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Prominent faculty members say the applicant can give herself the "pull"

Diploma in Hand---A Job in Mind
by Marie Larson

Of course you want a job! For 4 years or more you have been carefully preparing for this "coming out" into the business world. That first impression must count. It is usually the lasting one. Whether it be your letter of application, your personal contacts, or your application picture, see that it conveys the best possible impression of you and your ability.

"Is the young woman dressed for business or for a social event?" is the question that first enters my mind when interviewing an applicant for a position," said Mrs. Mary Elva Sather, assistant to the dean of home economics. "Clothes may not necessarily be the latest in style but they must be appropriate.

"Excessive jewelry and makeup, or an extreme style of hair dress tend to make one conspicuous. The business woman avoids such extremes. Of course, I realize that the young woman who is continually giving public speeches and demonstrations should possess more chic, more dash and style than does the average school teacher."

"Then too," she added, "strange as it may seem, we have had girls lose their positions because of the distasteful or inappropriate color of their clothing. One employer complained bitterly about the jingling noise caused by the numerous bracelets on the arms of one of his employees."

"Cleanliness, neatness, freshness these are the shining virtues I look for immediately," stated Dr. P. Mabel Nelson, head of the Foods and Nutrition Department. "Style in dress and hair dress does not matter a great deal, but the girl must be clean! I stress this particularly, knowing from experience that the girl who is careless about her personal appearance will possess equally slovenly habits in her work."

"The young woman's chance for a position depends on her ability to sell herself," stated Dean Genevieve Fisher. "She should do everything within her power to arrest favorable attention by appropriateness of dress, her best grooming, her voice, and her poise. However, after I begin to talk to the applicant I forget about her clothes and her personal grooming.

Then I note the quality of her voice, her ability to carry on an intelligent conversation and her use of the English language."

"Few girls seem to realize the value of a convincing, clear voice," commented Mrs. Sather. "A girl who swallows her words either from fright or from habit fails to give an impression of ability and self-confidence two essential traits. The voice should possess a pleasing quality. A high, rasping, uncontrolled voice may upset the emotional balance of an entire group of people."

"Do stress the importance of the letter of application," urged Dean Fisher. "I still recall the unfavorable impression created by one application letter which was written on ordinary note book paper. In cases where such a letter is your only means of contacting your prospective employer you must sell yourself through its contents."

Dr. Nelson offered the following suggestions for writing this all-important letter. "Be sure to tell your prospective employer the kind of position you want in the opening of your letter. This will enable him to decide immediately whether or not he wishes to read further. Then include your training and your experience, if any. References, of course, must not be overlooked. If a letter is typewritten, stress the importance of thorough proof reading to discover any typographical errors. Misspelled words have no place in a business letter."

Mrs. Sather placed equal emphasis upon the importance of the application letter, but she also commented on the value of a good application picture. "Pictures, too, often create the first impression," she exclaimed. "They are far more important than we think. We had one recent instance where the picture of one of our most capable young graduates was instrumental in the loss of an opportunity for a job. We require our dietetics majors to submit the proofs of their pictures to my office for approval before having the pictures made," she continued. "And to them we offer these suggestions: Look directly into the camera. The effect is an alert and intelligent appearance. Wear a light collar or band at the neck, for it reflects the light into your face to make it seem more alive. Then, finally, make it a likeness of you."

"Do not be afraid to smile. A smile which shows the teeth is not at all objectionable if it extends to the eyes and is not strained or unnatural. For one who intends to enter the commercial field, where personal contacts are part of the day's routine, it is quite important to have a smiling likeness to present. It may indicate to the employer that you have a sense of humor, an essential quality in dealing with people."

"On the other hand, prospective high school teachers' pictures should look as stern and mature as possible. The school board is looking for an individual who seems to be capable of handling the problems of discipline. And the application picture may convey just that impression."

"Never before has so much been required of the woman in business. Opportunity is virtually pounding at her door. But remember, it is opportunity only on an extremely high level. Only the best qualified need apply."

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