owners in the transition of ownership, management and control of private businesses.

Malin is also an adjunct professor at the Washington University School of Law in the Master of Laws in Taxation Program, where he teaches a class in Closely Held Business and Succession Planning.

## Marty McCabe

*Bank of Springfield*



Marty McCabe is vice president of Bank of Springfield's St. Louis location. Previously, McCabe was CEO/owner of Koetting Ford in Granite City, Illinois. With a focus on community, Jack Marantz

founded BOS in Springfield, Illinois, in 1965. BOS has grown to become a community bank with over \$950 million in assets.

## Grant Mechlin

*Sansone Group*



Grant Mechlin is managing director-retail services for the Sansone Group, a full-service commercial real estate firm. Mechlin specializes in retail project leasing,

tenant representation, development and investment sales. Since joining the Retail Brokerage Division at Sansone Group in 2007, Mechlin has successfully completed transactions in 23 states with team sales and leasing volume in excess of \$80 million since 2015.

## Gary Mindel

*Color Art Office Interiors/  
Color Art Palette Inc.*



Gary Mindel is the president and COO of Color Art Palette Inc., the holding company for St. Louis-based Color Art, the area's largest interior solutions provider

and only authorized Steelcase dealer. In addition to his current duties as CEO of Color Art in St. Louis, Mindel is responsible for strategic implementation and operational effectiveness enterprise-wide. In addition, he is a voting member of the Color Art Palette board. Mindel has been with the company for more than 30 years. He was hired in 1985 as a sales manager for new business development and was then promoted to leadership for the entire sales team. Mindel went on to be named president of the furniture team and then CEO of Color Art.

## Lisa Moore

*Paule, Camazine & Blumenthal, P.C.*



Lisa Moore is the president and managing partner at Paule, Camazine & Blumenthal P.C. She guides families through the complexities of legal issues that range from

paternity disputes to child custody battles to guardianships to divorces. A published author, Moore is frequently asked to speak about various family law topics. She is a member and has held leadership positions in The Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis, the St. Louis County Bar Association and the American Bar Association. In addition to serving clients, Moore also does pro bono work in her community as a special prosecutor with St. Louis County and through ALIVE - Alternatives to Living in Violent Environments, Safe Connections, Catholic Legal Services and Legal Services of Eastern Missouri.

## Kirby Morris

*Midwest Regional Bank*



Kirby Morris is vice president and SBA commercial lender for Midwest Regional Bank, where he sources Small Business Administration loan requests in the greater Saint Louis

metro area. Previously, he developed deep financial and banking expertise while serving as a commercial lender for Midwest BankCentre, Bank of America and U.S. Bank.

Morris is a member of the Loan Committee for St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, the Crestwood-Sunset Hills Area Chamber of Commerce and the American Bankers Association. He has served as a volunteer for Junior Achievement in Saint Louis Public Schools and for Soldiers Memorial.

## Amina Musa

*Thompson Coburn*



Amina Musa is an associate at the law firm Thompson Coburn. Musa represents financial institutions and borrowers in a variety of commercial financing transactions. She

has experience with nonprofits and public service law and is active in the legal and business communities. As the co-founder and associate executive director of the Muslim Women's Professional Network of St. Louis, she organizes events and initiatives, directs board activities, and assists with strategic planning.

## Sarfraz Nabi

*Dieterich Bank*



Sarfraz Nabi is the vice president of lending at Dieterich Bank. With over 20 years of experience in the banking industry, Sarfraz concentrates on com-

mmercial banking in the St. Louis middle market.

## Susan Orr

*UHY LLP*



Susan Orr is a partner at UHY LLP. Orr has over 20 years of experience providing consulting services to companies in the construction, manufacturing/distribution and

energy sectors. She has served the firm in various client-facing management and leadership roles, including serving as a leader in the St. Louis Construction Practice. Susan works closely with her clients as a true partner, consistently delivering timely and proactive advice.

### Domnick Paretta *Valorem*

Since co-founding Valorem Consulting Group in 2009, Domnick Paretta has served as a managing partner overseeing all business and operations aspects of the company. In this role he strategically helped navigate Valorem to become a nationally renowned business consulting firm and a top managed partner within the Microsoft ecosystem.

### Sandra Parker *Parker Insurance Group, Inc.*



Sandra Parker founded Parker Insurance Group Inc. in 1983 to meet the health needs of many women. Parker Insurance Group is an independent insurance agency represent-

ing many insurance companies. She is a board member of the Lemay Development Corp., the St. Louis County LCRA, the Wellston Redevelopment Corp. and the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership.

### Ken Poteet *M1 Bank*



Ken Poteet is the founder, chairman and CEO of M1 Bank. For more than 30 years, Poteet has been bringing fresh ideas and astute leadership to the financial

services industry with great success. Poteet now is focusing that extensive experience and expertise on a new financial institution: M1 Bank. M1 Bank specializes in low- to moderate-income housing and renewable energy tax credit/lending programs on a national scale with an unparalleled commitment as a steward of the communities in which it has a physical location and presence. Previously Poteet founded Sterling Bancshares Inc. and Sterling Bank.



