

A STUDY OF BUSINESS NEEDS IN RELATION TO A
COLLEGE SECRETARIAL SCIENCE COURSE

by 6408 .

MARY JEANNE CARROLL

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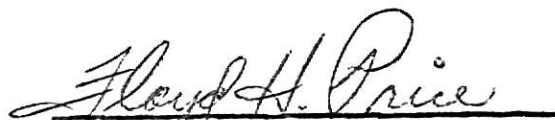
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Although many glamorous positions are open to women today, the one which continues to attract probably the largest numbers is that of secretarial work. Many doors have opened to college graduates who began in that capacity. Women executives enjoying positions of considerable responsibility often report they started their careers as secretaries.

There is currently a growing concern among business educators and employers regarding the preparation and training of secretaries. How well are secretaries trained? Is the coverage of subject matter adequate to meet the demands of business?

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The writer realizes the necessity of being certain that the needs of business are reflected in her teaching of the course Secretarial Science at Marymount College, in order that the course fulfills its basic purpose in training students adequately in the areas of skillful competence and human relations.

Objectives. It was the purpose of this study (1) to inquire into what business desires from its secretarial employees and the kind of training programs needed to prepare these employees, and (2) to evaluate the course Secretarial Science in view of the demands of business today.

Limitations and Delimitations. The study was limited to businesses of Salina, Kansas, because it was felt the city offered sufficient quantity and variety of businesses to provide an adequate sampling.

The study was also limited in scope to the course Secretarial Science at Marymount College in Salina, Kansas, because that course appeared to be best suited for the study.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Businesses. Businesses in this study have been categorized to include banks and other financial institutions, insurance companies, law firms, and real estate agencies.

Secretarial Science Course. For the purposes of this study Secretarial Science is defined as Course Number 120 in the Department of Economics and Business Administration at Marymount College, Salina, Kansas. The course integrates skills and develops secretarial responsibilities, and furnishes training in modern business office procedures and problems.

Survey. Survey is defined as a critical inquiry of the specified Salina businesses to provide exact information concerning qualifications expected of secretarial employees.

Questionnaire. Questionnaire is defined as a set of written questions submitted to the specified Salina businesses for the purpose of gathering data concerning qualifications expected of secretarial employees.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The enormous amount of paper work in American business today demands an ever increasing number of people trained in secretarial skills. There is a need for business education to realign itself with business practice. An effort must be made to bridge the gap between the classroom and the office.

No two secretaries have exactly the same job, but according to the editorial staff of the Parker Publishing Company, a typical secretary handles most of the following duties sooner or later:

Takes dictation; types correspondence, reports, and executive's longhand notes.

Sorts incoming mail.

Acts as receptionist.

Places calls for executive on telephone and answers incoming calls.

Maintains necessary filing systems.

Manages supply cabinet.

Schedules executive's appointments and makes sure that he keeps them.

Handles executive's travel arrangements.

Writes letters for her own signature and for executive's signature.

Handles arrangements for conferences.

Hires assistants and substitutes when necessary.

Supervises the work of an office of clerical assistants.

Handles office housekeeping duties and courtesy errands for her executive¹

Arnold Jacobson and Bruno Zachary see the modern office as a complexity of equipment, supplies, customs, procedures, and people.² All units of office work have an economics value. Students must be guided to realize the importance of accuracy, good work habits, and the careful use of equipment and material. The business world is highly competitive, and profits are often realized through rather small units of efficient procedure.

"We dream of the ideal man and the model employee," write Jacobson and Zachary, "but all men are but fragments of such fantasies."³ Nevertheless, in preparation for employment in modern offices, such basic qualities as positive attitudes toward work, good grooming, promptness, and the ability to get along reasonably well with others must be stressed. The development of such personal attributes is considered as important as basic intelligence and office skills because all combine to the total effectiveness of an office worker.

Much has been written regarding the merits of personality versus skill in the secretarial profession. It is like trying to solve the question of whether heredity or environment is more important. Either can be right in different situations. High skill can sometimes compensate for personality deficiencies, and conversely, a good personality can cover limitations in skill competency. Research is rather limited

¹The Successful Secretary. Editorial Staff. (West Nyack, New York: Parker Publishing Company, 1964), pp. 1-2.

²Arnold Jacobson and Bruno Zachary, "Office Occupations Laboratory," The Balance Sheet, I (January 1969), p. 210.

³Ibid.

in this area. Employers and educators alike attach importance to both human relations and skillful competency.

The authors of Executive Typewriting asked top business executives about the characteristics and skills they want their executive secretaries to have. The answers included initiative, creativity, and responsibility.⁴

A secretary is a vital part of the world of business, and she must learn to think from the standpoint of business. She must consider the effect her actions will have on her employer and use this as a basis for her working day decisions and behavior. The secretary who is business-oriented is a priceless asset to any office.

The woman who enters the business world needs the ability to reason objectively on the basis of facts she has been able to obtain. While a major complaint of employers is that women are inclined to reason subjectively when faced with a business problem, many employers now realize that with equal training, decision-making is not related to sex. This can be evidenced by the great number of industries that have placed women in management positions.

The everyday transactions in any business office are confidential; that has become an unwritten law of the business world. One of the primary responsibilities of a secretary is to see that this law is honored in her own office.

