

## Featured emPOWERed Woman Interview

Marcie Zlotnik, Managing Partner

BZMZ Interests



Marcie Zlotnik has been an entrepreneur in the deregulated telecom and energy industries for the past thirty years. Most recently as co-founder of StarTex Power, she grew the company to revenues of \$500 million in seven years. In addition to directing all day-to-day operations of the company, she focused her attention on the company's legislative and regulatory affairs and was invited numerous times to testify before the

Texas House and Senate committees overseeing retail electricity markets.

Presently, Marcie serves on the GCPA Board of Directors and the steering committee for GCPA emPOWERing Women, a program she was instrumental in creating in 2012. She also serves on numerous other corporate and non-profit boards.

Marcie graduated from the McCombs School of Business with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting and is a licensed Certified Public Accountant.

**Marcie, your work on the GCPA Board of Directors led to the creation of the GCPA emPOWERing Women program. What led you to propose the group and has it met your expectations?**

MZ: A group of us were discussing the statistics regarding the number of women who start out selecting technical careers, and then for whatever reason don't stay in the industry as long as men. The GCPA membership itself is just 20% women although we know there are more in the industry. It occurred to us that developing a network where women could engage and encourage each other would provide the support necessary for women to remain in and grow their careers in electricity. In addition, starting the group would support our current members in their careers – one of the primary goals of the GCPA - and help grow the membership which is a benefit to all. So the idea was born!

As far as meeting expectations, the GCPA emPOWERing women group has surpassed our wildest initial thoughts. We have engaged with literally hundreds of women in our industry. We have over 100 women engaged in our mentoring

circles, and last year we had over 300 attendees at our inaugural Women's Conference at the AT&T Center in Austin. We continue to add to the group's services to women in our industry, and I'm incredibly proud to be a part of this team.

**What advice would you give to women who aspire to reach the C-Suite and excel as leaders?**

MZ: Pick your battles – the vision of superwoman is a myth. It is simply not possible to be a C-Level executive, the Home Room Mom for each of your kid's classes, the Team Mom for every sporting event, and the Queen of Carpool. Leverage the strengths of others to provide assistance where you can, instead of trying to do everything yourself. Choose wisely.

The other advice I would give is to just be you. **It's ok to be a woman.** Learn to how to talk to men, but don't be a man. If you are someone who is naturally funny, don't try to be reserved and stuffy. It won't work, and people see through the insincerity. You can be feminine and professional – they are not mutually exclusive. Play to your strengths.

**It is often said that what leads to success is not succeeding every time, but how you react when you fail. What is your insight about that concept?**

MZ: I have several thoughts on this idea, as I think it is very important for people to understand how to be successful. Professionally, I can tell you, from having owned and operated a customer-facing retail company, anyone in a consumer based customer-facing business is going to make mistakes. How you react when that happens, and resolve things for the customer, determines your fate. You won't- you can't- succeed every time. However, you can design a process to resolve failures so that you make it right for the customer. And by doing that, you often earn the trust of customers and set an example for your employees that then lasts a lifetime. Make it right.

**If we were to look at your e-books or on your nightstand or coffee table, what books would we find? What are you reading now?**

MZ: I'm currently reading the February issue of Vanity Fair while waiting on the new Jeffrey Archer book due in three days (as of the time of this writing). The three books I read most recently that I highly recommend include "The Path to Power – the Years of Lyndon Johnson" by Robert A. Caro; "Flowers in the Blood" by Gay Courter - a novel about India's lucrative opium trade; and "New York" by Edward Rutherfurd.

## Resume Workshops: Putting Your Best Foot Forward – Resume Writing in Competitive Times

by Sandy Morris

Whether you are gainfully employed or you are in full job search mode, it is always a good idea to have an updated resume. Creating a great resume can be a stressful process. If you prepare when you are not in crunch mode, you will be ready when you need it.

You might ask, what is wrong with my old resume? With the onset of the recession in the late 2000s, resume writing was elevated to an art rather than being a general distillation of experience. Competition is fierce! Many people have excellent educations and well-rounded experience. You need to differentiate yourself.

### Goal: Get an Interview

Obviously, first impressions count. The resume is your first chance to make an impression -- it is your elevator speech/sales pitch. With Facebook, Twitter, and... well I'm not hip enough to know what the latest social media craze is... you need to think busy people equals short attention span. You will need to grab the hiring manager's attention and tell them what they need to know in the first half page of your resume. The rest is gravy.

In that first half of the page, you need to tell your story. Who are you and what have you accomplished? *What value do you bring to this position?* Where are you going? While your past matters (education and experience), it is not your leading item in a resume.

The resume should include a summary title tailored to the type of job you are seeking and an introduction paragraph of three to four sentences that projects the best skill sets you have. This is also your first "writing sample" so make it count. Other components of the introductory first section are notable career achievements and a list of searchable words. Only after this, do you list work experience and education.

### Resume Writing Workshops:

GCPA emPOWERing Women will be sponsoring three resume workshops for mentoring circle members in March: one in Austin, one in Houston and a WebEx. Watch your email for registration information.

**HOUSTON:** March 9 from 5:30 – 7:00 PM

(open to mentoring circle members)

Direct Energy Offices  
12 Greenway Plaza  
Houston, Texas 77046

**AUSTIN:** March 24 from 5:30 – 7:00 PM

(open to mentoring circle members)

Lower Colorado River Authority Redbud Center

3625 Lake Austin Boulevard

Austin, Texas 78703

**Webex:** April 9 from 3:00 – 4:30 PM

(open to everyone)

## GCPA's 29th Annual Spring Conference



The Spring Conference creates great opportunities for networking, including a golf tournament, golf clinic, pre-conference networking dinner and ample networking breaks between conference topics. GCPA emPOWERing Women is

organizing the annual spring golf tournament on March 30 at Sweetwater Country Club in Sugar Land (near Houston). For those not ready for tournament level play, skip the tournament and register for the beginner's golf clinic. Learn the basics and join in the fun!

On March 31 – April 1, join in on the conference and network with more than 500 professionals from the industry. Conference panel topics include:

- Mexico's electric market reform
- The state of distributed energy resources
- The future of different financial congestion rights and other ISO trades
- Oversight & enforcement in U.S. electricity markets
- Credit and collateral postings in the market
- Recent legal and legislative developments
- Potential impacts of the EPA's Clean Power Plan
- Carbon capture & storage
- Generation and transmission tradeoffs

Early Bird pricing ends March 9<sup>th</sup>. [CLICK HERE](#) to register.

## Stay in Touch with GCPA emPOWERing Women

**Join our Mailing List:** If you or someone you know is interested in receiving email notifications on upcoming GCPA emPOWERing Women events, mentoring groups, volunteer opportunities and this quarterly newsletter – [CLICK HERE](#) to join our mailing list.

**Join the GCPA emPOWERing Women LinkedIn Group:** Interact with other women, post items of interest and keep up with GCPA emPOWERing Women events – [CLICK HERE](#) to join.