

Auto rep advises 'be flexible'



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hiring decisions are beginning to smile more on those with a master's degree in business administration.

She advised women to learn about the business world, study accounting and be able to read a financial statement.

The salary is "extremely good," in her opinion. Entering with an MBA would mean a salary of \$16,000-\$20,000, depending on the school attended.

"A field representative is regarded as a stepping stone in the company," she said. She added that at times it is a pressure job, but not every day.

Ms. Stasek offered encouragement with the statement that Ford Motor Co. is dedicated to moving women up through the organization.

"Women need a sense of humor, and to be more adaptable in an area dominated by men," she concluded. "The system is so cumbersome, it can't be too flexible. So we have to be flexible, have a sense of humor and not allow things to bother us."

Cynthia Stasek (right) took time at a recent career conference to discuss her work as a sales representative for the Ford Motor Co. with Carolyn Jarosz. (Staff photo by Sherry Kaban)

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Labor hierarchy is challenged

By KAREN ANNE KOPEKIN

Although women have, for many years, served in large numbers in Detroit-area auto plants, most agree they have been pigeonholed in low-paying, dead-end jobs.

In the last 10 years, because of increased union representation for women, they have begun a push into the higher-paying positions.

In the United Auto Workers, women have started to assume more powerful positions in bargaining committees and in locals. They have fought for women's rights in both high-ranking elected positions and at the grass roots level.

Gina Spencer, formerly of Livonia, now holds the vice-chairmanship of Local 174 in Redford Township. But she began her fight to get women better-paying jobs more than 12 years ago.

Local 174 works out of Livonia's Fisher Body plant, which cuts and sews interior upholstery for many General Motors cars.

The plant employs about 4,800 workers—more than two-thirds women.

"Although at least two-thirds of the women that work at Fisher Body are women," Mrs. Spencer said, "until 10

'Although at least two-thirds of the people who work at Fisher Body are women, until 10 years ago we had virtually no women to represent us in the union.'

—UAW Rep. Gina Spencer

years ago, we had virtually no women to represent us in the union.

"So I became involved because of the great need for representation for women," she added.

"Men had always represented us and they usually moved up to supervisory positions. The union was just a step on a longer ladder for them."

"I had no desire to move up. I just wanted to help the women working around me who weren't getting the same opportunities the men were," continued Mrs. Spencer, who began working at Fisher Body as an assembler 22 years ago.

Women must represent women because they know each other's special needs and problems, she added.

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GINA SPENCER

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