



ROBERT MILLER
By Robert Miller

Gates to speak at SMU

Robert M. Gates, who recently retired as secretary of defense, has joined this year's William M. Byrd Distinguished Lectures Series as the final speaker.

The lecture is sponsored by Linda and Mitch Thart, starts at 5 p.m. Sept. 27 in McBurnin Auditorium at Southern Methodist University. David Gardner, a senior political analyst for CNN, will host the interview.

Gates served under Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama as the 21st U.S. secretary of defense from 2006 to 2011. He received the



ROBERT GATES will be the featured lecture speaker Sept. 27.

Presidential Medal of Freedom, America's highest civilian honor, after announcing his retirement in June. Gates became defense secretary, Gates was

interim dean of Texas A&M University's George Bush School of Government and Public Service from 1996 to 2001 and ASST president from 2009 to 2006. Gates has spent 27 years with the CIA, rising from an entry-level position to director. He spent nearly nine years with the National Security Council and served three presidents in both political parties. Gates earned a master's degree from the College of William and Mary, a master's degree in history from Indiana University and a doctorate in Russian and Soviet history from Georgetown University. He also earned an intelligence degree at the U.S. Air Force.

"SMU is honored to have Dr. Gates join the Byrd Distinguished Lectures Series," said Brad Chavis, SMU's vice president for development and external affairs. "This special event promises to be a unique night of thought-provoking discussion and a glimpse into the future of international relations."

Beginning Aug. 15, all guest seats will be made available to the general public for purchase. For more information, go to www.smu.edu/lectures.

Inventor from Yale comes to FW museum

Dr. Annissa G. Ramirez, an associate professor of materials engineering at Yale University, will explore the science of nanotechnology during a 7 p.m. lecture next Thursday at the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, 1001 Gandy St., in Fort Worth's Cultural District.

A lightweight, resilient and stronger, Ramirez will discuss how nanotechnology can be used in materials by not re-creating a magnetic field. She will share the research data done on these

Small Business Buzz

A weekly report on small-business owners and entrepreneurs in North Texas.



QUESTIONS OR COMMENT? Staff writer Sheryl Owen wants to hear your ideas and suggestions about our small-business coverage. E-mail her at sheryl@dfw.dallasnews.com.

THE FIVE

Also see expert profiles of seven recommendations each week on topics useful to small-business owners. This week, Dallas asks consultant Elaine Schuch "Florida, a cold will kill" in our State of Commerce. The ways to increase your sales, really.



1. Know what you sell

It's not your product or service, but how your product or service helps customers. For example, people aren't looking for printing, they're looking for increased business from professional sales materials.



2. Get referrals

You have more credibility when a customer recommends you. These leads are easier and take less time to sell.



3. Find out why customers choose you

The reasons why customers picked you over a rival are a good predictor of other prospects. They also show what you must do to continue as a preferred supplier.



4. Follow up

Missed an email when the sales process goes cold? Don't panic. It is often the cause. Use customer relationship software to manage leads and customers.



5. Figure out what drives your business

Why is your market or service needed? Find customers who need a solution for those needs. Nothing is worse than raising a sale because you're late to meet a customer's need.

FRANK SCHUCHEN is a former flight instructor who started his own training and consulting business. He's been writing in *Small Business Buzz* since 2004. You can follow him on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Schuch is a graduate of the World Business Institute. He's also a two-time award-winning author for *Entrepreneur* and *Inc.* magazines. He's also a frequent speaker at trade shows and seminars. He can be reached at frank@schuchconsulting.com or on Twitter at [frank_schuch](http://twitter.com/frank_schuch).



48%

Of small-business owners choose to use direct deposit for payroll, according to a 2010 survey by the Electronic Payment Association.

SMALL TALK | JOYCE ROSENBERG

Be a cool boss amid heat wave

Let workers see your human side, work on staff morale and don't sweat the rules.

The scorching heat this summer is giving small-business owners a great opportunity to create some good will with their employees.

When the heat index outside is 105, anything from a few minutes of working in a cool room or off work going toward helping workers feel appreciated. And it might help you keep them when the job market gets better.

Of course, in places such as Texas and Arizona, going to work when the temperature is above 100 is part of life. But in other parts of the country, those temperatures aren't the norm, and people struggle more to get through the workday. No matter who your normal climate, you might want to consider ways to give your employees some relief and to:

Kind words

Although you're probably as both cool by the heat as your staffers are, it's time for managers to say, "How are you



The heat wave is taking its toll on Britton Kuska, owner of Volker Bicycles in Kansas City, Mo. Fans and cold drinks go a long way toward halting employee spirits and morale in workplaces without air conditioning.

do employees have to pay for them?

