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BULLETIN

The College Counseling Service

A Summary Study of the Interview And Interviewing Techniques

- Laurence E. Saddler

An Abtract of
The Origin and Extent of Standards In Clerical Work

- Fred C. Archer

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FOREWORD

This issue of the Bulletin presents two articles. The first THE COLLEGE COUNSELING SERVICE by Dr. Laurence Saddler attempts to show some of the techniques of the counselor. The technique of the interview is presented to the public in the hope that it may be helpful, for each of us at various times is faced with counseling young people.

Dr. Saddler is a trained counselor and Director of Student Personnel at this institution. He received his doctorate from the University of Missouri.

The second article AN ABSTRACT OF THE ORIGIN AND EXTENT OF STANDARDS IN CLERICAL WORK is by Dr. Fred C. Archer. It reviews the history of methods and procedures for training office workers for industry, shows the inadequacy of those methods, and suggests methods which the author believes will result in the selection and better training of more efficient office workers.

Dr. Archer received his doctorate from New York University. He is at present on the faculty of St. Cloud State Teachers College.

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The College Counseling Service

History and Organization

The College Counseling Service was established in the fall of 1949. It was first located in Stewart Hall on a decentralized basis in order to provide private counseling quarters. In January, 1950, the Service was centralized in temporary building "B" with The Educational Clinic. This arrangement greatly increased the efficiency of the service for several reasons.

First, many aspects of the work of The Educational Clinic and The Counseling Service are interrelated. Centralization provided a basis for efficient communication and referral from one service to the other.

Second, the two services were able to establish an extensive psychological test library and adequate facilities for individual and group test administration immediately adjacent to the interviewing rooms.

Third, the personal-social,. educational, and vocational information library became centrally located so each counselor could use it effectively with his counselees.

The Counseling Service is organized as a part of the Bureau of Student Personnel. Any change in policy or procedure must be approved by the Student Personnel Committee.

Two staff members of the psychology department devote approximately one-half time to clinical counseling. Arrangements have been made to utilize the services of a third trained counselor when necessary.

A full time psychometrist is employed in cooperation with the Educational Clinic for test administration and scoring. Secretarial and receptionist assistance is also employed to assist the counselors and the students in any way possible.

The Counseling Service works in close cooperation with the other agencies of the Bureau of Student Personnel. These agencies, in addition to the Educational Clinic, include the Dean of Men, the Dean of Women, The Admissions Office, the Health Service, the Placement Services and the Student Activities Office. The Service also cooperates closely with the faculty and the administration.

Over 400 students have been registered for individual counseling since January, 1950. Some of these cases have required only one to three interviews with a minimum of testing. Others have involved as many as fifty separate interviews. The number of private counseling sessions and the extent of the testing program has been determined by the needs of the individual student. Dealing in numbers alone can be fallacious and misleading. In this instance, however, the number has real meaning as a quantitative indication of the general need for a Counseling Service as a part of a total student personnel program.

More than one-half of the students utilizing the service have been self-referrals. The balance have been referred by the other personnel agencies, the faculty, or other students. All referrals have been on a permissive basis. That is, no student has been required to visit the Counseling Service for assistance.

Objectives and Philosophy

The major objective of the Counseling Service is to implement and extend the other personnel services available to students on an individual basis. This means that all the efforts of the counseling service center upon the student in his efforts to meet his needs, solve his problems, improve his planning and reduce his tensions.

The counselor always keeps certain guiding principles in mind in his contacts with students:

First, behavior is never without cause. There is always a reason, or reasons, for both desirable and undesirable behavior or desirable and undesirable adjustment.

Second, all interviews are confidential. No personal information is released except with the permission of the counselee and in his own best interests.

Third, the inherent worth and the integrity of each individual is always kept in mind.

Fourth, freedom and responsibility for making choices and decisions rests with the counselee at all times.

The objectives and philosophy of the Counseling Service are illustrated and summarized in the following fictionized incidents based on actual cases. The various students are presenting typical situations wherein counseling is needed. After each group of presentations the situations are evaluated by the counselor. The total picture is then summarized by a series of conclusions.[1]

Case 1 . . .

"I'm all upset. When I'm here at college I worry about my folks and wonder if they are all right. Here at T. C. I feel as though I ought to be home, and I miss the folks. It gets so bad sometimes that I can't sleep and I can't pay attention in class. I know I don't eat the way I should, but I just don't have any appetite. Then when I go home, the folks get on my nerves after I have been there an hour or two and I wonder why I bothered to come home at all. Mother and Dad treat me like a kid and that makes me awfully mad. I fight with my kid sister all the time even though I think she's tops,

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[1] These cases with counselor comments and conclusions were prepared and first presented as a radio script by the author in collaboration with Dr. M. E. Van Nostrand of the Counseling Service.

and I resent everything Mother and Dad say even though most of the time I know they're right. I know I shouldn't feel this way, but I can't seem to do anything about it."

Case 2 . . .

"I'm worried about the way I get along with people. I get along with the other fellows in good shape most of the time, but I just don't make the grade at all with the girls. Whenever I try to talk to a girl, she seems friendly enough, but I get self-conscious and can't think of anything to say. Just the thought of asking a girl for a date scares me half to death, but I'd really like to go out. I know I'm losing out on a lot of the social activities and losing friends. What do you suppose is the matter with me?"

Counselor Comment 1

Here we have two cases where the students have reported rather different situations. It is the problem of the counselor to see back of the superficial difficulties which really are symptoms of more basic, underlying difficulties. The girl who finds difficulty in adjusting to her parents and yet, at the same time, feels drawn to them, is facing a very similar problem to the young man who finds difficulty making good social adjustments with girls his own age, but yet feels drawn normally to them. The task of a counselor is to help young people like this, first to discover the basic causes for these feelings, and then to help them find satisfying and acceptable ways of resolving their conflicts.

It must be emphasized that the counselor is not concerned with giving free advice. The task of every counselor and of the College Counseling Service is to help these young people to discover for themselves and with their own abilities, the methods of making mature personal, social, vocational, and educational adjustments.

