

PROFESSIONAL AND EXECUTIVE WOMEN

The new mystique is that women can have it all. There's a whole new generation of women today, flogging themselves to compete for success according to the male model - in a work world structured for men with wives to handle the details of life.

- Judith M. Bardwick

As a professional woman you face a myriad of conflicting values in a culture that has not yet adjusted to women's changing roles and does not yet have a social structure to support both career and family. Despite many advances made by women, you know the "glass ceiling" still hovers overhead. If you are a woman of color, research indicates that real barriers exist to your advancement, barriers that coaching and mentorship may mitigate. Several Sophia Associates executive coaches specialize in coaching high-performing, high-achieving women as a specialty.

As a "wisdom partner" to executive and professional women, we help you to:

- Become aware of the cultural context that influences the ability for women to advance in both their careers and in their personal development.
- Develop your *authentic leadership presence*, bringing all of who you are into your business and work
- Identify and eliminate subtle blocks that keep you from being effective and powerful
- Discover work that both inspires and rewards
- Increase your ability to work effectively in challenging circumstances
- Develop a greater capacity for decision-making from a place of power and clarity
- Negotiate from a place of power and confidence
- Communicate clearly, distinctly and powerfully in order to produce the highest performance results from those around you
- Learn to be seen as a valued and integral part of your organization
- Develop your presentation skills - articulating opinions, ideas or solutions *confidently* as you increase your visibility and credibility within your organization and industry



"They told me I was 21, I was black, and I was a woman, so there was no way I was going to make it in the financial services industry." -- Melissa Bradley, President and CEO of Bradley Holding Company, New York (in Fast Company)

- Gain greater clarity around what values you hold that must be present in your life and work in order to bring you the greatest personal and professional satisfaction and success
- Design your life and work to optimize personal energy, resources and time
- Integrate your family life with your work requirements without imposing unattainable goals of "balance" and "superwoman"

Most importantly, you benefit from *an objective but challenging sounding board* that provides you:

- The ability to express yourself honestly in a confidential, supportive and non-judgmental environment
- The support for your unique personal and professional development through frequent dialogue that evokes action and sustainable results
- The opportunity to objectively evaluate your strengths and thereby leverage your value to the organization
- A pro-active plan for your career path and a personal marketing strategy for your achievements
- The opportunity to discretely evaluate possibilities or confidentially "talk out" management strategy
- Time to explore blocks to your success, either in your thinking, your beliefs, your feelings or your behaviors
- "Real-time" self-observation practices and exercises to immediately experience new results while replacing ineffective behaviors
- Access to timely and current research on women in corporations, leadership programs for women and possible communities and networks for executive women

Our approach is based on an inclusive model that values intuition as well as analysis, relationships as important as results, personal time as essential as work, and learning as valuable as mentoring. We advocate the ability to be adept at multiple leadership styles that include both *backbone* and *heart*. Extensive reading, research and writing on the topic of Gender in Organizations and issues of Diversity and Inclusion inform our coaching.

Ms. Rodriguez, Principal of Sophia Associates, brings the breadth of her personal and professional experience as a professional, woman, mother, wife and coach to bear on her ability to empathize, yet challenge, her clients.

Organizationally, we support cultural shifts that include advancing women and minorities as a key strategic driver for successful business results, recruitment and retention, and executive development.

"In an era where we are living with the excesses of corporate American, having overall diversity at the top inevitably forces a degree of balance in the decision making. As a result you get a richer understanding of our customers, employees, and community. Pitney Bowes has been successful at moving women to the top because of our long-standing culture of respect for individual uniqueness combines with a strong commitment at the top for a level playing field."

-- Johana G. Torson, Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer, Pitney Bowes in 2002 Catalyst Census of Women Corporate Officers and Top Earners in the Fortune 500

Please call us at Sophia Associates, Inc., 410-544-5262 or email alicia@sophia-associates.com

Let's discuss how executive coaching can benefit executive women at your organization as individuals building leadership competencies or as an organizational commitment to diversity and women's development.