**JEANET WADE**  
JALAPENO CONSULTING

As a business consultant, Jeanet Wade was searching for a way to really make a difference in her clients' success. She found the answer in a book, "Traction," by Gino Wickman.

After reading the book, which outlines a business system known as the Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS), Wade knew this system was the key to helping businesses throughout the region become successful.

"This system is a life-changing thing," Wade said. "It fundamentally changes people's spirits and their energy. It's transformative."

She became a certified EOS implementer, the only certified implementer in St. Louis, and over the last six years she helped over 58 clients achieve results with EOS. As an EOS certified implementer, Wade helps companies implement the system through a 24-month journey.

EOS is a comprehensive business system, integrating a holistic business model with a complete set of simple tools and a process to align and synchronize all the pieces of a business.

"The system helps people think more simplified about their strategy, helping them implement and execute that strategy and helping them be more functional in accomplishing it," Wade said. "In the past, I've found leaders would typically dabble in things. They would hear a speaker at a conference and try that strategy for a while, or they would read a book and try another strategy for a while. They would randomize these strategies and wouldn't really think about it, like putting four different tires on a car. What I like about EOS as a system is that it takes a holistic view that is simplified down to just 20% of things that get you 80% of the results. It doesn't overcomplicate things."

Wade said her clients improve organizational effectiveness by an average of 213% within the first year of implementing the system, and they improve top-line revenue by an average of 20.4%.

She said CEOs and visionaries are originally attracted to the book and the system as a way to get strategy and their vision implemented. "That's the big draw at first, but what really happens is it changes their lives."

### James Pursley *Hochschild, Bloom & Co. LLP*



James Pursley is a partner at Hochschild, Bloom & Co. LLP. He began with the company in 2004. His areas of concentration include closely held businesses, medi-

cal practices, employee benefit plans, wholesale/distribution, personal service corporations, government agencies and nonprofit organizations.

### Kevin Reardon *Advertising Savants*



Kevin Reardon is the founder of Advertising Savants Inc. Since he founded the firm in 1991, it has built a roster of clients in consumer products and services, includ-

ing household goods, health care, education, financial services and nonprofit. Advertising Savants has received national and international recognition for its creative work.

## 100 ST. LOUISANS TO KNOW

### Vincent Reese

Mickes O'Toole LLC



Vincent Reese is a managing partner at Mickes O'Toole. Reese focuses his practice on labor, employment and education law in addition to commercial

litigation. He has extensive experience in representing his clients' interests with respect to investigations conducted by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, the Missouri Commission on Human Rights, and many other government agencies.

### Randall Reinker

Reinker, Hamilton & Piper LLC



Randall Reinker is an attorney with the firm Reinker, Hamilton & Piper LLC. With over 30 years of experience, he practices heavily in the area of civil

litigation. Before joining the firm, Reinker handled various litigation matters, ranging from small cases for individuals to mega-lawsuits for insurance companies and corporations. Reinker represents companies of various sizes as well as individuals.

### Terry Richards

Mueller Prost CPA's + Advisors

Terry Richards is partner and director of accounting services for Mueller Prost CPA's + Advisors. Richards has over 10 years of experience providing business

valuation; litigation support; forensic accounting; individual, corporate and partnership income tax returns; SAS 70/SSAE 16



reporting, and consulting services. He primarily works with privately held and middle-market organizations across various industries, including manufacturing, retail, health care and the legal community.

### Tim Rodden

Citizens National Bank



Tim Rodden is the President of Commercial Banking at Citizens National Bank. Tim has been with CNB for 16 years and in banking for 32 years. He is

currently active with the Affton Education Foundation, Canterbury Enterprises, and the Affton Historical Society.

### Jesse Sanders

Clayco



Jesse Sanders is IT director at Clayco, one of the nation's largest privately owned real estate, architecture, engineering, design-build

and construction firms. He was recently recognized as Volunteer of the Year at NFTE's Global Showcase.



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### David Sandorf

Midland States Bank



David Sandorf is a commercial relationship manager at Midland States Bank, where he has worked since 2015. Prior to that, he was with UMB Bank.

### Claire Schenk

Thompson Coburn



Claire Schenk is a partner at the law firm Thompson Coburn. As a former assistant United States attorney, she advocates for clients in the areas of health care fraud

and abuse, False Claims Act litigation, and other complex white-collar litigation. Drawing upon her 14-year history with the Department of Justice, Schenk represents and advises health care providers, registrants under the Controlled Substances Act and government contractors. She enjoys guiding physician groups, hospitals, pharmaceutical groups and others through the maze of complex and overlapping government regulatory schemes and assisting with the resolution of compliance concerns.

