

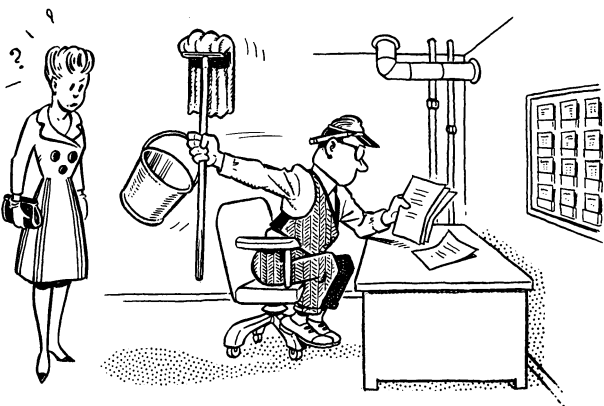
CHAPTER 2

Look at the Real You

THERE is a position for you. Hold fast to that idea and have faith in yourself. Use your ingenuity to search out opportunities, and keep everlastingly at your objective to find the job that is best for you.

Of course, employers aren't beating a path to your door to beg your services unless you are a most unusual person who has achieved noteworthy success in a noncompetitive field. Very few successful women in this country found opportunity ready-made for them when they looked for their first position. In fact, every beginner is apt to feel that she is ready to begin work at the wrong time, that she has chosen an overstocked line of work, that all her friends are getting fabulous jobs, and that nobody wants an inexperienced worker!

Let's dispel that last worry first. *There are more jobs for beginners than for executives.* Each business is like a pyramid



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with a broad base of less-skilled workers and a towering point of those with years of experience and great skill.

It is true that some women make the fortunate choice of a field of work that is in need of help at the time they are ready to work. But if you haven't chosen that training, what's the use of wasting your time and energy feeling sorry for yourself and bemoaning your hard luck? It's a bad habit to develop self-pity. The *hard luck* attitude is a sure way to lose friends and bore people. You may have to work harder to find your job, it may pay less at first, but who can say you won't climb to the top faster? *Kites rise high against the wind.*

Begin to build your plan of attack with an optimistic viewpoint. Never give way to the foolish thought that the world is against you. Remember the story of the little engine that pulled its load to the top of an impossible hill by saying, "I think I can."

You want to get into business. Therefore, start with a business-like, systematic analysis of the problem. You may get help from friends, family, and faculty members who know you. But, since you are the one who is looking for the right position, you are the one to tackle the problem.

Why do you want to work? Is it to earn some money for a few months between graduation and marriage? If that is your motive, then you should think in terms of the smaller positions in a department store, office, or similar location where you can begin at once to earn your salary without a training period. In these positions the employer doesn't expect too much or pay very much because the work is routine and does not require much skill. It isn't fair to accept a position which gives you several weeks of training if you plan to work just a year.

Even though you are a college graduate with specialization in a skill, you will need more training, supervision, and guidance in most positions you take in business. This is an expense to the company. You cannot honorably accept such a position if you do not plan to stay long enough to repay this expense plus a profit in terms of continuous, conscientious service.

If you want a career, before and after marriage, then you should choose your position with the thought of learning and

growing. You should be willing to work where you have an opportunity to continue your education and training. The salary should be less important than the benefits you receive from working in the right company under the right supervision.

You can waste a lot of time and effort by looking for a position before you take a good look at yourself. You'll be wise to analyze yourself first, then call on all past experiences and present facilities to find the position where you will succeed.

Here is an assignment that is more important than any one you have ever had. You'll find the best vocational guidance help you can get is to take pencil and paper and answer the following questions:

1. *What do you have to sell an employer?* Rate your personality and your training (education and experience).
2. *What kind of work are you able to do?* State the general field of work and list as many variations or subdivisions as possible.
3. *Where will you be more apt to find your kind of work?* Will a local community or a large business center give you the best chance?

