

Women in Management

I shall never forget a spectacle called «The Wall of Death», performed by two young cyclists: a man and a woman, each driving a motorcycle. The riders pushed the motorcycles from the ground up a huge, cup-shaped wall and let it glide spirally, until they reached the top from which they slid downward to the point of departure. The least hesitation, the least failure, preventing their hands from taking a firm hold of the handle bar, meant to them instant death. As I watched the daring couple pushing their vehicles up-ward, defying the law of gravity, I noticed that the woman looked calmer and showed more poise than her companion. I felt proud of her but I had no chance to meet her after the performance, to express to her my admiration verbally.

«The Wall of Death» spectacle made a deep impression on me. I felt that most women have potential talents which we generally tend to ignore. Men minimize the importance of women's household duties, though these duties require a variety of talents and impose on housekeepers a good deal of effort and competence in several fields. Men, on the other hand, concentrate on one type of work which, though it may be insignificant, gives them a sense of superiority.

Women's increasing enrollment as college and university students has allowed them to venture into new fields of work, one of which is business management or business administration. As directors of schools, hospitals, research institutes, business enterprises, conferences, nursing homes, societies and other similar organizations, they have shown so much skill and versatility that their participation in all kinds of group activity are now sought and appreciated by employers, important businessmen and other executives.

I once asked a successful school director about the secret of her success. She said: In dealing with my staff, I study each of them in the light of psychological knowledge and personal experience. I encourage the successful workers and give special attention and guidance to the slow ones or the less successful, to help them improve. It is my belief that every normal person

should be capable of achieving good work if given the necessary chance and encouragement. We should never lose hope in people's ability to grow.

Another successful leader of a large association told me that the secret of her success was in the democratic spirit she applied in treating her co-workers and other active members of the organization. She included them in the initiation and the planning of every project, giving them the opportunity to give ideas and thus arouse their interest. While she supervised their work, she shared their activities and gave her remarks in a skillful and gentle manner.

The above paragraphs offer only a few examples of women's success in the field of management and bring out some of the qualities that help them succeed. We may add that women's home training which emphasizes self-control, tidiness, perseverance and altruism, forms a favorable background for good management in the family or at work. According to recent statistics, women perform the task of household heads and providers in 30% of families in Third World countries. The reason is widowhood or the husband's emigration for work in other lands. During the Lebanese war, women played a heroic role in facing all kinds of hardships and taking charge of destitute families and war-handicapped individuals. However, there are those who think that women's traditional education at home and in school, requires them to be docile, dependent and obedient, thus lacking in firmness and initiative, characteristics indispensable for leadership. Such an idea should be considered a sweeping statement as long as it has not been submitted to careful study. Women's education nowadays tend to be less traditional and more liberal. While it keeps from the past those desirable elements which obtain general appreciation, it has discarded such stereotypes as self-denial, self-effacement and blind obedience. The modern young woman, particularly the one who has received higher education, has succeeded in developing and independent, self-reliant personality.

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