### David Scobee

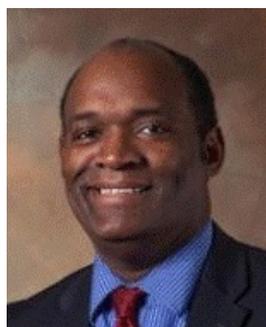
Simmons Bank



David Scobee is a commercial banker with Simmons Bank. Simmons First National Corp. is a financial holding company, based in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, with total assets of \$16.5 billion as of Dec. 31, 2018, conducting financial operations throughout Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas.

### Darrell Scott

BancorpSouth-O'Fallon



Darrell Scott is first vice president at BancorpSouth Bank. He has 22 years of business, real estate and asset-based lending experience and holds degrees from Park University and Fontbonne University. Scott has served on the Des Peres Hospital board and the St. Louis Workforce Development Board.

### Amit Shah

MiTek USA



Amit Shah is vice president and deputy general counsel at MiTek Industries Inc. He is also chair of the board of directors for the International Institute of St. Louis. Before joining MiTek, Shah was an attorney with the law firm Armstrong Teasdale. His areas of emphasis were mergers and acquisitions, commercial real estate, and general corporate.

### Jeremy Shore

Stifel Bank



Jeremy Shore is vice president-SBA lending at Stifel Bank. He provides banking products and services to entrepreneurial companies and their owners. Shore's specialty is coming up with more flexible, creative financing solutions that other banks don't think of.

### John Slaid

Banterra Bank

John Slaid is a senior commercial loan officer at Banterra Bank. Slaid has worked with Banterra since 2016. Previously he was vice president of Great Southern Bank.

### Thomas Smallwood

Stinson Leonard Street



Thomas Smallwood is a partner with the law firm Stinson Leonard Street. He is a member of the firm's real estate division and has a multifaceted practice primarily focusing on real estate development, redevelopment financing, real estate and asset-based lending, commercial leasing, joint ventures, zoning and other land use issues, construction, and environmental matters.

### Bob Stolzberg

VoiceXP



Bob Stolzberg is founder and CEO of VoiceXP, a St. Louis-based software-as-a-service company that focuses on voice platforms like Amazon Alexa, Google Assistant and Microsoft Cortana. VoiceXP is an Amazon recommended agency and advanced Amazon partner that creates voice solutions for enterprise businesses and brands that want to increase productivity and efficiency and drive sales and marketing using voice technology like Amazon Alexa.

## Nathan Stooke

*Wisper ISP*



Nathan Stooke is CEO of Wisper ISP. In the last 12 years, Stooke has gone from programming PCs to building Wisper ISP into a successful \$4 million company in the

Southern Illinois and St. Louis Metro East area. Wisper ISP offers internet access in Illinois, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma.

## Norm Toon

*Reliance Bank*



Norm Toon joined Reliance Bank in February 2014 and currently serves as executive vice president and chief lending officer. In his capacity as chief

lender, he chairs the various lending committees at the bank and manages the commercial lending group as well as the other lending areas of the bank. Before beginning this position, Toon worked at Simmons First National Bank as senior vice president and senior commercial banking officer. He has extensive experience in both commercial real estate lending and C&I lending, having worked at PNC Bank as a senior vice president of C&I lending and at Southwest Bank as a senior vice president of commercial real estate lending.

## Greg Twardowski

*Whelan Security Co., Inc.*



Greg Twardowski is president of Whelan Security Co. Inc. Whelan Security is a family-owned company providing private security across many diverse industries and vertical mar-

kets, including corporate headquarters, commercial real estate properties, financial institutions, educational campuses, manufacturing and industrial facilities, retail shopping centers, residential communities, and sensitive government facilities throughout the United States. In addition to traditional private security service, the company offers uniformed security and staffing services for major events.

## Affan Waheed

*Fyndus*



Affan Waheed is the founder and CEO of Fyndus, a global e-commerce company that meets the needs of the changing global retail ecosystem. Waheed realized

the potential to leverage the migration of retail from brick-and-mortar to online with the ability to deploy technology to capture and use behavior in new and innovative ways. Fyndus is a comprehensive platform that focuses on the user's behavior and brings offers, deals and merchandise to meet their individual needs.

## John Stupp III

*Stupp Bros. Inc.*



John Stupp III Stupp Bros. Inc. John Stupp is director of project management at Stupp Bros. Inc., a privately owned company focused on providing infrastructure development in the

United States as well as serving the St. Louis market through a successful community bank.

## Paul Truber

*UHY LLP*



Paul Truber is the managing director at UHY LLP. For over 25 years, Truber has provided tax and consulting services to a broad spectrum of businesses. Over

the years he has become a trusted source to his clients for tax planning, research, consulting and compliance. He serves as a member of UHY's manufacturing and distribution team and its estate planning team.

## John Vitale

*Global Capital Resource Partners*

John Vitale is president and founder of Global Capital Resource Partners, a company founded to help small, medium and large enterprises raise the capital they need when they need it. The company is an international financing advisory firm with 50-plus years of experience and a massive database of both equity and debt sources of capital, systems and organization to advise entrepreneurs looking for funding.