What Do You Have To Sell an Employer?

Your personality is your most important asset. What kind of a woman are you? If you have gone away to school, you've made a break from the family circle and have learned through some rather trying experiences that you as a person are accepted on different terms than you as "Doctor Bell's daughter who attended Riverside Church." But even at school you may have been protected by some of the family, home-town influence. Now, in going into business, you, the woman, must be ready and able to succeed without artificial props. Family influence may help you get a start — but pampering and parental protection seldom help anyone grow!

Personality is an intangible word, yet you have a rather definite idea in mind when you speak of a friend's personality. You refer to the sum of her personal characteristics as these affect you. In the same way, your personality or distinctive personal and social traits

may be given different values by the people you meet under different conditions.

Your home, your schools, and your church have taught moral, ethical, and social standards. Perhaps you have thought many of these were a bit old-fashioned. No doubt you've had many a *gab session*, discussing the true worth of honesty, fairness, self-control, tact, tolerance, sincerity, dependability, initiative, cooperativeness, and other traits of character. It's easy in a school atmosphere to decide that good manners are overrated and rather out of style. It's natural that each generation should feel a bit sorry for older folk who seem conservative and intolerant of youth's *self-expression*.

This is no place for a lecture on morals or manners. But this fact is indisputable: *The most essential ingredient in business is the ability to get along with people.* Since the people with whom you will work will have an adult viewpoint of good manners and social adjustment, it is wise to pause and give yourself an honest rating on your personality traits.

It is part of growing up to think of yourself not in terms of "Marybelle of XYZ Club" but "Miss Clay of LMN Company." There is a difference! The transition from school life to the business world will be easy for you, if you are one of the many modern young women who are socially adjusted and have adult standards of behavior.

SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT is a combination of many factors. Of these — a sense of humor acts as a *foam-rubber cushion for the hard road of life* and a springboard to acceptance by your co-workers. This does not mean you should be a practical joker, a teller of funny stories, or a comedian. Far from it! But a healthy sense of humor is the best safety valve for the stress and strain resulting from the daily impact of personalities and events in business. Don't take yourself too seriously. Enjoy a good laugh! If you find you haven't a sense of humor, mark this as a handicap and make a conscientious effort to correct it.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE plays a part in determining your personality. Most young women today have learned to appreciate the



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importance of good health, good posture, and good grooming. You should realize before you apply for your first position that modern businesswomen must look the part. Outward appearance is an indication of the person inside. Only a genius can afford to be careless of her personal appearance. And even the genius is a more useful member of society if she looks as smart as she really is!

Now that you have had a heart-to-heart talk with yourself and can see yourself as others see you, here is your next personality test.

You as a person have definite likes for certain people and certain activities. You are more successful if your work suits your likes and your temperament. These questions will help you know more about yourself:

1. Do you like to meet and be with people, or are you happier alone?
2. Do you like to be with both men and women, or do you feel more at ease with children?
3. Are you clever with your hands, or are you more successful at mental work without manual demonstration?
4. Do you like to organize and assume responsibility, or do you prefer to carry out plans made by others?
5. Are you creative and imaginative?
6. Do you enjoy finding the reasons for things, and searching for background facts?
7. Do you like selling, competition, and working under pressure?
8. What other likes influence your ability to express your real self?

If you really give thought to your answers and write them down in a list, you'll get a clearer picture of *you the person*. You then can be selective in looking for a position. You'll be better prepared when interviewed and asked, "What do you *like* to do?" That question doesn't call for your autobiography, but your answer will tell the employer that you have given thought to your ability. It will be to your credit to give a positive statement as,

"I like to work with people and I enjoy selling," or, "I like to research and find the reason for things, so I work better with figures and facts than in contacts with people." If you answer, "I don't know, I guess I like to do most everything," the employer is apt to interpret that to mean, "I'm not too interested in anything."