The next group of students will present a different type of situation which would bring them to the College Counseling Service.

Case 3 . . .

"I have been doing all right in some of my classes, but some of the others haven't been going well. Science and mathematics are o.k., but I'm making low grades in English, and I have trouble keeping up with the reading assignment in psychology. I'm beginning to wonder if I should be in college or just what the trouble is, and what I should do if I drop out."

Case 4 . . .

"This is my fifth quarter here at T. C. I have been taking the general courses in English, science, humanities and social studies, and I have been doing all right - - Mostly B's and C's and a couple of A's. Besides that, I'm in the choral club and I'm taking voice lessons. I'm interested in music very

much, but I don't know what my chances are for making music my life's work. If I don't go into music I don't know just what I want to do, what I can do, or what I should do. I surely need some help in making up my mind."

Case 5 . . .

"One of my instructors mentioned the tests that we all had to take when we came to college last fall. He said all of us should know what we had done on these tests so we would have a better understanding of our strengths and weaknesses. After class I asked him where I could find out about mine and he referred me over to you."

Counselor Comment 2

The three students whom you have just heard have presented typical educational and vocational problems which often confront college students. Some students do not have the ability to do college work successfully. Others have the ability to do some types of college work successfully, whereas they would be unsuccessful in other areas.

Some students are faced with indecision because they lack adequate information concerning their strong points and their weak points, and their interests, or their likes and dislikes. Still others face these problems because of the fact that they do not have sufficient information about different types of jobs or about the educational requirements for these jobs. Through counseling, supplemented by testing, the College Counseling Service can assist the student in gaining a more adequate appraisal of himself and more accurate information of any sort. If the student has a clear picture of himself and the necessary information, he is thus placed in a position to make wise decisions and adequate adjustment educationally or vocationally.

The next student who is talking with the counselor presents a more complex problem because of her own emotional involvements.

Case 6 . . .

"My advisor suggested that I come in to see you because of the way my work is going. I'm a second quarter junior, majoring in business administration. I had about a B average for my first two years here in college, but I made a D, two C's and a B the last quarter. I'm doing no better in my present courses, and may even be doing poorer. I've been feeling terrible but I can't find out what is the matter. I have a dull headache half the time and my stomach is upset nearly all the time. I had a complete physical examination from our family physician last month and he didn't find a thing wrong with me. He said I seemed to be worrying too much, and maybe I was working too hard. My appetite has been a little better and I am sleeping some better because I take the medicine regularly that he prescribed to help me in these respects. I've been going to the Health Service about once a week, too. My temperature and pulse are always normal, but I still have the headaches and the stomach trouble.

My advisor told me that my high school record and the results of the tests I took when I entered the college indicate that I have the ability to do good work in college. Since I did o.k. the first two years, my ability is apparently high enough even though I'm making poor grades now. It must be because I feel so bad, and yet they tell me that there is nothing wrong with me physically. The whole thing has me so mixed up that I'd be tempted to drop out of school if I thought that would help."

Counselor Comment 3

In this situation, the difficulty is one of emotional adjustment rather than adjustment to scholastic problems in and of themselves. There are things that are troubling this student, and she needs help in order to discover what her real difficulties are. As we listened to the recital of the difficulties that she faces and the situations which disturb her, we cannot escape the feeling that here is a girl who has basic disturbances of which she is not aware. She is aware of some of the symptoms of her disturbances, but she does not recognize many of them. She has tried to deal with the problem in terms of those symptoms that she recognizes rather than in terms of the basic difficulties that are hers.

In helping a student like this one, the counselor must proceed slowly and carefully, winning first of all the confidence of the student, then helping the student to see each of the difficulties as it comes to light. Each new step helps the student to gain new insights into the situation. As one after another these insights come and the problems and conflicts resolve themselves, the student gains greater surety, and one by one the various symptoms disappear as she is helped.

In this situation, we cannot expect to achieve 100 per cent adjustment. As a matter of fact, no one ever is completely adjusted. But in this instance, there are many indications of insights that are already there, and it is expected that as the student and the counselor work together, that new insights will come, new methods of handling situations will be learned, and gains will be made so that this person will be much better adjusted than before coming to the counseling service.

This student is dealing with a problem which probably stems largely from difficulties within herself. The next student, however, is involved in a situation in which people and forces outside himself are largely responsible for his problem.

Case 7 . . .

"My grades last quarter were pretty low. I feel terrible to have done so poorly, but my Dad feels even worse, I think. He wants me to be an engineer, so I enrolled in the pre-engineering course here at school. My Dad is a good mechanic and he has his own garage. He's paying all my way if I'll be an engineer. It makes me feel worse because he is so good to help me when it is a little hard for him and mother with my three other brothers

and sister at home. I really tried last quarter and I'm trying now, but I have a tough time in both chemistry and algebra. The teachers helped me a lot outside of class, even, but after I study math, especially, for fifteen or twenty minutes, I just can't keep my mind on it. That's funny, too, because I spent hours on the model house for art appreciation and loved every minute of it. I liked my English course, too. There's really nothing I'd rather do than pick up a good book or a photography magazine and read. I got my best grades in the art and English courses, but what good will they be to an engineer?"

Case 8 . . .

"The housemother thought I should come over and talk to you but I can't see why."

Question - "Tell me a little about yourself. How are you getting along here in school?"

Reply - "That's just what I mean. I'm getting along fine. I made straight A's last quarter and I think I will this quarter too. (pause) Of course I should, I study every night and even weekends when I go home I do special projects in the library. (pause) I like to study, but sometimes I can't help but feel that I'm missing something. When the other girls go out on dates I get to feeling sorry for myself, and yet they don't get anywhere near the grades that I do. The funny thing is that it doesn't bother them either."

Question - "What clubs do you belong to or what activities have you taken part in lately?"

Reply - "Oh, I'm not in anything like that. (pause) Do you suppose that's why the housemother wanted me to see you?"

