

1946

Good Professional Scope Begins Adjustment To Business Life

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Recommended Citation

Lush, Mary Elizabeth (1946) "Good Professional Scope Begins Adjustment To Business Life," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 26 : No. 6 ,
Article 9.

Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol26/iss6/9>

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THE AUTHOR: As a member of the Consumer's Bureau of General Foods, Mary Elizabeth Lush, '46, pursues her vocation in the field of foods promotion. This former editor of the Homemaker employs her time baking cakes, doughnuts, fritters and other foods which she later analyzes for effectiveness of the recipe, consistency and other qualities by which these products are judged.

Good Professional Scope Begins Adjustment To Business Life

A NEW home economics graduate spends most of her efforts during the early months of her first position adjusting to the changes from college to professional life.

One of the traits I found food corporations watch for in interviewing young home economists is the all-too-common schoolgirl attitude. Instead of telling her possible future employer what services she can provide his company or presenting him with a well organized scrapbook of previous achievement, an unprepared graduate may merely mention courses she has taken and murmur that she has always thought it would be thrilling to work in a test kitchen.

In the home economics field, it is of utmost importance that each graduating senior go forth thoroughly trained to know and use professional attitudes at all times.

Not only in the interview but on the job an employer is usually more interested at first in the home economist's standards. If her judgment is based on accurate information, if she reads the professional journals to keep abreast of current trends in her field, if she is neat and appropriately dressed, nine out of ten employers are willing to teach her all she needs to know about the work they want her to do for them.

BESIDES developing new attitudes, there are changes to make in housing, clothing and finance. Since many companies employing home economists are located in large cities, a high percentage of recent graduates have gone to live in cities. It is vital to success in adjusting to a new position to like the people with whom you share an apartment or room. You need adequate space and facilities for rest and recreation. Although in college the housing, a congenial group of friends, a more or less recognized standard of dress and a supervised diet may have been provided, a graduate in a large city must arrange each of these herself while adjusting to a new position.

In some way or other every bit of experience and every college course a young home economist has had will prove useful.

No one can say which courses are more useful than others to prepare you for a career. It was my own experience during summer vacation working in different parts of the country and doing everything from being a fry cook to teaching 10-year-olds how to sail that led me to choose the courses I did. The important thing in college seems to be to collect as much specific knowledge and experience actively related to the work you think you want to do as time and energy permit.

I HEARTILY endorse summer apprenticeships while in college. They make classwork more significant and show you whether or not your chosen field is truly satisfying to you. They provide useful experience before graduation and contacts with professional people.

Two summers in a test kitchen taught me, among other things, that it is a real asset to have saved class notes from certain courses. When an employer or co-worker asks me what gram weight they use at Iowa State for a cup of milk, I have a quick authentic reference even though I must look it up.

Once we have left college most of us who have graduated in home economics begin to realize that the adjustment from college to professional life depends on a good professional attitude more than upon any other asset.

The rest of the world is not run like a college campus, but it welcomes young, well-trained professional women.

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