

## **“WOMEN IN TRANSITION “**

**PURPOSE:** To recognize the achievements of women making career changes or returning to the workplace.

**BENEFITS:** To the Club:

- Increase Membership
- Learn About New Career Opportunities
- Encourage Members who are thinking about career changes
- Opportunities for Networking
- Opportunity for award and recognition at state level

To the Panelists:

- Opportunity to make a difference in other’s lives
- Opportunity to serve as a role model for other women
- Opportunity for networking
- Opportunity to learn about BPW

### **HOW TO DO THIS PROGRAM:**

1. Choose one of your regular club meetings to present this program. Choose a title that sparks interest, like “How My Career Change Enabled Me to Achieve My Goals.”

2. Form a panel of 4 or 5 people who have made a significant career change. (Ask 6 to make sure you have at least 4 panelists in case of cancellations)

3. Recruit panelists from other organizations such as:

Chamber of Commerce  
College Leadership Programs  
Women’s Programs in your Community  
New Businesses  
Ask participants to help find panelists  
Ask your own club members

4. Ask the following questions of each panelist—responses will still vary.

- 1) Why did you decide to make a career change?
- 2) Why did you choose that particular career field?
- 3) How did you acquire information to determine if it was a compatible career choice and what action would be needed to obtain it?
- 4) Who were your support systems during this time of change?
- 5) How did the people closest to you (family/friends) feel about your change?
- 6) If you had to do it over again, would you? Would you choose the same career? Why or Why Not?

5. Allow the audience to ask questions of the panelists and if time permits, share their own career experiences.

6. Present each panelist with a certificate of appreciation.

7. Put them on your newsletter mailing list for at least 3 months.
8. Follow up in a few months (preferably 3 – 6). Contact members and guests by phone or email. Ask the following questions.
  - 1) Did anyone make a career change after the presentation?
  - 2) What, if any, effect did the presentation have on that decision?
  - 3) What value do you think this type of program provides to women in general?
  - 4) Do you have any suggestions that you think would improve the program?

**To be eligible, a panelist must:**

Have made a career change that was diametrically different from the previous career or  
Have been absent from the work force at least 3 years before taking on a new career  
Be actively involved in the new career at present

**Prepare Panelists**

- Mail out to panelists the Questionnaire
- Use their one paragraph personal bio in your agenda and newsletter.
- Start early enough to send them your newsletters leading up to and announcing the program.
- Encourage them to bring a support person, friend or family, if they would like. These are potential members for your club, too. (Be sure they know the amount the guest will need to pay.)
- Give them the list of questions you will ask.
- Provide them with a list of panelists.
- Provide them with the agenda of the meeting.
- Give information on time, place, and dinner or lunch arrangements i.e. their meal is complimentary

**Day of Event**

- Set up half circle of chairs or long table in front of group.
- Use microphone if available.
- Provide an agenda with program information and panelist information.
- Have each panelist tell their story, using the questions as a guide.
- Allow question and answer time.
- Thank all panelists with certificates. Small gifts from BPW catalog or with your LO logo are also nice remembrances.