SECRETARIAL AND STENOGRAPHIC DUTIES AND
QUALIFICATIONS IN DEPARTMENT STORES
IN DALLAS AND FORT WORTH

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SECRETARIAL AND STENOGRAPHIC DUTIES AND
QUALIFICATIONS IN DEPARTMENT STORES
IN DALLAS AND FORT WORTH

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By

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure Used in Gathering Material</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How the Data Were Presented</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. RESULTS OF SIMILAR STUDIES</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Institute of Business Survey</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charters and Whitley Survey</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. DEPARTMENT STORE SURVEY</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation between Stenographer and Secretary</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Necessary Qualities</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills and Abilities Required of Stenographers</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Routine</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancement of Stenographers</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment of High School Graduates</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Limits of Stenographers and Secretaries</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries of Stenographers and Secretaries</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers' Reasons for Discharging Secretaries</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Training Sponsored by Stores</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business College Training</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequacies of Stenographers and Secretaries</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Check List of Secretarial Traits</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George-Deen Act</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words of Warning</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions Made by Department Store Officials</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Education Requirements of Stenographers..............................</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Education Requirements of Secretaries..................................</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Six Qualities Stressed Most According to Surveys One, Two, and Three, Respectively</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. General Duty Requirements Placed on Stenographers as Revealed by the Department Store Survey</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. General Duty Requirements Placed on Secretaries as Revealed by the Department Store Survey</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Employers' Age Preferences for Stenographers..........................</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Employers' Age Preferences for Secretaries.............................</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Salary Range of Stenographers...........................................</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Salary Range of Secretaries.............................................</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this survey, *Secretarial and Stenographic Duties and Qualifications in Department Stores in Dallas and Fort Worth*, is to discover and present the actual views and opinions of department store officials who were consulted personally by the writer of this thesis. A thorough understanding of what business men expect of their employees is an absolute necessity if commercial departments of high schools and colleges are to train young men and women in such a way that they may be successful in the business world. Originally it was planned to present the views of officials of different types of business organizations in the two cities, but after several interviews it was decided that a detailed study of the duties and qualifications of stenographers and secretaries in one particular type of business organization, a common one operating on a large scale, could be studied much more in detail. It is readily agreed that qualifications and duties of secretaries and stenographers will vary somewhat with the types of business concerns. This holds true
especially with duties, but personal qualifications will not change considerably with the types of businesses.

Procedure Used in Gathering Material

It was decided that by talking with the employers, personnel directors, and secretaries personally more valuable information could be obtained than by any other method. Names and addresses of officials of the various department stores were obtained and appointments were made by mail. This proved to be very satisfactory, since a brief explanation of the purpose of the interview was given in the letter, and the employer knew in advance what was expected of him. All interviewees seemed extremely glad to cooperate and give of their time, and this willingness to help was appreciated greatly. Each official seemed to realize the importance of close contact and full cooperation between schools and businesses, since it is in this way that school authorities can know what is the necessary training to equip students adequately for different phases of business. Obviously, the business man is aided in this way as well as the student and the school.

After expressing appreciation to some employers for their helpfulness and for information received, the writer was pleased to have them express their own appreciation for the interest shown by schools in wanting to find out just what is expected of graduates of commercial departments.
A carefully planned questionnaire was used as a basis for interviews. Questions on various duties, personal qualifications, educational requirements, salaries, and many others were included in the questionnaire, and personal opinions of interviewees as to weaknesses of their stenographers and secretaries were invited and encouraged. This information was given gladly, and a great deal of attention will be given to specific phases of the questionnaire as they were handled through the interviews. It seems important that officials of commercial departments and commercial schools everywhere should have first hand information as to weaknesses of employees. By constant revision and improvement of the commercial curriculum these expressed weaknesses may be overcome.

It is probably needless to state that much additional information was obtained after the interest of the officials was aroused. Almost without exception, the employers gave much more information than was asked for.

How the Data Were Presented

Chapter II of this thesis will present the results of two other surveys made in this same field. These surveys were made by W. W. Charters and Isadore B. Whitley of the University of Pittsburgh, and by the American Institute of Business. In addition to these two surveys, opinions of several authorities will be given. Attention
will be given to what employers and authorities consider the most desirable character traits for stenographers and secretaries, the most undesirable qualities, and the duties of these employees. Then the results of these studies will be compared with those of the department store survey in Dallas and Fort Worth. Chapter III will be devoted to this comparison and to other information obtained through the department store survey. Chapter IV, Summary and Recommendations, will give the suggestions of employers interviewed, and will explain what Dallas Technical High School and other schools are doing to give commercial students experience with training in high school.

Scope

The information presented in Chapter III of this thesis was obtained through a study of twelve department stores employing sixty-seven stenographers and twenty-two secretaries. Eight of the stores on which the study is based are located in the city of Dallas, Texas, and four are in Fort Worth.
CHAPTER II

RESULTS OF SIMILAR STUDIES

A brief review of the results of other surveys that have been conducted in this field should prove helpful, and the results of two will be summarized before an attempt is made to give an analysis of secretarial and stenographic duties and qualifications in Dallas and Fort Worth department stores. In addition, the views of several authorities will be included in this chapter. Then these findings can be compared with those of the survey used as a basis for this thesis. It is evident that sizes and types of business organizations will have a great deal to do toward determining duties of stenographers and secretaries, but personal qualifications should remain about the same regardless of size or nature of the business. There are certain personal qualities and character traits that are necessary to the success of any individual, regardless of the nature of the trade or profession which he may follow. In this chapter and the one to follow an attempt will be made to give what employers feel are the necessary qualities for stenographers and secretaries. Attention will also be given to the necessary skills and abilities essential to any stenographer or secretary if she is to perform her duties
satisfactorily. Technical skills that need special emphasis will be included.

American Institute of Business Survey

In 1938, the American Institute of Business conducted a survey among business men of Des Moines, Iowa. The purpose of this survey was to determine character and personality traits considered most important in obtaining and holding a position. Each business man was requested to list ten qualities that he considered important in hiring a new stenographer. Technical requirements were also given. Altogether, sixty qualities were mentioned, and the sixteen most often repeated are given in the following list in the order of their rank.¹

1. Appearance
2. Personality
3. Capability
4. Initiative
5. Loyalty
6. Typing accuracy
7. Shorthand skill
8. Honesty
9. Cooperation
10. Transcription
11. Health
12. Experience
13. Education
14. Neatness
15. Dependability
16. Punctuality

Note that experience and education ranked twelve and thirteen respectively. Considerable attention will be given to these two in the next chapter.

In addition, thirty undesirable qualities were mentioned. Then these were prepared in the order of their importance, placing the most undesirable first, and so on. Following is a list of the twenty most undesirable qualities according to this American Institute survey:2

1. Dishonesty
2. Unreliability
3. Disloyalty
4. Insincerity
5. Inability to keep confidential matters secret
6. Laziness
7. Unwillingness to follow orders
8. discourtesy
9. Carelessness
10. Lack of initiative
11. Body odors
12. Poor health
13. Halitosis
14. Disagreeableness
15. Habitual lateness
16. Poor English
17. "Bossiness"
18. Excessive make-up
19. Excessive gossiping
20. Excessive giggling

Of all the undesirable qualities a stenographer or secretary may have, dishonesty is most objectionable according to business men in the city of Des Moines, Iowa, and unreliability and disloyalty run a close second and third. By checking the list of most desirable qualities again, it is found that the opposites of these three, honesty, reliability or dependability, and loyalty, are stressed strongly as being essential.

