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Take Inventory for
Self Selling
by Margaret Sheriden

Spring is in the air; thoughts of hikes, picnics and fun. But here and there a senior stops for a minute to think of June, graduation, and a place to hang her hat after she checks out of the dorm or house.

She may get panicky at the mere thought of peddling her wares, and yet she knows “there’ll come a day.” But if she is prepared she can cope with any situation when the day of reckoning does come.

Appearance should be the first consideration of the applicant. A prospective employer will form an opinion of her as she first walks through the door of the office, and the wise applicant will be prepared. Smart clothes that are conservative with a touch of originality will tend to create that favorable first impression. For your costume, choose quiet colors that are interesting and friendly, but not gaudy.

Clothes are important in molding this first impression, but still more important are posture, carriage and attitude. It’s wise to stand correctly and walk casually, but, at the same time, as if you were aware of the importance of the occasion. Don’t slouch, or on the other hand be stiff and unnatural.

You can show your interest and enthusiasm by your manner. Assume a “This is the opportunity I’ve been waiting for; now let me show what I can do” attitude, and you’ll be off on the right foot.

The first few minutes of the interview will probably be an exchange of pleasantries, as each of you make adjustments, but you’ll both be watching for the opportunity to get down to the real object of the meeting. The employer is sizing you up. Take the cue, and do likewise. Remember that the interview should be an exchange of ideas and this purpose can be accomplished better if you understand each other.

You should take the initiative, and state the purpose of your appointment as soon as plausible. Tell simply but fully just why you are applying for the position, why you are interested in the firm, and what you think that you as a member of the organization could do to improve it. Show where you would fit in the scheme and then give a thorough account of scholastic records, previous experience and other qualifications that will help your interviewer to know you better.

Give yourself a chance by building up a convincing case that shows what you will do, and why you should be allowed to do it. Then give the man across the desk his opportunity.

He’ll ask questions; answer them directly and unhurriedly. Stop and think first if you aren’t sure of the answer; but if you really don’t know, say so. Remember, he’s pretty familiar with the setup of his own company and its work. He will catch in sincerity and ignorance. The “bluffer” hasn’t a chance.

Throughout the interview assume an attentive attitude. You are vitally interested in the outcome. Show it. Look the interviewer straight in the eye; be alert and, above all, attentive.

Then if you get the job, conclude promptly. Remember that your interviewer is a busy man, and that you as a member of the firm should respect this. If you are unsuccessful, express your gratitude for the appointment and leave at once. Pleading your case now won’t help, and a pleasant cheerful “thank you” is eloquent.

For a final checkup keep the following in mind:

WRITE a letter of application before the interview.
HAVE a definite campaign mapped out giving complete qualifications.
KEEP all appointments to the minute.
DON’T argue with the interviewer.
DON’T criticize other employers or employees.
DON’T try to capitalize on fraternal and lodge affiliations.
DON’T be discouraged if you fail the first time.

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