

Victor (Tory) Kinson

Knoxville, TN | [Tory's LinkedIn Page](#)

Lecturer | CEO | Executive & Business Coach | Keynote Speaker | Volunteer

Everyone is born with special talents. My talent is being able to spot these in others. I love doing this and seeing how people can transform their own lives. I'm energized when I see these individuals become major contributors to a team's strategy and execution. With over three decades of enriching the business landscape from field marketing all the way to the C-Suite my journey has led me to Haslam College of Business, where I teach Global Business Strategy and International Business. As the owner of Apex Consulting, I've honed a niche in Leadership and Business Coaching with a growing list of clients and industries and over 20 keynotes.

My work experience spans over 30 years and 60+ countries working as an accomplished and versatile executive leader specializing in international strategy, sales, and operations. I have led change management initiatives and helped struggling startups become fully-fledged enterprises. I am also fluent in Spanish and proficient in Portuguese.

My values center around connection and the power of the human spirit. When you are tapped into your value system, work no longer feels like work and amazing results can occur.

Core Competencies

- A.I. Innovation in Business
- Strategic Management
- Change Management
- Training & Leadership Development Programs
- International Trade Compliance & Strategy
- Business Planning and Goal Setting
- Entrepreneurial & Intrapreneurial Focus
- Cross-Cultural Negotiation
- B2B and B2C Go-to-Market Strategy

Professional Experience

University of Tennessee – Haslam College of Business

2022-Present

Lecturer – Dept of Management & Entrepreneurship

Faculty Lecturer and Leadership Coach for Executive MBA programs

- Founding member of department's Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) taskforce
- Deliver Business Strategy and International Business courses with an average 4.8/5.0 course feedback rating.
- Tap into my network of C-suite execs as guest speakers and mentors to students bringing the courses to life.
- Leadership coach for executive MBA programs with a proven performance record of successful transformations.
- Career Coach for the MSHRM program helping students with networking and job interview tools.
- Keynote speaker for topics such as strategy, influence, and cross-cultural negotiation.
- Coach and advisor for UT's International Case Competition team
- Courses taught include
 - BUAD 453 – Global Business Strategy
 - IB 409 – International Business
 - MGT 558 – Business Strategy and Financial Management

Apex Consulting – Knoxville, TN

CEO/Founder

2021-Present

- I founded a consulting company that specializes in executive coaching, and management consulting.
- I have delivered results to companies in Footwear, Import/Export, Restaurants, A/I tech, and EV technology.
- Leveraging my experience and success in the following areas:
 - Change management projects
 - Executive coaching and leadership development
 - Developing start-ups into scale-ups

- International expansion and cross-cultural negotiation.

Promat, Inc. (a subsidiary of Etex Group, NV) – Maryville, TN

Region Director and General Manager

2016-2021

CEO and General Manager of the North American subsidiary of Etex Group, NV leading the executive leadership team through a tumultuous start-up phase in the red and under \$11M to a profitable and fully functional manufacturing and distribution center hosting 3 divisional sales teams and \$40M in business.

- Direct supervision of seven executive leaders and four sales managers.
- Prepared monthly business reviews with deep dives into P&L for C-Suite leadership & stakeholders in Europe.
- Revamped the sales and marketing team skillsets to achieve our growth targets using key productivity tools such as Salesforce CRM, Showpad, and Talent2Grow.
- Developed a change management initiative that created accountability and employee recognition which was subsequently used throughout the entire corporation across 42 countries.
- Successfully completed ERP migration (Rootstock to SAP) on time and under budget during COVID-19.
- Under my direction, Promat had YOY sales growth (from \$11M to \$40M) while keeping overheads under budget and improving trade compliance.
- Coached sales team with negotiating and achieving sole-supplier status on several DOD projects.
- Awarded the News Sentinel “Top Places to Work” award for 3 consecutive years 2017-2019.
- Led the Etex group in employee engagement and consistently ranked in the top 5% highest engaged workforce of Etex Group worldwide even during a challenging change management initiative migrating to a new ERP.
- Identified, networked, and vetted acquisition targets with executive team for expansion in USA