2Ibid.
A very important factor in the success of any stenographer or secretary is her efficiency in the technical skills. A report of these skills that need emphasizing in business training as revealed by the Des Moines employers is also given. Listed in the order of their importance, they are:

1. Accuracy in typing
2. Grammar
3. Spelling
4. Knowledge of words
5. Skill in shorthand
6. Transcription
7. Speed in typing
8. Use of the dictaphone

Note that according to this survey, accuracy in typing needs more emphasis in business training than any other technical skill, whereas the need of extra attention to typing speed is considerably less. Note, also, that most stenographers and secretaries are comparatively weak in grammar and spelling. It will be noticed later that this weakness is quite evident among employees in Dallas and Fort Worth department stores as well.

This particular survey conducted by the American Institute of Business in the city of Des Moines does not enlighten us to any great extent on the many varied duties of the stenographer and secretary. As has already been stated, these duties will be determined by several factors. Then, too, the duties of the stenographer will differ widely from those of the secretary. Distinction between
the stenographer and secretary will be made in Chapter III, this distinction being based on the opinions of employers interviewed in the department store survey. The different views should prove helpful to the stenographer or prospective stenographer who aspires to become a secretary.

Charters and Whitley Survey

Perhaps one of the most thorough surveys on duties, and one most often referred to, was made by W. W. Charters and Isadore B. Whitley of the University of Pittsburgh. Although the survey is considered by many as an analysis of conditions as they actually existed and not especially what should be, it still has its value. The study is a very detailed one, and will be mentioned only briefly here to be used for comparative purposes. A very careful survey of the duties of secretaries and stenographers was made, and a list with a grand total of 871 duties was compiled. Evidently, many of these duties are very minor and require only a very small part of the secretary's time. From this extensive list of specific duties twenty-five are chosen as being most common.

1. Typewriting letters
2. Answering the telephone
3. Dictation of letters
4. Transcription of letters
5. Use of the telephone--local
6. Addressing envelopes, packages, etc.
7. Inserting letters in envelopes
8. Folding letters
9. Ordering supplies of various kinds in the office
10. Placing telephone memorandum where employer can see it
11. Writing letters not dictated (composing letters)
12. Sending telegrams
13. Sealing mail
14. Signing mail (dictator's mail)
15. Cleaning and oiling typewriter
16. Marking, attaching, or getting enclosures
17. Getting material from files
18. Stamping letters, packages, etc.
19. Filing letters
20. Use of telephone (long distance)
21. Receiving telegrams
22. Typing telegrams
23. Reading incoming mail
24. Transcribing telegrams
25. Meeting callers

It will be noticed, of course, that these are specific duties, some of which are very minor and require no special training. Below is a much more general list of duties that should have more value.
1. Mailing duties
2. Taking dictation
3. Transcription
4. Typewriting
5. Filing
6. Duties connected with filing, indexing, etc.
7. Telephones
8. Editorial duties
9. Duties involved in meeting and handling people
10. Financial and bookkeeping duties
11. Clerical duties
12. Miscellaneous duties and personal services to employer

The survey conducted by Charters and Whitley also included a thorough study of the qualities found necessary to the success of the stenographer or secretary. Compare the following qualities with those stressed by the Des Moines business men. These, also, are listed in the order of their rank.

1. Accuracy 9. Personal pleasantness
2. Responsibleness 10. Personal appearance
3. Dependability 11. Speed
4. Intelligence 12. Reticence
5. Courtesy 13. Adaptability
8. Tact
As shown by these two surveys, there are differences of opinion among employers as to just what are the most essential personal qualities for secretaries and stenographers, but in general, essentially the same qualities are stressed. Accuracy, ranked as most important by Charters and Whitley, is ranked as number six by the American Institute of Business, and is termed simply "typing accuracy." Appearance, given first place in importance by the Des Moines employers, was ranked as number ten by the Charters and Whitley survey. However, it must be remembered that both of these qualities were among those most often mentioned as being necessary to success, regardless of the difference in placement by the two surveys. Ray Abrams, author of Business Behavior, says, "Business places value on pleasing appearance and conduct, on courteous reactions and responses, and on attractive grooming and personality."  

F. A. Faunce and F. G. Nichols have written a book entitled Secretarial Efficiency. Mr. Faunce was formerly secretary to the editor of the Atlantic Monthly; he has served as assistant editor of the Atlantic Readers, and has also served as assistant to the business manager of

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Wellesley College. With Mr. Nichols of Harvard University, he has presented some very worthwhile information for prospective secretaries. Following is a list of things that the efficient secretary must be able to do according to these two men, and *Secretary Efficiency*, in which this list is presented, merits the attention of any individual who is studying to be a secretary. The secretary must:

1. Understand and take efficient care of office equipment
2. Understand varied secretarial skills
3. Know how to follow detailed instructions in the right order
4. Give attention to her work—often to several tasks at once
5. Be willing to carry through minor duties, especially the monotonous ones and those that do not show how much work is involved
6. Buy supplies economically
7. Keep supplies ready at her employer's and her own desk
8. Make every motion count
9. Know how to plan and carry out every detail of the day's work and the week's work so that tasks are finished on time
10. Know how to use the odds and ends of time and supplies
11. Understand the personal requirements of her employer
12. Put through neat, well-arranged work
13. Be able to cooperate with others
14. Be patient with interruptions
15. Know how to telephone courteously and firmly when matters need special tact

Any secretary who is to cope with the above successfully will definitely need the following qualities as stressed by Nichols and Faunce in the same book: alertness,

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attention, dependability, interest, judgment, initiative, industry, accuracy, speed, orderliness. Compare these with the following traits stressed by S. J. Wancus, Assistant Professor of Business Administration, University of Arizona: responsibleness, judgment, initiative, interest, deportment and poise, knowledge of proper dress, cooperativeness, and loyalty.

C. F. Hainfield of New York University says:

To be really efficient and successful, the office assistant or secretary must have something in addition to a knowledge of the forms pertaining to the office and of the operation of the time-saving machines. The truly successful office worker must have certain personal qualifications. 5

Mr. Hainfield places special emphasis on the following character traits: trustworthiness, judgment, agreeableness, courtesy, accuracy, and general deportment. Certainly we cannot expect all authorities to agree on exactly the same character traits that are most essential to the secretary, but there are certain qualities that all will agree upon as being necessary to her success. This is evident by checking through the views of the several authorities mentioned in this review.

Six short staccato words beginning with "wh" are forever pricking the judgment of the secretary: What? Who?

