DO YOU SEEK YOUR PLACE IN LIFE?
SELL YOURSELF TO BUY YOUR FORTUNE

By JOHN B. EVANS
Director of Placement

Very shortly you will be in the midst of company interviews and therefore, I thought a few suggestions along this line might be helpful.

Each one of you is a salesman even though you may feel that your interests lie in other fields. The product you have to sell is you; your personality, abilities and qualifications. A sale can never be made until the buyer is quite certain that he wants the product. Your Placement office, professors and friends can obtain a list of prospects for you, but in the final analysis, you must "close the sale."

To sell his product the salesman must have a definite plan in mind. First, decide what you are best qualified to do. Where do your interests lie? Do you prefer working with people or with machines? Which of your abilities receives the most praise? On the jobs that you have held, which did you enjoy the most and which the least? What are some of your leisure time hobbies and activities? What do you consider essential to success in life? Remember, you must be interested in your work in order to enjoy it. From this self-analysis, you should have some idea as to why you chose your present course of study, the type of work you would like when you graduate and what qualifications you have that you can use in selling your services.

The next step is to locate and know something about your prospects. You should have some idea as to whether you would like to work for a large or a small company, to work at home or abroad, etc. Finding your prospects can be done by using Placement office files; letters of application and by personal solicitation. Help yourself to literature which is available in the Placement office.

In order to show the interviewer what you can do for him and where you would fit in his organization, you should know something about his company. Be familiar with the product made, the size, stability and reputation of his company as well as knowing something about the competitors in the same field.

Most salesmen present a calling card prior to the interview. In your case, this would be the completed application, (or better still a resume of yourself), your grade transcript and other personal records which will be in your Placement office file. However, your "calling card" will not be presented until after the interview is terminated.

You are now ready to start "selling." Remember, appear on time, neatly dressed, as first impressions are very important. Carry yourself erectly and walk confidently. Use a firm handshake, reflecting friendliness and confidence. Take some initiative in opening the interview yourself. State the purpose of your visit briefly, but completely. Do not give a "canned speech." Your deportment during the interview is important. Be courteous and know when to listen. Do not be too cocky. Do not (1) tell how badly you need a job (2) discuss your personal difficulties or (3) knock a previous employer. It is difficult for anyone else to tell you how to "toot your horn." All we can do is urge you to be moderate.

The company interviewer will be interested in knowing something about your personality, school activities, grades, course of study and part-time work.