

B7

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BUSINESS

Women executives get vocal about what they want

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As more women gain experience in corporate management and executive roles, they have become much more vocal in taking control of their desired career paths.

That's one of the recent trends that Andrea Eisenberg, managing director of Right Man Consultants, has seen over the past few years.

Eisenberg, who spoke to Women In Management members this week at the Stamford Yacht Club, highlighted the challenges women are experiencing as they manage their executive career paths.

WIM, an association of women business owners and corporate executives in Fairfield County, invited Eisenberg, who provides career transitioning coaching and consulting services to corporate clients, to discuss issues facing women executives today.

Women are taking charge of their careers and speaking up, Eisenberg said. They are evaluating their values and skills and have become more eloquent in saying what they can bring to an organization.

The trend started in the early 1990s and has intensified for a variety of reasons. Many women have been pushed off their career tracks because

WORK MATTERS

of downsizing or corporate mergers or acquisitions, she said.

After the second or third time they have found themselves thrown off course, she said, they began to evaluate where to take their careers.

"People now really want to have, satisfying careers," she said.

Businesses are becoming more receptive - listening to their employees when they talk about where they can best contribute to an organization, she said.

As more women are assessing where they want their careers to go, they have also become more concerned about the way they are perceived by their coworkers, she said.

There is a new wave of people who want to be looked at as a leader no matter what position they hold in a company, she said.

But to want to be a leader and actually be viewed as one takes feedback, she said.

Eisenberg suggests an evaluation system called 360-degree feedback. The system takes the evaluation process out of the hands of one person and

gives it to the many people who interact with an employee on a regular basis - peers and customers, as well as supervisors.

But being evaluated doesn't have to be a formal process. Eisenberg suggests gathering a circle of contacts and friends and interviewing them.

The experience can be a real eye-opener for managers when it comes to skills they need to work on, she said.

Eisenberg's advice is timely, especially as more women are evaluating what they want to do with their lives, said WIM member Annette Richmond, who attended the event.

"Things have changed in the way people approach their careers during the past 10 or 20 years," she said.