So far, you have looked at your personality and listed your interests. *Have you any prejudices, opinions, physical conditions, or family ties that might affect your success in a certain business?* If so, you should face the facts and decide in what kind of work these will be an advantage instead of a handicap. Religion, nationality, marital status, intense political beliefs, and physical defects may weigh the scales in your choice of a position and in the employer's choice, too.

Have you any definite dislike for a type of work, class of people, or location? This may be due to immature judgment which you can correct. If not, you'll never be very successful in work that emphasizes these dislikes.

Your personality is the result of many influences. But if you want to succeed in business, you must recognize and acknowledge your real self. If you don't like some of the things you find out about yourself, now is the time to begin a personality improvement campaign. It may be comforting to know that most successful people have had to take corrective measures, too!

This self-analysis isn't easy, but it should be an eye-opener. In school, no doubt you have had intelligence tests, temperament tests, and interest tests to guide you in your selection of work. You may have found you can do several kinds of work. Most folk can. You don't have to be a genius to succeed, but you'll be far happier if you can find out now about the *Real You*.

In a talk given to a group of business and professional women, Dr. Lillian M. Gilbreth, widely-recognized industrial psychologist, said that, today, business puts less emphasis on your I.Q. (Intelligence Quotient) and more emphasis on your P.Q. (Personality Quotient). So, if you have good average intelligence, a will to succeed, good health, an interest in people, and a willingness to work and learn, you are off to a good start. If you also rate a high I.Q. you are in the winning class.

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When you total your assets to make a good sales story you will include *your personality plus your training*. Training includes your education in high school, specialized schools, college or university. Training also includes those experiences which build up your fund of knowledge.

A study of the women who have reached executive stature in business reveals that some have reached their goals by beginning with general training while others began with vocational training in a special skill. Knowledge gained in both general and specialized training has played an important role in their careers. There is no royal road to success. Many women do not find the right road until they have been in business two or more years. The specialists must study and learn more *general knowledge*. Those with a liberal education must study and learn *specialized skills*.

How do you rate your storehouse of knowledge and your training in a special skill? Are you prepared to enter a field which requires a college degree in a specialization, such as Home Economics, Law, Economics, Medicine, or Engineering? If not, you should look for a position which requires general knowledge and which offers an opportunity to acquire specialized training through experience and vocational study.

The women listed in *Who's Who in America* illustrate the importance of a balance between general knowledge and special skills. Dr. Gilbreth, Wallace Clark Award winner in 1951 in the field of scientific management and the mother of 12 children, is an outstanding example of a woman with specialized training who is loved and respected because of her womanliness and her breadth of knowledge and human understanding.

You will find the list of other women who have won public recognition for stellar performances includes:

- publishers and editors of newspapers and magazines;
- presidents or directors of manufacturing companies, banks, and department stores;
- executives in insurance and real estate companies;
- vice-presidents in advertising agencies, photography concerns, and public relations organizations;

heads of research and production departments for cosmetics, clothing, and other products;
buyers; designers;
creators of clothing, textiles, equipment, foods, and the many other products which contribute to our daily welfare.

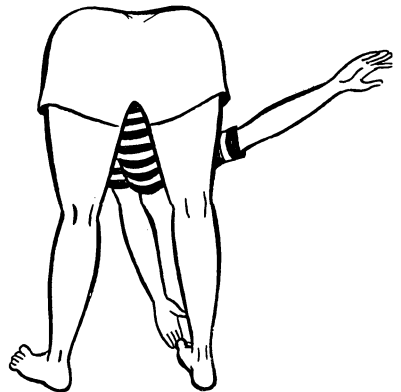
Women also have reached executive positions in many fields of personnel work in office management and in supervision or in teaching greater efficiency in the mechanics of business procedures. Then, of course, there are women who have reached professional heights in many specialized fields of the arts and sciences.

