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## Personal Management: Career Assessment and Marketing Guidelines Jean

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*GUEST WRITER: This column was written by Anne P. Hyde who is an owner and principal in Management Woman, Inc., an executive search firm in New York City.*

Ms. Hyde, who was born and educated in England, is a graduate of London University and came to this country in 1963. She knows corporate management in the United States and Europe. As a presidential assistant in an international real estate firm, she reorganized personnel and administrative policies and procedures for offices located throughout the U.S. and Europe. Prior to that she established a new division at a major U.S. advertising agency, was corporate manager for a firm of international management consultants and executive search group, and supervised corporate personnel and administration for a European hotel chain.

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As executive recruiters and principals of our own firm, my partner and I have interviewed in-depth, several hundred women executives and have reviewed resumes of over 1,800 middle and upper level management women in all disciplines. With this exposure, we have been in a position to observe, evaluate and analyze the professional business woman. In this article we will share some of our findings.

Opportunities for women in all areas of

# Personal Management

## Career Assessment and Marketing Guidelines

business and industry have increased considerably during the past decade. Emergence of "The Women's Movement" with its visibility and thrust in the 60's and the use of the government's enormous purchasing powers to enforce Equal Employment Opportunity, did a great deal to open doors hitherto closed to women. Reinforced by passage of the EEO Act of 1972, these factors have had a major impact on every U.S. employer. They "started the ball rolling", and today we can see very definite progress. The expanding need for services offered by Management Woman, Incorporated, and the corresponding growth of our firm, bear witness to the changing scene.

Realistically, of course, neither the corporate world nor society at large is going to alter overnight. People are creatures of habit, resisting change until it is thrust upon them. Nevertheless, women have been quietly preparing themselves for growth and upward mobility. With advanced education, or perhaps practical experience gained in secondary or supportive roles, many seek opportunities to progress. For the individual, such opportunities may or may not appear.

Marion S. Kellogg, a management development specialist at General Electric, recently pointed out in *Business Week* that "To a far greater degree than most people imagine, a career can be managed . . ." This will be the theme of the balance of this article.

### Determining Career Goals

In a career track, opportunities are not always readily apparent. Certain assessments and decisions are necessary, and decisions to transfer to a different job

with your current employer, or to change employers, are frequently based on the notion that movement is necessary for advancement. But before making the decision to move, a career-conscious woman must make some careful evaluations.

Goal-setting, if kept flexible, can spur you to action when your progress appears halted. It helps evaluate alternative opportunities within and perhaps outside of your present environment. It provides the necessary basis for making any career decision. Look around in your present company and evaluate what the opportunities might be. Would a lateral move give you the chance to obtain greater depth and breadth of exposure? Would a slight shift in direction within your present company give you the chance you seek? Do you have the right qualifications to take advantage of that chance?

A career plan is nothing more than an instrument of self-appraisal. It must begin with that all important look at yourself: "Do I know the things I like best?"; "How hard am I willing to work physically and mentally to achieve my goals?"; "Am I willing to give up leisure time to obtain further education?"

Determine your goals and objectives, both immediate and long-range. Once determined, these goals will help you search for and recognize opportunity. As new situations arise, each presenting its opportunities and its risks, goals will help you evaluate these factors rationally.

We have always recommended that the executive woman have a professional history written and ready, even though she may have no intention of leaving her present job or company. The reason is sim-

ple: By maintaining an updated resumé, she establishes a reviewing method that will let her know if she is on-track in her chosen career pattern and within her determined timeframe. Think of your resumé as a form of business biography. You would not write just one biography in a lifetime. You must always expand the list of achievements, eliminating those initial, now less important accomplishments, and emphasizing the latest milestones. Thought of in those terms, an updated resumé is a vital tool for executive evaluation. As you change and grow, so will your goals and objectives.

Few, when the look back over a 20-year track, can honestly say that they envisioned one objective and one alone. Frequent review of yourself, your achievement record, your goals, your successes and failures, your strengths and weaknesses, will provide a great deal of insight.

