# THE WOMAN COUNSELOR IN WAR INDUSTRIES

## An Effective System

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INDUSTRY has had personnel departments for many years. The development of very large war production plants, the need for speedy production, and the employment of large numbers of women and men inexperienced in industry have brought about new needs, however, that called for a new type of personnel system. From the past 2 years' experience of many air-frame, shipyard, and ammunition plants there has evolved an employee counseling system that meets workers' current needs. Such a system is described in this pamphlet.

As shipyards present more difficult women-personnel problems than any other war industry, the effectiveness of personnel systems in shipyards in the spring of 1943 is described separately on the concluding pages.

# THE WOMAN COUNSELOR IN WAR INDUSTRIES

## An Effective System

Good personnel practice demands careful selection, placement, and supervision of each worker so that his or her optimum efficiency may be attained. Awareness of individual differences is necessary and, by extension of the principle, recognition of such group differences as exist between men and women workers. In this recognition there is no assumption of inferiority or superiority or of any valuation whatever, but knowledge of the more uniformly good results from treating like things alike and different things differently.

Though the new women recruits should be considered on the job primarily as workers rather than as women, recognition should be given to their strangeness in the industrial environment, their inexperience, and the difference from men in their background and physical structure.

In acknowledgment of these facts, industries employing numbers of women for the first time are tending increasingly to set up a women's division in their personnel or industrial relations department headed by a properly qualified woman. Such an arrangement makes possible more effective selection and placement of women. It maintains also regular machinery of an effective kind for helping to settle women's grievances, solving their special problems, supervising their particular needs, and aiding them in all matters that affect their job adjustment except actual performance of the work, thereby relieving their production supervisor from duties for which he has little time and is not especially qualified. A women's division is especially recommended in industries in which the physical and administrative adjustment of the plant has until very recently been geared entirely to a male labor force.

An arrangement that has been found effective in plants employing as many as 500 or more women is one in which a head of women's personnel works within the main personnel or industrial relations office and has under her women personnel counselors who are responsible also to the chief production supervisors or masters in the shops. The counselors work directly with the women employees and occupy desks in the shops to which they are appointed. In most plants or yards it is best that at least one woman personnel assistant be assigned to every shop where considerable numbers of women are employed. In some plants there may be shops requiring several women assistants. When numbers of women are working on the ways, on board ship, or out of doors on slabs, farms, or platens in shipyards, personnel assistants should be assigned to cover these areas. The women's personnel organization should include also women employment and exit interviewers when the head of women's personnel or the women counselors do not assume these duties.

In plants with relatively few women, the head of women's personnel may be able to handle all matters herself with perhaps the aid of a woman interviewer and one or more roving representatives or assistants who keep in close contact with the women workers and with the women's production supervisors.

The size and lay-out of the factory or yard and the extent of women's employment will determine the detailed set-up of the counseling system. However, experience and present need have determined what the functions should be.

Whatever the set-up and functions, the counselors' status should be well defined. Job supervisors and union representatives should be consulted when delimiting and outlining their functions, and all the workers, men and women, should understand them thoroughly.

Because of their full-time attention to the special needs of women workers, the women personnel counselors can be of particular assistance not only to job supervisors but to shop stewards. It is important that both work closely with the counselors and use the service they can render, the better to increase their own effectiveness and to give the women workers greater opportunity for good adjustment.

The functions of the head of women's personnel and of her assistants that experience has proved effective are described in the pages that follow.

## The Head of Women's Personnel.

### Her Functions.

No position may be defined rigidly to cover every situation. Actually, the functions of the women's personnel officer and of any assistants she has will vary from plant to plant, depending on the background and qualifications of the incumbents, conditions in the plant, and of course the degree of latitude given the women's division by management. By and large, however, certain duties are fundamental to the position of head of women's personnel if the individual occupying the post is to have sufficient responsibility for effective action. She should be called upon to assist and advise the chief officer in charge of personnel in the over-all planning and coordination of employee-relations work affecting women production workers. In this way she will help to formulate the general policies that will prevail in the selection, placement, induction, and supervision of women as well as in their counseling and personal adjustment to the job. A uniform policy with respect to the general steps to be taken when problems arise from the employment of women should be established in the central personnel office and maintained through the office of the head of women's personnel. It is recognized that in occasional instances proper and effective placement of women on certain shifts or types of job will invade established seniority rights and privileges. Procedure in such cases should be made clear and should be decided in consultation with labor and management.[1]