Why? When? Which? Where? The alert secretary who answers these questions effectively has her attention on her work.6)

Every employer has his own ideas as to the most important character traits for stenographers and secretaries, but all employers will agree on certain very necessary ones. The following list is compiled from the two surveys discussed in this chapter and from the traits stressed most by the authorities mentioned. This list is limited, of course, to those qualities that appear to be most essential according to these studies; there is general agreement on many of them. So many qualities are listed in the surveys by Charters and Whitley and by the American Institute of Business that only the six given most importance in each survey will be included here. Qualities that are repeated by the several authorities will be included, but not in the order of their rank, since they were not listed that way previously. By handling the traits in this manner, there can be no doubt that the following reduced list is composed of the most essential qualities:

1. Initiative
2. Appearance
3. Personality
4. Capability

5. Loyalty  
6. Accuracy  
7. Responsibleness  
8. Dependability  
9. Intelligence  
10. Courtesy  
11. Alertness  
12. Attentiveness  
13. Interest  
14. Judgment  
15. Industry  
16. Speed  
17. Orderliness  
18. Deportment and poise  
19. Cooperativeness  
20. Trustworthiness  
21. Agreeableness  
22. Proper dress, neatness

Edgar C. Wickdall, Director of Secretarial Practice Department, The Packard School, New York, in collaboration with C. O. Thompson, Supervisor of Commercial Education, Mount Vernon, New York, and Kate Keenly, a secretary in the city of New York, has written a book called The Training of a Secretary. The book presents some sound ideas, and from it comes the following statement which appears to be significant:

To get through a day's work successfully, a secretary may have to put into use a number of special qualities. Some of these are character traits and some are mental qualities. First of all, she must like being a secretary; she must be interested in her work and loyal to her employer. She must have a good memory, good judgment, and systematic habits of work; be well informed and able to speak and write well, and have initiative. Her mind, and not her emotions, should control her acts. The successful secretary must have marked ability to see, observe closely, and remember.7

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7Edgar C. Wickdall, Clyde O. Thompson, and Kate Keenly, The Training of a Secretary, p. 3.
In the next chapter, a much more extensive list of desirable qualities will be given, the qualities having been determined by employers in department stores in Dallas and Fort Worth. The preceding reduced list will serve well as a comparison, and it will be interesting to note to what extent the studies agree.
CHAPTER III

DEPARTMENT STORE SURVEY

Differentiation between Stenographer and Secretary

Before the results of interviews concerning duties and qualifications of stenographers and secretaries in department stores in Dallas and Fort Worth are given, some of the differentiations between the secretary and stenographer as expressed by officials with whom interviews were held will be mentioned. What qualities must the successful secretary have that are not as necessary to the stenographer? What abilities are necessary to the secretary that are not so essential to the stenographer? These are typical questions asked in interviews, and some of the answers are enlightening as well as interesting. Following are some of the answers received:

1. The secretary must show more adaptability. Her duties are more varied and her work is broader.

2. The secretary makes contact with people in the outer office. She must have appraisal ability in order to determine who should and who should not be permitted to enter the employer's office and require his time.
Her work is more specialized; she works primarily with one person, her employer. She must possess more initiative and be able to carry more responsibility.

3. The secretary should have wider experience.

4. The secretary should be somewhat older; she must be entirely dependable.

5. The stenographer's work is mostly routine, while the secretary must have a knowledge of the personal nature of her employer's business; she is more on the "inside" and is somewhat a confidant of her employer.

6. The secretary is a super stenographer. She should have more education and experience and should be "tight lipped." She should have a better understanding of the business as a whole.

Other differences between the stenographer and secretary were given, but these were chosen as the best answers and will serve present purposes adequately.

Educational requirements placed on stenographers in Dallas and Fort Worth department stores are not exceptionally high. As will be noticed in the table below, three companies place no minimum whatsoever on the education of stenographers. Here ability to do the work is stressed, not education.

One employer made the statement that brains do the work, and that the stenographer should have "the quality
of Abraham Lincoln," which quality he was unable to define. Putting it simply, he stated that she should have good common sense and the ability to come out with the right answer. This same employer also stated, however, that a good education is splendid even though it may prove dangerous since, too often, the college trained individual finds difficulty in "getting down on the level with others." He further explained that many times the person whose education is cut short goes through life feeling that he should have something that education could give him, when in reality, education actually takes something away from many individuals and gives them false attitudes. Some inconsistencies are apparent here, but both arguments have their value. It seems evident that much depends on the individual, his characteristics, his general make-up, and his chief purposes in getting an education. Definitely, though, his predictions could be true in many instances.

TABLE 1

EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS OF STENOGRAPHERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Number of Stores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No minimum set by company</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least high school education</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least high school education, but business college training preferred</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least high school education, but college training preferred</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In no case did any company require stenographers to be college trained, even though two preferred college-trained workers, and one preferred the stenographer with business college training. This particular employer felt that in a good business school, the prospective stenographer is given training that is more thorough and complete. Six employers required that their stenographers have at least high school education.

TABLE 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Number of Stores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No minimum set by company</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least high school education</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least high school education, but business college training preferred</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least high school education, but college training preferred</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the two tables on education requirements of stenographers and secretaries, we notice readily that there is only slight difference in the requirements placed on the two. This is easily accountable in the fact that in almost every case it was the policy of the stores to promote stenographers to the position of secretary when this promotion was at all possible. If the stenographers are simply moved up in the firms, then the education requirements will remain about the same for both stenographer
and secretary, the major determining factor being experience and number of years service with the store. In no case was there a classing of stenographers and secretaries, such as the junior or senior classification.

Necessary Qualities

In Chapter II a brief summary was made of the results of two other surveys on necessary qualities or character traits for stenographers and secretaries. That part of the questionnaire for the department store survey probably received more attention than any other phase of the study, and the importance of desirable personal qualities was stressed by every employer. One employer went so far as to say that he would unhesitatingly discharge a secretary whose breath was constantly offensive. Many times the person in business considers these little personal attentions or inattentions far too lightly. Tonne in his Business Education emphasizes the importance of developing these desirable qualities when he states that if employers are asked for suggestions about improving business education, they are inclined to say:

Do not teach highly specialized and routine office skills; leave that to us. Do not try to teach the routine of the daily job; that will be mastered in the office or store. Teach the students honesty, reliability, loyalty, and other major character traits and you will have done all that is basically important.

1C. F. Tonne, Business Education, p. 106.
In attempting to get the opinions of employers concerning the essential personal qualities, each interviewee was given an entirely free hand. No limit was placed on the number of qualities he was to stress. In fact, he was encouraged to dwell at length on the subject of the development of these traits and some very helpful answers were received. A complete list of the qualities was kept and then they were compiled in the order of their importance, based on the number of times each was stressed by the various employers. Checking again with the survey conducted with the American Institute of Business, we find that appearance ranked first in importance. Coincidentally, this character trait also was stressed more by employers in the department store survey. The following table will illustrate readily the six traits stressed most by the three surveys. (For convenience, the American Institute Survey will be designated as Survey One; the survey by Charters and Whitley of the University of Pittsburgh as Survey Two; and the department store survey developed in this thesis as Survey Three.)

