

HEAVY HITTERS IN TECHNOLOGY

DEBORAH VAZQUEZ

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Deborah Vasquez founded IT placement firm Protech in 2000 – just when the tech market went into a meltdown. With 20 years of solid IT experience, including a stint as senior VP of worldwide sales and mar-

keting for a major software vendor, behind her, it took all of Vazquez's market savvy, contacts and determination to survive during the tech bust. But she did more than just survive. The business thrived, growing at a 50 percent annual rate while many competitors bit the tech dust.

A Broward branch opened this year and a Palm Beach County office is planned for 2005.

Vazquez thinks and acts outside the box. Her practical style is not to hire recruiters with staffing or executive search backgrounds. Instead, she hires IT professionals with hands-on tech experience.

"Only with this background can a recruiter determine who is qualified and who is not for a particular IT function or position," she said.