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[1] Whenever possible the preferred method for the duration of the war is to allow placement of women wherever they can do the best job regardless of the established seniority rules. For example, if the heavy jobs usually go to the youngest workers in point of seniority, it should be recognized by labor and management that for as long as women are needed in the plant this rule should be waived so that, though new workers, women can be assigned to jobs according to ability to perform them. Likewise, where newcomers automatically draw the "graveyard" shift, it is recommended that this rule be overlooked in special cases so that assignment to shifts may be made on an individual basis when home responsibilities, health, or other factors warrant.

It should be the duty of the head of women personnel to foster and maintain the correlation and cooperation of the various plant departments with the women's personnel program. This should involve discussion, interchange of ideas, and development of policies regarding such matters as women's medical examination and care, their safety, training, and occupational dispersion and work progress. In this way each department of the plant is apprised of the aid it can give in furnishing valuable information to the women's division and at the same time can learn of ways to extend and improve its own program with respect to the women workers. The head of women's personnel also should have considerable direct responsibility for planning and supervising the setting up of toilet, washroom, restroom, and any other facilities, such as the cafeteria or other lunching arrangements, that women must use.

If the head of women's personnel does not do the interviewing herself, she should help to select, guide, and train, and should work closely with, the intake and exit interviewer of women, both to seek ways of improving women's selection and placement and to determine and if possible eliminate causes of their separation. Where women personnel counselors are employed, the head of the women's program should choose the candidates in consultation with the shop supervisors or masters with whom they will work and subject to the approval of the chief personnel officer. She should, however, have sole responsibility for the counselors' training and direction and be available at all times to answer their questions and help them with their problems. When there are a number of counselors it is advisable to hold regular meetings with the group for interchange of ideas, threshing out of problems, and review of policy. From these meetings the head of women's personnel may select pressing matters that require quick administrative action, or situations of larger scope requiring study and careful approach with the cooperation of the entire administrative staff, perhaps even outside agencies.

The women's head should supervise the setting up and maintenance of an efficient, complete, and up-to-date record system covering every woman employee. Background facts such as experience, education, age, marital status, number and ages of children, and the like should be secured at time of the intake interviews. Each woman counselor, under the head of women's personnel, should help to keep the records current and be provided with a duplicate of the complete record of each of the women in her charge. Data the counselors can supply relate to the job and its performance, wage status, absences, transfers, grievances and their settlement, and so forth. There should be periodic transfer to the master file of medical, accident, and training data. The material on each record card and correlation of the data can be tremendously illuminating in all phases of the work with women, including, for example, job placement, transfers, promotion, and investigation into absence and turn-over.

The factory or shipyard is not located in a vacuum, nor do the affairs of its workers begin and end with the 8-hour shift. There are many ways in which outside influences aid the worker on the job or lead to discontent, absenteeism, turn-over, and other production saboteurs. The lack of adequate housing, recreation, transportation, and child-care facilities is among outside influences that affect women

workers the most. It should be the responsibility of the women's personnel officer to work with the community agencies that have jurisdiction over such matters in the effort to promote introduction of community facilities that may be lacking or the reorganization, perhaps the extension, of those not serving adequately if at all the important needs of significant numbers of women workers. Careful survey of the women factory employees may reveal, for example, the need for more nursery schools in some areas while there are too many in others, for their earlier opening and later closing, or for an after-school-care program. The chief of women's personnel can be influential in making the facts known and securing action. In conference with the USO-Y. W. C. A., directors of Federal Government housing projects, and others, she can lend her assistance in the expanding of recreational facilities to include activities suitable for women and adjusted to their hour schedules. By the enlistment of civic support, the merchants of the town may be persuaded to sacrifice a morning and keep their doors open one evening a week to accommodate the busy day shift. These are examples of some of the community affairs with which a women's personnel officer can profitably concern herself to secure better adjustment of her women workers to their jobs and consequently more nearly maximum production. She may also learn from the outside agencies with which she maintains contact ways in which the plant itself can make accommodations and introduce facilities that will temporarily relieve community limitations or serve to supplement them. Rationing bureaus and room registries are examples of such services.