Other qualities stressed by employers interviewed in the department store survey are: pleasantness, willingness to work, smooth temperament, punctuality, adaptability, quietness, tactfulness, good education, good judgment, conservativeness, business-likeness, cordiality, common sense,
good grammar, good health, ability to carry out instructions, appraisal ability, pleasing personality, scholarship, good speech, seriousness, good behavior, dependability, fashion, sense, cooperativeness, and congeniality. Still others were mentioned as being desirable traits, but these were stressed most.

**TABLE 3**

THE SIX QUALITIES STRESSED MOST ACCORDING TO SURVEYS ONE, TWO, AND THREE, RESPECTIVELY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Survey One</th>
<th>Survey Two</th>
<th>Survey Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>Appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>Responsibleness</td>
<td>Accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Capability</td>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td>Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>Courtesy</td>
<td>Speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>Friendliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Typing accuracy</td>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>Honesty or trustworthiness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By checking this list with the reduced list given at the close of the preceding chapter, it will be found that there is general agreement as to the most important character traits for stenographers and secretaries, although as is to be expected there is some difference in the terms used by the different employers. For
example, the term "personality" is a very broad one. Survey one in the above table places personality in the second position. Some employers are perhaps referring to the same thing when they stress appearance, friendliness, trustworthiness, and the like. Some will agree that an individual must develop all these qualities if he is to possess the personality that most employers are after. Ray Abrams, author of Business Behavior, enlarges on this somewhat in an article found in the Balance Sheet for February, 1941.

Personality is not an artifice achieved by picking up a few tricks. It is not to be gained by accumulating facts, storing them up in neat packages, and referring to them encyclopedically. Even deep, broad knowledge and wise precepts may give only momentary encouragement in the formation of personality. However, they do not bring about lasting effects. Personality must include not only knowledge but also belief. When knowledge and belief form the foundation of conduct; when what we know and believe is translated into what we do, then personality is functioning.  

Skills and Abilities Required of Stenographers

In order to get a fair estimate of the foundational training necessary for the prospective stenographer and secretary, a question on skills and abilities essential to these employees was included in the questionnaire. In all cases, as is to be expected, skill in typing and shorthand was required of all stenographers. The size of the

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concern determined largely the number of additional skills and abilities required. The smaller the establishment, the more varied were the duties. In order to enlarge on this statement somewhat, two cases will be cited. In conferring with the manager of one of the larger stores, it was found that the only skills and abilities necessary to his stenographers were typewriting, shorthand, and filing. The various other duties of the office were handled by office clerks, bookkeepers, secretaries, cashiers, and other employees. Here the stenographer was expected to be highly skilled in taking dictation and making rapid transcriptions. Filing took only a small part of her time. In larger establishments of this type, the many duties of the office can be divided among more highly specialized workers, and the duties can be narrowed down to comparatively few, whereas in the smaller store there is likely one person who serves in the capacity of stenographer, secretary, bookkeeper, office clerk, file clerk, and handles the office work in general. This situation was found in one of the smaller stores. To illustrate this situation more fully, the person interviewed performed practically all the office duties and the following comprised most of her work:

1. Taking dictation

2. Transcribing notes and typing letters
3. General typing
4. Assisting with the bookkeeping
5. Filing
6. Handling collections
7. Waiting on customers in emergency
8. Handling the telephone
9. Making deposits
10. Keeping records on the storage of furs
11. Aiding with government reports
12. Handling the payroll
13. Composing letters
14. General clerical work

It is evident that in a small store of this type there is no stenographer in the true sense. This employee, although she was considered secretary to the manager of the store, was, in reality, just about the whole office force. Her duties were varied and it was necessary for her to have a thorough understanding of the business.

Duties of the stenographers in the various stores are given in the table that follows. These are general duties, and, as has been stated, the number of these performed by any particular stenographer will be determined largely by the size of the store in which she is employed.

Efficiency in shorthand, typing, and filing, as indicated by the table, are the main essentials of the stenographer in department stores in the two cities of Dallas and
Fort Worth. However, she needs a general knowledge of office routine and office machines. She must be skilled in letter wording as well as in letter forms, since she may be called upon to do some letters of her own composition.

**TABLE 4**

**GENERAL DUTY REQUIREMENTS PLACED ON STENOGRAPHERS AS REVEALED BY THE DEPARTMENT STORE SURVEY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duty</th>
<th>Number of Stores Emphasizing Each Stenographic Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Typing (letters)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typing (general)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking dictation</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composing letters</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General clerical work</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisting with bookkeeping</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the dictaphone</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiding with payroll</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating the P. Bt. X</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handling the cash register</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*There are other minor duties that are not important enough to merit attention here.*
The stenographer who feels that if she is efficient in shorthand and typing she is bound for success is likely to be disappointed, even though these are the most essential skills. In the small store where office help is insufficient, the stenographer may be expected to perform all the duties in Table 4, plus other minor occasional duties that come along unexpectedly.

Table 5 presents the general duty requirements placed on secretaries as revealed by the department store survey. At first glance it appears that the duties of the secretary in these department stores are about the same as those of the stenographer, but consider the fact that the secretary gives much of her time to general aid to her employer and other members of the office force. The duties listed in the table are major duties, and in addition to these she must perform many miscellaneous ones conveniently placed under the heading of "general utility." Some of these are: general assistance to other employees, handling and checking outgoing and incoming mail, aiding with miscellaneous reports and records, writing follow-ups, handling personal affairs of her employer, et cetera. Obviously, the secretary must be well informed as to the business in general of her employer if she is to be efficient in her work.
TABLE 5
GENERAL DUTY REQUIREMENTS PLACED ON SECRETARIES
AS REVEALED BY THE DEPARTMENT STORE SURVEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duty</th>
<th>Number of Stores Emphasizing Each Secretarial Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General utility</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typing (letters)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typing (general)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filing</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composing letters</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting callers</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisting with bookkeeping</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handling collections</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictaphone</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisting with payroll</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewing applicants</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating P. B. X. in emergency</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating mimeograph</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Daily Routine

In practically no case did a secretary follow a definite routine of work each day. Certainly, there are definite jobs that most secretaries have to do every day, but they generally do these jobs as they can get to them. There are two times during the day at which most secretaries take the major part of their dictation—about
ten o'clock in the morning after the manager has had a chance to examine his mail and plan replies, and again late in the afternoon after other duties of the day have been attended to and additional mail must be answered. Then, during the day as the need arises, an occasional letter is dictated. Personal help to the employer, dictation, and transcriptions take up most of the department store secretary's time. This is likely true with secretaries in other types of businesses as well. On the whole, employers were well pleased with their secretaries and would have them get no additional training if it were possible for them to do so.

