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Personal Management

Planning A Career In Public Accounting

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The successful Certified Public Accountant or Public Accountant must be technically competent, but to maximize success the practitioner must also possess the ability to obtain new and retain present clients. Public accounting is a very competitive profession and the successful individuals in the profession strive for an image which will aid in practice furtherance.

Where physical assets are important to the growth of a business, we encourage our clients to increase the investment to accomplish growth. Since our major asset is ourselves, we should in turn invest in ourselves.

The first investment should be in appearance. Many clients are not in a position to thoroughly evaluate technical competence and probably take appearance into consideration in the evaluation of the practitioner. The time and money necessary to achieve the neat, business-like appearance of a professional will pay dividends through a better rapport with clients.

The next investment should be in making business and social contacts. These contacts can strengthen your relationship with present clients and offer oppor-

tunities for obtaining new clients. You can make these contacts by establishing yourself in various activities and organizations around your community. Your selection should be based on what you enjoy and also those which allow you to meet business and community leaders. Some examples of these activities and organizations are charitable organizations, professional organizations and social clubs.

Charitable organizations need the assistance of qualified business people and they provide a means of becoming established in the community. Professional women are especially in demand for positions on boards of directors and in other leadership roles. Many women boards of directors, such as the YWCA boards, are looking for business women to serve on their boards. Other organizations such as United Way, colleges and universities generally want women represented on their boards. There are many other volunteer jobs available with charitable organizations ranging from working with juveniles to handicapped to elderly people. Any of these volunteer jobs will aid in the development of your image in the community and should give you the opportunity to meet community leaders.

Local chapters of professional organizations such as the American Society of Women Accountants, State Societies of Certified Public Accountants and the National Association of Accountants are excellent ways to establish yourself in the

community. These organizations give you the opportunity to develop leadership potential and provide many opportunities for exposure in the community in addition to their primary purpose of furthering the accounting profession. Estate planning groups normally consist of accountants, attorneys, bankers and insurance specialists; these groups provide excellent contact opportunities with other professions.

Social club memberships include country clubs, tennis and other sports-oriented membership and private clubs with dining and meeting facilities. The time you spend at such a club should depend on how much time you want to spend with the other members and how involved you want to be in the activities. It need not be a major commitment.

Many businesses seeking the services of Certified Public Accountants and Public Accountants select accountants they know or those recommended by attorneys, bankers, and other members of the business community.

In conclusion, our product is our service which cannot easily be separated from the individual performing the services. To increase the marketability of a product, it should be tastefully packaged and an investment must be made to familiarize the buying public with the product. The practitioners who follow this concept have a definite advantage in maintaining and/or expanding their practices.