## Evan Waldman

*Essex Industries*



Evan Waldman is the chief executive officer at Essex Industries. Waldman is the third CEO in the company's 70-year history. He joined Essex in 2004 as a sales and marketing

associate. He also served as operations manager for the manufacturing division, director of commercial sales, director of strategy and most recently as senior vice president of business development. Essex Industries is a family-owned and -operated manufacturer focused on the aerospace and defense market. Providing platform controls and aircraft components, Essex has been a part of virtually every major military and commercial aerospace program since the company began in 1947.

## Stefanie Thelen

*Slalom St. Louis*



Stefanie Thelen is the general manager for Slalom St. Louis, a modern consulting firm focused on strategy, technology, and business transformation and shared

insights to deliver high-impact business results.

## 100 ST. LOUISANS TO KNOW

### Derek Weber

goBRANDgo!



Founded in 2003 by Derek Weber, goBRANDgo! is a marketing firm built for privately held companies that want to aggressively grow market share through a metrics-based

marketing strategy or need a WordPress website that drives and converts traffic. goBRANDgo is owned by Weber and partner Brandon Dempsey. Weber is also the president of the Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO) St. Louis chapter, a peer-to-peer network of influential business owners.

### Laura Wilson

Marketplace At The Abbey



Laura Wilson opened Marketplace at The Abbey in 2014, showcasing home accessories, lighting, linens, upholstery, housewares, floral arrangements and custom furniture expertly handcrafted by talented artisans in the Saint Louis area.

### Michelle Yates

Lawrence Group



Michelle Yates is the director of marketing for Lawrence Group, a design and project delivery firm based in downtown St. Louis with offices in Austin and New York.

The company offers architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, graphic design, town planning, construction management and real estate development services.

### Tricia Whelan

Lindell Bank and Trust Co.



Tricia Whelan is vice president of Lindell Bank and Trust Co. She has over 25 years of banking experience, including examination, audits, compliance, lending, risk management

and reserve analysis. Before working at Lindell Bank, she worked at Concord Bank.

## Congratulations to Darrell Scott!

Darrell Scott has been selected as one of the **Top 100 People to Know in Banking**. We applaud Darrell's efforts and contributions that enrich the lives and opportunities of those within our community.

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# ST. LOUIS COMPANIES YOU SHOULD KNOW

*Some of the area's leading businesses share their accomplishments and how they help to make St. Louis a better place to live and do business.  
Pages 38-40*

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# How a Retirement Plan Contribution Helps Your Qualified Business Income Deduction

**T**he Tax Cuts and Jobs Act created a new deduction for pass-through business owners, including Sole Proprietorships, Partnerships and S Corp shareholders. The new deduction, commonly called the 199A deduction, allows for up to 20% of Qualified Business Income to be deducted, provided the business owner meets certain requirements. There are income limitations that may limit or eliminate the deduction, which for 2019 are \$160,700-\$210,700 for Single filers and \$321,450-\$421,450 if you are Married Filing Jointly. This is a complex deduction that you will want to consult with a tax advisor for specifics.

As an example, if you are a single individual filer with a sole-proprietorship, with projected taxable income of \$215,000 in 2019, you would be ineligible for the 199A income due to your income level. However, if you could drop your taxable income below the \$160,700 level, you could take a full 20% deduction on all of your remaining qualified business income and lower

your tax bill by thousands. With a 401(k) plan, you could potentially save up to \$56,000 (\$62,000 if you are at least age 50 in 2019) in employee and employer contributions, which would accomplish the goal of lowering your taxable income. Need to drop your income even more? Consider a defined benefit plan. In some situations, you can contribute hundreds of thousands a year, which can then be deducted from income.

Assuming your situation already qualifies you for the full 199A deduction, you may not want to reduce your taxable income with retirement savings that would cause you to give up your deduction. In that case, consider using a Roth 401(k) account (or a Roth IRA, if your income level doesn't disqualify you) to save for retirement without losing the 199A deduction.

It's important to review your entire financial picture for this type of financial planning. There are fees and sometimes actuarial calculations required for setting up and administering a retirement plan.

You may want to discuss your intentions with your CPA and us to decide on the best strategy.

Pension and Retirement Services, Inc. ("PARS") provides retirement plan services to businesses with up to 1,000 employees. Since its founding in 1998, PARS has been a one-stop retirement plan provider. President and Founder, Dave Bruder explains, "We are specialists at handling the full range of retirement plan services; compliance, consulting, employee education, investments and fiduciary services."