**Her Qualifications.**

To perform these duties ideally the women's personnel executive should have had experience in industrial work and labor relations affording her some practical knowledge of personnel management and labor and factory economics. In factories with union agreements it would be well if she were acquainted also with the organization, functions, and activities of unions in general and particularly with those prevailing where she is to accept an official post.

Actually, few women have had such experience, so good fundamental education and personality and leadership qualities may have to be the basis of choice. Special education and a thorough knowledge of work operations in the plant and the conditions under which they are performed are important but may have to be gained after employment.

The most important personal qualifications to be sought are such rare and precious traits as good common sense and judgment, leadership and organizing ability, initiative, imagination coupled with practicality, equable temperament, humor, ability to work well with others, and the faculty of persuading management to make changes that employee conferences indicate are needed.

## The Personnel Counselors.

Decentralization of the personnel function involving the appointment of counselors to assist the chief of women's personnel makes possible more thorough attention to the needs of women employees and their work supervisors and a greater spread of the services that can be rendered. Experience has proved that few new workers will go to a central personnel office distant from their shops. The personnel representative must be stationed where women are at work.

The important consideration in assigning the personnel counselors, besides matters of background and personality, is the necessity that representation from the women's personnel office be provided within each shop, for each of the shifts, and over all parts of the plant or yard and docks where women work. There should be no important hiatus in this representation, for serious problems may stem from inadequate supervision, especially in the first months of women's employment and when women are working in small numbers in isolated places. It has been found in practice that a relatively large number of women, certainly as many as a hundred, can be handled by one counselor when all the women workers are together within a shop, as in the machine shop; but in the case of the public-works department in shipyards, where women maintenance employees work all over the yard, a greater number of personnel counselors are required for the same number of women workers. When a group of women from different shops or departments are working on board ship, a woman counselor without specific shop assignment should be provided. It is recommended that when many Negro women are employed, a Negro assistant be added to the personnel staff.

Women personnel counselors have been rendered ineffective in some concerns because their duties and authority had not been clearly defined by the main personnel office. If the personnel program with women is to meet with success, the functions and status of the women counselors, as well as the limits of their authority, should be well understood by them and by all the production supervisors and employees, men as well as women. Their position, furthermore, should command respect and be attended with adequate authority for effective action derived from the central personnel office. In general, the arrangement that has been found most satisfactory is one in which the personnel counselors are concerned only with problems that do not pertain to the performance of the work itself and in which their function is advisory to the job supervisors. They serve to bring supervisor and workers closer together.

It is a mistake to give certain women production workers counseling functions setting them apart from and above their fellow women operatives but giving them no additional claim to status. The counselor must stand outside the production system in order to view it objectively. Furthermore, personnel work in a plant employing hundreds of women is a full-time job and cannot be performed with any justice by women who are also responsible for production.

**Their Functions.**

Whether they conduct the intake interview themselves or receive applicants selected by the central personnel office, it should be the function of the personnel counselors and within their ability to aid the work supervisors in determining the suitability of women applicants for specific jobs. They should help also in completing the hiring and placement process, arranging for the workers' starting date, and similar details.

The induction and orientation of new women employees is an especially important aspect of the personnel counselors' job. When the training division is not organized to undertake the induction program, part of the work of the woman counselor should require, briefly, acquainting the women with shop or yard geography and with plant

processes and terminology; introducing them to their fellow workers and their work supervisors; making them cognizant of shop rules, safety regulations, and proper work clothing; informing them about wages, hours, and policies that cover training, promotions, transfers, and dismissals; telling them about means of securing transportation to the plant; and many other matters. Even if there is a manual covering these points, each item bears reviewing, and sufficient time should be given to the answering of employees' questions. Through this induction process the woman counselor has the opportunity of establishing herself as a friend of the individual woman worker, to whom the worker may come whenever she needs assistance.