Keep in mind that more can be learned from failures than successes. Do not push failures "under the carpet". Review, assess and learn. Interviewers often ask that candidates identify their weaknesses. I am aware of one situation in which a woman's failure to respond to such a question lost her a \$40,000/year job. To the interviewer, her inability or unwillingness to speak of weaknesses indicated that she was not secure enough to identify or recognize them — and thus she would hardly be able to rectify them.

Self-review is not easy. I know that only too well. Twice in my own career, I have had to take a hard objective look at myself and my career, considering where I was, where I wanted to go, and what I had done to help secure my own success. The answers to these questions were not always to my liking but they provided the basis for making necessary decisions.

## Preparing the Resumé

Now let us assume that a move from your present company is imperative. You have done your preparatory evaluations, established goals, and are about to write an updated resumé for presentation to a prospective employer. What do you leave in, and what do you delete?

In preparing a resumé, the cardinal rule is to "be the reader, not the writer". A resumé should tell the reader just enough to entice, leaving out all that is not relevant to the job. If you think it is important, additional background can be brought up in the interview. As quoted recently in *Business Week*, "you use a resumé to open a door, you don't use it to do a complete selling job. You sell your-

self at the interview".

A great many people ask, "Why do I need a resumé? I never needed one in the past. Why can't I meet the company's executive and explain?" On the surface, this is logical. The problem is that executives today are constantly on the run. Having a prepared document before them, presenting you as you wish to be presented, saves time that would otherwise have to be spent during the interview. The resumé saves time so that you have an opportunity to elaborate on those points of your career which you wish to emphasize.

As an executive recently remarked: "The majority of resúmes end up in waste baskets." Keep yours out of the trash can so that it can produce an interview. One expert has estimated that a large company will receive as many as 250,000 resúmes a year? Remember, length is not indicative of quality. Keep your marketing document short and pertinent. One page is fine, two the maximum. It should be easy to read, concise and directed toward your desired goal.

If you have defined two possible job routes, for example accounting and administration, then *two* resumes will have to be composed, each postured toward the desired goal. It is unlikely that you will want to include everything on both resúmes. Everything relevant to accounting will probably not be relevant to administration, and vice versa. Decide what items present your strength for each goal, and eliminate all that is not pertinent.

If you have had a diversified career, then the established chronological format is desirable, i.e., yearly dates, job title and company identification. Then write a clear, concise paragraph or two (in third person) detailing highlights of your career which you wish to emphasize. Elaborate the details of your present and last jobs, since those accomplishments will point up your current level of responsibility and justify advancement to the position you seek.

Marketable assets include the following:

- responsibility in terms of budget, sales, title and people supervised;
- communication skills such as report writing, and experience communicating with various levels of management and with outside clients;
- timely attainment of specific company goals and objectives;
- total, accountability for projects, including creation, design and implementation;
- technical in-depth knowledge or

just general exposure, where relevant;

- education, extra seminars and management training; and
- any other comments which indicate that the company you work for gets a good return on its investment in you.

## Some Do's

- Include dollar figures. If you have controlled or managed a budget, mention the specific amounts.
- Include only outside activities that are relevant to the position you seek and that indicate management ability.
- Include the numbers and the levels of people who report directly or indirectly to you.
- Be a name dropper whenever possible. Unfortunately, corporations are still interested in the "right" schools and the "right" companies.

## Some Don'ts

- State how loyal, aggressive, friendly, attractive and bright you are.
- State your age, marital status, number of children, husband's name or occupation, send a picture or list hobbies. These are not relevant to your job.

It is becoming increasingly important that prospective employers know if you will relocate. An executive is expected to be very flexible these days, and corporations will always consider executives more promotable if they show commitment. Willingness to relocate is commitment.

Always provide a telephone number where you can be reached. Letters are costly and time consuming. You may miss out if another candidate is easier to reach than you.

Finally, your resumé has been composed, and you are ready to produce and send it to those companies identified as perhaps being interested in your qualifications and expertise.