Advancement of Stenographers

Included in the questionnaire was the following question on the advancement of stenographers to the position of secretary: Do most of the secretaries employed by your firm advance to that position from that of stenographer? This question, of course, referred to secretaries who had advanced to the position from within the firm. Only two employers gave definite positive answers to this question. Six gave conditional positive answers, stating that if at all possible they tried to advance qualified stenographers to the better position of secretary, but they were willing to go out of the firm to get better qualified secretaries if necessary. Only one employer gave a definite negative
answer to the question. One employer stated that anyone qualified could become a secretary in his firm, regardless of stenographic experience. At the time of the interview with the manager of one of the larger department stores, it was learned that his secretary had been employed previously in the store as elevator operator. He had observed the girl at work, liked her personality, and went to the trouble to find out more about her. He found that she had had stenographic training, and when the opening in his office occurred, he made her his private secretary. This is an unusual case, but it illustrates what varied opportunities there are for the qualified person. It also stresses the importance of desirable personal qualities which, in this instance, attracted the attention of the manager of a large department store and resulted in an unusual advancement for an elevator operator. Two employers stated that they were perfectly willing to go out of the firm for better qualified secretaries. In the majority of cases, however, it was the policy of the stores to advance all employees from within if at all possible. This helps to keep good will among workers and serves as an incentive to do better work.

Employment of High School Graduates

In order to get some idea as to what employers thought about employing stenographers who had just graduated from
high school, each interviewee was asked the following questions: "Do you employ stenographers just out of high school? Do you find most of them to be efficient workers? Please give suggestions as to improving high school commercial training."

The answers received were quite interesting and enlightening. Seven of the twelve employers interviewed on this question gave positive answers, although there were many conditional factors involved.

Even though these employers did employ young people just out of high school, practically all of them did so rather hesitantly. Some of their reasons for this hesitancy are: (preference for older workers; college or business college training preferred; too young; the lack of experience; lack of seriousness; not dependable; not self-reliant; scared, fluttery, and slow; too much time wasted; too many substitutes for work; too much expense involved in training; too much time required to learn the business; inability to judge character.) Three employers stated that they employed no stenographers immediately out of high school who lacked experience. One employer gave a rather indefinite answer when he stated that he employed practically no stenographers under those conditions.

From the foregoing, one is persuaded to conclude that high schools are not giving adequate training to prospective
stenographers. The training in the technical skills seems to be fairly sufficient, but apparently the inadequacy of the high school training lies chiefly in the failure to form the desirable and necessary character and personality traits, such as adaptability, dependability, accuracy, industry, and others that have been mentioned previously. Also, a large percentage of the employers stated that their stenographers were weak in grammar and spelling.

In Chapter IV, suggestions as to how to overcome these weaknesses will be made.

Age Limits of Stenographers and Secretaries

In no case were store requirements placed on the ages of stenographers or secretaries. However, employers did express their preferences, and the following tables will give these personal preferences, not requirements.

The range of stenographer age limits according to this survey is rather wide, as will be noted in Table 6. Out of the twelve employers interviewed, only one-half placed a maximum age for stenographers, the highest age limit quoted being forty-five, and the average maximum age preferences thirty-six. The other six who quoted no limit placed importance on ability to do the work regardless of age.
TABLE 6

EMPLOYERS' AGE PREFERENCES FOR STENOGRAPHERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average 19 36

*No maximum age limit as long as employee does satisfactory work.

No great difference in age preferences as to secretaries and stenographers was expressed. The employer of store number eight as expressed below gave no minimum or maximum age limit for his secretary, since he considered experience and ability as the determining factor.
**TABLE 7**

**EMPLOYERS' AGE PREFERENCES FOR SECRETARIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*No limit as to maximum age as long as employee does satisfactory work.
**No minimum or maximum age limit—matter of experience and ability.

**Salaries of Stenographers and Secretaries**

Salaries of stenographers vary widely in department
stores in Dallas and Fort Worth. The salaries given in the following table are figured on a monthly basis.

**TABLE 8**

**SALARY RANGE OF STENOGRAPHERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$ 50.00</td>
<td>$ 70.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>72.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>88.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>80.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>72.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>72.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>60.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>85.00</td>
<td>125.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Average monthly salary for stenographers in these stores.

The salary range is from $50.00, the lowest figure quoted, to $125.00 per month, the highest figure quoted. Note that the maximum salary paid to stenographers in store number eleven is lower than the minimum salaries paid to these employees in stores three, four, and twelve. This
wide variation in salaries paid to stenographers is due to several factors. Some of the stores employ young people just graduates from high school. Naturally, these beginning stenographers are not highly skilled and lack experience. They are unable to demand high salaries, and, in most cases, are glad to get what is offered them. Other stores do not employ inexperienced stenographers. The employers of these stores prefer to pay more for well-seasoned, proved workers. In fact, as will be noted below in the table giving salaries of secretaries, many stenographers who are highly skilled receive more money per month than a large percentage of the so-called secretaries. However, many of these, whether stenographer or secretary, perform approximately the same duties.

Seventy dollars per month, the lowest salary quoted for secretaries, is a much smaller amount than that paid to many stenographers, but, again, many conditions and factors must be considered. In many of the stores the type of work done by some of the stenographers required much greater skill and ability than that done by a considerable number of the secretaries. On the whole, however, the average monthly salaries received by secretaries is appreciably higher than that received by stenographers. The lowest average monthly salary received by stenographers
in any store was $55.00 per month, whereas the lowest average salary received by secretaries in any situation was $80.00 per month.

**TABLE 9**

**SALARY RANGE OF SECRETARIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$70.00</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>140.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>...</td>
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<td>...</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>150.00</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>110.00</td>
<td>120.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>85.00</td>
<td>125.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Average monthly salaries for secretaries in these stores.

The highest salary quoted for secretaries was $160.00 per month, and this figure was given by employers
as an average salary paid to secretaries. Much must be taken into consideration when we study these salary figures. Many so-called secretaries are nothing more than stenographers or office clerks and this accounts for the low salaries paid them.

Employers' Reasons for Discharging Secretaries

"Have you ever discharged or wanted to discharge a secretary? If so, why?" This question was asked all interviewees, and, frankly, rather hesitantly. However, it was especially gratifying to hear the frank, open answers that were given so willingly. These reasons for discharging or wanting to discharge secretaries should have a definite value to the individual who expects to do this type of work. Some of the answers given were quite interesting. One employer stated that his secretary called him over the telephone one morning about ten o'clock and reported that she could not come to work because she had been out the night before and was still slightly intoxicated. No, the employer did not discharge her for this reason. He said that he, too, might be caught in the same condition some time, and he did not feel that he had just grounds to discharge a secretary because of an offense of which he, himself, might be found guilty. Failure to carry out instructions and taking undue liberties were reasons for which he would be,
in his opinion, justified in discharging his secretary.

Another employer stated that he had never discharged a secretary, because he felt that if she could contend with him for eight hours a day she deserved her position. Three employers gave negative answers and made no other comment. Because of the very nature of the question, interviewees were not encouraged to give answers if they showed any hesitancy whatever.

Logical reasons one employer gave for wanting to discharge a secretary are: poor conduct, refusal to be corrected, and inability to work in harmony with the rest of the office force. This same individual stated that he never discharges a secretary on first or second offense. He liked to be completely fair and give every employee adequate opportunity to show his worth.