Even when formal induction has taken place, the work of the women counselors should by no means be considered over with respect to orientating the women to their new job experience. This should be a continuing process. It involves careful follow-up of the new workers to help them make a satisfactory adjustment, develop good work habits, a constructive work spirit, and an attitude and sense of belonging in a cooperative enterprise. The counselors can be most effective also in helping supervisors to educate the women early in safe habits of work, including especially the conscientious wearing of proper work clothing. To carry out these duties effectively, the personnel counselors must visit workrooms and work stations frequently. In this way they are in a position to encourage women on the job, follow up transferred employees on a new job, and watch closely employees whose work or conduct is or has been unsatisfactory.

Assistance in arranging department and interdepartment transfers of women workers should be given by the women counselors. They should also cooperate with the job supervisors in the reassignment of employees in cases in which such factors as physical disability, vocational maladjustment, lack of suitable work, and the like may be involved. They are to lend aid to foremen and others in selecting women for promotion, upgrading, and retraining for new work. When employees are available for transfer who cannot be placed within the shop under their jurisdiction, the counselors should refer them to the central personnel office and advise the office as to the type of work for which they have shown aptitude. When discharge is indicated, the counselors should seek to avoid it if possible by bringing about readjustment or rehabilitation of the workers, but if this proves impossible, they should make the recommendation for discharge. Actual dismissal should be effected only through the central personnel office, in close consultation with the head of women's personnel.

The women workers should be encouraged to take to the women counselors any problems they may have that affect their relation to the job, whether the matters involve shop, personal, or family situations. To perform their function in this regard, the counselors should be available for consultation at all times during normal working hours. When the professional attention of physician or social worker is required, the counselors should refer the women to qualified persons or agencies in the community for help. They should not themselves attempt to deal with deep-seated problems requiring professional attention. Their function is that of detecting such problems and knowing where and how the individuals concerned can secure help.

When valid complaints or grievances about the work, shop, or yard are voiced, the counselors should interpret the needs and viewpoint of the women workers and act generally as liaison between the women and their foremen, or other supervisors, or help the union stewards in this. The counselor should, in fact, be equipped to make recommendations and in other ways assist in arriving at a satisfactory adjustment of women's requests or grievances.

The counselors should concern themselves with giving constructive aid to the women workers in situations that, though not directly related to the plant, nevertheless are highly important to morale and work performance. This aspect of the counselor's duties may involve, among other things, helping to secure day care for children when regular arrangements have failed, aiding in the search for living accommodations, setting up car pools, or finding a nursing home for an ill relative. Assistance of this kind makes it immeasurably easier for the women workers to assume and carry out the dual role of worker and housewife and to adjust to the strange environment and work of the factory or yard. Where the personnel counselor is equipped to do an intelligent job of this kind, knowing when and of what agencies to ask assistance, she can bring to the women under her a sense of security, relieving them of strains and anxieties that very seriously affect their production, interfere with their attendance, and cause them to leave their jobs.

Their knowledge of work processes and women's capabilities makes the women counselors especially helpful in finding ways of extending women's employment through the shop and advising the supervisors and personnel office accordingly. It is desirable that they be equipped also to check on new jobs proposed for women by others and to assist in determining their suitability. In this general connection, the counselors should be on the alert for ways in which the jobs women already hold could be replanned, rearranged, or reengineered to reduce fatigue and contribute to more efficient performance.

Complete records should be kept by each counselor for every woman under her direction, and the central personnel office should be notified of changes and additions that should be recorded in the master file. Records that are current and complete, including information on education, experience, home responsibilities, health, and the like, are necessary background for intelligent counseling and constructive service alike to management, to job supervisors, and to women workers.

It will be necessary in some plants for the counselors to supervise the maintenance and use of the women's rest room, washroom, and cloakrooms. This should be done only to make certain that the women's facilities are adequate and are kept clean and in good repair and to follow up certain of the workers who may be abusing their privileges or who may require help or attention. It should not be carried out as a general policing function nor should the counselor be charged with cleaning or in any way tending the washroom or rest rooms. Such capacities would detract from her status in the eyes of the women in her charge. Policing the washroom and rest rooms is wholly unnecessary under a wise personnel program that begins with good selection and involves careful induction and orientation of women, attention to their special needs, and effective counseling. Care of the women's facilities should be the function of the department of maintenance or

the service department; occasional suggestions to and from the women's personnel office are of course in order.

