



THE CEO WHISPERER

FORMER CORPORATE BIGWIG **MINDY MACKENZIE** REINVENTS HERSELF WITH A NEW BOOK AND A NEW CAREER AS A MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER TO THE C-SUITE SET.

BY J.P. ANDERSON

The business world isn't everyone's cup of tea, but it's a true passion for Mindy Mackenzie.

"I love the corporate tribe," enthuses the former chief performance officer of Beam, Inc. As Mackenzie embraces her new corporate calling as a speaker, a CEO advisor, and the author of *The Courage Solution* (out May 3), she reveals her passion for

leadership, her weakness for fashion, and why, after 18 moves, she's finally found home in Chicago.

What's in a (nick) name? Mackenzie's Beam, Inc. colleagues affectionately called her the "Velvet Hammer" for her graceful yet forthright, truth-telling manner. "I joked that they would take a beating from me and

come back for more, because they knew I adored them and was also fiercely supportive of the business."

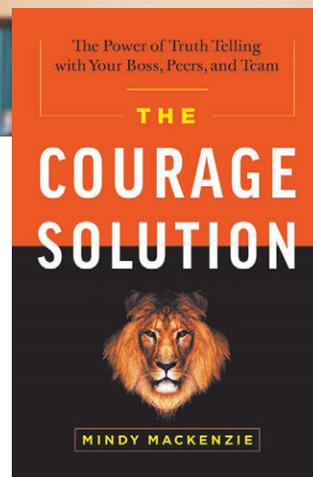
Leading the way. "I enjoy making a difference. That sounds super-trite, but it just jazzes me up."

Passion for fashion. "I love Dolce & Gabbana—those guys cut for a woman's figure."

Fun fact. "I used to be a

wedding singer back in my 20s, and I've cut a few CDs. My poor family and friends have suffered through all sorts of things." **Sweet home.** "Next year I will have lived in Chicago longer than anyplace else. I really feel like I have roots here, and will for a very long time."

Book signing May 23 at The Book Stall, 811 Elm St., Winnetka, 847-446-8880; thebookstall.com ■



Author Mindy Mackenzie at one of her favorite indie bookstores, The Book Stall in Winnetka.