The secretary of the future will have to adapt herself to meet new demands. Her job will require more and more creative thought. Some of the routine jobs for the secretary are being eliminated; there is

⁴Barbara H. Nalepa, "What Now?" Business Teacher, XLV (March-April 1968), p. 11.

increased emphasis on the creative and human relations aspects of the position. The secretary will face challenges ahead and may be required to possess a greater degree of skill than is presently required.⁵

Typewriting has been and continues to be important on all levels of business. Accuracy in typewriting has always been important, but it becomes even more important because a single error can be compounded rapidly by the high speed equipment in use today.

A great deal of a secretary's time will be spent in typing of some kind; it is therefore important that she can handle any typing assignment efficiently, neatly, and correctly on the first attempt. The secretary who can handle routine typing quickly and easily is ready for more responsibility and further advancement in her job.

The Dartnell Corporation reports that the average cost of a business letter is \$3.19, and the cost is still increasing.⁶ It is no surprise that each partly completed letter which finds its way to the wastebasket is of major concern to businessmen.

A secretary has to be consistently good; her job is not one for an erratic genius. All her hard-earned skills can be wasted if she makes costly mistakes that force her to do the work over again, or create confusion in the office.

A study by James Clark was undertaken to determine the skill in typewriting needed by secretarial and clerical personnel in the Los Angeles area. Thirty-six companies, selected at random from the

⁵Clair Parsh, "The Future of Business Education," The Balance Sheet, L (December 1968), p. 164.

⁶"\$3.19 For a Business Letter," The Secretary, Vol. 31, No. 2 (February 1971), p. 7.

Los Angeles roster of the National Office Management Association, participated in the investigation.

Twenty-five percent of the employers surveyed required prospective employees to take typewriting tests on electric typewriters, 37.5 percent required them to use manual typewriters, and 37.5 percent allowed applicants to select either a manual or electric typewriter. This evidence tends to support the conclusion that secretarial students should be equally proficient in the operation of both manual and electric typewriters.⁷

In a secretarial survey conducted by Maria Arratia, it was discovered that although the majority of firms investigated use the electric typewriter exclusively, there is still a sizable group that use the manual typewriter only. Her study further substantiates the necessity for providing some training on the manual typewriter.⁸

Minimum typewriting speed requirements for secretaries ranged from 45 to 75 words a minute according to the study made by Clark. Sixty words a minute were required to be eligible for a position in 75 percent of the companies participating in the survey. A majority of the companies contacted during the course of the investigation indicated a keen interest in the development of better typewriting programs in the schools.⁹

For many years the threat has been heard that voice dictating and transcribing equipment will eliminate the need for shorthand. So

⁷James L. Clark, "Are Classroom Typewriting Standards Compatible With Office Standards?" Business Education Forum, XVII (December 1962), p. 23.

⁸Maria Arratia, "Some Findings Derived from a Secretarial Survey," Journal of Business Education, XLIV (December 1968), p. 106.

⁹Clark, loc. cit.

far this threat has been without grounds. The demand for qualified people with shorthand skills is higher today than ever before.¹⁰

Many businesses still require their stenographers to be able to take shorthand dictation in spite of the fact that the use of voice dictating machines has increased during the past ten years. They admit frankly that there are better opportunities for promotion for persons with shorthand skill than for those without it. Many business executives still prefer to dictate to stenographers or secretaries rather than to machines even though secretarial workers receive higher salaries than machine operators.

Much office work is difficult to measure with exactness. Shorthand dictation requirements for office positions vary, sometimes depending on availability of well-trained stenographers.

The ability to take accurate shorthand and produce accurate letters from notes is essential to a secretary's success. Although an executive seldom cares what system of shorthand his secretary uses or how well she makes her outlines, he is interested in the finished product--the transcription.

The following quotation from a well-known company gives a good description of what the end product should be:

We have come to lean toward the secretary--who takes pride in her work so that a letter becomes to her the same as a good cake to a good cook, or a nice picture to an artist--who is concerned about the appearance of the work she turns out, and is always striving to improve it--who recognizes that the only connection clients may have with her company, is through her.¹¹

¹⁰Parsh, op. cit., p. 163.

¹¹Verna R. Findlay, "Secretaries Who Meet the Test of the Space Age," Journal of Business Education, XLI (February 1966), p. 197.

The secretary can play an important role in representing her employer and her company through the impressions made by the letters she sends out. Producing quality transcription to represent her company attractively is a challenging duty, and one that requires a great deal of concentration. The secretary is responsible for perfection in the mechanics of letter-writing, and she must master the fundamentals of the English language.

The writing of unfamiliar words is the major problem of stenographers on the job relative to shorthand, according to a study conducted by Virginia Casebier. Stenographers and secretaries felt that they lacked the basic knowledge and understanding of shorthand principles which are necessary to write unfamiliar words. Both secretaries and employers reported that the greatest transcription problems were in the areas of spelling and punctuation.¹²

Verna R. Findlay made a survey of office managers of business firms in each of the 50 states. After she received replies from 100 businesses, tabulations were made. The replies represented 35 states and companies having from 90 employees to 75,000. Forty-eight percent of those replying expected their secretaries to take shorthand at 100 words per minute. Twenty percent required a speed of 80 words per minute, while another 13 percent specified a speed of 120 words per minute.¹³

¹²Virginia E. Casebier, "A Time Study of Activities and Responsibilities of Secretaries with Implications for the Training of Prospective Secretaries," National Business Education Quarterly, XXXV (Winter 1966-67), p. 94

¹³Findlay, op. cit., p. 198.