Finally, the counselors should be free to offer suggestions to the chief of women's personnel and refer to her any cases on which advice is needed or on which action should be taken from the main office.

**Their Qualifications.**

It is obvious that, to do their job well, women personnel counselors should be thoroughly acquainted with the work in the factory or shipyard and especially with the jobs in the shop or division to which they are assigned. This knowledge may be acquired as a worker in the ranks, if only for a few weeks. In any case, acceptance of the personnel job should involve sufficient preliminary training in production work to provide first-hand understanding of processes, personnel problems, and production details.

Very early, if the counselor has not already acquired the knowledge from employment in the factory in another capacity, she should become thoroughly acquainted with plant organization and policies. Here again it is important that she bring to the job practical experience in either industry or business, preferably in work involving supervision. In this way she will have acquired some facility with the problems of personnel and the techniques of supervision. General academic theoretical understanding of the work also is desirable, and this of course assumes education beyond high school.

The personality traits that have proved advisable in a personnel counselor have a wide range. They include emotional stability; the quality of leadership without officiousness; tact; resourcefulness; versatility; adaptability; good judgment; patience; a genuine interest in, and understanding of, people; good insight; a sense of humor; and a knowledge of when and how to compromise.

## PERSONNEL PROGRAMS IN PRACTICE IN SHIPYARDS

Field representatives of the Women's Bureau visited 41 shipyards in 1943, 35 of which had women on production. Nearly three-fourths of the latter, 26 yards, were already, at date of survey, employing 1 or more women to deal in some way with women's personnel relations. In most of these shipyards, a woman, with or without assistants, had the title if not always the authority of the head of women's personnel. There were only 2 instances in which the women personnel workers were women's intake interviewers with no other functions, and only 2 in which they were matrons charged solely with policing the women's rest rooms.

Nine of the shipyards visited had no women personnel workers. Five of these employed each from 700 to 2,200 women wage earners and were sorely in need of more adequate attention to women's problems for the sake of boosting morale and production. One was notorious for its deplorable working conditions and the poor spirit of its workers, features that inevitably are found together. The yard's reputation caused reluctance on the part of women in the town to answer the call for workers. Consequently, many of the women taken on are from out of town, complicating community and management problems immeasurably and leading to the employment of women who ordinarily would be unacceptable. A good many of the shipyard's

difficulties might not have arisen had adequate selection of women been made at the outset and their adjustment and supervision been placed under the direction of a capable head of women's personnel. A belated effort was being made at time of visit (February 1943) to find a woman to accept the post. A person of adequate background, given sufficient authority, should be able to do a great deal to remedy matters, but the job is infinitely more difficult because of the poor beginning.

The women's personnel divisions in active operation varied considerably from yard to yard, differing chiefly in the freedom from rein and the well-defined authority given the women counselors and the approach to the personnel function, whether administrative and positive or disciplinary and negative. Only a few effective plans were in force at the time of visit by Women's Bureau representatives. Two were in United States navy yards. One of these was organized late in 1942, but another was set up in response to a circular letter issued in May by the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, establishing the positions of "personnel assistants" for women shop employees in naval shore establishments. The positions were set up in four grades, beginning with junior personnel assistant at a $2,000 annual salary and allowing at the top for a principal personnel assistant at $3,200. Description of the position for the first grade, that of junior personnel assistant, follows:

> Under general supervision of the shop master or his designated representative, serves as personnel assistant for shop supervisors in a shop employing a small number of workers, or as an assistant to the leading personnel assistant in a shop employing a large number of workers.
>
> Performs under general supervision a limited number of the following duties to assist shop supervisors in handling personnel problems, particularly these concerning women shop employees: Assists in the introduction of new workers to shop employment—location of time clocks, proper muster, identification badges, location of lockers, cafeterias, rest rooms, etc.; instruction in shop safety rules, safe working practices, and proper work clothing; explanation of shop and yard regulations concerning attendance, sick leave, conduct on the job, etc.; assists supervisors in proper placement and transfer of workers in employment for which they are best fitted; assists in follow-up to prevent or correct tardiness, irregular attendance, improper conduct on the job, loafing, wastefulness, etc.; assists supervisors in personal problems of women workers concerning health, transportation, housing, rationing, etc., and advises employees as to the various services in the yard available to them in these and similar matters; assists supervisors in handling grievances and complaints of women workers; other similar duties as assigned.

