

1946

## How To Become a Career Girl

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*From the other side of the fence  
Frances Kerekes, '46, offers tips on*

# How To Become a Career Girl

**S**TARTING out to be a career girl is an adventure, just as that first date was or the freshman week at college or the first time you actually heard grand opera performed. At last your formal schooling is over, and you'll find yourself taking part in an adult world with 16 or 17 years of classrooms behind you.

One of the biggest differences between life in college and that of a career woman in a large city is that you lead two distinct lives. One is your business life, one is your private life—and the two seldom merge. At school, lectures and dates and labs and activities all blend into a unified whole. But you forfeit that way of living with your first pay check.

Your first realization that bobby-socks days are over comes when you find yourself seated in a neat little office complete with an imposing desk, Incoming and Outgoing baskets, a telephone and an awe-inspiring little grey instrument known as a dictaphone. Gradually, it dawns on you that "Miss" is replacing your first name completely. Then a friend calls and is bewildered to be greeted formally with the statement, "This is Miss Kerekes' secretary. What is it that you wish?"

When you are handed your diploma you somehow feel confident of your capability to speak intelligently on many subjects, at least if they are in your major field. By the end of the first week on the job you know all too well that your education has just begun. You begin to have real respect for the secretaries, who can match you word for word in a scientific conversation—and who almost certainly are drawing higher salaries.

Finally, and most important, comes the realization that you are on your own. You have definite responsibilities. No teacher is standing over you with a grade book to make you produce. The shiny desk and private office weren't provided for solitaire, and the dictaphone isn't for personal letters. They were put there and you were added to the outfit because your employer thought it would be profitable. With this in mind you begin producing.

But all this doesn't mean that you're a slave to an office chair—far from it. In fact, one of the most delightful things about this new life is the freedom. You can go out on a Tuesday night date with no qualms about tomorrow's foods test. Actually there is time to catch up on that list of books you looked at longingly during 4 years of college.

But this free time, which at first sounds so ideal, may have its pitfalls. It's all too easy to come home, curl up on the bed and luxuriate in quiet evenings-at-home which, taken week in week out, contribute nothing to your personal growth.

The wisest way is to make a definite plan of how

you want to utilize your free time. In this way you can get a good balance.

Of course this added time isn't all on the credit side of the ledger. You'll be spending more hours washing and ironing. Laundry and mother are no longer synonymous. If you have an apartment, there's the cooking and cleaning to be considered. And grooming is a much larger item. Each morning you must leave for work looking just as charming as you would for a Saturday night super-date at college.

**T**HIS brings up the sad Case of the Sweaters. Every one of my new-career-girl friends casts a mournful eye on her drawer of pull-overs and cardigans. Except for off-hours lounging they might as well be turned over to the moths for a feast. So take heed, you who still have time. As your senior year becomes a fact instead of a far-away goal, look with interest on classic wool dresses, well-tailored suits and matching accessories. They'll be budget savers during those first few months.

And speaking of budgets, they'll be a necessity of life instead of something you prefabricate the night before you ask your father for an allowance increase. The first time you are handed a pay check you look at it in amazement. Here you are, getting all this money for less work than you did at school.

By this time you will have come to the conclusion that there aren't many similarities between college life and career life. Well, there aren't. But it's not something to be regretted.

Certainly, you should keep those campus memories bright, but don't live in them. Your record in college will be valuable only as it makes you more capable of adjusting and accomplishing in this new world. Remember, it's a step forward. And you haven't arrived. No, you're just starting.

*THE AUTHOR: Serving as managing editor of the Iowa State Daily Student provided Frances Kerekes with the training and experience invaluable to one in her occupation. Editing pamphlets and booklets for the Nutrition Department of the National Dairy Council constitutes a large share of Miss Kerekes' promotional work in public relations through journalism.*



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