Because his secretary took the liberty to change the wording of letters that he had dictated to her, one manager felt that he had just grounds to discharge her. He expected his letters to be typed the way he dictated them, and not to be changed around to suit the wishes of his secretary. Irritableness, bad temperament, and impatience were especially objected to by one interviewee, and still another stated that he had discharged previous secretaries but that he preferred to help them change and improve. He expected his secretary to be so well founded as to catch errors that he
made and to know more about grammar, spelling, and choice of words. He wanted his secretary to be able to help him in his weaknesses.

Personal habits due to carelessness sometimes become very serious. Some of these especially objected to by employers are uncleanness, offensive breath, and poorly manicured nails. Some might be inclined to consider these lightly, but one manager stated that since his secretary had to work with him eight hours a day he expected her to be pleasing in appearance and personality. He went so far as to say that he would be willing to discharge her if she should have a consistently offending breath. Slowness and inability to turn out work rapidly are other reasons for discharging or wanting to discharge secretaries, as given by employers interviewed in this survey. Many managers depend heavily on their secretaries, and one stated that at least twenty-five per cent of his success was due to the efficiency of his secretary. It is evident that the secretary's job is far from a small one.

After pointing out why some of the managers had discharged or wanted to discharge secretaries, it might be well to look into some of the reasons why secretaries employed by managers interviewed especially pleased their employers. "When I tell my secretary to do something, she does it immediately even if I tell her that there is no
hurry to get the job completed." This was one reason a
certain manager especially liked his secretary. Another
was well pleased with his secretary because she did things
on her own initiative and did not wait to be told. She
had been in the employ of the firm for a long time and
understood the business. She knew how to meet callers in
the outer office and make friends for the company. Too,
she was unusually good at making appraisals; she knew
those who should be permitted to see the manager and those
who should not. One employer especially liked his secre-
tary because he could depend on her. When she did a piece
of work he knew that it was unnecessary for him to check
it. She was accurate and neat and was consistently punc-
tual. Efficiency, pleasantness, and capability were three
qualities that won the approval of another employer. Good
appearance and pleasing personality are qualities absolutely
necessary to the secretary if she is to win the approval
of her employer with whom she works day after day.

How many stenographers eventually become secretaries?
In order to get a fairly accurate prediction on this ques-
tion, it was included in the questionnaire. However, it
is evident that only estimates can be made. These estimates
are figured on past experiences chiefly. Too often we feel
that most stenographers hope eventually to become secre-
taries, but quite often this is not the case, since many
of them are serving in the position only temporarily, using
it as a stepping stone to other ends. One employer stated that about eighty-five per cent of his stenographers eventually worked into other fields and never became secretaries. Since this study is based on a department store survey, it is quite easily understood why a large percentage of the stenographers become interested in designing, fashioning, modeling, etc. One employer stated that he believed about twenty-five per cent of his stenographers eventually became secretaries, and this was the largest percentage quoted by any manager. The next largest estimate was from ten to fifteen per cent, and other predictions were five per cent and lower. In many cases, stenographers remain in the employ of one department store for only a very short time. They find better jobs either in other department stores or larger offices. It was found that most of the secretaries employed in department stores remain with one particular firm for very long periods, but the length of time spent in one store by stenographers is considerably shorter. This explains, in part at least, why such a small percentage of them ever become secretaries.

Employee Training Sponsored by Stores

In practically all stores studied in this survey some type of employee training is sponsored. This training generally pertains especially to fashions, styles, store policies, etc. In order to give a brief review of such
training sponsored by each of twelve stores, a paragraph will be devoted to an account of what each store is attempting to do to aid employees.

Store Number One.—Every Tuesday morning classes in new fashions and models are sponsored by this store. The manager designates training for each department and then follows up to check on results.

Store Number Two.—All employees are trained in the policies of the company. Meetings for salespeople are designed chiefly for developing selling ability. New styles and fashions get a great deal of attention in these meetings. Once a week, the store calls in a diction teacher from one of the schools in the city and asks her to conduct a class, twenty-five minutes in length. These diction classes are meant chiefly for salespeople.

Store Number Three.—This is a small store and only occasional meetings are conducted. At these meetings, new fashions and models get most of the attention. Pamphlets on new methods and trends in selling are discussed.

Store Number Four.—In this store, departmental classes are conducted every week. In addition, at the beginning of each season meetings devoted to new styles and fashions are held. An attempt is made to give special training to salespeople.

Store Number Five.—General employee meetings are held
only occasionally in this store. Group meetings, or departmental meetings, are held quite frequently, but no special time is designated. Much attention is given to the proper handling of customers, store policies, and trends in selling.

Store Number Six.--Regular weekly departmental meetings are held in this store. Department managers, buyers, and the personnel director preside. Like all the others, this store gives special attention to new styles, new merchandise, store policies, and the proper handling of customers.

Store Number Seven.--Group meetings are held frequently, and general store meetings only occasionally. Store policies and new merchandise get most of the attention.

Store Number Eight.--General store meetings are held occasionally and departmental meetings are held frequently, but no special time is designated. Department heads plan and conduct meetings. Quite often good speakers are invited, and special attention is given to new and improved selling methods and trends. The manager of this store encourages all his employees to hear as many good lectures as possible.

Store Number Nine.--In this store, employees are encouraged to take special courses outside the store when possible. This, however, is done at the employee's expense. Buyers have weekly meetings for their employees, and special attention is given to new merchandise. Twice
each year classes are conducted for all employees. Store policies and service are discussed at these general meetings.

**Store Number Ten.**—Like most of the other stores, this firm holds weekly departmental meetings at which store policies and new merchandise are discussed. Only recently, this store made it possible for the secretary to the personnel director to take a special course in letter writing. Also, in order to "personalize" advertising, a specially trained man in this field was employed by the store for a limited length of time.

**Store Number Eleven.**—General meetings are held in this store once each month. Buyers conduct meetings two or three times each month. Policies of future buying are discussed, as well as store policies, general conditions, and styles. Special style or color meetings are held at irregular intervals.

**Store Number Twelve.**—The manager of this store stated that there was no special training for employees sponsored by the company. However, occasional meetings were held to discuss policies, handling customers, new merchandise, etc. This is a comparatively small store.

**Business College Training**

On the whole, the department store managers interviewed were somewhat indifferent as to where the stenographer
or secretary got his training, whether in high school, college, or business college. One manager expressed a definite preference for the business college trained stenographer, saying that a good business school trains the students more thoroughly. Most of the interviewees felt, however, that more depends on the individual than on the school. One manager preferred the college trained worker and still another preferred the high school graduate over the business college trained individual. Several stated that they had had practically no experience with the business college graduate and, of course, could give no helpful criticism. Because business colleges rush their students too much was the chief objection one employer had to this type of stenographic training, and another felt that the graduate was not "finished" when coming out of business college. This, however, is true with almost any type of training, it seems. The practical experience is necessary regardless of fundamental training. Most people will agree that more depends on the person than on the school, a point agreed upon by most interviewees.

Inadequacies of Stenographers and Secretaries

In addition to various weaknesses of stenographers and secretaries as set out in this thesis, the following expressed inadequacies taken from a survey made by the Business Education Department of North Texas State Teachers
College in 1938 should prove helpful to teachers of commercial courses as well as prospective stenographers and secretaries. A questionnaire was sent to two hundred firms in the Southwest and the following questions and answers are taken from a summary of that study.