Counselor Comment 4

The girl whom you have just heard is compensating for inadequate adjustment personally and socially through over-concentration on a perfect grade record. She is somewhat aware of her social and personal inadequacies, but has not faced them realistically.

She needs assistance in finding a better balance between her academic activities and those social activities which are basic to desirable adjustment. The counselor can render this assistance by talking through the problem with her so that she gains insight into her needs and learns to evaluate herself and her activities in a more realistic manner.

The boy who discussed his difficulties in the pre-engineering course needs assistance in resolving a problem which stems from parental desire that he achieve a certain objective. Often the goals a parent sets for a student are based on the parent's desires only, and are unsound if not in line with the student's abilities and interests.

His problem is made more difficult because of his natural loyalty and devotion to his family and his desire to please his father.

He needs assistance in gaining a proper evaluation of himself and his relationship with his family. If he achieves this goal through counseling, he can probably talk the matter through with his father and decide on another course of training which will be in line with his abilities and interests.

In some instances where the student is unable to present his case in such a manner as to obtain the cooperation of the parents, the counselor can be of assistance through conferences with the parents.

These two students, and those whom you have heard before them, have highlighted some of the problems which may arise rather frequently as normal young people grow towards maturity. In other words, these are some of the dilemmas that may confront any normal person, and usually such problems will respond quite readily to counseling. There are infrequent instances, however, when the problem is of a more serious and severe nature. The final student whom you will hear exemplifies such a problem.

Case 9 . . .

"The strangest thing has been happening to me lately and I'm becoming more and more disturbed about it. I've reached the point now where I've just got to talk to someone. Every once in a while for the last two or three weeks, I've noticed that my right hand gets numb. It doesn't have any feeling in it at all - - It scares me."

Counselor - "Tell me about the last time you noticed this numbness."

Client - "Well, the last time was just yesterday when I had to take a history exam. It was a subjective test, and there was a lot of writing. I was frightened about the test even before I went to class. I got through the first question all right, but while I was trying to think of what to write for the next one, I noticed that I couldn't feel the pen in my hand at all. It frightened me so that I just got up and left the room. I don't know what the teacher thought, but I went over to my room in the dorm and I was so scared I just shook. I couldn't feel anything in that hand for hours. And then just as quickly as the numbness had come, it went away. I don't know where to turn to, or what to do."

Counselor Comment 5

This last situation is one which indicates the very probable necessity for referral to other more specialized sources of help. It is a part of the training and the skill of any person working as a counselor to understand his own limitations as well as his own capabilities.

In the situation which we have just heard, there are indications that psychiatric help is needed, and that a much longer period of time may be required before this situation can be cleared up. Since the student has

sought help early, however, and since her condition is not too advanced, there is every reason to expect that with adequate psychiatric care she will make a relatively speedy recovery and will be able to make good adjustment in a normal, wholesome, adult manner, to the problems and difficulties that she faces.

Now that we have presented those typical situations in which college students need assistance and we have commented briefly about them, may we summarize by emphasizing with a few short statements the guiding principles on which we work:

Conclusion

1. All counseling is essentially a person-to-person relationship. This is why the private interview is always used.
2. Counseling aims to give the person independence and strength. Advice-giving may make him dependent and weak.
3. The counselor does not solve problems or make decisions for the individual. He helps him to solve his own problems and make his own decisions.
4. The skilled counselor uses many tools and techniques in assisting the person. Among these are psychological tests, vocational books and pamphlets, and educational informational material.
5. The counselor must have a thorough knowledge of the skills and services of other persons or agencies to whom the student can be referred for special help.
6. All information given by the student is always held in strictest confidence by the counselor.
7. Counseling is non-judgmental. By this we mean that the counselor never acts in the capacity of judge upon the behavior of the person. He only seeks to understand **why** the person does what he does, without either condemnation or censure.
8. The Counseling Service at a Teachers College is double important because it helps the prospective teacher to achieve personal maturity which will be reflected in his relationships with children throughout his teaching career. This is the cornerstone of mental health in a community.
9. And finally, the Counseling Service deals with normal people who are wrestling with problems that cannot be solved by simple self-analysis. The major emphasis of counseling is to keep normal people normal.

A Study of the Interview And Interviewing Techniques

Definition and Classification of Interviews

Counseling is the heart of any guidance program and interviewing is the basic technique for counseling. Guidance may be rendered in many different ways, but it is generally agreed that the most effective means of assisting an individual to make wise choices, interpretations and adjustments is through skillful counseling. Interviewing is so intimately related to counseling in its personnel or guidance significance that the two words are sometimes used singly and interchangeably rather conjointly: interviewing implies counseling and counseling cannot take place without interviewing.

The interview may be defined as a fact to face conference between two people, conducted for any one of a number of purposes. There are many types of interviews, are held for a variety of purposes, and take place under very different conditions as to environmental factors. The interview may be introduction (get acquainted), evaluative (appraisal), information-getting, information giving, or for treatment (therapeutic) purposes (3). This is an inclusive classification that covers almost any situation in which an interview may take place and will serve very well for our purpose in this instance. However, it is well to recognize that many other classifications of the interview can be made. It may be classified according to the major area or field in which the topic of the interview seems to lie; physical, medical, or health, educational, religious, social, mental, vocational, economic, and the like (9).

Germane and Germane in classifying the interview and considering it chiefly from the school joint of view list only the casual and the purposive interview (7).

The casual interview is considered as one that might take place anywhere, anytime, while the purposive interview is planned for specific fact-collecting and clinical counseling. Young categorizes the interview as formal and informal (13). He considers the formal interview as one in which there are more or less standardized procedures and a predetermined type of material to be required or requested of the interviewee. The informal interview is defined as one in which an effort is made to secure the desired information in the course of conversational interaction.

Much more important than any classification of interviews is the obligation of remembering that the counseling interview, irrespective of its classifications, is always a method of education, always personal, always purposive, and should always be professional.