You might want to think about getting a refrigerator, if you don't already have one. And then go to a warehouse club retailer and stock up on

everyone go home early. Kops suggests going even further — offer staffers a day off. It may not be the company policy to have what Kops calls "heat days." But the odds, which will vary

CONSUMER WATCH

Airlines asked to refund tax

FAA lost levy power after July 22, affecting some tickets, IRS says.

Air passengers who bought plane tickets before the airlines had to stop collecting U.S. ticket taxes introduced in 1991 on July 23 may be entitled to a refund of the tax.

The Federal Reserve Service, in a notice posted Wednesday on its website, said it has asked the airlines to repay eligible customers who request refunds. It says who don't receive one from the airlines can submit claims to the IRS under special-law being developed, according to the statement.

"We agree that passengers are entitled to a refund based on precedent and case law from previous tax laws," Steve Lott, a spokesman for the Air Transport Association, said about uncollected ticket taxes.

"But we are guided by the IRS guidance on how to most efficiently get the refund. We believe it's the IRS responsibility to issue or reimburse the Treasury that has the tax money, not the airlines," Lott said.

The airlines opposed collection of ticket taxes, and most raised fares by similar amounts when the Federal Aviation Administration resumed raising and they expired July 29 after Congress failed to extend the agency's funding.

Carriers aren't required by law to issue refunds, said Frank Kerch, a spokesman for the IRS. The agency would prefer they do, Kerch said.

The IRS may have difficulty tracking refund payments because electronic tickets do not have a paper trail, but a passenger may need to make a purchase, Kerch said.

"At this point, we are recommending passengers contact the IRS for a refund, since the tax funds are allocated to the IRS in the form of payments, not travel," said Brady King, a spokeswoman for Dallas-based Southwest Airlines.

By Nancy Green

COMPANIES IN THE NEWS

The following companies are featured in this week's *Companies in the News* section. For more information, visit www.dallasnews.com/business/companies.

A-C	
A.H. Belo	30D
Academy Sports & Outdoors	31A
Boeing	30D
CRJ Properties	37A
Conoco	37A
ConocoPhillips	37A
Children of the Holy Spirit	37A
Convergint	37A
CP Properties	37A
Dart Industries Group	37A
Orlando Sentinel	37D
Group	37D
H-W	
Hanger Inc. (Lobby Partners)	37A
ITW	37A
Logistics	37A
Logistics	37A
Lyondell	37D
H. Ochs	37D
PostNet	37D
Starbucks	37D
Stamps	37D

metals, as well as talk about her newest invention: a solid-state liquid metal, that can be dissolved and manipulated into places with a magnetic field.

The lecture is part of the museum's Cool Science Week, from Tuesday to Aug. 8, which focuses on the science of cold things and cool science technology.

Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for students, children 2 to 12 and seniors 50 and older. Buy tickets online at www.kit.edu/thissummer, by calling 877-555-3640 or in person at the museum ticket office.

For information about the museum, visit the website or call 877-555-3640.

dealing with this awful heat?" and his response that money and "payed," said Beverly Kays, an employee relations consultant in Sierra Vista, Calif.

Kays said a few kids would need some understanding can lift a worker's spirits. So can letting employees know that you appreciate that it can be hard or to get through the workday and still do a good job when everyone is so uncomfortable.

This approach is particularly important if you have premises, such as a factory or auto repair shop, that can't be air-conditioned. Your workers may really be suffering and would feel better if you show your human side.

Drinks are on you

Are the only cool drinks on your premises in a cold drink machine? And

bottles of water, used because it's that way you can help them survive, too. It probably won't break the bank, and you'll be saving a lot of good will.

Kays suggests bringing in ice cream. Or pizza — it may not cool anyone off, but it will lighten everyone's mood. Depending on how big your staff is, it can get expensive.

Mr. Kays said, "Go in, it's going to come back in speeder" in January.

Hot time

If your air conditioning needs don't hold down at the worst possible time, you need to get fans in quickly. If you have a direct duct, relax so that staffers can be as comfortable as possible until the AC is back.

If your business can stand a few lost hours of productivity, consider letting

keep the rules on the people?"

You might also let staffers who work at a PC do their work from home. This can be essential if there's a problem with the air conditioning in your company or if you have a staffer who has health problems that are worsened by the heat.

The oil means being aware of what's going on with your staff and how they're being affected by the heat wave.

There's something else you can do: If staffers are running the same distance at home to keep their cool, think about holding a "Bring Your Dog to Work Day." That would let them keep their pets comfortable without running up a big electric bill. Unless, of course, everyone would get a kick from having the poaches around.

By Andrew W. Hines

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