The principal personnel assistant carries the following responsibilities:

> Under general supervision of the personnel relations officer, serves as the coordinator of the work of all women personnel assistants at a large navy yard.
>
> Responsible to the yard personnel relations officer for developing and putting into operation the program for women personnel assistants in shops where women are employed in industrial work.
>
> Assists shop masters in the selection and training of women personnel assistants in the shops; instructs, guides, and advises women personnel assistants in their major problems and in the general conduct of their work.
>
> Conducts meetings as necessary of all women personnel assistants for discussion of women employees' problems and the proper steps to be taken in their solution.
>
> Assists and advises the personnel relations officer in the over-all planning and coordination of employee relations work affecting women shop employees.

These position descriptions briefly summarize an organization for women's personnel work that should meet success not only in the navy yards but in any large shipyard expecting to employ numbers of women in industrial work. Two things the new policies indicated are expected to overcome in those navy yards without adequate women's divisions are the frequently encountered objections of shop masters to introducing women counselors and reluctance on the part of shop supervisors to allow women counselors already employed any authority or backing.

One navy yard had organized an adequate women's program several months before the Assistant Secretary's circular letter was issued. This was done, however, after 3,000 women already were employed and a difficult situation had arisen revealing strain and conflict between the new women employees and their supervisors and fellow workers. The men had not been made fully aware that the women had to be depended on for production, and little attention therefore was being paid as to whether the 3,000 women did or did not build ships. It became apparent that a liaison had to be introduced between the men supervisors and the new women workers. A yard coordinator for women was appointed to work out over-all policy and a program to meet the problems that had arisen. Though final approval of her program and policies was subject to strict military and civilian inspection, she was nevertheless given broad powers and discretion in developing plans. The resulting organization elicited this comment from the Women's Bureau field representative who visited the yard: "The system of women coordinators which has been devised is one of the most effective observed in any of the war industries visited." It had flaws of which the yard coordinator was aware, but efforts were being made to correct and change methods as conditions warranted. Furthermore, the whole attitude of the yard was one of eagerness to take full advantage of professional criticism and recommendations and to make practical changes.

It is to be hoped that each of the navy yards, with the Assistant Secretary's sound recommendations for strengthening personnel work with women in naval shore establishments as a guide, will set up an effective women's personnel organization to meet its particular needs. This is especially important since the eight navy yards building and repairing ships, only a fraction of the country's shipyards, nevertheless employ a large share of the total women wage earners in the industry, a share, in fact, out of all proportion to their small number; it amounted to nearly a fourth in March 1943.

There are many more private commercial yards, their problems differing considerably one from another, depending on their size, their location, the age and adequacy of their plant, the labor supply in the area, the kinds of ships they build, or whether or not they repair ships. The navy yards, in contrast, are fairly uniform. They are all large and old yards that are repairing ships as much as, or more than, building new ones. They ordinarily do a great deal more work under cover than the private yards because of excellent plant accommodations. The private yards run the gamut in all these matters, and therefore it is much more difficult to generalize about them. Most of those visited appeared to be doing a mediocre or poor per-

sonnel job with women; but some were found to be doing a most noteworthy job. For example, one with fewer than 200 women operatives had a capable woman personnel officer in charge who was assisted by a secretary-interviewer and a field representative. The women's division handled women's intake and exit interviewing, induction of women, adjustment of complaints and grievances, investigations of new jobs for women, follow-up, transfers, discipline, and other matters pertaining to women's adjustment to the yard. Among other things, the woman executive had developed a good record-keeping system, the function and value of which she understood thoroughly. She had trained her field representative as a competent contact person for the central office, introducing new women workers to their jobs, following them up, making daily contacts with the women's foremen as girls were placed or transferred, reporting daily on the jobs available for women in the yard and shops, handling disciplinary problems, and keeping daily and weekly records of absence, separations, and accidents. Though large-scale expansion in women's employment was expected momentarily at time of visit, the well-organized personnel department was equipped to meet the problems that inevitably would arise, thus saving production time and turn-over.