Preparation for the Interview

It can be stated axiomatically that preparation is possible for any interview. There are two types of interviews with reference to opportunity to make specific previous preparation: the one is based upon more or less abundant and previously collected information regarding the individual to be interviewed; the other is dependent upon what the counselor is able to uncover through observation and the content of the interview. The former is known as a prearranged interview. The latter is termed a "cold interview" in which the interviewer is not acquainted with the interviewee, has had no opportunity to consult recorded information concerning the individual that may be available from various sources, and has no knowledge of what the problem is. General preparation is possible for this type of interview, baffling though it may seem. If one has made the proper general preparation he will be in full command of the situation for the moment and can lay a foundation for future interviews of the prearranged type. The preparation for the prearranged interview will be discussed at length but first consideration must be given to general preparation.

General preparation for an interview presupposes that the counselor has had adequate training in methods of gathering information and data. If not, then certainly the acquisition of such training will be the first step in his general preparation. In addition to this training the general preparation should include familiarity with types of individuals with whom interviews are likely to be held; knowledge of the major agencies which help to cause or to prevent maladjustments and of the major areas of life within which problems seem to come to a focus on different age and educational levels; understanding of the various influences, both personal and environmental, which form the matrix of problems; and the setting up of some criteria for evaluation of one's own potential strengths and weaknesses as a user of the interview technique (9).

General preparation is just as important for the prearranged interview as for the cold interview, but the situation is somewhat different. Additional specific information relative to the interviewee and his problems or to the purpose of the interview will be available and will permit specific preparation on the part of the counselor. One caution is needed here, however: the counselor must not allow his general preparation to stereotype him or cause him to form premature judgments.

The first step in making specific preparation for the interview must be that of deciding just what is to be accomplished during the interview.

The second step is that of knowing the individual. This can be accomplished by gathering together all the information possible from every available source and evaluating each item with reference to the part it may play in accomplishing the objective or purpose. The maintenance of an open mind is esssential, particularly if little worthwhile information is available. In that case one must use his common sense and judgment and come to know the individual as well as possible. Even if practically no information is

available the situation is still more favorable than that of the cold interview in that the problem and purpose of the interview is known. The resourceful counselor will make the most of the sketchy information available and will rely on gaining further information and coming to know the individual through the first interview.

The scheduling of the interview is the third step. A definite time, convenient to both the interviewer and the interviewee must be arranged. Ample time should be allotted so that there will be no "meeting a deadline" pressure on either of the parties involved.

The fourth highly important step is the provision for privacy. The interview should be scheduled in a room which will insure privacy and an environment conducive to the spirit of conversing freely. Anything suggestive of a disciplinary nature will detract from the interview. For example, it is inadvisable to have the interview conducted in the office of the school principle or the school nurse. In the former instance there will be a strong disciplinary suggestion and in the latter the association with that of illness or abnormality is highly undesirable. A clean, well-ventilated, informally arranged room is advantageous.

The practice of taking the interviewees point of view may well be included as a fifth step in the preparation. This point will be treated under the psychological factors of the interview which follow. It is included here because the same psychological principles apply in the preparation for the interview as during the actual interview.

The Psychology of the Interview

An interview between a counselor and a counselee is obviously a form of interaction. We know that people learn to assume varied roles in terms of the particular social situation with which they are confronted. Successful social adjustment, in fact, depends upon just this sort of capacity, and the interview is only a special instance of person-to-person adaptation. In the interview two selves come into relation with each other, and the success or failure of the interview will rest largely upon the character and direction of the verbal and gestural contacts between the two participants. We may state the essentials in this fashion: The interviewer comes to the situation with a view or a role of himself as interviewer, and with a corresponding concept of the subject or counselee as a person who will furnish him certain data. In the same way the subject or counselee, will have a conception of himself, and another of the interviewer or counselor. In order that an interview may proceed successfully—that is, enable the interviewer to secure the wanted information from the subject—there must, sooner or later, emerge a sympathetic identification between the two persons concerned. In addition to the external conversational interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee, there will be—on the part of the interviewer—an imaginary and internal interplay between his ideas of himself and his idea of the subject. Likewise, the interviewee will experience an interplay between his

concept of his own role and his concept of the interviewer. In fact, the course of the conversation will be directed and qualified at all points in terms of this dramatic process. That is, from the very beginning of the session the interviewer will in imagination begin reacting to his image of the interviewee, and likewise, the interviewee will begin reacting to his image of the interviewer. Throughout the entire process, therefore, not only will every exchange of words and gestures influence the internal concepts of both participants, but these latter, in turn, will qualify their verbal and overt interactions.

In identifying himself with the interviewee the interviewer must be able to sense or "feel" the former's aims, traits, attitudes, values, and other inner states. Yet in this understanding of the role of the other, the interviewer must not overdo his identification and thus lose his own integrity and his critical capacity. The successful interviewer must have the ability to play a dual role—his own as manipulator of the situation and seeker of information, and also in imagination that of the subject or informant. Only in this way will he be able to follow the latter's answers, comments, and confessions sympathetically. In other words, he must learn to play another's role in his overt or verbal reactions.

The competent interviewer must possess keen perceptive faculties and an accurate memory. Not only should he hear correctly what is said to him, but he will be alert to the overtones of the interviewee's verbal and overt reactions, noting changes in voice, indications of feeling-emotional states from facial or other gestures, and any other possible clues to inner states which may subsequently be exposed. And, while he must know how to direct the session with skillful and revealing inquiries, he must also possess the capacity for sympathetic listening. Often in interviews, especially with persons under the emotional stress of mental conflicts, once the informant has begun to pour forth his troubles, the interviewer need but listen attentively in order to gain significant information about the fundamental inner life and problems of his subject.

Discussions of the psychology of the interview technique often emphasize the importance of insight and rapport. These qualities have much in common. **Insight** refers to the capacity of one individual to identify himself sympathetically with another's inner life and verbal and overt reactions or the capacity of an individual to understand himself and gain knowledge of his environment and the effects it has upon him. **Rapport** means more particularly the degree of mutual sympathy and congenial interidentification between the participants. To secure rapport, then it is necessary for each person in the session to possess insight into the other.. Thus, if an interview takes place in the emotionalized atmosphere of fear, anger, or blame, obviously little or no rapport will be established (13).