Question: What is the most adverse criticism you can offer about the work of new stenographers?

Stenographers lack: (listed in the order of frequency reported)

1. Basic subject matter
2. Spelling ability
3. Interest in work
4. Working knowledge of good English
5. Accuracy in transcription
6. Stenographic experience
7. Self-confidence
8. Broad training (shorthand and typing are not enough)
9. Adaptability
10. Letter writing ability
11. Initiative
12. Ability to concentrate

Question: What is the most severe criticism you can offer about the personal qualities of new office employees?

Office employees: (listed in order of frequency reported)

1. Lack job interest (too many clockwatchers)
2. Are too aggressive
3. Lack self-confidence
4. Are not adaptable
5. Talk too much
6. Lack personality
7. Are selfish
8. Are poorly groomed
9. Lack initiative
10. Lack common sense

Upon close examination it will be noticed that these results parallel almost entirely those of the department store survey.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. From Tables 1 and 2, pages 20 and 21, it is evident that the educational requirements placed on stenographers and secretaries in department stores in Dallas and Fort Worth are relatively low. Consequently, it is apparent that a great deal of the training of stenographers and secretaries is left to the high schools, since comparatively few high school graduates continue their training in institutions of higher learning. In most cases, only high school training is required of stenographers and secretaries.

2. More attention must be given to the development of desirable personality traits. Most stenographers and secretaries are weak in this respect rather than in their technical training.

A check list of desirable character traits should be kept before teachers and students at all times, and these traits should be emphasized in all work. The following check list is recommended.

51
Your Check List of Secretarial Traits

Initiative: In going about tasks with resourcefulness when instructions have not been given in detail. In being independent of consulting others unless absolutely necessary. In thinking out how to keep supplies and equipment for your most efficient way of working. In carrying on your work with self-reliance while your employer is away. In volunteering suggestions when and as advisable.

Neatness: (work and personal appearance) In transcription, as to arrangement, erasures (if any), corrections, careful folding. In personal appearance, as to dress, hair, nails, and other essential details.

Loyalty: In your devotion to your work, especially under difficulties. In your attitude toward your employer and your associates. In your personal concern for the welfare of the business.

Accuracy: In shorthand, typewriting, arithmetic, choice and spelling of words, punctuation, hyphenation. In dating pieces of work, in numbering pages, and in copying names and addresses. In putting through work right the first time. In carrying out directions to the letter.

Dependability: In carrying through tasks that are given to you. In obeying instructions to the full. In caring for valuables.

Courtesy: In greeting associates and callers. In showing tact. In not getting into heated arguments or discussing associates willfully behind their backs. In displaying general consideration, pleasing manners, and good tastes.

Alertness: In being awake to situations and what they call for. In responding to requests. In moving quickly from one piece of work to the next. In observing and profiting by mistakes. In handling the day's work with what employers call 'drive.'

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1F. A. Faunce and F. G. Nichols, Secretarial Efficiency, pp. 50-53.
Attention or attentiveness: In hearing instructions. In concentrating on work without giving in to distractions. In keeping aware of what your work is about and the reasons why it should be carried out in a certain way. In watching the details of your work so that it will be consistently good, will meet requirements, and will show that you have been thinking.

Interest: In executing every type of task—not just those you especially 'like.' In learning the most efficient ways of working. In applying the best that you know to what is put into your hands. In exerting intelligent curiosity about the business as a whole and understanding the relation of each link of business to its Chain. In practicing foresight in your work. In studying for improvement in your vocation.

Judgment: In giving to each piece of work its exact measure of importance with due regard to all other work before you. In choosing wisely and quickly what to do next. In allowing time enough to carry out a given duty on time. In thinking tasks through from start to finish. In deciding on the right principles to guide you in a task.

Industry: In persistent application to long, monotonous pieces of work. In turning off many small pieces of work with dispatch. In conscientious perseverance with tasks demanding in succession the use of different skills and different traits.

Speed: In attacking and going ahead with work. In utilizing each skill necessary to the occupation of the secretary. In little motions that carry through the day's duties.

Orderliness: In keeping files, card indexes, and lists. In care of supplies and of your employer's desk as well as your own. In systematic procedure with work. In keeping frequently used things readily accessible.

Poise: In proceeding with work under pressure. In meeting emergencies. In showing self-control
under irritating circumstances. In keeping even-tempered when the weather is not to your liking. In avoiding mannerisms.

**Cooperativeness**: In taking suggestions and criticism and acting on them pleasantly for the good of your work. In offering to do extra work when you have time. In carrying an extra load when an associate is absent. In doing readily teamwork with your employer and associates. In doing your share of work to create an agreeable atmosphere in the office.

3. Actual experience should be provided for the student while he is still in high school. Otherwise, it is very difficult for him to adapt his basic training to real office situations. This experience can be provided successfully in several ways.

**George-Deen Act**

Opportunity for training young workers and giving them actual experience in their chosen work was provided by the George-Deen Act, passed by Congress in 1936. Dallas Technical High School has availed itself of this opportunity by planning and executing a part-time cooperative program for distributive occupations. This part-time cooperative program provides that, during a two-year course, students spend their mornings in school and afternoons and Saturdays in the store or office. Then, during the summer months the student is available for full-time employment. The store, assisted by a coordinator employed by the school, outlines and supervises the training plan in that particular concern.
The plan offers a variety of experiences on the job to provide for training which will make the trainee more valuable to the employer upon the completion of the training program.

During the morning hours, the school provides the opportunity for the instruction which the employer specifies as necessary. In all instances, the coordinator attempts to correlate the school instruction with the work in the store so that the student will get instruction along with actual experience.

All students who wish to enter the course must be sixteen years of age or over and must have successfully completed two years of high school work. They must be seriously concerned and interested in the occupation as a vocation, and must possess the necessary qualifications to meet the requirements set up by the employer and the occupation. Students of a high type are selected by the school, but all final selections are made by the employers. Naturally, full cooperation between the school and the employer is necessary.

Since the trainee is not expected to compete with regular store employees, the wage scale is based on a percentage of the prevailing wage for the job for which he is training. Each of the four school periods is approximately five months, and minimum wages are conditioned upon progress, generally twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five, and forty per cent, respectively.
The coordinator keeps in close touch with the trainee during the two-year training period, and his progress is observed carefully so that, with the store's aid, the training in school will be practical and comprehensive. At the end of the two-year training period the employer will have available a person who has had experience covering a sufficient length of time, and, in addition, has had supplementary job training provided at Dallas Technical High School.

Before the time set for the opening of school in September, the coordinator contacts each store to determine approximately how many trainees each will require, and the type of employee desired. As soon as school opens a number of carefully selected students will be sent to each employer for final selection and employment.

A simple agreement is then drawn up for each student, and signed by him, his parents, the store employer, and an official of the school. This agreement includes a brief outline of the type of training the store plans to give the student, and of the information the school will give. This training agreement is not legally binding, but gives the work arrangements dignity and importance in the eyes of the student.

