

# **MEET THE EXPERTS**



Learn a little more about the  
background and  
experience of our experts!

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## Bob Ashfield

**SCORE: Counselors to America's Small Business ([www.score.org](http://www.score.org))**

Bob is a retired business executive who currently volunteers with SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) as a management counselor to small businesses. In his career, he started two companies – Ashfield and Associates (Consultant, Procurement and Supply Chain Strategies) and served as President of Shellmark Press, Inc. (publisher of Desk Diaries, featuring sea shells of the world, and calendar products). His primary career spanned 32 years with Shell Oil Company, where career stops included assignments' in marketing and sales of petroleum and chemical products and an extended tour in corporate purchasing. In the latter he held management and leadership roles –overseeing field purchasing operations for marketing, heading the corporate team for the procurement of computer equipment and services, and serving as Shell's lead buyer for advertising and print production services.

## Chuck Butler

**Whitney Bank ([www.whitneybank.com](http://www.whitneybank.com))**

Chuck holds a BBA in Finance and an MBA in Accounting from the University of Texas. He went through a formal bank training program at First City National Bank, then taught the new trainees how to analyze credit in the training program before becoming a Middle Market lender, then managing a group of Middle Market lenders. He has worked as a lender at community banks and now a regional bank, Whitney National Bank, a 127 year old strongly-capitalized bank based in New Orleans. Chuck helps companies with their lending needs (working capital, real estate, equipment and acquisitions), plus deposit, cash management and investment needs while being a trusted advisor/consultant at times. He currently deals with companies in the one to fifteen million dollars in annual revenue size.

## Kathie Edwards

**Westpark Communications, LP ([www.westparkcom.net](http://www.westparkcom.net))**

Kathie holds a Tuck Executive MBA from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth as well as a UT Executive MBA. Her previous work experience includes 8 years as the Director of Provider Relations for Cigna Health Care, a Make-A-Wish Foundation Representative, and her current company Westpark Communications. Kathie is the second generation, Owner and CEO of Westpark Communications, established in 1968. Westpark Communications is a 24/7 Customer Service Call Center. Westpark provides outsourcing services in inbound and outbound call handling, as an overflow partner or as a full turn-key service department. Westpark services individual entrepreneurs up to Fortune 500 companies.

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## **Dave Eyre**

### **Apollo Sales & Marketing Group ([www.apollosmg.com](http://www.apollosmg.com))**

Dave holds a B.S. Degree in Chemical Engineering from Iowa State University and a MBA from Northwestern University. His work experience includes Borg Warner – Marbon Plastics Division, Quietaire Corporation, HVAC distributors & manufacturers rep companies in Houston for 20 years, and Industrial lubrication equipment companies in Houston for 20 years. His current company, Apollo Sales & Marketing Group works with small and medium sized companies to enhance their marketing strategy, messaging and lead management to grow sales and profits. Clients include IT managed services providers, Microsoft channel partners, USI (casualty insurance agency), Growth Force (accounting and financial management for small companies) and Kiersted Systems (e-discovery for law firms). Their unique solution for our clients revolves around development of a comprehensive, cost effective marketing program to engage, qualify and nurture prospects plus expand business with existing customers. Apollo marketing programs are customized specifically to the prospect or client's needs and are very flexible to adapt to changing conditions. Apollo allows them to put their marketing on auto-pilot and keep growing their business.

## **Brent Kamin**

### **Element Payment Services ([www.elementps.com](http://www.elementps.com))**

Brent has a B.S. in Communications from the University of Kansas (2002). From 2002-2008 he served as KB Home Construction Superintendent, but he has been at Element Payment Services since 2008. Element Payment Services Houston is a full service merchant services provider. Element Payment Services Houston will tailor a plan for your company that meets your companies' specific needs. The primary service that they provide to companies is allowing businesses the ability to accept and process credit cards as a form of payment. We also provide several other services such as check processing guaranty and verification, gift card services, and ecommerce. At Element Payment Services Houston we work with companies that range from home based set-ups to multi-location operations.

