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Can You Climb the Corporate Ladder in Stilettos?
New Study Suggests the Ascent is Trickier Than Ever

NEW YORK, N.Y. – There are 63 million working women in America, but according to a recent study released by Catalyst, a non-profit research organization that researches women at work [Catalyst.org], women continue to be severely underrepresented in top corporate leadership positions.

The study found that in 2005, women held 16.4 percent of corporate officer positions (those appointed or elected by the board), up just 0.7 percentage points from 2002. If things keep growing at the rate they have for the past decade (0.82 percentage points per year), it would take 40 years for there to be an equal number of women and men in Fortune 500 corporate officer ranks.

Lynette Lewis, career and women’s initiative expert, has personally lived through the struggle that these statistics reveal—an overall scarcity of role models available to mentor women in the precarious climb up the ladder. In her new book, *Climbing the Ladder in Stilettos: 10 Strategies for Stepping Up to Success and Satisfaction at Work* (Thomas Nelson, October 2006, ISBN: 0-8499-0186-3, \$21.99), Lewis outlines ten steps for finding purpose and joy, whether a woman is stuck in a dead-end job or living the career of her dreams. Advocating the concept of “empowered mentoring,” Lewis challenges women to take the initiative versus waiting for a mentor to handpick them.

“Even with successful examples like Oprah Winfrey, Martha Stewart, and Condoleezza Rice, there is still a significant lack of female executives in the real world who have the time to mentor women one-on-one,” says Lewis. “My passion is to inspire women to think outside their typical mentoring definitions and recognize the many ways they’re already being mentored every day.”

For 20 years, Lewis navigated the corporate ladder in an eclectic marketing career that spanned a range of industries, from fundraising at a major university to serving as a senior marketing leader for the National Women’s Initiative at Deloitte & Touche in New York City. Though her resume is now filled with accomplishments and awards, Lewis isn’t a stranger to the disappointments and frustrations that many women face as they struggle to find purpose on their climb up the corporate ladder.

Lewis speaks to thousands of women each year on topics such as finding purpose, success, and satisfaction at work. A frequent television and radio guest, she has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post*, *Dallas Morning News*, *Martha Stewart Living Radio*, and hosts a weekly podcast “Lunch with Lynette.”

To learn more, visit www.lynettelewis.com.

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