The many advantages of this plan used by Dallas Technical High School are obvious and numerous. By giving the
student actual employment while getting his training in school, both experience and basic education are combined. In working with other employees, he learns the meaning of cooperation. He naturally acquires a more serious attitude toward his work and training, thus much of his frivolity and insincerity is replaced by conscientious effort and industry by the time of his high school graduation.

The student, however, is not the only one who is benefitted. Not only does the employer have an experienced worker who is well trained in the basic skills, but he has an employee who has learned to apply these skills to specific situations common to one particular establishment.

In the plan just discussed, the student receives some remuneration as well as school credit for his work. With some schools, this is not possible, especially in the smaller towns. However, a similar plan can be executed without the remuneration. L. O. Dawson, Superintendent of the United Township High School in East Moline, Illinois, explains what his school is doing in this respect in the Business Education World for November, 1938. Industrial firms, factories, business offices, and firms of various other types cooperate with the school and permit students to work during the last quarter of their senior year. This work is supervised by members of the business education staff of the high school as well as by company employees.
Students work three hours per day for four days per week. On the fifth day, they report to the school and talk over problems that arise during the week. Each student works for two different employees, five weeks at each place. At the close of each five weeks, the employer makes out a detailed report and presents to the school to be kept as a permanent record. Teachers call on employers during each student employment period and talk over progress, difficulties, and necessary adjustments. Students do not receive remuneration for their work, but high school credit is given for the actual training received. Mr. Dawson says,

We have been using the plan as here outlined for the past two years and feel that the students get a great deal of value from their work in these businesses. We are glad to give them credit in their shorthand and typing courses for the learning acquired in this out-of-school activity.  

Words of Warning

The question arises, "Should credit be given for training received outside of school?" "Yes, if it contributes to educational growth," says Dr. E. G. Johnston, who is Principal of the University High School at Ann Arbor, Michigan. In an article entitled "School Credit for Business Experience,"


3Ibid., p. 180.
found in the *Business Education World* for November, 1938, Dr. Johnston enlarges on this statement somewhat. He feels that there is some danger of exploiting youth under the guise of "practical education," and that credit for out-of-school experience must certainly be judged in terms of education outcomes, not of necessity of pupils or convenience of employers. However, by careful supervision and full cooperation on the part of school, employer, and student, many advantages can be attained through this actual experience plan, and the student will be more "at home" on his first job.

For obvious reasons, many high schools in smaller towns will not be able to carry out a program similar to either of the two discussed above, but there are other successful means for providing actual experience for high school students. This can be done very successfully right in the high school. Miss Jane Krumacher of the Jonathan Dayton Regional High School of Springfield, New Jersey, says:

In order that the student may feel 'at home' on his first job, we try to give him as much practical experience within the school as is possible. Working out many problems and projects, working for various teachers, working in the school offices, health department, and school cafeteria offer opportunities for real job experience. At times work from outside sources comes into the school. Since this kind of work
usually carries with it some remuneration, students who have done especially good class work are given the opportunity to earn this money. 4

Such situations, though perhaps not as successful as those provided by the George-Deen Act, do help to give the student a feeling of responsibility and provide actual experience that will help him greatly to cope with the problems of his own job after graduation.

4. From the preceding chapter, it is apparent that most stenographers and secretaries are weak in grammar and spelling. More emphasis should be placed on this phase of the high school student's training. There must be absolute accuracy in business correspondence.

Every employer wants to have unlimited confidence in his secretary or stenographer, and she should be able to catch minor errors that oftentimes give a bad impression to the reader of a business letter or other business forms. "How Do They Spell?" is an article by Louis D. Huddleston in the Business Education World for June, 1939. In this article, Huddleston states that one office commented, "It is our best stenographer who knows when she cannot spell a word and uses the dictionary; it is our worst stenographer who thinks she knows and does not consult a dictionary." 5


5. The high schools should work in close harmony with business. Business men should be consulted frequently so that students can be trained in accordance with actual needs and demands of business.

Suggestions Made by Department Store Officials

At the close of interviews with the department store officials, each was asked to give a helpful suggestion to prospective stenographers and secretaries. Some of those suggestions merit attention here.

1. Be able to work in a "pinch." Nervousness must be overcome, even when test is given for job.

2. To college students: Be physically fit. Do not stress pleasure too much. Give time to work. Good workers occasionally ruin their work because of too many good times. The enjoyment of one's work is the most important thing.

3. Learn how to write letters with a personality. An executive wants to be proud of his secretary. Improve personality. Master the fundamentals of grammar.

4. Suggestions for interviews: Do not force employer to "drag" information out of you. Be alert—expressive. Know what to say before entering the office. Have information concerning experience and education well in mind.

5. Typing and shorthand are secondary. Do not hesitate to ask questions. Do not be bashful. Correctness should come before speed. Get more vocational training.
6. Be prepared for your work. Many times a college graduate is unable to adapt himself.

7. MEET PEOPLE!

8. College graduates should forget that they are college graduates. Too often it goes to their heads.

9. According to department store employers, too many high school graduates take their work too lightly.

(The stenographer or secretary must realize the importance of his responsibility. Full cooperation is necessary at all times; harmony among workers must be the result.)

High school teachers and administrators can do much toward overcoming these obvious inadequacies mentioned by employers, and many of our schools are doing a great deal toward attaining that end. If school officials will plan their work so that these weaknesses are overcome, then students, employers, and schools will reap the mutual benefit.
APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN MAKING PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

I. Qualifications

A. What are the educational requirements of each of the following?

1. Stenographers
   a. Junior
   b. Senior

2. Secretaries
   a. Junior
   b. Senior

B. How many stenographers are employed by your firm?

C. How many secretaries are employed by your firm?

D. In hiring a stenographer, in what qualities, skills, and abilities do you place most importance?

E. In hiring a secretary, in what qualities, skills, and abilities do you place most importance?

F. What qualities and characteristics do you think distinguish the secretary from the stenographer?

G. Do most of the secretaries employed with your firm advance to the position from that of stenographer?

H. Do you employ stenographers just out of high school? Do you find most of them to be efficient workers? Please give suggestions as to high school commercial training--improvements

I. What are the age requirements of your stenographers?

J. What are the age requirements of your secretaries?
K. Approximately what are the salaries paid to stenographers in your firm?

L. What are the salaries of your secretaries?

M. Does your company offer additional training of any type to employees?

N. Have you ever discharged or wanted to discharge a secretary? If so, why?

O. Approximately what per cent of your stenographers eventually become secretaries either with your firm or elsewhere?

P. In what ways does your present secretary especially please you?

Q. What improvements or changes would you have her make, if any? Further education?

R. Do you think the business college gives adequate training to stenographers and secretaries?

II. Secretarial Routine

A. As a rule, does your secretary follow a regular routine of work each day?

B. Briefly, what routine does she follow?

C. Does she have a designated period each day at which she takes the major part of your dictation? If so, when?

D. Briefly, list the duties of your secretary.

E. To which one of these duties does she give most of her time?

F. Approximately, how much time does she give each day to her most important duty?

G. If possible, would you have your secretary get additional training now? What training would you like her to have?
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