Charles E. Zoubek, a well-known authority in the field of shorthand, states:

We have always felt that building our students' raw shorthand speed to the highest point possible in the time available made good sense. We have always felt that, other things being equal, the girl with the greatest shorthand skill made the best stenographer or secretary and had the greatest job opportunities.¹⁴

Zoubek points out the obvious advantages of a high shorthand speed:

The faster a stenographer or secretary can write, the more reserve speed she has. The more reserve speed, the more comfortably, efficiently, and productively she can work.

The faster she can write, the better notes she can make, with the result that she can transcribe faster. She will not have to decipher poorly written outlines so often.

The faster she can write, the less frequently will she have to interrupt the dictator. She will have the reserve speed to handle the dictator's "spurts."

The faster she can write, the more time she will have to formulate outlines for unusual or unfamiliar words.¹⁵

In a follow-up study on adequately trained secretaries carried out by Joseph F. Klein, 72 percent of the respondents reported that not enough office style dictation is given in the classroom.¹⁶ Office style dictation should simulate, as much as possible, the dictation of a person actually composing a letter as he dictates. Changes are made as the letter is dictated; there are insertions or deletions. This type of dictation practice differs greatly from the traditional style

¹⁴Charles E. Zoubek, "The Importance of Shorthand Speed," Business Teacher, XLV (March-April 1968), p. 13.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Joseph F. Klein, "Adequately Trained Secretaries--A Follow-Up Study," The Balance Sheet, L (March 1969), p. 292.

dictated at 80, 100, or 120 words per minute. There is a definite need for skill in taking both kinds of dictation. Students are not ready for their first position until they can cope with office style dictation as well as school style dictation.

The structure, ideas, and plans of business are changing. The concepts of business are in a continuous state of flux. The business educator is faced with the task of educating to meet the needs of change. For example, the teacher should acquaint the secretarial student with the vocabulary and terminology of electronic data processing even though she will not be faced with the problems of the actual programming.

Students must be informed about office standards, and they must be helped in developing the needed level of competence. If students are trained correctly today, they can go anywhere in the world of business challenges of tomorrow.

Even though only a few college teachers of business engage primarily in research, all need a minimal competency in research in order to attain their maximum potential as a teacher.

The business teacher at the college level should contribute new knowledge and new organization of knowledge in his discipline. Mastery of subject matter alone is not an adequate qualification for teaching at the higher education level. Only when knowledge of the status of business education and its adequacy is made available is it possible for enlightened teaching to take place.

Chapter 3

PROCEDURE AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS

Research Design. The type of research used in this investigation was the descriptive-survey study. The purpose of this study was to provide essential knowledge concerning the kind of training secretarial employees need in order to meet the requirements of selected Salina businesses.

The study attempted to identify certain standards and norms of secretarial employees in these Salina businesses, in order to compare the standards and norms with those adhered to in the course Secretarial Science at Marymount College.

Sample. The sampling for this study included all of the Salina businesses which fell into the categories of banks and other financial institutions, insurance companies, law firms, and real estate agencies.

It was believed that these groups comprised a sufficient representation of firms which typically hire secretarial employees.

Method of Gathering Data. Data for this study was gathered by the use of a mailed questionnaire sent to the specified businesses in Salina, Kansas, requesting opinions as to the kind of training expected of secretarial employees in their companies. A letter of transmittal accompanied the questionnaire, in addition to a stamped, self-addressed envelope for convenient reply.

The questionnaire included questions pertaining to skills in typewriting, transcription, filing, and handling of correspondence as

well as questions dealing with the human relations factors of consideration, tact, discretion, loyalty, and objectivity.

Method of Analyzing Data. When the results of the questionnaire had been tabulated, the writer compared the various aspects of secretarial training under study to discover whether or not revision was needed in the syllabus of the course Secretarial Science at Marymount College, Salina, Kansas. The results of the questionnaire were analyzed according to certain skills and personality factors.

Method of Presenting Data. The results of the questionnaire were presented in table form. Tables were used to show the data contributed by the businesses studied. The first table showed the total results of the survey, and subsequent tables indicated the results according to the individual business categories, permitting comparisons according to the type of business replying.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

A questionnaire was mailed to 122 selected firms in Salina, Kansas, in order to gather the needed information for the study. The businesses receiving the questionnaire were all Salina banks and other financial institutions, insurance companies, law firms, and real estate agencies. A letter of transmittal and a stamped, self-addressed envelope were provided to facilitate the return of the questionnaire. A copy of the letter of transmittal and the questionnaire may be found in Appendix A, page 35, and Appendix B, page 37.

Seventy-eight of the 122 questionnaires were returned for a 65 percent total response. Returns included 100 percent of the banks and financial institutions contacted, 62 percent of the insurance companies, 80 percent of the law firms, and 42 percent of the real estate agencies.

Table 1, page 15, gives the total percentages of replies of the 78 respondents to the questionnaire. A total of 55 percent of all firms surveyed employ one secretary, 43 percent employ two to five secretaries, and only two percent indicated they hire six to nine secretaries.