## **Louis Lopez**

### **Mile Technologies ([www.miletechnologies.com](http://www.miletechnologies.com))**

Louis is the CEO and founder of MILE Technologies, Inc. which was born in October of 2003. He has over 130 certifications and over 26 years of experience. He helps solve the impossible computer problems facing business owners and other IT professionals in the field through collaboration. MILE Technologies is a network design and repair shop for any server or workstation running Microsoft Windows operating systems. Louis served as the chair of the Technical Advisory Board of American Intercontinental University for 3 years. He prides himself knowing he has never lost a client.

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## **Sandra Louvier**

HCC Center for Entrepreneurship ([www.hccbizconnect.org](http://www.hccbizconnect.org))

Sandra Louvier has consulted in the hotel & restaurant industry for 17 years through PKF Consulting, Laventhol & Horwath, Marriott and Louvier & Associates, her own consulting practice in Southern California. She has specialized in market feasibility analysis for new and existing locations for varying concepts and brands in the Western U.S. and South Central U.S. She was also Real Estate Director, U.S. for Pillsbury/The Haagen-Dazs Shoppe Company, Inc., responsible for identifying, scouting, analyzing and approving all new U.S. shop locations for 9 years. She received a B.S. in Hotel & Restaurant Management and an MBA in Finance from the University of Houston and has also taught Franchising in the Hotel and Restaurant Industry there. Sandra is currently the Director of the Center for Entrepreneurship at HCC Spring Branch. The C4E offers entrepreneurial workshops, seminars, & classes on weekdays, weeknights and weekends; all designed to provide new business owners with the skills and tools needed to foster and grow a successful business.

## **Mike Mahady**

Melton & Melton, LLP ([www.melton-melton.com](http://www.melton-melton.com))

Michael joined Melton & Melton, L.L.P. in January 2000 and was promoted to manager in 2005. He works primarily in the areas of Federal and State tax compliance for individuals, partnerships, non-profit and closely held corporations. He has extensive experience in working with clients in the construction, manufacturing, and non-for-profit industries and AMT planning related to incentive stock options. Michael is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants. He previously chaired the Relations with Taxing Authorities committee of the Houston Chapter, and is current a member of the Board of Directors.

## **Steve Merck**

Express Employment Professionals ([www.expresspros.com](http://www.expresspros.com))

After graduating from West Virginia University with honors, Steve Merck began his career with a Fortune 10 multinational energy company in Houston, Texas. For the first 10 years of his 25-year career in the industry, Steve performed various leadership roles within the human resources and labor relations fields. During the latter 15 years, Steve led transportation, logistics management, and global supply chain functions. Steve left the energy industry in 2005 to pursue his lifelong entrepreneurial interests. Steve is currently the owner of two Express Employment Professionals franchises covering Fort Bend, Waller and western Harris counties in the state of Texas. Having led his first Express office to achieve the coveted Circle of Excellence level in his second year of operation, Steve continues to lead a team of professionals who provide a wide range of human resources solutions; professional search; and temporary, flexible and contract staffing services to a multi-industry client base.

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## **Steve Palmer**

**RTech Department ([www.rtechdepartment.com](http://www.rtechdepartment.com))**

Steve is currently the business to business development manager for a small IT services provider, RTech Department. Steve is a sales and marketing professional having been a road warrior, a worldwide key account manager and a global business development manager. His strengths are in developing new and innovative business within the oilfield sector. Over the past 10 years his skills have been targeted to the subsea industry globally. He has a number of client contacts worldwide within such companies as Aker Solutions, Cameron, FMC, Drill Quip, Vetco as well as operators, consultants and down hole equipment manufacturers. His technical field is generally within the electrical sector of the subsea market, having specialized in electrical connectors, cables and accessories since 1982.