It is helpful to look at the stars in the business world. Remember, however, that top-flight women were once beginners like yourself. Take encouragement from their success because they have made it easier for you to enter the business world and to succeed. Some day a beginner may be reading about your career and wondering what kind of a person you are and what you did to win success.

Your ability to do a certain kind of work depends on your personality, your storehouse of knowledge, and your special training, plus experience in your chosen field.

Confidence in your own ability will help you make a whole-hearted effort to get the right job. Overconfidence or an overestimate of your ability may result in disappointment when you meet with the realities of business. But most employers prefer to hire a woman who knows what she can do and what she wants to do rather than a timid soul who doesn't think much of herself or her ability.

For the beginner, the most baffling line on that application blank will be *experience*. While you are making the preliminary survey of your assets, take time to jot down all the experiences you have had, both in and out of school, which contributed to your ability to work intelligently and effectively. Did you hold



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any class offices or belong to any organized groups like the Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, or YWCA? Did you work at home, work during summer vacations, work after school? The experiences need not be limited to those for which you were paid, but paying jobs do give you an edge. Travel, working with people, meeting new situations, participation in sports, training in music or art, outstanding ability in any field of endeavor are experiences which will indicate what kind of a person you are.

As you progress in your career, your experience in your work will become more important. In succeeding analyses of experiences, that first listing will lose significance. But when you are a beginner, you can't afford to overlook any activity that indicates you have been tested and have shown ability in some field of endeavor.

What Kind of Work Are You Able To Do?

It's a happy thought that you probably can do several kinds of work. Most women who make a career for themselves shift their work within their field or dare to work in very different fields. For example, one woman taught clothing construction, became a successful clothes designer, restaurant manager, tearoom owner, and finally organized a real estate company. Do not narrow your sights when you look for your first position. There are thousands of kinds of work of which you may never have heard, but new horizons will open for you if you are alert and make a good start.

Vocational guidance courses in school, books about positions open to women, current magazines and newspaper articles, and, best of all, lectures by and talks with women in business help you select the work you are able to do.

Aptitude and intelligence tests are guides to your ability. *But the very best help will come from your own analysis of yourself and your acquaintance with as many fields of work as possible.*

For example, suppose you have found you are a sociable, observing person who likes to work with people. You like to solve

a problem and sell the idea to others. You have training in journalism and have acquired a habit of reading about current events and interesting people. You enjoy writing and have imagination and ability to harness your thoughts into a working, orderly plan. Then you could profit by talking with someone in the advertising field, either in an advertising agency or in the advertising department of a company producing or selling consumer goods.

Suppose, however, your analysis shows you prefer to work with *things* rather than *people* and you are creative and efficient in hand skills. Then check your extra ability to determine whether you would succeed in designing or construction of clothes, fabrics, or equipment. Perhaps your ability fits you for work with statistics, charts, diagrams, and the research needed in banking, finance, insurance, and office procedures.

Home economics training prepares a girl for many and varied positions which are specifically women's work. If you have this training, you have but to analyze your personality and your special likes and abilities to decide whether you are fitted for work in clothing and textiles, foods, equipment, home management, or child development. Do you want public contact work in your specialization, or do you like best to use journalism, research work, or production to express yourself?

If you haven't vocational training, you still have a wide choice of work. Your skill doesn't have to be one of great specialization. Some very successful women have started in business with a skill in typing, plus the desire to learn and the ability to make the most of every opportunity. Women in advertising, insurance, banking, radio, television, journalism, and many other kinds of work have begun by being a good secretary to a good boss. Many women have begun their climb by selling in a department store.

Any selling is good experience. Where could you have a greater opportunity to learn to get along with people, to study human psychology, to become a judge of qualities that make for consumer acceptance of a product, and to get firsthand experience in many of the phases of business operation?

No book or standardized tests can open all the doors to the best work for you. You'll find books, tests, personal contacts, and success stories helpful only as you use these to analyze yourself and to guide you in the general direction of the right work for you.



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