Electric typewriters are used by more than half (56 percent) of the secretaries of the firms surveyed, while only slightly more than one third (34 percent) still use only manual typewriters. Ten percent indicated they use both electric and manual machines.

The businesses surveyed were fairly evenly divided in regard to minimum net typewriting speeds required of secretaries. Fifty to sixty

Table 1
Secretarial Needs and Requirements
of Selected Salina Businesses

Question	N	Number Responding	Percentage
Number of Secretarial Employees:	77		
One		42	55
Two-Five		33	43
Six-Nine		2	2
Ten or more		0	0
Kind of Typewriters Used:	77		
Electric		43	56
Manual		26	34
Both		8	10
Minimum Net Typewriting Speed Required:	72		
40-50 words per minute		19	26
50-60 words per minute		26	36
60-70 words per minute		20	28
Over 70 words per minute		7	10
Machines Used by Employees:	78		
Mimeograph machine		12	15
Ditto machine		2	3
Copying machine		51	65
Automatic typewriter		15	19
Voice dictating machine		36	46
Secretaries Required to Take Dictation:	76		
Yes		51	67
No		25	33
Speed at which Secretaries Must Take Shorthand:	48		
Under 80 words per minute		12	25
80-100 words per minute		26	54
100-120 words per minute		9	19
Over 120 words per minute		1	2
Secretaries Required to Compose Letters:	76		
Frequently		37	49
Infrequently		35	46
Never		4	5
Organization of Files:	78		
Alphabetically		67	86
Geographically		5	6
Numerically		21	27
By subject		16	21
Importance of Grooming and Personal Appearance:	75		
Very Important		57	76
Important		17	23
Fairly Important		1	1
Secretaries Allowed to Wear Pant Suits:	71		
Yes		54	76
No		17	24

Source: Replies from Salina banks and other financial institutions, insurance companies, law firms, and real estate agencies.

words per minute minimum speed was required by 36 percent of the firms; 28 percent required a minimum of 60-70 words per minute, and 26 percent had a minimum requirement of 40-50 words per minute. About ten percent indicated they required a minimum of over seventy words per minute.

The growing popularity of copying machines is shown by the fact that 65 percent of the firms surveyed use them in their offices. Forty-six percent use voice dictating machines, 19 percent use automatic typewriters, and 15 percent use mimeograph machines. Only three percent said they use ditto machines.

About two thirds of the firms required their secretaries to take dictation. Of that group, approximately one half of them require a speed of 80-100 words per minute. One fourth do not require secretaries to take dictation above eighty words per minute.

Businesses were evenly divided in their response to the question regarding the composition of letters by secretaries. Forty-nine percent ask their secretaries to compose letters frequently, while 46 percent said they ask their secretaries to compose letters only infrequently. Five percent said they never require this of their secretaries.

Although many Salina businesses use more than one method of filing, the alphabetical method continues to be the most popular, according to the survey. Eighty-six percent of those responding use alphabetical filing. Twenty-seven percent use numerical filing, and 21 percent file by subject. Only six percent indicated they file geographically.

Grooming and personal appearance of secretaries is very important, according to 76 percent of the respondents. Another 23 percent consider these factors important. One percent felt grooming and personal

appearance was only fairly important. One executive who stressed the importance of good grooming added, "She doesn't have to be pretty."

Three fourths of the respondents said they permit their secretaries to wear pant suits in the office. Only one in four responding said "no." One businessman wrote, "They like them, and so do we."

When the replies to the questionnaire were examined according to individual business categories, further interesting facts were revealed. The majority of banks and financial institutions responding hire more than one secretary. A total of 78 percent hire two to five secretaries (Table 2, page 18). This compares to 50 percent of the law firms who hire two to five secretaries (Table 4, page 20), 35 percent of insurance firms (Table 3, page 19), and only six percent of real estate agencies (Table 5, page 21). On the other hand, 94 percent of real estate agencies hire only one secretary; 61 percent of the insurance companies hire one secretary.

A total of 95 percent of the law firms surveyed provide their secretaries with electric typewriters exclusively, while only 35 percent of insurance company secretaries use electric typewriters. Five percent of law firms responding indicated both manual and electric typewriters are used. Sixty-one percent of insurance company secretaries use manual typewriters only. Banks and financial institutions, insurance companies, and law firms tend to require somewhat higher speeds of typing than do real estate agencies.

Law firms are the most likely to have a copying machine, with 90 percent using them. However, all companies surveyed make wide use of the copying machine--67 percent of the banks and financial institutions, 63 percent of the real estate agencies, and 46 percent of the

Table 2
Secretarial Needs and Requirements of Salina
Banks and Financial Institutions

Question	N	Number Responding	Percentage
Number of Secretarial Employees:	18		
One		3	17
Two-Five		14	78
Six-Nine		1	5
Ten or more		0	0
Kind of Typewriters Used:	18		
Electric		7	39
Manual		6	33
Both		5	28
Minimum Net Typewriting Speed Required:	17		
40-50 words per minute		6	35
50-60 words per minute		8	47
60-70 words per minute		3	18
Over 70 words per minute		0	0
Machines Used by Employees:	18		
Mimeograph machine		2	11
Ditto machine		0	0
Copying machine		12	67
Automatic typewriter		2	11
Voice dictating machine		6	33
Secretaries Required to Take Dictation:	18		
Yes		12	67
No		6	33
Speed at which Secretaries Must Take Shorthand:	11		
Under 80 words per minute		2	18
80-100 words per minute		7	64
100-120 words per minute		2	18
Over 120 words per minute		0	0
Secretaries Required to Compose Letters:	18		
Frequently		8	44
Infrequently		9	50
Never		1	6
Organization of Files:	18		
Alphabetically		13	72
Geographically		1	6
Numerically		12	67
By subject		6	33
Importance of Grooming and Personal Appearance:	17		
Very important		13	77
Important		4	23
Fairly important		0	0
Secretaries Allowed to Wear Pant Suits:	15		
Yes		14	93
No		1	7