Red Wing Shoe Co. – Red Wing, MN

Region Director and General Manager – B2B Americas

2011-2016

- General Manager for the Outfitters operation which included warehouse, distribution, export, and product customization operations for a team of over 50 employees.
- Coached and led a team of 6 direct reports and 44 indirect reports covering 2 brands, 3 product groups, and \$50M in P&L responsibility.
- During a downturn, I grew our upstream Oil & Gas market share 40% by creating 1-stop global PPE solutions for large multi-national clients such as Schlumberger, Halliburton, and NOV
- Sponsored and led the migration and adoption of Salesforce.com CRM for the team.
- Created accountable and measurable targets for local distributors in the Gulf of Mexico and Pan-American region, giving the partnership accountability and a benchmark to increase sales.

Director – Latin America/Caribbean

1998-2011

- Created a distributor training program “Brand Champions” that was adopted across the entire company. It created brand disciples in each region that personally assured their sales approach embraced our brand’s values.
- I identified and developed a new \$20M P&L region spanning two brands and three product groups.
- Led and developed a high-performing team of 3 direct and 21 indirect reports.
- Revitalized distribution partnerships by creating fair and measurable growth targets.
- Successfully relocated and closed our manufacturing partnership office in Leon, Mexico
- Two-time recipient of the most prestigious management award (2004 and 2009)
- 19% CAGR over the final 8 years of my tenure and
- Developed entry plan for Brazil and MERCOSUR markets.
- Created a solution for Venezuelan distributors to legally navigate currency controls and secure a \$1M contract with a large multinational client in the region.

- Through a value-based sales approach, our company became the only non-Mexican company invited into the design of safety footwear norms for Petroleos Mexicanos (PEMEX) resulting in many new opportunities.

Additional Experience

Account Executive Caribbean Region, *Black & Decker Latin America Group*

International Business Development Manager, *Black & Decker Latin America Group*

Territory Manager – National Accounts (Big Box), *Black & Decker North America Group*

Field Marketing Rep, *Black & Decker North America Group*

Industry Skills

- Spanish (Fluent), Portuguese (Proficient), English (Native), Artificial Intelligence (generative AI), Business Consulting, Leadership Coaching, Cross-Cultural IQ, CRM adoption, ERP migration (SAP, Rootstock, Movex), Business Process Improvement, DFARS, ITAR and Trade Compliance, Demand Planning, Specialized Production, Value-Based Selling, International Export and Logistics, Cross-Cultural Leadership, B2B Sales, Global/Local Customer Experience

Professional Certifications and Affiliations

Certified Translator (ATA)

US

International Coaches Federation (ICF) in process of reaching PCC level

US

Education

Harvard Business Impact – Cambridge, MA

2025

- Teaching with A.I. Seminar and Workshop

INSEAD – Fontainebleau, France

2018

- Executive Leadership Programme

Thunderbird School of Global Business – Glendale, AZ

2008

Master of Business in Global Management with a specialization in Portuguese

- Convinced the faculty to open a Portuguese class for myself and several other interested executives.
- Led teams on multiple semester projects and specialized in the presentation and execution of our projects.
- Graduated with highest honors and 3.8 GPA

The Citadel: Military College of South Carolina – Charleston, SC

1994

Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing with a minor in Spanish

- Achieved Cadet Officer rank and NCO rank every semester
- Company Academic and Campus Protocol Officer
- Mentored new cadets to ensure adherence to academic excellence and balance between military and academic life
- Judo Team Captain

Volunteering and Outreach

Rotary International – Farragut, TN

2021-Present

Youth Services Chair Lead Rotary's efforts in our community for our Youth Exchange Program and youth leadership in our high school and college service clubs (Interact and Rotaract.)

Water Mission Knoxville – Knoxville, TN

2021-2024

Area Advocate Team member of the Knoxville chapter of Water Mission. A Christian non-profit engineering organization dedicated to bringing clean water and hygienic washing stations in developing countries and disaster areas. In my role as advocate, I conduct presentations and outreach activities to get community sponsorship and volunteers for our annual “Walk for Water” even held each year. We have more than doubled our fundraising year over year.

All Saints Catholic Church – Knoxville, TN

2017-Present

Catechist for Youth Ministry Teach faith formation to catechumen ages 6-12 grade at our parish. Also involved with youth retreats as a team leader and chaperone.