**To start a retirement plan or improve an existing one, please contact PARS today! Dave Bruder may be reached at [dbruder@pars401k.com](mailto:dbruder@pars401k.com) or at (314) 966-0406.**



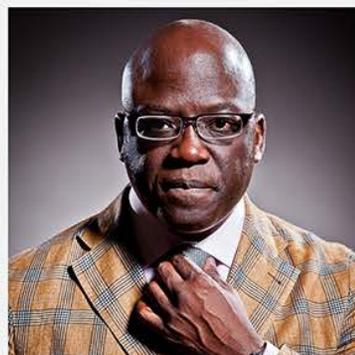
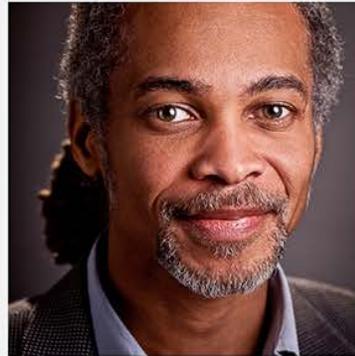
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# Jeff Koziatek To Keynote Top 100 Luncheon At St. Louis Business Expo & Biz Growth Conference

Learn The Four Keys To Building An Authentic, Value Driven Business

**A**s the former owner of an entertainment company, Jeff Koziatek's value as a human being was tied directly to his business. A self-proclaimed workaholic, Koziatek took one vacation in 16 years and was constantly moving from one project to the next. Because his identity was tied to the business, every employee mistake seemed like a personal attack against him.

"Needless to say, I didn't always handle employees very well," Koziatek admits.

As a kid, Koziatek said he picked up the idea that he didn't have any value by himself, only for what he accomplished. "If I performed well in sports or school, people looked at me," he said. "If I didn't, I saw a lot of the backs of peoples' heads. That desire to be seen and valued drove me to do a lot of different things in business and wear a bunch of hats. The problem was it

was never enough. I couldn't stop working. If I stopped working, then the source of my value would be shut off and I would be less of a person. Stopping the work was never an option. I had to be a workaholic all the time."

Koziatek was stressed to his limits. After suffering through a painful bout of stress-induced shingles, he knew something had to change.

It wasn't until he began to see he had value outside of work that led him to take a break and a breath. "I started to see my employees and customers differently," he said. "Not as objects I needed to manipulate to get something done or obstacles I just had to deal with."

Said Koziatek, "I don't want people to miss out on experiences or opportunities in their lives because their value is tied to their work or the success of their companies. It is never going to be enough. You won't be present with what is going on in life because you are constantly thinking about the next deal, next project, the next client and you'll miss what is happening right before you."

Now, a nationally recognized life coach, author and speaker and owner of Core Authenticity, he travels around the world sharing his experiences and ideas to audiences all over the country. His goal is to help audiences realize their value does not come from their work. "I want people to experience more peace, more joy, more freedom, more productivity and not miss their moments," he said.

Koziatek will be the keynote presenter at the Top 100 People To Know in St. Louis Luncheon on April 23. SBM spoke with Koziatek about his upcoming presentation. **Tell me what you'll speak about at the Expo on April 23?**



I am going to talk about intrinsic value. As entrepreneurs and leaders in our industry and within our businesses, it's really easy to tie our personal worth and identity into what we do. Now, for most people, what we do is who we are. What I want to talk about is how we have intrinsic value outside of that. When we stand on that, it allows us to be more present, with customers and employees so we can actually listen to what is going on and respond appropriately, versus defending ourselves and our products.

**How do we make sure we are not falling into that trap?**

I think it comes down to daily reminders. It is easy to pick up what the culture is saying, "You're only worth your productivity," "Are you a CEO of a company?" If so, we'll rate you above someone who is not a CEO. You have value. "You're not in the C-Suite?" Then you are seen as less. All of these messages build and build and start to shift our focus to what we do. Remember: You are not the art, you are the artist. The art comes from you, it is not who you are. We need a constant reminder, almost daily, of who we are as human beings. We all need to stand on the foundation of our core values. From that, comes our business.

**The luncheon honoring the Top 100 People To Know is Tuesday, April 23 (11am-1pm) at the St. Charles Convention Center. Tickets are \$55 each (tables of 10 are \$550). Tickets can be purchased online at <https://store.sbmon.com> or via phone at 314.569.0076.**

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1:30-2:20	Tune-Up Your Sales Story	How To Stand Out in Today's Digital Landscape	How I Got 30 Million Organic Views on One Facebook Post	Winning Government Contracts
2:30-3:30	TBA	TBA	The Entrepreneur's Time Management System	Essential Presentation Skills

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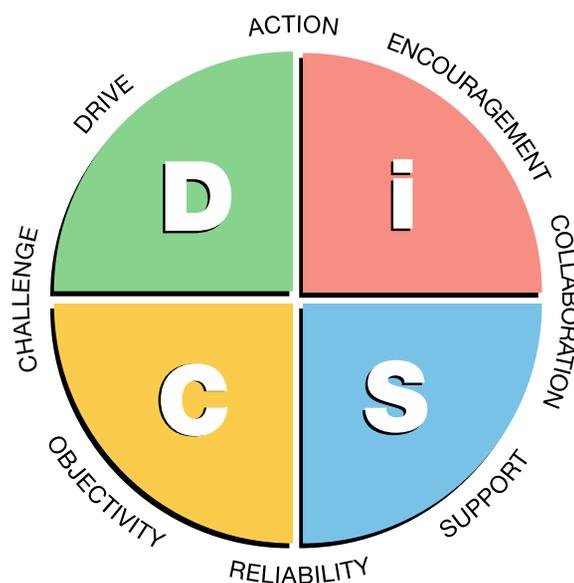
# Your Leadership Style At Work

Success in leadership requires an understanding of people, their motivations and preferences. Once you recognize that people are different, you will be ready to adapt your style to those you work with . . . minimizing the crazy-makers.