Table 3
Secretarial Needs and Requirements
of Salina Insurance Companies

Question	N'	Number Responding	Percentage
Number of Secretarial Employees:	23		
One		14	61
Two-Five		8	35
Six-Nine		1	4
Ten or more		0	0
Kind of Typewriters Used:	23		
Electric		8	35
Manual		14	61
Both		1	4
Minimum Net Typewriting Speed Required:	22		
40-50 words per minute		6	27
50-60 words per minute		10	46
60-70 words per minute		4	18
Over 70 words per minute		2	9
Machines Used by Employees:	24		
Mimeograph machine		9	37
Ditto machine		2	8
Copying machine		11	46
Automatic typewriter		2	8
Voice dictating machine		11	46
Secretaries Required to Take Dictation:	22		
Yes		12	54
No		10	46
Speed at which Secretaries Must Take Shorthand:	12		
Under 80 words per minute		3	25
80-100 words per minute		8	67
100-120 words per minute		1	8
Over 120 words per minute		0	0
Secretaries Required to Compose Letters:	23		
Frequently		16	70
Infrequently		6	26
Never		1	4
Organization of Files:	24		
Alphabetically		22	92
Geographically		3	14
Numerically		4	17
By subject		2	8
Importance of Grooming and Personal Appearance:	23		
Very important		16	70
Important		7	30
Fairly important		0	0
Secretaries Allowed to Wear Pant Suits:	23		
Yes		16	70
No		7	30

Table 4
Secretarial Needs and Requirements
of Salina Law Firms

Question	N	Number Responding	Percentage
Number of Secretarial Employees:	20		
One		10	50
Two-Five		10	50
Six-Nine		0	0
Ten or more		0	0
Kind of Typewriters Used:	20		
Electric		19	95
Manual		0	0
Both		1	5
Minimum Net Typewriting Speed Required:	18		
40-50 words per minute		0	0
50-60 words per minute		4	22
60-70 words per minute		9	50
Over 70 words per minute		5	28
Machines Used by Employees:	20		
Mimeograph machine		0	0
Ditto machine		0	0
Copying machine		18	90
Automatic typewriter		8	40
Voice dictating machine		17	85
Secretaries Required to Take Dictation:	20		
Yes		16	80
No		4	20
Speed at which Secretaries Must Take Shorthand:	15		
Under 80 words per minute		3	20
80-100 words per minute		7	47
100-120 words per minute		5	33
Over 120 words per minute		0	0
Secretaries Required to Compose Letters:	20		
Frequently		7	35
Infrequently		12	60
Never		1	5
Organization of Files:	20		
Alphabetically		19	95
Geographically		0	0
Numerically		2	10
By subject		2	10
Importance of Grooming and Personal Appearance:	20		
Very important		17	85
Important		3	15
Fairly important		0	0
Secretaries Allowed to Wear Pant Suits:	20		
Yes		13	65
No		7	35

Table 5
Secretarial Needs and Requirements
of Salina Real Estate Agencies

Question	N	Number Responding	Percentage
Number of Secretarial Employees:	16		
One		15	94
Two-Five		1	6
Six-Nine		0	0
Ten or more		0	0
Kind of Typewriters Used:	16		
Electric		9	56
Manual		6	38
Both		1	6
Minimum Net Typewriting Speed Required:	15		
40-50 words per minute		7	46
50-60 words per minute		4	27
60-70 words per minute		4	27
Over 70 words per minute		0	0
Machines Used by Employees:	16		
Mimeograph machine		1	6
Ditto machine		0	0
Copying machine		10	63
Automatic typewriter		3	19
Voice dictating machine		2	13
Secretaries Required to Take Dictation:	16		
Yes		11	69
No		5	31
Speed at which Secretaries Must Take Shorthand:	10		
Under 80 words per minute		4	40
80-100 words per minute		4	40
100-120 words per minute		1	10
Over 120 words per minute		1	10
Secretaries Required to Compose Letters:	15		
Frequently		6	40
Infrequently		8	53
Never		1	7
Organization of Files:	16		
Alphabetically		13	81
Geographically		1	6
Numerically		3	19
By subject		6	38
Importance of Grooming and Personal Appearance:	15		
Very important		11	73
Important		3	20
Fairly important		1	7
Secretaries Allowed to Wear Pant Suits:	13		
Yes		11	85
No		2	15

insurance companies. As would be expected, 85 percent of the law firms use voice dictating machines. Only 13 percent of the real estate agencies use them. Automatic typewriters are used by 40 percent of the law firms surveyed. This is far more than are used by any of the other business categories.