The interviewer creates the atmosphere of the interview. His personality is the dominant factor in the first impression which counseling makes upon interviewees, whether they be public-school and college students, or adults. A personality which radiates cordiality, invites confidence, removes

fears, leaves the impression of shock-proof qualities owing to familiarity with the entire range of human strengths and weaknesses and implies that broad information and wide experience are available on any topic the interviewee may care to discuss will counteract almost any material deficiency which is conceivable.

This treatment of the psychology of the interview is in no wise all-inclusive. It is impossible to isolate every psychological detail and discuss it apart from the actual interview. By way of summary, it may be stated that there is a psychological basis for each technique employed by the counselor in the face to face interview situation. The trained counselor, or the teacher-counselor in training should be aware of this fact and should note the psychological implications throughout the discussion which follows.

The Content and Conduct of the Interview

In general, the content of the interview will comprise material designed to establish rapport, material definitely related to the problem at hand, material which is a by-product of the main theme but connected with some broader aspect of the individual's interests, and parting comments of the type which tighten the knot of confidence. The specific content of the interview should always be in harmony with the purpose of the interview.

Likewise, the conduct of the interview depends upon its type and purpose and upon whether the two personalities involved clash or are able to find common ground of interest and understanding. There are no rigid rules that can be laid down for conducting an interview. There are, however, certain practices involving both **dos** and **don'ts** which every counselor should know. Most of these practices will apply generally to each and every interview situation, although there will be some common sense deviations in keeping with the highly different situations encountered.

W. W. Charters several years ago suggested five one-word rules which he felt were the essence of good interviewing. These five words are relax, listen, question, decide, and quit. The following list of positive principles which should be applied in conducting the interview is based upon the sound advice embodied within these simple rules (1).

1. Meet the interviewee cordially.
2. Be sincere.
3. Begin the interview with whatever topic will be of most interest to the interviewee.
4. Approach the problem as soon as rapport is assured.
5. Avoid a patronizing attitude.
6. Uncover the real difficulty.
7. Isolate the central problem.
8. Encourage but do not urge.

9. Ask questions to direct attention to salient facts. Use the direct question infrequently and with caution.
10. Avoid disjunctive and implicative questions.
11. Make the interview a joint undertaking.
12. Maintain and exercise a sense of humor.
13. Avoid embarrassing the interviewee unnecessarily.
14. Face the facts calmly and professionally.
15. Observe closely the interviewee's behavior.
16. Avoid putting the interviewee on the defensive.
17. Alleviate the shock of disillusionment.
18. Establish a reputation for being fair and for keeping confidence.
19. Let the interviewee formulate his conclusions or plan of action.
20. Allow time for insights to mature and attitudes to change.
21. Present alternatives for his consideration.
22. Give information as needed, but give advice sparingly, if at all.
23. Make certain that all vital considerations relevant to a decision are brought forward.
24. Achieve something definite.
25. Make subsequent interviews easy.

To summarize the conduct of the interview the following paragraphs quoted directly from Garrett are excellent (6).

"No matter how many questions need to be answered, no matter how much information he wishes to impart, the interviewer should always 'begin where the client is.' After the brief introductory statement about the manifest purpose of the interview, a few leading questions that will enable the client to express what is on 'the top' of his mind will usually be most helpful. Of course, the interviewer will have thought over the interview in advance and will know fairly definitely what he wants to obtain from it. But by letting his client talk first, he finds out the client's purpose and is able ot pick up many leads for the best way of getting the information needed to help him. He knows his goals but he will keep his plan of procedure flexible until such "leads" indicate the best course to take.

"Somewhere during the interview, and often early, the client should be given a fairly clear idea of the sort of things the interviewer and his agency can do to help, and of the sort of responsibility the client himself must assume in meeting his problem. Often the matter can be introduced by asking the client, "In what ways did you think we might be of help?' He needs reassurance that he has come to the right place for help, but he should not be over-assured or led to believe that he is now relieved of all responsibility, that his problem will be 'taken care of.' Usually a very brief statement of

services the agency tries to render will suffice at first. Later, as the interview proceeds, further explanation of the precise ways in which the agency can help can be given. Often an interviewer finds it useful in closing the interview to run over with the client the next steps each has agreed to undertake.

"After the interviewee has told his story largely in his own way, the interviewer will make use of the clues thus revealed to introduce additional questions and discussion in crucial areas so as to fill out the picture and focus the interview on that territory where exploration promises to be more fruitful. It is at this stage that expert direction of the interview is most called for. The interviewer must decide on the areas to be explored and the best way of drawing out the client. Indispensable to the successful accomplishment of the latter is the establishment and development of that rapport between the client and himself which will give the client confidence in the interviewer's unselfish desire to help and in his possession of the understanding and general knowledge required for effective assistance. This confidence established, he can proceed by careful direction of the course of the conversation to the necessary knowledge of the underlying basic factors of the specific problems of this particular client.

"It is not easy to achieve the golden mean of leaving the client free to talk spontaneously and at the same time giving the interview continued direction into fruitful channels. Mere listening and encouragement simply leaves the client floundering in the same sea of uncertainty in which he was lost when he applied for help. But overdirection can stifle the interview in its infancy by preventing the salient features of the matter from rising to clear awareness.

"Again, it is not easy to achieve the ideal balance between relieving a client of the unbearable burden of what seem to him insurmountable difficulties, and of leaving him with essential responsibilities for working out his own destiny. The counselor should do enough to make the difficulty seem conquerable, yet, in each case, carefully leave responsibility and initiative with the client. It is a temptation to work out a solution in full detail, especially when working with children or old people, but this temptation must be resolutely resisted. It is better to have a few details wrong but have the client feel that the plan is one he has been instrumental in developing and is carrying out, with help to be sure, but essentially on his own initiative.

