

Conference makes pitch for sales career

By Marie McGee
staff writer

A FUNNY THING happened to Nancy Gilmore on the way to the office.

She started an organization now known as Professional Women in Sales. That was about three years ago and all Gilmore originally set out to do was to organize a chapter of the National Association for Professional Saleswomen.

She began with a nucleus of 11 women. One of them was Lynn Evans, an energetic and promising student in one of the management training classes Gilmore was conducting in Detroit.

"HAVE YOU EVER heard of Professional Women in Sales?" she recalls asking Evans.

Evans replied that she hadn't but was interested. Gilmore said: "Well, we're going to start one."

Therein began the only organization of its kind in the area for women in sales. In fact, it has no male counterpart in the area at the present time.

Gilmore, of Livonia, became the group's first president. Evans is the current president.

Gilmore said that as a salesperson herself she found it was "an isolated profession."

"There was nowhere to go to talk



Nancy Gilmore sensed a need



Diane Dauble professionalism is the key



Cathy Bays easier to be a mom

about the successes — the big sale you clinched. Or talk about the doors that were slammed in your face. There was no chance for networking — an invaluable way to meet and exchange ideas."

HER OWN EXPERIENCES convinced her that the Detroit area was ripe for such an organization. That she guessed right is evidenced by the fact that the chapter soon became the largest chapter in the country with over

200 active members representing Fortune 500 companies and other major businesses.

"At our first meeting we had 225 people," recalled Gilmore, who at one time operated her own management training company, Performance Training Associates, and frequently conducted seminars for the Livonia Chamber of Commerce.

"Even now, we have on an average of 100 members at our monthly meeting," she added. The current membership is about 165.

To better serve its members, the Detroit area chapter split from the national organization recently to become Professional Women in Sales, a non-profit organization providing education information, networking, job bank, motivational speakers and sales training.

A HIGH POINT for the fledgling organization will come Saturday, Oct. 20, when the membership hosts an all-day sales conference at Mercy College featuring 34 workshops on various topics plus an address by Lt. Governor Martha Griffiths and keynote speeches by sales entrepreneurs Beverly Klevman and Carol Hyatt.

A subtitle for the seminar could very well be "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Sales but Didn't Know Who to Ask," commented Diane Dauble, another Livonia resident who is active in the organization.

Dauble is education chairman and played a key role in organizing the seminar by helping to arrange for the various workshops.

The workshops, she notes, cover all facets of successful sales techniques plus advice on how to dress, how to deal with differences in people and keeping it all together on the homefront.

THERE ARE SOME intriguing workshop titles, including: "Oh Lord, Please Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood" and "Finding the Job You Want or Has Princess Diana Retired Yet?" All conference facilitators are experts in their particular field of discussion. Some of the speakers come from the organization's own membership.

While the conference is geared for professional saleswomen, any woman thinking of entering a sales career is invited.

Price of the conference is \$40 for early registration (up to Oct. 19) and \$55 the day of event. The admission covers a coffee hour registration period in the morning, lunch with Griffiths as speaker, and a wine and cheese party at the conclusion of the day.

TO REGISTER or for further information, call 261-0410.

Dauble, a former English teacher in the Livonia public schools, fairly bubbles with enthusiasm for the group which she joined after she was plunked and had to make a career change.

Currently, she is a marketing representative for Loomis Armored Inc. — the only woman in this position in the state of Michigan.

Matching her enthusiasm is another Livonia resident and ex-teacher who switched to a sales career because it offered more opportunity and greater time flexibility in combining the role of mother and career woman.

She is Cathy Bays, who is presently on maternity leave from her sales control systems job.

"There's a lot of money to be made out there in sales," the three women note. "Women make excellent sales people. We have definite advantages. We communicate with others easier. We come across as being more honest."

"WE DON'T HAVE that male hustler image," they continued. "Women are more perceptive in picking up any vibes that could help or hinder a sale."

None of the three has encountered any great amount of harassment from male clients.

Professionalism is the key, they added. "If you have product knowledge, you don't have a problem."

And the higher the corporate status of the person you're dealing with, the easier it is to receive fair treatment. "You encounter more prejudice in a mom-and-pop operation than you do at the corporate level," said Dauble.

Women are returning in droves to the work force, Gilmore noted, but most are in lower paying jobs like fast food operations or getting stuck in "pink collar" secretarial jobs.

Sales careers, she feels, offer stronger economic power at a faster pace.

The outlook for women in sales is excellent, according to PWS vice president Mary Walsh, a recruiter for major Detroit area companies seeking professional salespeople.

"In my eight years as a recruiter, I have seen twice as many women enter the sales field and earn twice as much money as they did five years ago."

Gilmore, Dauble and Bays all add a resounding amen to that.

'Women as Leaders' is topic for lecture

Marilyn French Hubbard, president of Marilyn Hubbard Associates, will speak on "Women as Leaders" at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 17 in Women-center, Oakland Community College, Orchard Ridge Campus, Marilyn Hubbard Associates is a management consulting firm specializing in human resource management and development.

French-Hubbard is also founder and national president of National Association of Black Women Entrepreneurs, a network of women who own and operate their own businesses.

She has received much national recognition for her work. She was available.

called a "Top Working Woman in the U.S." by Mademoiselle Magazine in 1980, and her success story was told by "Working Women" in the same year. The U.S. Small Business Administration designated her National Minority Owned Business Advocate of the Year in 1980.

French-Hubbard's talk is the next event of the Womencenter Adventures in Growth series, which is focusing on the theme of "Women and Leadership." The talk will be given in Room J-306. A \$3 donation is requested. Child care is available.

Speech coach returns

Lloyd Smith, a retired high school teacher who continues to coach the debate team at Farmington High School, was among those who gathered for the Michigan Association of Speech Communication's fall conference.

The 59-year-old organization is made

up of educators, broadcasters, forensic associations and speech coaches. They band together every fall to celebrate their mutual public service to various communication groups in the state. The association's aim is to bring to the public effective, professional communication education and service.

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