

## Reject Excuses, Author Says

**By Sherry Slater | Tuesday, June 16, 2009**

FORT WAYNE – Roxanne Emmerich estimates it takes workers two weeks before they lose enthusiasm for a new job.

That's when they decide to join co-workers who are mired in mediocrity, the Minneapolis-based motivational speaker said Monday.

Management's job is to stop accepting excuses for poor performance, she said. Leaders can establish non-negotiables, including how employees respond to customer requests. Instead of saying, "I'll try," employees must make a commitment by responding, "I will."



**Roxanne Emmerich**

Emmerich spoke to about 20 local business leaders and Star Financial Bank executives during a luncheon at the Summit Club. She visited Indiana on Monday to talk to about 175 of Star's 711 employees, meeting with workers in Fort Wayne and Anderson.

Jim Marcuccilli, Star's president and CEO, said he brought in Emmerich four years ago to start working with staff. Banking products can seem interchangeable, he said. But by providing outstanding service, the Fort Wayne-based bank can wow customers and attract new ones, he said.

Star increased its loans by \$100 million in less than five months while also improving the quality of its loan portfolio from 2007 to 2008, Marcuccilli said in remarks printed in Emmerich's book. The bank's return on equity also increased from 7.18 percent to 10.44 percent in one year.

The bank wants to spread the wealth. Star is offering the consultant's teachings as a customer perk, allowing clients to access Emmerich's seminars by phone.

"If our clients win, we win," said Ben Campbell, Star's Fort Wayne region president.

Steve Huggins, co-owner of Bluffton-based Pretzels Inc., attended the event.

"I think that gal is spot-on, that people do need to re-energize from the ground floor up in their personal lives and their professional lives," he said afterward.

Campbell said leaders in any industry can relate to Emmerich's stories because she talks about workplace behavior, including gossiping.

Emmerich has been consulting on workplace issues for 20 years.

"Everything, everything, everything is a leadership issue," she said.