"In bringing an interview to a close, several things should be kept in mind. It is usually a good plan to end with a recapitulation of 'next steps.' A tying together of the threads of the interview and a restatement of what interviewer and client are each going to attend to next are valuable. If possible, a definite next appointment should be made. If the interviewer has involved considerable

expression of emotion, the interviewer can usually avoid an emotional let-down by turning his client's attention to objective factors before closing the interview.

"One of the most important skills for an interviewer is a knowledge of his own limitations. To know when to refer a client elsewhere, when to terminate an interview, when to explore an emotional situation, and when to leave some area unexplored requires skill that comes only with practice. It is a help to remember that an interviewer seldom aims at a complete personality change for his client; his functions are usually much more limited. He musn't stop too soon or too late, but at just the right time. And the 'right time' varies from case to case. With growing skill in interviewing, it is selected with increased ease and confidence."

Recording the Interview — Interview Follow Up

The records of an interview are an essential and legitimate part of the cumulative records of students on all levels of education and items recorded should comprise all statements, observations, or interpretations which throw light on growth or suggest guidance values. The so-called case notes should be structured—this means simply that the various types of material selected for the record should be distinguished from one another for the purpose of clarity and ease of understanding when examined by one not thoroughly familiar with the case.

There has been considerable disagreement relative to the advisability of taking notes during the actual interview in order to provide a more complete and accurate record. Many have been against this practice, but as all counseling procedures have become more scientific, a change in attitude has been noted with an increased in the number of authorities who feel that the most salient statements and most significant observations may usually be recorded by an efficient interviewer without causing inhibitions or in any way lessening the effectiveness of the interview.

The subject of follow-up has been mentioned either directly or indirectly from time to time throughout this entire discussion, hence it is only necessary to include a few supplemental points of importance. First it must be emphasized that the matter of follow-up when interpreted as indicating interviews to follow the initial interview is rightfully a matter of choice on the part of the interviewee. If he does not choose to make appointments for additional interviews, then he should not be forced to do so under normal circumstances. If the initial interview has been properly conducted the subject in most instances will indicate a desire for additional counseling when the opportunity is provided for him to make the choice. If a large percentage of the interviewees are reluctant to schedule follow-up interviews when it is apparent, at least to the interviewer, that such interviews are advisable, then it is time to make a careful appraisal and evaluation of the

original interviews in an attempt to ascertain the cause for this loss of contact.

As a term follow-up is also used to indicate activities on the part of the counselor to render personal services for the counselee such as securing valid information, making appointments, and noting adjustments on the job if one has entered a particular occupation as a result of a vocational interview.

Follow-up also serves as an informational service through which the end results of the interview may be appraised. While appraisal as such is not a technique of interviewing its importance cannot be minimized. An accurate appraisal is the best means of evaluating the various interviewing techniques employed and efficient follow-up is the best means of appraisal.

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An Abstract of

THE ORIGIN AND EXTENT OF STANDARDS IN CLERICAL WORK

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An Abstract of
THE ORIGIN AND EXTENT OF STANDARDS IN CLERICAL WORK

The Problem

This investigation of the origin and extent of standards in clerical occupations was designed to accomplish several important purposes. First, the hitherto indistinct origins of standards of performance in clerical work utilized by school and business were to be identified. The development of the early standards was to be traced down to the present day and in that process the major influences and trends were to be determined. The adequacy and efficiency of existing standards were to be appraised in terms of present needs and principles. Finally, possible opportunities for the improvement of existing standards were to be indicated.

The Importance of the Investigation

The nature of the early standards is exceedingly important to present-day business men and business educators because these measures inevitably became the foundations or patterns for later efforts to identify and to maintain efficiency in the face of the revolutionary changes in office operations accompanied by the almost astronomical growth in the size of the clerical working force.

A preliminary examination of pertinent business and professional literature and discussions with business men and educators made it apparent that present standards were not providing an adequate basis for the evaluation of competency to perform clerical operations. There were many differences between standards stated by both business and schools, and standards actually observed in practice. Some educators and business men apparently had no definite standards of performance to facilitate their efforts.

The waste and other tragic consequences of the continued utilization of inadequate standards could hardly be minimized when, for example, the census of 1940 revealed that there were about 4,500,000 gainfully employed clerical workers and when in 1942 it was estimated that there were over 1,150,000 students enrolled in secondary school courses in typewriting alone.

Obviously it is only through comprehension of the origins and growth of standards in clerical work that today's business educators and business men may fully understand the present situation and may then deal with it effectively. Since no exhaustive investigation of the origins and development of standards in clerical occupations had apparently ever been undertaken, it was the purpose of this study to fulfill the fundamental need.

The Method

The nature of the problem involving the discovery of origins of standards in clerical work, the tracing of developments, and the identification of influences and trends, suggested the utilization of the historical method in the broad sense.

Historical information was gathered through the utilization of several processes: 1. library investigation of periodicals, documents, books, and other publications, 2. inter-library loan for the examination of theses and out-of-print books, 3. personal interviews with elderly persons associated with business education and office management, 4. correspondence with old-timers, 5. purchase of miscellaneous reports and other publications. Early periodicals related to shorthand, typewriting, court reporting, and business management were found to be particularly valuable. The New York Public Library (42nd Street) was discovered to be the depository of many shorthand collections including those of Beale, Eldridge, Gregg, Heffley, National Shorthand Reporters Association, New York State Shorthand Reporters Association, O'Keefe, Pitman, and Rockwell.

Information pertinent to the identification of present trends was obtained from the more recent numbers of periodicals and from the later books, booklets, pamphlets, theses, abstracts, and reports of various types. In order to clarify current practices even further, the writer employed three additional procedures: 1. correspondence with individuals, associations, and agencies in related fields; 2. personal visits to school and business offices; and 3. personalized questionnaire letters sent to business concerns.