It was interesting to note that 80 percent of the law firms require their secretaries to take dictation, while 69 percent of the real estate agencies, 67 percent of the banks and financial institutions, and 54 percent of the insurance companies require this skill. Sixty percent of the real estate agency secretaries were required to take dictation faster than 80 words per minute. The highest percentage of secretaries in the other three business categories take dictation at 80-100 words per minute.

Secretaries of the insurance companies surveyed are more likely to compose letters frequently than secretaries of the other three types. Seventy percent of the insurance company secretaries compose letters frequently. Only 35 percent of law secretaries compose letters frequently, according to the survey.

As stated earlier, alphabetical filing is used far more frequently by all four kinds of businesses than any other filing system. However, 67 percent of the banks and financial institutions also file by the numerical method, and 38 percent of real estate agencies file by subject.

Eighty-five percent of law firms surveyed felt that grooming and personal appearance is very important; 70 percent or more of each of the other three categories also felt it to be very important.

Pant suits were approved by high percentages. Ninety-three percent of banks and financial institutions approved of them; and even law firms, who responded with the smallest percentage of approval, gave pant suits the "go ahead" by 65 percent.

The last four questions in the questionnaire (Appendix B, page 37) required the respondent to rank items in order of importance. The writer considered all items to be of importance, and attempted to gain insight as to the degree of importance through the replies from the respondents. These replies did not lend themselves to table form. Although the replies were varied, there were decided similarities among the responses.

The first of this series of questions dealt with the matter of transcription skills. All businesses listed spelling as the most important factor, followed by punctuation, word usage and vocabulary in order of importance.

Under use of the telephone, all businesses listed answering the telephone as the most important factor. Receiving and giving information were next in importance, followed by placing of calls and transferral of calls.

In reply to the question regarding performance factors, all companies listed accuracy by far the most important item. Initiative and good judgement were ranked next in importance, with follow through and resourcefulness ranking last.

Among the human relations factors, law firms, insurance companies, and real estate agencies ranked loyalty as the most important item. Banks and financial institutions ranked tact as the most important factor, followed by consideration. The ranking by all businesses of

discretion was inconclusive, with replies listing it from one to five in importance. Objectivity was ranked least important by all businesses.

In addition to specific questions, an opportunity was provided in the questionnaire for suggestions or advice to teachers of secretarial students. This brought a considerable number of responses. Among them were the following:

"Punctuation, spelling, and word usage are the most important ingredients of a good secretary. It takes such a load off the employer when he knows the mechanics will be done right."

"No one can ever be a first-class secretary until she learns how to write the English language properly, including punctuating it properly."

"Telephone usage is very important. Explain to your students that they should never let a caller hang on the phone."

"It is my opinion from observation from various offices that not enough consideration is given to the proper telephone etiquette by secretaries. This medium is often the first impression which a client might get regarding the office or firm."

"Initiative results in continuity of work. Don't wait for instructions, but find work to do when none is assigned."

"I would like for my secretary to be my girl Friday. She should know my business like it was her own."

"Customer-consciousness is so important now. Tact, patience, and product knowledge are extremely important."

"Don't bother employers with personal problems; they have enough of their own."

"In my opinion, a matter that should be stressed is that all business matters are strictly confidential, and no information concerning anything that pertains to the business operation should ever be repeated outside the office. Too often one can hear two or three girls discussing their employer's business over their coffee at the corner cafe."

"Facts learned in our business should 'stay in the office.'"

"An ability to meet and deal with the public is very important."

"I've always felt that a genuine smile, along with a sincere effort to offer to help people, is by far the most important asset to the employee and to the company."

"Personality and appearance are two of the most important attributes of a secretary, followed closely by conscientiousness."

"We need more number one secretaries with a B. A. degree or two years of liberal arts education."

Chapter 5

SECRETARIAL SCIENCE COURSE

Three hours of college credit are given in the course Secretarial Science which meets three times weekly for one semester. The student usually takes the course in the second semester of the freshman or sophomore year.

The basic purpose of the course is to train professional secretaries in the areas of skillful competence and human relations. An attempt is made to create positive attitudes and motivate students to self-improvement. Subject matter and problems require the student to evaluate his individual ability and personality. The broad concept of the "cooperative spirit" needed between the secretary and the executive is emphasized throughout the course.

From the standpoint of organization, course topics are grouped into integrated parts in order to enhance the development of a mature understanding of office problems. Office duties and skills that all secretaries will be required to handle are presented first. As the student progresses, special duties are introduced. Some of these are of a supervisory and decision-making nature. Ability in handling these extra duties usually means the difference between a truly competent secretary and a routine stenographer.

The major topics included in the course are:

- a. The Secretarial Profession
- b. Secretarial Typewriting and Duplicating
- c. The Secretary's Communication Responsibilities

- d. Secretarial Use of Transmittal Services
- e. Secretarial Management of Records
- f. Assistance with Travel and Conferences
- g. Collecting, Processing, and Presenting Business Data
- h. Financial and Legal Facets of Secretarial Work
- i. Professional Future of the Secretary

Teaching methods used by the instructor include lectures and considerable student participation in discussion. Some new techniques are introduced during class periods. Various supplements are used, such as trips to offices and the use of films, film strips, and overhead projections. A guest lecturer is occasionally invited to speak to the class. Students are asked to present both oral and written reports from outside reading assignments, and an attempt is made to keep the course current with the help of newspapers, magazines, and other publications.