Are there some people who just drive you crazy? If you're like most people, especially in leadership, you're probably thinking, "Yes, definitely!"

Success in leadership requires an understanding of people, their motivations and their preferences. Once you recognize that people are different, you will be ready to adapt your style to those you work with – minimizing the crazy-makers.

There are many assessments for determining workplace styles. One of the easiest to understand is the DiSC profile. I use the "Everything DiSC Management Profile" in my work with leaders. It has four personality/behavioral styles:



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## Four Basic Styles

The circle above (circumplex) shows four distinct styles: D, i, S and C. Consider how the styles are different. As you look over the characteristics of each style, think about individuals on your team who fit each style. Think, also, about which style best fits you in your leadership role.

### D = Dominance

- Direct
- Results-Oriented
- Firm
- Strong-willed
- Forceful

### i = Influence

- Outgoing
- Enthusiastic
- Optimistic
- High-spirited
- Lively

### C = Conscientiousness

- Analytical
- Reserved
- Precise
- Private
- Systematic

### S = Steadiness

- Even-tempered
- Accommodating
- Patient
- Humble
- Tactful

## Foundational Principles

Remember that all styles have strengths and drawbacks. All are equally valuable. Working closely with someone whose style is opposite or very different from our own, we often experience conflict. It's easier working with someone who shares the same style. Research, however, finds that the best-performing teams are made up of individuals with a mix of styles.

We're all a combination of styles. You are likely to have a primary style, but you may be a blend of a couple of styles.

"Priorities" are the words around the circle. The individuals with each DiSC style are motivated to act in a certain way based on their natural priorities, as represented by that style.

## Creating a Motivational Environment

Imagine improving even the most difficult relationship at work. Think about your team. How can you adapt your style to maximize motivation for the four styles?

	D	i	S	C
Demotivators	-Too many details -Boring/routine work -Micro-management	-Routine/boring tasks -Overly critical people -Working in isolation	-Abrupt change -Forced into quick decisions -Conflict and drama	-Pressured to make quick decisions -Vague directions -Being wrong
Motivators	-Allow some control -Challenge with stretch goals -Recognize performance	-Praise in public -Offer opportunities to shine -Offer variety in tasks -Allow team interaction	-Offer sincere and specific praise -Provide structure when delegating tasks -Ask for their ideas	-Allow for independent work -Be clear about expectations -Give time to process info

## Becoming a More Effective Leader

A few simple steps can help you lead others with less stress and more insight:

1. Take the DiSC for Management online assessment.
  - a. Review your report with your coach.
  - b. Gain insight into your strengths and weaknesses.
2. Allow team members to take the assessment (individual contributor version).
  - a. Hold a facilitated team workshop.
  - b. Learn the team makeup of styles.
  - c. Allow open discussions about the impact of styles.
3. Enjoy the benefits of an enlightened team! ■

For more information about the DiSC for Management Profile, please contact Kathy Cooperman, [kathy@kathycooperman.com](mailto:kathy@kathycooperman.com). Kathy Cooperman, an executive coach and leadership expert, is the president and founder of KC Leadership Consulting LLC. For more information, contact her at [kathy@kathycooperman.com](mailto:kathy@kathycooperman.com), [www.kathycooperman.com](http://www.kathycooperman.com) or 720.542.3324.

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## The Courage To Be Disliked

*“When we least expect it, life sets up a challenge to test our courage and willingness to change; at such a moment, there is no point in pretending that nothing has happened or in saying that we are not yet ready. The challenge will not wait. Life does not look back. A week is more than enough time for us to decide whether or not to accept our destiny.”*

-Paulo Coelho, *“The Devil and Miss Prym”*

I read a book called “The Courage To Be Disliked” on psychiatrist Alfred Adler, and I highly recommend it. We use Adler’s model, a major departure from what is held to be “common sense.” The author states that Adler is at least 100 years ahead of his time; I have always said the same. The title refers to the courage it takes to think outside of the fixed belief (and power) system that the majority operates from related to scarcity, fear and self-interest. Most people think and do what the herd does. And that “common sense” is the reason we are, and have been, in so much trouble.

### Operating by freedom with responsibility rather than control

We have had centuries of using extrinsic motivators to get desired behavior from others – being autocratic and using incentives, praise, shaming and spoiling, all in an effort to create compliance. Freedom with responsibility requires first that we like people, that we are grateful for their power, acknowledge and celebrate it, draw upon their inherent good, help them clarify their purpose, and adopt behaviors that achieve it. This requires a favorable and optimistic view of them rather than one in which they are not trusted but are judged as selfish, lazy and worth less than others and must be frightened, praised, bribed and shamed subtly or overtly. This shift is no easy feat.