## **Steve Peters**

**Amegy Bank of Texas ([www.amegybank.com](http://www.amegybank.com))**

Steve is a career banker. From 2003 to the present, he has been employed as Vice President of Amegy Bank of Texas (formerly Southwest Bank of Texas) where I manage the Commercial Banking group at the bank's Memorial City location. From 1985 through 2003, he was employed by Texas Commerce Bank, which later became JPMorgan Chase Bank ("Chase"). During his 19 years at Chase, Steve served in a variety of Relationship Management positions, including Small Business Banking, Commercial Middle-Market Banking and Private Banking.

## **Marc Schwartz**

**Hill Schwartz Spilker Keller LLC ([www.hssk.com](http://www.hssk.com))**

Marc is a shareholder of Hill Schwartz Spilker Keller LLC, focusing his practice on Litigation consulting, including providing expert testimony, economic and strategic consulting and bankruptcy and reorganization services. Marc also serves as the Chairman of HSSK Forensics, Inc. which provides computer forensics and discovery services. His career includes nearly twenty years with Coopers & Lybrand (now PricewaterhouseCoopers), the last twelve as an audit partner with the firm. His clients included Gulf Oil Corporation, Sterling Chemicals, Inc. and Mt. Airy Trading Company (at the time the largest refined products trader on the New York Mercantile Exchange, accounting for one third of the Exchange's volume).

In his more than thirty-five years of practice, Marc has assisted clients, including providing expert testimony, in matters involving professional malpractice, construction litigation, oil and gas disputes, intellectual property, breach of contract, probate matters, lender liability issues, divorce, personal injury, fraud, and bankruptcy. He has also served as a bankruptcy trustee and examiner on a number of estates as well as an advisor to parties involved in bankruptcy proceedings, including National Gypsum Co., Continental Airlines, and First Mortgage Investment Association.

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## Linda Stiles

Stiles & Associates ([www.lindastiles.com](http://www.lindastiles.com))

Linda Stiles is the founder and principal of Stiles & Associates Leadership Consultants, a Houston based organization dedicated to building team leaders that have more confidence, are more committed to the organization and instill more cooperation within the team. Of her 25 years with three Fortune 500 Energy corporations, twelve were spent in middle and upper management. As Director of Critical Applications, she has been responsible for building internal and external technology teams. Her teams have successfully implemented major enterprise applications worldwide in critical business change environments.

She is the author of two books on personal and professional leadership. Linda collaborated with Dr. Ken Blanchard, Dr. Stephen Covey and Jack Canfield to publish *Speaking of Success*. Her solo book, *Team Leader's Toolkit*, has been chosen as the recommended resource for the Coaching and Teambuilding programs presented by Skill Path Seminars worldwide.

Her clients include AKER Solutions, NCO Group, Kerr McGee and Fulbright & Jaworski, and CDM Resources to name a few. She customizes her leadership programs depending on an assessment of needs. Her goal is to provide a reproducible solution to communication and leadership problems. She uses proven tools to provide a guaranteed return on investment for every training and development session.

## Nate Stockard

Melaroo Web Marketing ([www.melaroo.com](http://www.melaroo.com))

Nate has over 13 years of marketing experience in several industries including medical services, construction, entertainment, and audio/video distribution. Nate also attended the University of Memphis during his span of work experience at one of the top-rated business schools in the US. As a marketing professional, Nate has developed a unique skill set that includes web design and programming, video production, marketing consulting, and social media marketing management.

Nate has a wide variety of management experience as well, managing as many as 9 marketing teams throughout the southern and midwest regions. As co-owner of Diamond Productions in Memphis, TN, Nate played a vital part in management of all promotional and marketing staff, and continued marketing management in Houston at Electronic Custom Distributors(ECD), where he supervised, motivated, and trained all of ECD's sales and marketing staff. Along with founding a marketing firm in Memphis, TN, Nate has most recently founded a web marketing company in Houston, which is a one of three sources for the merger that created Melaroo. Melaroo is a web marketing company specializing in four major areas: website development, search engine optimization, social media marketing, and video production. Melaroo has grown over 350% in revenue since its inception and has more grown its staff by 300%.