The textbook used in Secretarial Science is Secretarial Procedures and Administration (and Workbook of Related Work Assignments), Hanna, Popham and Beamer, South-Western Publishing Company, 1968. Dr. J. Marshall Hanna is Professor of Business Education at Ohio State University. Dr. Estelle L. Popham is Professor of Business Education at Hunter College, and she was formerly Dean, Institute for Certifying Secretaries, National Secretaries Association. Mrs. Esther K. Beamer is a professional secretary who has had extensive executive secretarial experience in advertising, architecture, editorial research, personnel, and public accounting.

The bibliography for the course may be found in the syllabus, Appendix C, page 41.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS .

An attempt was made in this study to inquire into the needs and desires of Salina business in regard to the training of secretarial employees. An effort was also made to evaluate the course Secretarial Science in view of the demands of business today.

Literature was reviewed on the development of secretarial skills and the importance of efficiency as well as on the importance of human relations factors. The literature appeared to reflect the fact that emphasis must be given both to mechanical skills of secretarial work and to the value of human relations aspects.

A questionnaire was mailed to Salina banks and other financial institutions, insurance companies, law firms, and real estate agencies. The questionnaire was comprised of sixteen questions in addition to an opportunity for comments. A total of 122 questionnaires was mailed to businesses with 78 responding for a return of 65 percent. A series of tables was prepared to show percentage responses. One table listed total responses and an additional four tables gave responses in percentages by type of business.

The questionnaire survey of Salina business was then related to the content of the course Secretarial Science in order to discover whether or not the needs of business are reflected in the teaching of the course. Although not every aspect of the course could be covered in a survey of this kind, a study was made of those office duties and skills that most secretaries are required to handle.

The following conclusions were drawn from the study:

1. The course Secretarial Science appears to cover adequately the preparation of secretaries for Salina business.
2. Salina business has a genuine interest in the kind of training prospective secretaries receive, as evidenced by the response to the questionnaire and in particular by the many comments which were included in replies to the questionnaire.
3. Because more than one half of the businesses surveyed employ only one secretary, it is necessary to continue to train students to handle a wide variety of office assignments.
4. The degree of proficiency required in certain skills differed according to the kind of business surveyed.
5. There was a marked similarity among all businesses in the study concerning the need for emphasis on the value of human relations in secretarial training.
6. Increased training in the use of the manual typewriter and more emphasis on the composition of letters should be incorporated into the course Secretarial Science.
7. There is a need for continued training in shorthand and related transcription skills as evidenced by the high percentage of businesses requiring those skills.

It appears to the writer that the training of secretaries should reflect the growing trend in the use of copying machines and automatic typewriters, coupled with the decreasing use of the ditto machine. Because only three percent of all businesses surveyed make use of the ditto machine, the deletion of training in ditto work will be considered.

On the other hand, the writer concluded that a program of instruction in the use of the automatic typewriter would be beneficial. Since one in five of the businesses surveyed indicated that automatic typewriters are used by their employees, it appears that some instruction in this area should be initiated in the course Secretarial Science. An

automatic typewriter is not available in the classroom at Marymount College at this time. However, an attempt will be made to provide training through the College Service Center where frequent use is made of an automatic typewriter.

The study showed that a surprising percentage of secretaries continue to use manual typewriters, or at least a combination of electric and manual machines. In view of this, more emphasis must be placed on practice to attain adequate skill with the manual typewriter as well as with the electric machine.

Through the use of a questionnaire survey of Salina business, the writer has attempted in this study to make an evaluation of the quality of the training program in Secretarial Science. Because of the limited scope of a study of this kind it was not possible to cover all areas of training. However, it was felt that a definite improvement can be made in the teaching of the course Secretarial Science as a result of the study.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

2053 South Fourth Street
Salina, Kansas 67401
March 4, 1971

Gentlemen:

I teach secretarial courses at Marymount College, and I am concerned about the preparation and training of secretaries. As part of my work toward the Master's degree at Kansas State University, I am attempting to discover what Salina business desires from its secretarial employees and the kind of training programs needed to prepare these employees. The topic of my report is "A Study of Business Needs in Relation to a College Secretarial Science Course."

To gather information needed for my study, I am asking your help in answering some questions. I would be very grateful if you will take time to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me within the next few days. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided.

Sincerely,


Mrs. Mary Carroll

Encl. (2)

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed as an aid toward the improvement of secretarial training in Salina. Statistics gathered will be used collectively and your firm will not be identified. Please mark the item that represents the best answer(s) for your situation.

1. Please indicate your type of business:

Bank or Financial Institution _____
Insurance Company _____
Law Firm _____
Real Estate Agency _____

2. Number of secretarial employees:

One _____
Two-Five _____
Six-Nine _____
Ten or more _____

3. Do your secretarial employees use:

Electric typewriters _____
Manual typewriters _____
Both _____

4. Minimum net typewriting speed required:

40-50 words per minute _____
50-60 words per minute _____
60-70 words per minute _____
Over 70 words per minute _____

5. Please indicate which of the following machines are used in your office:

Mimeograph _____
Ditto _____
Copying Machine _____
Automatic Typewriter _____
Voice Dictating Machine _____

6. Are your secretaries required to take dictation?

Yes _____
No _____

7. If yes, what speed do you expect the secretary to take shorthand?

Under 80 words per minute _____
80-100 words per minute _____
100-120 words per minute _____
Over 120 words per minute _____

Questionnaire--Page 2

8. Do you feel that secretaries would benefit from more office style dictation in the classroom? (Dictation which simulates the actual dictation of a person composing a letter as he dictates.)

