

REFLECTIONS BY LIZ - FINDING YOUR OWN PLACE

February 2005

In my salon this week Jennifer Pinck, President of Pinck & Co., told her story of how she entered the construction field by chance, how she earned her place at the table in often unfriendly environments and how she subsequently shaped her own construction management business serving nonprofits, such as homeless shelters, daycare centers and affordable housing, whose buildings create better lives. As I listened to Jennifer, I asked myself several questions. First, how did she survive and indeed thrive in tough environments? Second, what inspired her to start her own business and to figure out what it should be? Third, what should established businesses do who want to attract and keep talented women like her? The answers clearly aren't simple, but they suggest:

- Her drive showed the power of her interest in succeeding. Indeed she wanted so much the construction skills and experience that she accepted the environment. She willingly paid her dues.
- A period in Germany not working gave her the space to define what she really wanted and inspired her to create her own place where her work represented her values.
- Finally organizations must provide welcoming environments or they will lose great talent. The talent will figure out that they can do it better by themselves.

I loved Jennifer's story because it was my story and that of so many of the successful women of our era. I love my business because I work with people like Jennifer from whom I am constantly learning.

Jennifer's remarks are available at <http://www.lizlevin.com> and look for Jennifer's story in the April edition of Women's Business. Also, save March 28th for the next salon--Reaching For The Stars--with Craig Miller.

