

DOs and DON'Ts for

Career Women

by Susan M. Rogers

Consideration for the boss applies to coffee breaks, too. All businesses recognize the emotional and physical value of these intervals away from the tension of routine. It is when coffee breaks are extended beyond their allotted time without permission that the boss loses patience. The pressure of today's business demands that each 60 seconds have its distance run.

A Wall Street banker who has had the same secretary for 40 years told me he has silently suffered many little inconsiderations in return for his Girl Friday's ability to handle his affairs during his long absences from the office. For example, he resents her running out every evening without first inquiring: "Is there anything else you'd like me to do?" He fumes when he buzzes for her and finds she's three quarters of an hour late returning from a sorority luncheon.

LOYALTY. If a girl can't respect her employer and feel that the two of them are on the same team, then she should look for another job. A successful working relationship must be a hand-in-glove affair. If not, the productivity of the individuals and the business will suffer.

With so many millions of women at work, why do so few reach the pinnacle of business success? Most young girls enter business as a stop-gap to marriage. Few members of the "Under 25" sorority establish a business goal for themselves. After 25, either a girl has set a future that she wants and is sincerely working toward it, or she is adrift.

The trouble with most women is that they don't plan beyond next week's pay check and won't make the sacrifices necessary to business success. To illustrate, there's a girl I used to know who was in her late thirties and could easily have held a more responsible, higher-paid job, but she refused to accept it because it would make occasional off-hour demands on her time. She had a boy friend who had no intention of marrying her, but she was afraid to let him out of her sight for those additional hours that could have spelled solid security. That's typical of many women's reasoning.

Older women frequently are, or have been, married but have responsibilities which keep them at their jobs. Employers report these women have greater physical stamina than younger women; are more dependable, less emotional, and more mature in their judgment.

If women could be taught to realize that business success means, first, the laying of a firm foundation, and then the relentless placing of brick upon brick, there would be less drifting and less emotional instability because their energies would be absorbed.

If marriage is a woman's major ambition, then let her go after it! But if her Prince Charming has not appeared before she is 25, she had better give serious thought to her career. This will not deprive her of matrimonial opportunities. If she retains her femininity, her additional knowledge of a man's world should actually make her a more interesting and understanding wife.

A wise man once remarked: "A woman's function in life is to be admired." Men are proud of women of accomplishment. True, they like to be seen with an attractive or gay girl, but just watch a man's eyes when he brags about a woman's accomplishments!

And remember, nothing worthwhile was ever achieved without *planning* and *sacrificing*. Achievement is expensive but well worth the cost!

gets a promotion. Innate feminine antagonisms erupt. Attitudes, direct remarks, or subtle hints are directed at the fortunate employee, invariably with inferences about her and the boss!

In the interest of peace, bosses may try to act unaware, but actually none of it escapes them. They make mental notes which later turn to the offenders' own disadvantage.

DISCRETION. Knowing when and how to mind her own business, respect confidences, and maintain golden silence should be a female fine art.

A tragic example of indiscretion concerns an executive who became personally interested in a girl. Malicious rumors about her reached him. Perhaps it was wrong, but he asked his woman assistant who lived in the same apartment building as the girl, to learn more about her. He was hoping by this means to kill rumors. But the assistant revealed her employer's confidence to her friends.

The gossip spread like wildfire! Of course, it reached the girl and now there is no hope of marriage. His assistant will soon be job-hunting.

Everyone seems to indulge in indiscreet gossip to some degree. Women are more severe when talking about other women. Each time a statement is repeated it is altered by words, voice intonations, or gestures. The damage is unpredictable.

A former employer of mine whose education stopped in the sixth grade built a financial empire. To would-be gossipers, he constantly reiterates: "Never believe anything unless you get it from the horse's mouth."

Secretaries to top executives must be extremely careful. The girl "in the know" keeps quiet. It's the one who *doesn't know* who shows it!

GOOD CUSTOMER-RELATIONS SENSE. A manufacturer told me he first sold himself to his employees, then he educated them on his product, the company, and its policies. People are interested in people. If you think your boss is the greatest, you'll go the limit for him. Because you are interested in him, you'll feel a responsibility for the success of the organization and realize that your future and the company's are bound together. You will unconsciously become an enthusiastic booster.

POISE. Flighty women wear down a boss's patience. Women who indulge in curt replies, emotional outbursts, loud laughter, and lack of con-

THE EVENING'S DUSK had just settled as I drove toward home. Waiting for buses to carry them away from the pressures of the workaday world were many of the women who comprise today's vast industrial army.

Did you ever notice their rounded shoulders and observe them desperately clutching their pocket-books? Those pocketbooks represent their jobs. They cling tenaciously to the security they carry under their arms and worry constantly about how to increase it. Yet how many women know the necessary ingredients for top-level business achievement?

Emotional stability in business women is rated as the No. 1 gilt-edged trait by the men who okay the pay raises and promotions.

A woman's instability in the business world takes many forms. Alcoholism is one symptom.

When I was feature editor of a paper, one of the top women writers was a confirmed alcoholic. When she was with us, she never missed a deadline and she wrote excellent copy. But we were aware of the scent on her breath in the early morning. We knew she had lunch in a bar, preceded by cocktails. Frequently, about 2 p.m., she could be found "sleeping it off" in the powder room. Of course, instead of taking a coffee break like the rest of us, she took another nip or two in the afternoon. Today this woman is holding an insignificant office job.

Psychologists report that a woman's emotional instability also may be evidenced by bad temper, sulking, moodiness, inability to accept constructive criticism graciously or see a task through. Instability is further exhibited in repeated tardiness, absenteeism, careless work, and personal untidiness.

It's frightening to see a woman floundering because of emotional instability. Heavily burdened as today's executives are, they cannot also play company psychiatrist to probe, analyze, and straighten out some psychological maladjustment. The woman must do it herself!

In my research for "How to Get Along with the Boss," a book which deals with masculine psychology as applied to women in business, innumerable conferences with top executives revealed the qualities most sought in women employees. Among those cited were the following:

GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP. This sterling quality is frequently lost in the storm of feminine jealousy. The backbiting is particularly rough when a girl

Photos by Mickey Pallas

DO
Speak pleasantly to all business callers.



DO
Watch clock while on your coffee break.



DO
Check with boss before leaving for day.



DON'T
Gossip, especially about fellow workers.



DON'T
Make personal phone calls from the office.



DON'T
Apply make-up at desk; use powder room.



DON'T
Talk to boss with cigarette in mouth.

