

1938

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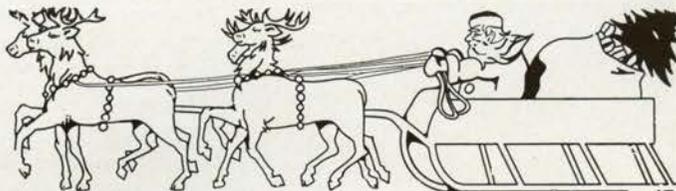
Recommended Citation

Van Meter, Marian (1938) "Personality on Paper," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 18 : No. 5 , Article 14.
Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol18/iss5/14>

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Personality on Paper

by Marian Van Meter



TAKE off your old gray bonnet and throw away those rubber stamps. Clean out the old moth eaten expressions. Give your own friendly personality a chance. Let your letters talk as you would talk. These are the first great essentials in the writing of a good business letter," according to L. E. Frailey in his book, "Smooth Sailing Letters." It is surprising how many people give the impression of great charm in a conversation but become stilted and formal in a letter.

The trend in business letters has changed in the last decade. We no longer use trite, rubber stamp phrases. The application letter of today should be short and to the point, using a simple but direct vocabulary. Begin your letter quickly. State the point of your letter at the very start.

Gain the interest of the reader at the first and hold it. Make your letter original and daring. In the body of the letter assert your personality without bragging.

How long should your letter be? Long

enough to do the job and no longer. The fewer words the better. Make up your mind what you want to say, say it and know when to stop.

As a conclusion leave a thought that will stay with the receiver of the letter. Make your conclusion strong; don't let down at the end; carry through to the finish. A good example of a let down is illustrated in the following closing paragraphs of a letter.

"Now that is my story, and I DARE YOU to give me a job, and if you have no vacancy, I DARE YOU to find one.

"Hoping to hear from you in the near future and wishing to merit your indulgence in this matter, I remain,

Very truly yours,"

In this illustration one may readily see how these trite phrases at the end weaken the whole letter. It is the modern opinion that "Very truly yours," and "Yours very truly" are no longer necessary on a business letter. The complimentary close is not essential to good

business form.

Appearance makes a big difference. Use attractive, high grade stationery. It pays in the long run. The block style of typing has become most popular. Use no abbreviations and give your letter unity, coherence and emphasis. In applying for a position don't beg the employer for the job; convince him that his organization will profit by hiring you. Make yourself a necessary part of his staff.

Seniors are now tackling the problem of the written application. Dr. P. Mabel Nelson, head of the Foods and Nutrition Department, advises that the applicant state what he wants in the first paragraph of the letter. The second paragraph should tell the training of the applicant, and the third his experience.

According to Dr. Nelson, the letter should be finished up quickly, but in a dignified manner. Be sure to include a list of people who may be written for references, providing that you have their permission to use their names.

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