Since your resumé frequently precedes you to an interview, it should present you at your best. In business, image is all. Therefore, no "wet" reproductions or xeroxed copies. Have it professionally typed and offset, with no typos, no added items in ink, and deletions. If you feel this piece of advice is unnecessary for professional women, my reaction must be "How I wish it were true". Resúmes have come to us in numerous unprofessional states, written illegibly in pencil and

(Continued on page 31)

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# Editor's Notes

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## Support the ERA

The United Nations has proclaimed 1975 International Women's Year. And numerous organizations have proclaimed 1975 the year in which the Equal Rights Amendment will become the 27th Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Among the organizations supporting the ERA are our two sponsoring organizations: The American Woman's Society of Certified Public Accountants and the American Society of Women Accountants. Sally J. Self, CPA, and Pearl J. Mullvain, the president of AWSCPA and ASWA, respectively, are strong advocates of the ERA and have urged our members to work for its ratification in their states.

When North Dakota ratified the ERA early this year it became the 34th state to do so. Two states, Tennessee and Nebraska, which had earlier ratified the ERA have since rescinded their ratifications, an action of doubtful legality. Strictly speaking, only four more states are needed to make the 27th Amendment a reality; but to overcome the negative actions of Tennessee and Nebraska ratification by another six states would put all legal doubts to rest.

The sixteen states which have not yet ratified the ERA are: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah, and Virginia.

If you live in one of these sixteen states which has not yet ratified the ERA, you

owe it to yourself and to all women to work for its ratification. You can do this by working through the E.R.A. Coalition, an umbrella organization of more than 60 women's groups. Or you can circulate and sign a petition at your next ASWA Chapter meeting and mail copies of it to all your state representatives and senators.

In addition to — or instead of — these actions you can write to your state representatives and senators urging them to vote for the Equal Rights Amendment. You don't necessarily have to write a long letter; a postcard saying simply "Support the ERA" should be sufficient to let them know how you feel. And how much time and money does it take to send a few postcards?

And all of you, whether you live in one of the 34 states which have already ratified the ERA or in one of the 16 which have not yet done so, can send a check to one or more of the organizations which are working actively for ratification.

In our January 1974 issue Dr. Patricia C. Elliott, CPA, reported on "The Status of the ERA" in our Legal Developments Department (pp. 18-19). Her column summarized most of the arguments which have been advanced against the ERA and rebuts each of them. She also lists the most important benefits of the ERA. If you want to refresh your memory and be ready to win opponents to the ERA over to our side, then do read her column again.

And then don't just sit there and wait for your income tax refund. Do something for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment!

## Personal Management

(Continued from page 22)

sometimes replete with grammatical and spelling errors.

Be discriminating in selecting to whom you send your resumé. Wrong exposure or over-exposure could cost you your job, if you are just "exploring the market". Beware of replying to "blind" ads, your letter and resumé could end up on your boss' desk, or on the desk of a friend with whom he or she frequently talks at professional meetings.

## Using an Executive Search Firm

If you contemplate sending your resumé to an executive search firm, make sure that you clearly understand how the firm operates. Does the firm guard your professional anonymity and/or contact you before submitting your resumé to a client? Determine how visible you are and how careful you must be. Choose your search firm accordingly. Does the firm keep you and your resumé on "active status" and are you being continually considered for openings?

Keep the search organization to whom you submit your resume appraised of changes in your status, i.e., added responsibilities, greater relocation flexibility, and any other change that might be relevant to the job you seek. Of course, you must always advise the search firm of a change in a telephone number and/or an address. An executive search firm's immediate response to a prospective employer can be very important, so make sure the firm you use can contact you quickly when the need arises.

In estimating the time it will require to locate a new position, allow a week for every \$1,000 in salary. Keep in mind that this does not include the goal setting and evaluation period, nor the time required to prepare and produce your resumé.

Don't wait until you need a job to send your resumé to a search firm. If it has your updated resumé on file, it can contact you and keep you abreast of what is available. This keeps you informed of the job market, and it allows the search firm leeway in working for you. Remember that the right job might not present itself for twelve months or more.

Even in the current climate, companies are looking for qualified professional people. As an indication, during the last three weeks, two companies have approached us requesting help in locating financial women. Both of the openings carry salaries above \$40,000. So despite all you read, good people are still being sought. Make sure they find you! !