Evidence for Conclusions

Publications pertaining to the history of the typewriter indicated that attempts to evaluate the performance of the machine dated from the pioneer experiments of Sholes, the inventor. Early periodicals served to establish the fact that speed in stenography received a heavy accent when shorthand skill was applied to business purposes. However, these publications also revealed that the short-spurt words a minute standard was never developed with office production problems in mind and, consequently, there was dis-

satisfaction with that standard as a valid measure of functional competency very soon after its popular adoption. Numerous criticisms and suggestions appeared in the literature but no effective remedial measures resulted for some time, due in large part to formidable background factors which were the topics of frequent articles in periodicals. Personal traits and other qualifications in addition to typewriting or stenographic skill were likewise discussed in various publications. The development of standards in clerical occupations not involving typewriting or stenography was not attempted for many years because of the tremendous changes in office practices which were taking place. The changes were the subject of a number of brief articles in periodicals.

The early business magazines and management publications furnished accounts of the awakening of the business man to the possibilities of efficiency in office operations. This movement coincided with the work of Emerson, Taylor, and Leffingwell. Business men reported their new techniques in office management in contributions to various journals. Later on business associations undertook broader studies which were then published in organizational pamphlets and summarized in management magazines.

Educational literature indicated, however, that business educators generally failed to grasp the implications of scientific management. Research conducted by business educators finally began to appear in professional publications around World War I and the 1920's. At approximately the same time psychological test experts commenced to develop clerical tests and to report experiments in periodicals and organs of learned societies. Unfortunately these contributions failed to provide the improved standards required.

The gradual development of business training on the college level resulted in increased numbers of texts, manuals, and handbooks devoted to office management and related subjects. Standards in clerical occupations also received attention in the yearbooks of organizations of business educators starting around 1934 when the effects of the depression created obvious new problems in commercial training.

While isolated instances of cooperative efforts to improve standards had occurred before, educators and business men established much firmer mutual relationships toward the end of the 1930's. This development was responsible for the production of additional publications and materials related to the persistent problem of identification of competency. The continuing combined efforts of school men and employers have furnished numerous surveys and reports regarding standards employed in connection with office operations and school training.

The correspondence with old-timers and the interviews with elderly persons associated with business education or office management supplied vary-

ing amounts of supporting evidence regarding the utilization of standards. The interviews with business men and the replies to the questionnaire letters furnished data regarding current practices. Recent graduate studies dealing with the status of clerical occupations and standards were also the source of additional information utilized in the study and appraisal.

The Findings of the Investigation

Conclusions Pertaining to Origins

Machine manufacturers and shorthand inventors and publishers exerted a great influence in the popularization of what are now regarded as traditional standards of performance in clerical operations involving typewriting and stenography.

The earliest standards were the short-spurt words a minute standards used to express speed performance in typewriting and in shorthand notetaking.

The earliest standards in typewriting were developed from short artificial tests, demonstrations, and novel performances. The earliest standards in shorthand were nothing more than crude estimates of an "appropriate" rate of speed. The standards were not based on an examination of the office production problems to which the skills were ultimately to be applied.

Since the typewriter manufacturers conducted the first schools for typewriting instruction, their approach to the expression of competency served as the pattern which was then adopted by private business schools and business men for the measurement of skill in both typewriting and stenography.

The inadequacy of the artificial, short-spurt performance as an indicator of ability to perform acceptable service in the office was soon recognized by employers and was also conceded by a few educators.

Some early standards in other clerical operations were developed by business men based on an analysis of their specific situations. But the prominently-mentioned standards were generally derived from survey averages and estimates which were highly unscientific.

From the beginning of the clerical era the employer established qualifications in addition to skill competency. These other requirements included education, experience, physical capacity for work, and personal factors.

Conclusions Pertaining to the Developments

The inadequacy of the short-spurt words a minute standard in typewriting and stenography was almost immediately apparent but corrective action was slow and scattered. The early domination of the typewriter manufacturers and shorthand inventors and publishers waned. In time the continuing deficiency received increased attention first from business men, then from educators, and later from joint groups; but no effective improvements resulted. The short-spurt words a minute standard remains in common use in both the schools and the business world.

Performance standards in other clerical work likewise received additional attention but no significant improvements were accomplished. Standards are still few and are generally of the survey-average type or are limited in usefulness to individual situations.

The failure of business education to keep pace with business needs may be attributed in part to the inadequate preparation of teachers, a condition which has improved only very slowly.

The lagging interest of business educators may also be attributed to their reluctance to recognize the primary vocational aims of the training which they had to offer.

Attempts were made to facilitate the evaluation of other qualifications mainly by the development of appropriate tests. The intelligence test appears to have earned favor as an aid in selection. However, tests of achievement in arithmetic, spelling, and language usage are not yet successful in measuring the ability to apply skills and knowledges to the actual business situation. Personality evaluation remains largely a matter of subjective appraisal. Physical capacity is typically determined by medical examination.

Conclusions Pertaining to the Adequacy of Existing Standards

The popular short-spurt words a minute standard in typewriting and stenography is not a valid indicator of ability to perform on the job because it has insufficient relationship to the job conditions.

The survey-average type of standard commonly cited for other office operations is likewise invalid because it is an average which has little connection with any specific, existing situation, and the figures included in the average are generally no better than estimates.

Existing standards have not typically been developed through the application of scientific methods of investigation such as job analysis and time study.

No universal standards of performance in clerical work have been developed. It is, therefore, impossible to compare standards established in one situation with those derived anywhere else.

The principles of scientific office management are not yet effectively applied in typical business office operations.

The schools characteristically use traditional units to express performance in typewriting and stenography, doubtless due to convenience and objectivity, but there is no uniformity in achievement rate goals among schools.

The basic inadequacy of the standards used by the schools has been further magnified by the apparent dearth of realism in instructional materials and environment and the negligible attention given to the development of working habits.

Standards in current use in the schools stress one separate element of job success—skill. Generally speaking, the schools have overlooked the importance of personality development.

Conclusions Pertaining to Apparent Trends

There are no signs of immediate improvement in the quality of existing standards because even the most recent remedial projects continue to employ unscientific and invalid procedures and assumptions.