### Understanding what it means to be an effective and life-giving authority

In my culture transformation process, people face their limiting and faulty beliefs about authority and learn who they can be best when they lead anyone (including children, co-workers or the boss, even if not a recognized “authority figure.”) What most people don’t realize is that if they want to be influential with anyone, they must uncover and resolve issues related to authority. We all carry more baggage about this than we know, and it’s crucial we come to new conclusions and behaviors concerning authority.

### When nice is really mean

I often find leaders who are afraid of being autocratic (rightly so) but then use incentives, judgment, pampering and avoidance instead. They are afraid of being “mean” and think these choices are viable alternatives. They are not. In their efforts to be nice (usually a cover for playing it “safe”), they rob others of becoming empowered, lovable, connected and contributing – and they don’t see it.

A great example of this is in the 1962 movie “The Miracle Worker,” about Helen Keller (Patty Duke) and her new teacher, Annie Sullivan (Anne Bancroft). This movie is a dramatic example of how one loving family offered pity and permissiveness that kept Helen disempowered, unknown, unable to fully connect and contribute. What’s most important is the obvious courage within Annie Sullivan, who neither pities nor pampers nor sets out to hurt Helen but rather consistently demonstrates determination and a clear vision of the best outcome for her student despite inconvenience, attacks and challenges, remaining strong until breakthrough. If one watches this movie, one can see the courage it takes to not only choose a less traveled path but also stand up for one’s convictions despite often avid confrontations and criticisms that come with it.

More than ever, our world needs strong, intelligent and effective leadership within every person, beginning in early childhood. This requires that each of us pray and seek to be released from the need for love, acceptance and approval from others because effective leadership is still not often understood or welcome. And it is our future hope. ■  
*Judy Ryan (judy@LifeworkSystems.com), human systems specialist, is owner of LifeWork Systems. Join her in her mission to create a world in which all people love their lives. She can also be reached at 314-239-4727. People hire LifeWork Systems because we help businesses become agile and manage their priority system: their human system. I hope this article helps you make sense of what’s most crucial to your evolving organization!*



## New Business Owner? Now Is The Time To Plan To Sell Your Business

Family-owned businesses thrive on pride, tradition and dedication. Often, a business depends on multiple family members and vice versa. Although approximately 70 percent of family-owned businesses hope to transition to the next generation, nearly 43 percent do not have a succession plan, according to the Conway Center for Family Business.

Honest communication about expectations and abilities can help your family business survive and be relevant into the future.

### Ask about intentions early and often.

Don’t assume that the next generation does (or does not) want to participate in the family business. Ask whether they are interested and revisit this conversation often as they mature. If an individual does not genuinely care about the business’s product or purpose, he/she will not be fulfilled working there just because it’s the family thing to do. Do not make offspring feel guilty or disloyal if they choose to pursue another career path.

### Don’t assume younger generations know the business inside out.

When children grow up hearing about the family business day in and day out, it’s easy to assume they know the fundamentals. But remember, they were not involved when the direction of the business was determined. Regularly review the overall mission and standards that guide the business – this is also a good reminder for those who have become bogged down in the daily grind. Teach younger generations the processes and operations responsible for your company’s success, preferably by having them work their way up through the ranks.

### Don’t protect/hide bad habits.

Maybe there are skeletons in your company closet that don’t paint other family members or the company in the best light. Protecting unsavory behaviors only leads to bigger problems. Address any issues promptly to ensure the future health of the business.

### Don’t keep family who aren’t working on the payroll.

Are there family members on the payroll who don’t actually come to the office or perform a needed function? Stopping this practice may be unpopular within the family, but allowing it to continue breeds resentment between employees (family and non-family) who do work hard and contribute to the company’s success.

### Determine strengths and weaknesses.

Objectively assess the abilities and challenges of family members, just as you do with any employee. Family should be promoted only if they meet the qualifications

expected of other candidates. Capitalize on strengths and offer training to build skills as needed. Allow future leaders to begin making decisions and support them through the inevitable mistakes. If a family member does not have potential that benefits the business, encourage them to find their niche elsewhere.

### Involve younger generations in strategic planning.

Long-term strategy is not always obvious when you are focusing on daily operations. As you review and set goals, be sure to include younger generations. Their fresh perspectives may highlight new opportunities for growth.

### Bring in qualified “outsiders” to fill necessary roles.

Forcing family members into roles they are not suited for can have disastrous results. For example, if someone’s expertise is in operations, do not ask him/her to lead marketing initiatives just because that role is vacant. Supplement your team with employees who have the competence to help your company thrive – regardless of their DNA.

### Anticipate and plan for industry trends and customer needs.

Regardless of the commitment and talents of your family, your business will not survive long term without adapting. Consider how your product or service fits into industry trends and shifting cultural norms. How are your customers’ needs changing? What additional problems can you solve for your clients?