In another private shipyard employing nearly 1,600 women in the summer of 1943 a similar organization was in force but without such smooth functioning. Its intake and placement procedure was especially satisfactory. The chief weakness was the lack of follow-up of women workers on the job; only problems so pressing as to reach the central office were attended to. The two field representatives working out of the personnel office were given little authority beyond fact finding and, in any case, were too few to shoulder counseling responsibility for so large an employment load.

It is to be expected that examples of the weaker or more imperfect approaches to the personnel function with women are the more easily found. The shipyards are still feeling their way. Women have been part of the picture less than a year in most cases, and consequently perfection can hardly be expected. It is more economical, however, to learn from others' experience than to muddle through. It is for this reason that a few examples of poorly organized personnel work with women are presented here.

In one yard the woman personnel counselor in the main office was too young and ineffective for the post, and the matrons employed in each department of the yard where girls were working had as their sole responsibility checking to see that the workers did not congregate to chat or smoke in the rest rooms. This was a fruitless and negative way of dealing with the nearly 550 women operatives employed. Policing has been found less effective than counseling as a method of teaching employees good work habits. It was promising, however, that the chief personnel officer, a man, was considering at time of visit hiring as his assistant a capable and efficient woman to take over the women's program.

Perhaps the most frequently encountered cause of failure in the women's personnel program is the fact that too little cooperation and responsibility for shaping or carrying out major programs affecting

the women workers is given women personnel counselors. A Women's Bureau field representative reported of a woman personnel executive and the woman interviewer under her in a large east coast yard that "their * * * authority is not very strong, and they are following rather than helping to form policies or procedures * * * it is probably no accident that the person selected as 'dean' appears to be lacking confidence and experience."

The situation in a west coast shipyard is described by a Women's Bureau representative as follows:

> There is no clear-cut line of duties and authority. Miss X, who is supposed to be in charge of the entire women's employment program in all the ———— yards, is more of a public relations person than coordinator of women's counselor functions. Her activities are concentrated more on outside contacts, and she has little knowledge of the problems of the women in the yards. Hence, there is no central direction as to what the women counselors in the shops can and cannot do.
>
> The women counselors who are most effective are those who have somewhat "bluffed" their way through and made foremen and yard people think they had authority when actually they had not. However, most of the activities of the counselors center around office work, and they have little contact with women out in the yards.
>
> The women safety inspectors, on the other hand, are out in the yard constantly. And it has developed that they are counselors as well as safety inspectors because of their day-to-day contacts with the women on the job. Consequently, a friction has arisen between the two groups.

The chief women's counselor in another yard had to struggle with her immediate superior in charge of employee relations about every action she wished to take in the women's program. In still another case a woman with good background and a variety of experience reported that the shop and department supervisors refuse assistance from the main personnel office. Consequently, new policies affecting women workers had to be submitted to them with the utmost tact and in trepidation for the outcome. The woman personnel officer could accomplish little except by indirect approach even with the main personnel office. She had to grope her way and consequently felt most insecure in her poorly defined position. Yet she was well equipped to do an intelligent and worth-while job in women's personnel relations in this large yard employing nearly 1,500 women productive workers.

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See also the following publications of the United States Department of Labor that will be helpful to counselors wanting information on standards relating to working conditions:

Division of Labor Standards. Special Bulletin No. 13. *Wartime Working Conditions.* 1943. 25 pp.

Women's Bureau. Special Bulletins:

2. *Lifting Heavy Weights in Defense Industries.* 1941. 11 pp.
3. *Safety Clothing for Women in Industry.* 1941. 11 pp.
4. *Washing and Toilet Facilities for Women in Industry.* 1942. 11 pp.
5. *Women's Effective War Work Requires Time for Meals and Rest.* 1942. 4 pp.
6. *Night Work for Women and Shift Rotation in War Plants.* 1942. 8 pp.
9. *Safety Caps for Women in War Factories.* 1942. 4 pp.
10. *Women's Effective War Work Requires Good Posture.* 1943. 6 pp.




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