

# Improving America's International Competitiveness

*This was first presentation of the 1993-94 Corporate Partners/Alumni/Faculty Breakfast series.*



*Professor Judy Rosener is the author of **America's Competitive Secret: Women**, recently published by Oxford University Press.*

"Sex and America's International Competitiveness," featuring GSM professor of public policy Dr. Judy Rosener was the first of five presentations in the 1993-94 Corporate Partners/Alumni/Faculty Breakfast Series hosted by GSM.

During the presentation, held on November 18 at the Beckman Center, Dr. Rosener highlighted the changing role of women in the American work-force since WWII and how women are uniquely positioned for leadership in an increasingly global economy.

For example, Rosie the Riveter in World War II went home after the war. Her job was temporary or, if permanent, merely a support role such as secretary or assistant. Today, however women in the workforce are a fact of life. Women want careers, not just jobs. And as more companies are going to run mean and lean, they need the best employees—ones that are flexible and able—and they are finding that some of the best are women.

With women being considered as a new labor pool for potential leaders, opportunities arise for women as challenges arise for men. "In the 'old world order' the man's job has been to provide and protect. Work was his arena, just like the home was a woman's. The current changes challenge some of these deeply held values and

can threaten a man's ego and esteem," according to Rosener. "Most organizations are grappling with this issue with varying rates of success, but there is positive movement for both men and women."

In a global framework, companies are finding that women are comfortable with ambiguity, sometimes much more so than men. This may be one reason why we are beginning to see an increasing number of women being posted abroad by their organizations and functioning very well overseas.

Rosener also pointed out that women in leadership potential positions today understand that being flexible is very important to their careers. Often they will volunteer for assignments abroad to gain the position and authority that would take them much longer to attain here at home. This is happening not only in America but with women in Japan and other countries as well.

Rosener believes that "women's ability to deal more comfortably with diversity and change will be a strong benefit for organizations in the future, both internationally and domestically."

*In addition to "Sex and America's International Competitiveness," the 1993-94 Corporate Partners/Alumni/Faculty Breakfast Series is scheduled to include: "Bill Clinton's First Year Anniversary Report Card," on January 20, 1994; "The Global Investor," on March 11; "Human Resources in Successful Competitors: Motivating Key Personnel - examples from the U.S., Asia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East," on April 19; and "Information Technology and Business Value: Untangling the Productivity Paradox," on May 20. All presentations feature GSM faculty members and begin at 7:30 a.m. with breakfast, followed by the presentation from 8:15 to 9:00 a.m. For information and reservations, please call the GSM Events Line at (714) 856-5781.*