Yes _____

No _____

9. Do you ask your secretaries to compose letters either for your signature or their own?

Frequently _____

Infrequently _____

Never _____

10. In your office, are your files organized:

Alphabetically _____

Geographically _____

Numerically _____

By subject _____

11. When selecting a secretary, how important do you consider grooming and personal appearance?

Very important _____

Important _____

Fairly important _____

12. Do you permit secretarial employees to wear pant suits in the office?

Yes _____

No _____

For the remainder of the questionnaire please rank the following in order of their importance (1 for most important, 2 for next important, etc.).

13. Transcription Skills:

Word Usage _____

Punctuation _____

Spelling _____

Vocabulary _____

14. Use of the telephone:

Placing calls _____

Answering the telephone _____

Giving information _____

Getting information _____

Transferring calls _____

Questionnaire--Page 3

15. Performance factors:

Accuracy _____
Good judgment _____
Follow through _____
Resourcefulness _____
Initiative _____

16. Human relations factors:

Consideration _____
Tact _____
Discretion _____
Loyalty _____
Objectivity _____

COMMENTS:

If you wish, please offer suggestions or advice to teachers of
secretarial students.

APPENDIX C

SYLLABUS: SECRETARIAL SCIENCE

SYLLABUS

1. Title and number of course: Secretarial Science (120).
2. Course description: An integration of skills already acquired, development of secretarial responsibilities, modern business office procedures and problems.
3. Credit: Three hours, offered M-W-F in a regular time slot.
4. Placement: Generally second semester in the freshman or sophomore year.
5. Objectives: The basic purpose of this course is to train professional secretaries in the areas of skillful competence and human relations. An attempt is made to create positive attitudes and motivate students to self-improvement. The subject matter and problems require the student to evaluate constantly his individual ability and personality. The broad concept of the "cooperative spirit" needed between the secretary and the executive is emphasized throughout the course.
6. Organization: Topics that are related are grouped into integrated parts in an effort to enhance the development of a mature understanding of office problems. The duties and skills that all secretaries will be required to handle are presented first. As the student progresses, special duties are introduced. Many of these are of a supervisory and decision-making nature. Ability in handling these extra duties usually means the difference between a truly competent secretary and a routine stenographer.

The major topics included in the course are:

- (a) The Secretarial Profession
 - (b) Secretarial Typewriting and Duplicating
 - (c) The Secretary's Communication Responsibilities
 - (d) Secretarial Use of Transmittal Services
 - (e) Secretarial Management of Records
 - (f) Assistance with Travel and Conferences
 - (g) Collecting, Processing, and Presenting Business Data
 - (h) Financial and Legal Facets of Secretarial Work
 - (i) Professional Future of the Secretary
7. Teaching methods: Lectures by instructor and considerable participation from students. Some new techniques are introduced during class periods. Various supplements are used such as trips to various offices, the use of films, film strips, and overhead projections. A guest lecturer is occasionally invited to speak to the class. Students are asked to present both oral and written reports from outside reading assignments. An attempt is made to keep the course current with the help of newspapers, magazines, and other publications.

8. Textbook: Secretarial Procedures and Administration (and Workbook of Related Work Assignments), Hanna, Popham, and Beamer, South-Western Publishing Company, 1968. Dr. J. Marshall Hanna is Professor of Business Education at Ohio State University. Dr. Estelle Popham is Professor of Business Education at Hunter College; and she was formerly Dean, Institute for Certifying Secretaries, National Secretaries Association. Mrs. Esther K. Beamer is a professional secretary who has had extensive executive secretarial experience in advertising, architecture, editorial research, personnel and public accounting.

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A STUDY OF BUSINESS NEEDS IN RELATION TO A
COLLEGE SECRETARIAL SCIENCE COURSE

by

MARY JEANNE CARROLL

B. S., Kansas State University, 1962

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1971

There is currently a growing concern among business educators and employers regarding the preparation and training of secretaries. This concern is related both to the development of secretarial skills and acknowledgment of the importance of human relations training.

As a teacher of secretarial students at Marymount College in Salina, Kansas, the writer was concerned about the preparation and training of secretaries. The purpose of this study was to inquire into what Salina business desires from its secretarial employees and the kind of training programs needed to prepare these employees, and to evaluate the course Secretarial Science in view of the demands of business today.

A questionnaire was mailed to Salina banks and other financial institutions, insurance companies, law firms, and real estate agencies. Results were tabulated in a series of tables showing percentage responses.

Salina business showed a genuine interest in the proper training of prospective secretaries. From the results of the study it appears that it is necessary to continue to train students to handle a wide variety of office assignments. The degree of proficiency required in certain secretarial skills differed widely according to the kind of business surveyed; however, there was a great similarity among all businesses concerning the value of human relations training for prospective secretaries.

The writer concluded from the results of the survey and an examination of the course Secretarial Science that the course appears to cover adequately the preparation of secretaries for Salina business. Certain revisions are planned as a result of this study which are expected to further improve the course.