

Secretaries: Give raises, not flowers

During Professional Secretaries Week, April 24-30, many secretaries will be treated to lunch by their bosses and will receive flowers at their desks.

According to a national survey, secretaries would rather have better salaries, greater opportunity for advancement and more professional recognition. The survey also showed that many executives don't realize what their secretaries think about their jobs.

The survey of secretaries and executives, sponsored by Minolta Corp.'s Business Equipment Division in cooperation with Professional Secretaries International (PSI), showed that almost all secretaries feel there are limitations within their companies.

About two-thirds cited problems in raises, career advancement and status within their organizations. Half felt

there are limits on the levels of responsibility they can achieve.

One-fourth mentioned limited professional contact with executives and managerial staff. About the same number believe there is sex discrimination.

Executives' perceptions in these areas differ significantly from those of their secretaries. A lower percentage of executives mentioned each of the areas listed as a limitation, and 24 percent did not feel any of the limitations existed in their companies.

EVEN WITH the perceived limitations, secretaries are generally satisfied with their jobs. But only one-third of those under 30 are sure they want to continue their careers as secretaries. They view their jobs as stepping stones to supervisory and management positions.

Even with the perceived limitations, secretaries are generally satisfied with their jobs.

The younger secretaries tend to be better educated than the average. In general, they are more willing to take action which will help them achieve their career goals than are older secretaries. They are more willing to go back to school or change companies, and one-fourth are even willing to relocate to another city.

One other area of concern which emerged from the survey had to do with health problems experience by secretaries using certain types of automated office equipment.

More than half of all responding secretaries reported eye strain, and nearly half complained of neck and back aches as a result of using word processors and other equipment with CRT display screens. About one-quarter said they have experienced headaches and stress related to using the equipment.

Despite these physiological problems, secretaries — and executives — are overwhelmingly in favor of office automation. Secretaries agreed almost unanimously that office automation will allow them to produce higher volumes of work and be more efficient.

VIRTUALLY none of the secretaries

see automation as a threat to their employment. In fact, more than three-fourths expect office automation to open up new career opportunities for secretaries. Executives tend to agree with their secretaries. But they are somewhat more likely to view automation as a threat to secretaries' jobs (7 percent vs. 1 percent).

According to a follow-up telephone survey of 10 percent of the respondents, more than half the secretaries and executives describing their offices as automated agreed that automation has increased secretarial productivity. More than half the executives but only one-third of the secretaries feel automation has improved managerial productivity.

The survey, "The Evolving Role of the Secretary in the Information Age," questioned more than 2,000 members of Professional Secretaries International and 1,000 of the executives with whom they work. The survey was commissioned by Minolta in order to fully understand the role and attitudes of secretaries in today's modern office environment. It was conducted by C.A. Pesko Associates, a Massachusetts-based research organization specializing in the information processing industry.

Minolta's Business Equipment Division markets office copiers in the United States. Professional Secretaries International is an organization with more than 800 chapters in the United States and Canada. PSI was previously known as the National Secretaries Association.

This table shows how secretaries and executives polled by Minolta Corp. felt about the subjects. For example, 69 percent of the secretaries but only 51 percent of the executives thought getting a higher salary was a problem.

Feel secretaries are limited	% sec.	% exec.
Higher salaries	69	51
Career advancement	68	41
Sense of status	66	33
Level of responsibility	60	24
Sex discrimination	23	7
Variety of work	19	12
Other	8	4
*not available		

Experts offer tips to analyze finances

Analyzing your financial affairs can be an eye-opening experience, especially if you haven't taken a good, hard look at your assets and liabilities in a while. Looking at your net worth on an annual basis should be part of your overall financial planning goals.

To help you achieve this goal, bankers, lawyers, accountants and insurance representatives have proclaimed April as "Family Affairs Month" with the objective of getting you to review your financial assets and liabilities.

When was the last time you reviewed your net worth? If it's been a while, here are some questions you should ask yourself:

- Are your important papers kept together in a safe place? Things you should consider are: marriage and birth records, stocks and bonds, deeds and mortgages, tax records and cancelled checks, insurance policies and wills. A safe deposit box is a good investment here.

- Does someone else — spouse, adult-age children, relative or close friend — know where these papers are? Records are of no value if they cannot be located when the need arises.

- Is your life insurance and homeowner's insurance adequate? Often individuals do not consider the impact inflation can make and actually are underinsured for the time. A yearly assessment will guard against this. Some policies now include provisions for an automatic coverage increase.

A listing of your assets and liabilities on a yearly basis can help you more effectively reach your goal of financial security.

- Do you have access to some ready cash in a savings account? A number of factors must be taken into consideration when addressing this question. However, three months' net income is considered a minimum even when there is adequate insurance. A word of caution for families with dual income: If the household budget and standard of living have been established utilizing both parties' paychecks, the emergency savings should be adjusted to reflect this in the event both would be unable to work.

- Do you have a will? And, is it up to date? Laws change and so do families. People who die without leaving a will risk having their estate divided up in a way contrary to their wishes by a

court-appointed administrator not of their choosing. They also risk having the estate reduced by a lack of tax planning.

- Do you have a fair idea of what your retirement income will be? What about that of your spouse? You should count in Social Security, retirement pension, and income from investments and insurance.

- And last but not least, a crucial issue that must be assessed is your total net worth. Can you accurately write yours down? A listing of your assets and liabilities on a yearly basis can help you more effectively reach your goal of financial security. A balance sheet will help you assess more realistically where you are today so you can get to where you want to be in the future.

To assist you with the review of your net worth, write for a personal free copy of the Family Affairs Monthly Balance Sheet: Consumer Affairs, Manufacturers Bank, 411 W. Lafayette, Detroit 48226. (The author is director of Consumer and Urban Affairs for Manufacturers National Bank of Detroit.)

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May 1 is this year's Sun Day
The sixth annual Sun Day celebration will be held from noon to 5 p.m. Sunday, May 1, in Southfield Civic Center Park, Civic Center Drive and Evergreen.
It will be coordinated by local industries involved in harnessing the sun, Eaton Corp. of Livonia, and Star Park and Alternative Energy Industry Association of Novi.
The first Sun Day on May 3, 1978 was celebrated by an estimated 20 million people in 31 nations. Highlights of the event will be a display of examples of the state of the art since then. These include a solar photovoltaic demonstration, solar hot water and air systems and talks by alternative energy experts.
A softball game will be held from 2-4 p.m. For more information call Patrick Fitzpatrick or Dave Germalin at 261-4130.

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