The professional and business literature contains increasingly frequent mention of standards, but these characteristically lack specificity or universality of application.

The problem of standards is apparently receiving more attention than ever before from both business men and educators but the participants still represent only a minority. The rank-and-file of both groups have not yet been sufficiently aroused to action.

The satisfactory solution of the standards problem in clerical occupations is not impossible, but a fresh departure is needed—one which will be cognizant of past mistakes rather than one which will perpetuate them.

Recommendations for Improvement—Long Range

The techniques which have been applied to the problem of improving standards up to the present have had a common purpose—to ascertain production as it is in the office. However, it has been shown that business offices are not typically conducted in strict conformity with the principles of scientific management. Since it may be safely surmised, therefore, that offices are generally operating at a much lower level of efficiency than is potentially attainable, should those concerned with setting standards simply accept performance of that caliber as a basis for a system of evaluation?

Is there an approach that is based upon genuine efficiency which would permit the determination of sound training goals and which would provide a degree of comparability not hitherto attained? The "best method" approach is proposed as a means of establishing improved standards of performance in clerical operations using procedures calculated to avoid traditional weaknesses. This approach involves several steps to be undertaken cooperatively by educators and business men: 1) the identification of common, basic clerical operations for which training may appropriately be given in the schools, 2) the application of time and motion studies to each of the basic operations to determine the "best method", 3) the utilization of the job analysis data to establish minimum standards of quality of work in terms of practical acceptability for business purposes, 4) the preparation of a detailed job description listing the characteristics of the "best method", 5) the employment of the job description as the keystone of the organization of school instructional content, equipment, materials, working layout, and working conditions, 6) the use of the minimum standards of quality of performance indicated in the job description as the uniform criteria for appraisal of school work, 7) the development of norms for the evaluation of school achievement from data accumulated over a prolonged period from timed observation of trained students engaged in sustained-interval, "best method" performance of acceptable quality, 8) the development of norms which would contain the maturity and experience elements from data accumulated through similar observation of experienced office workers who have been trained in "best method" procedures for the basic clerical operations, 9) findings would be subjected to periodic review and full details would be made available to schools and business firms.

Recommendations for Improvement—for Immediate Use

Recommendations for the Business Man

The process of selecting office personnel has been generally characterized by informality owing in part to the absence of reliable formal measures which could be applied. Instead, the lack of reliable measures and devices should

be the signal for added caution. Today's selection procedure should employ a number of devices and methods in order to double-check and to compensate in volume for what is lacking in quality of available techniques and measures.

The policy of making the most out of the best available materials necessarily involves a considerable elaboration of the typical selection procedures. A preliminary screening process should include the completion of a short application form, a brief interview, and the administration of pertinent performance tests. This is adequate to weed out those applicants who are obviously unsuited.

The detailed appraisal of the more promising applicants should include additional and lengthy interviews with several different persons. The interviewers' reactions should be verified by the investigation of references. Then the employer seeking to be as thorough as possible should consider a battery of formal tests which would include the evaluation of intelligence, personality, and clerical aptitude as well as the mastery of fundamentals such as English, arithmetic, and spelling. A physical examination should also be included in the appraisal procedure.

Upon completion of the detailed appraisal process the employer will have accumulated a considerable amount of relevant data to help him reach a decision. However, the employment decision should not be regarded as irrevocable. The probationary period should receive more serious consideration. It should be a genuine trial period in which the employee is kept under close observation and the selection should not be regarded as final until the probation has been successfully served.

Recommendations for the Teacher

As in the case of the business man, the best solution to the teacher's immediate problem seems to be to make the best use of available methods and devices and to avoid the obvious pitfalls.

The educator must recognize the short-spurt performance for the artificial measure that it is. With this realization in mind the teacher should employ the traditional tests only in areas where they serve a useful purpose. Once the preliminary instructional period has passed, the educator must emphasize realistic materials in instruction and must develop the ability to perform in a sustained production situation in which appropriate emphasis is directed to working habits, proper selection of materials and equipment, and effective layout. Personal factors should also receive attention in the classroom consistent with the recognized importance of such characteris-

tics in job success. Every mark which the student earns in the advanced stages of training should reflect the adequacy of total performance rather than of skill performance alone.

The business educator should not overlook students' deficiencies in fundamentals. It is a mistake to try to mark the students on their narrow accomplishments within strict subject-matter lines. Admittedly there are limits to remedial measures which the business teacher can take. The further responsibility should be placed squarely before the school administration.

In the absence of reliable instruments for prognosis in business training, the teacher should employ the old but neglected idea of try-out courses to greater advantage. Until a long-range fundamental development such as the "best method" approach is perfected, the only improvement that the educator can reasonably hope for must be the result of his own alertness and ingenuity.

Recommendations for Teacher-Training Institutions

The teachers colleges must assume a more aggressive role in efforts to develop improved standards. In the inevitable process of improvement, greater demands will be made upon the teachers. In anticipation of the more demanding future, institutions for the training of teachers must be more selective in their choice of students and must regard the entire training period as a continuing observation-selection opportunity with the ideals of the profession uppermost in mind. These institutions should hold their students to high standards of mastery of subject matter and fundamentals.

The best way to inculcate the progressive, critical attitude toward standards that is now so sorely needed in the profession is to capture it in the teacher-training instructional situation and consistently to set the example. Teachers colleges must take a lead in the overdue development of the new instructional content which should emphasize the working habits, personal factors, working layout, and sequence of operations features that are vital for the enrichment of present unrealistic and unbalanced instruction. The program of preparation for business teachers should include a course in office management and the requirement of related business experience to provide both theoretical and practical background. Provision should also be made for training in elementary remedial techniques so that the future teacher will be able to do the most for students whose deficiencies are revealed in classroom performance.

With respect to the "best method" approach to the improvement of standards, the teachers colleges must be ready to play a prominent role in the developmental work and in the subsequent popularization of the new materials and procedures.