

RESTARTING WINLAND ELECTRONICS ✨ MINNESOTA'S NEXT LABOR SHORTAGE

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BUSINESS

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Medtronic, St. Jude Medical,
and Boston Scientific

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\$3.50



Crack the Whip

"Changing your life is hard, and I want to weed out the weaklings right away," says Erika Lyremark, a self-styled "professional ass kicker."

She ditches the namby-pamby coddling of other career and life coaches and instead gives clients the Daily Whip, her tough-love, occasional-profanities-included, six-week coaching programs (\$695 to \$1,395).

Lyremark is still a partner with Ellis Properties, LLP, a commercial real estate brokerage in Minneapolis. Before that, she was a stripper for nine years, a vocation that gave her some useful hustle. She's not glib about translating the experience into a business. Her dominatrix-style coaching isn't everyone's cuppa tea, she acknowledges, but it's pragmatic at the core: She helps (forces!) clients to take responsibility for their actions, and honors accountability above all else.

"People may think one thing before they meet me," Lyremark says. "But then they do, and they realize I'm smart, straightforward, and personable. Oh, and I can kick your ass."

—Kate Rogers



Erika Lyremark says she's putting her club smarts into a book published by Bascom Hill and due out next July—*Think Like a Stripper: How to Make It In Any Economy*.

TRANSOM

Minnesota expects to set a **new state record for new business filings** for 2009. Secretary of State Mark Ritchie says that the projected total of **63,000** represents both new Minnesota-based businesses (about 90 percent of the total) and entities based outside of Minnesota that are starting to do business in the state. The total number is a 15 percent increase over filings in 2008 and the largest single-year increase since 2002.

Transparency—or voyeurism—is in. Minneapolis ad agency **Periscope** has launched a new Web site at **periscope.com** that allows clients and prospects to "scope us live" with **24/7 streaming video from throughout the firm's Twin Cities, Hong Kong, and Delhi offices**. This shows that Periscope is "not a 'smoke and mirrors' shop," President and CEO Greg Kurowski said in announcing the site's launch. (See page 16: The creatives at Brew just installed Web cams behind the scenes for client D'Amico Kitchen.)

Desktop nanofabrication systems and other new equipment and curriculum are beefing up the nanoscience technology program at **Dakota County Technical College** in Rosemount. An agreement between the college and Illinois-based nanotechnology firm **Nanolnk** makes DCTC the pilot site for a new Nanolnk education program. The college was already offering a degree program (associate in applied science) in nanoscience in conjunction with the University of Minnesota. The federal government's National Nanotechnology Initiative recognizes it as **one of only a handful of nano-science degree programs in the United States**.

A **solar power purchase agreement** signed by **Xcel Energy** and **Best Power International** in early December is the **first such agreement in the state**. Best was a developer of the 400-kilowatt solar farm being installed near St. John's Abbey and University in Collegeville. Pending approval of the agreement by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in December, power generated at the site should be on line by January.

Pollywog, a Minneapolis naming and branding firm, is out with its list of **top 10 best and worst brand names of 2009**. Notables include (on the "worsts" list) Xe, the "meaningless, unpronounceable, and just plain weird" new identity assumed by Blackwater, the security-services contractor that's had a troubled history of operations in Iraq. On the other hand, Pollywog's principals say, "this may be the perfect cover for a company that wants to disappear." See the full list at **tcbmag.com/Pollywoglists**.

Santa now texts. **Burnsville Center** had a standard sit-in-his-lap Santa for children to visit at the mall this Christmas season. But its Web site also had downloadable video messages from Santa and his elves, and for \$5.49, parents could register minimal information about their kids and get Santa to send them three customized text messages ("cant w8 2 visit u xmas eve").

—Denise Logeland