### Prioritize continuity of values and corporate culture.

Your company’s success is not solely due to your fantastic products or services. Don’t underestimate the importance of community relations, charitable contributions and other ways your values are lived through your business. Ensure future generations realize that this is a responsibility of success and that this generosity does influence buying decisions and community support.

Open communication and honest assessments will increase the likelihood that upcoming generations can effectively lead your business into the future. Be sure to formalize these plans and expectations into a succession plan that is updated regularly. ■

*Dave Driscoll is president of Metro Business Advisors, a business brokerage, valuation and exit planning firm helping owners of companies with revenue up to \$20 million sell their most valuable asset. Reach Dave at DDriscoll@MetroBusinessAdvisors.com or 314-303-5600. For more information, visit www.MetroBusinessAdvisors.com.*

# Funny Business

By Todd Schowalter



## TIME WITH THE BOSS

### Gary Mindel

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**Education:** Marquette University (BS BA), St. Louis University (MBA)

**Family:** Wife, Mary. Daughters, Caitlin, Kelly. Son in Law, Matt. Grandkids Oliver and Evelyn

#### What is your mission?

Color Art creates and provides the best places for people to do their best work. We do this through understanding and leading practices in connecting architecture, technology, furniture, and services for healthcare, education, corporate and large venue environments.

#### What was your first job?

I started my first job at a golf club when I was 12. I worked in the rack room cleaning clubs and taking care of member needs. I was paid the minimum wage of \$1.25, plus tips. I usually had to be there at 6:15 a.m. to open the shop and we would not close until dusk which, in Wisconsin, could be as late as 9 p.m. so that meant there were many times I was working 14 hour days. (laughs) There were probably child labor laws back then but apparently the golf industry did not subscribe to those. I was a young golfer at the time so it was a ton of fun hanging around golf professionals and other successful people to tap their brains about all kinds of things.

#### What was the smartest thing your company did in the past year?

Last year we made an investment in our branding, showroom and people. All three of these areas were critical to building our focus for the future and I am pleased to say these initiatives have been successful beyond our wildest. Along with that, we began focusing on a new division, now called Color Art Sports. A number of years ago we recognized that professional sports franchises in particular, were investing in stadiums. So we pursued that market with a great deal of success. We have had the opportunity to work with teams like the New York Mets, Washington Nationals, Kansas City Royals, St. Louis Cardinals, St. Louis Blues, Detroit Redwings, Orlando Magic and a

variety of others, including universities.

#### Who is your industry role model?

I do not know if I would necessarily have one individual. Rather I would say I look to the leaders of organizations who recognize that people are their most important asset. The leaders who understand that people matter also recognize that space can be a tool to develop and build a successful organization. We are blessed in St. Louis to have many leaders who are conscious of the value of their people and recognize the sheer power that space can have for them and therefore their clients.

#### How do you try to differentiate your business from others in your industry?

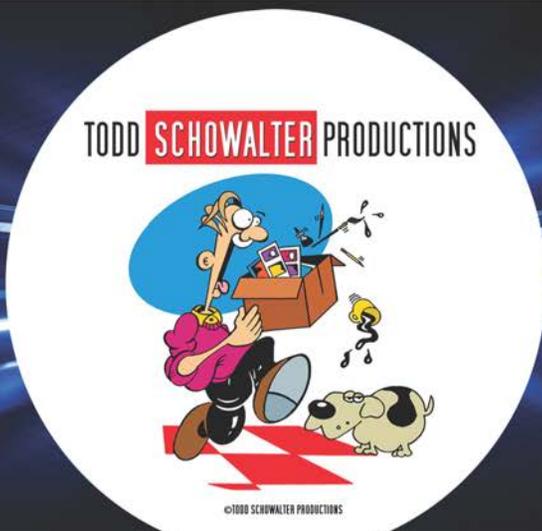
Well that is a short answer that could turn into a long one so I am going to keep it brief. At the end of the day, we sell products and services like everyone else but what truly differentiates Color Art is our ability to bring knowledge, insights, research, case studies, all of those things, to organizations that are looking to evolve. We make the investment in our people so they can acquire knowledge and apply it intelligently to the spaces our clients are trying to create.

#### What best advice would you share with new entrepreneurs?

I do not know that this is particularly innovative but I would encourage entrepreneurs to surround themselves with bright people, and not necessarily only those in their organizations. St. Louis is blessed with an entrepreneurial ecosystem that is just incredible. Entrepreneurs have access to many blossoming startup spaces like TRex, Cortex, and 39 North in addition to a staggering amount of venture capital, specifically in the St. Louis market. There are also mentoring organizations, like ITEN, that help new businesses with growth, marketing, selling, finances. It is so important that entrepreneurs reach out, acquire knowledge, and network like crazy because it is unlikely that one individual, or one team, will have all the disciplines they need to get a business off the ground.

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We're proud to be recognized with this award, and hope you share in our excitement. To learn more about Winning Technologies, visit [www.WinningTech.com](http://www.WinningTech.com), and to learn more about the award, visit [www.HireVets.gov](http://www.HireVets.gov).