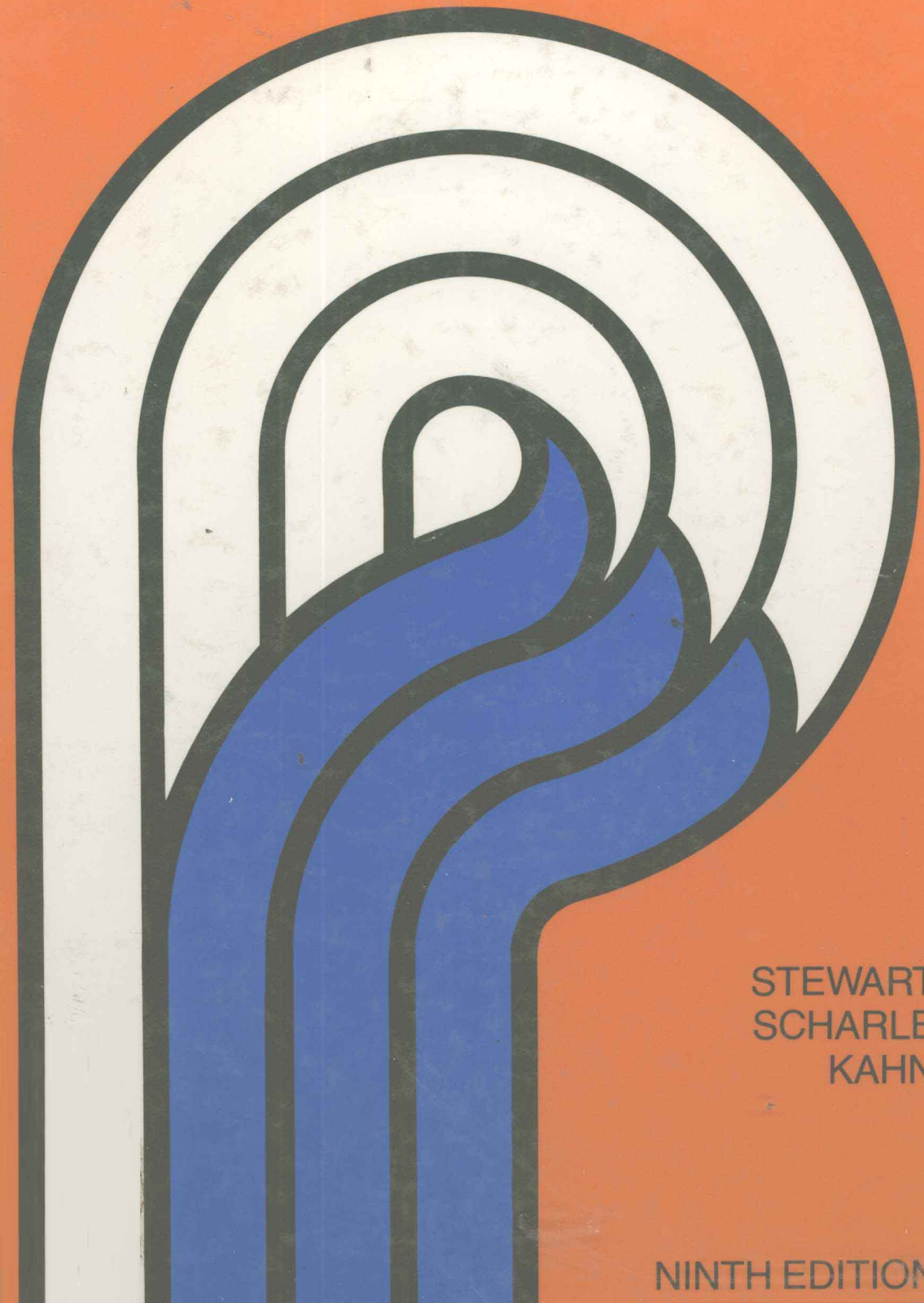
PROGRESSIVE FILING



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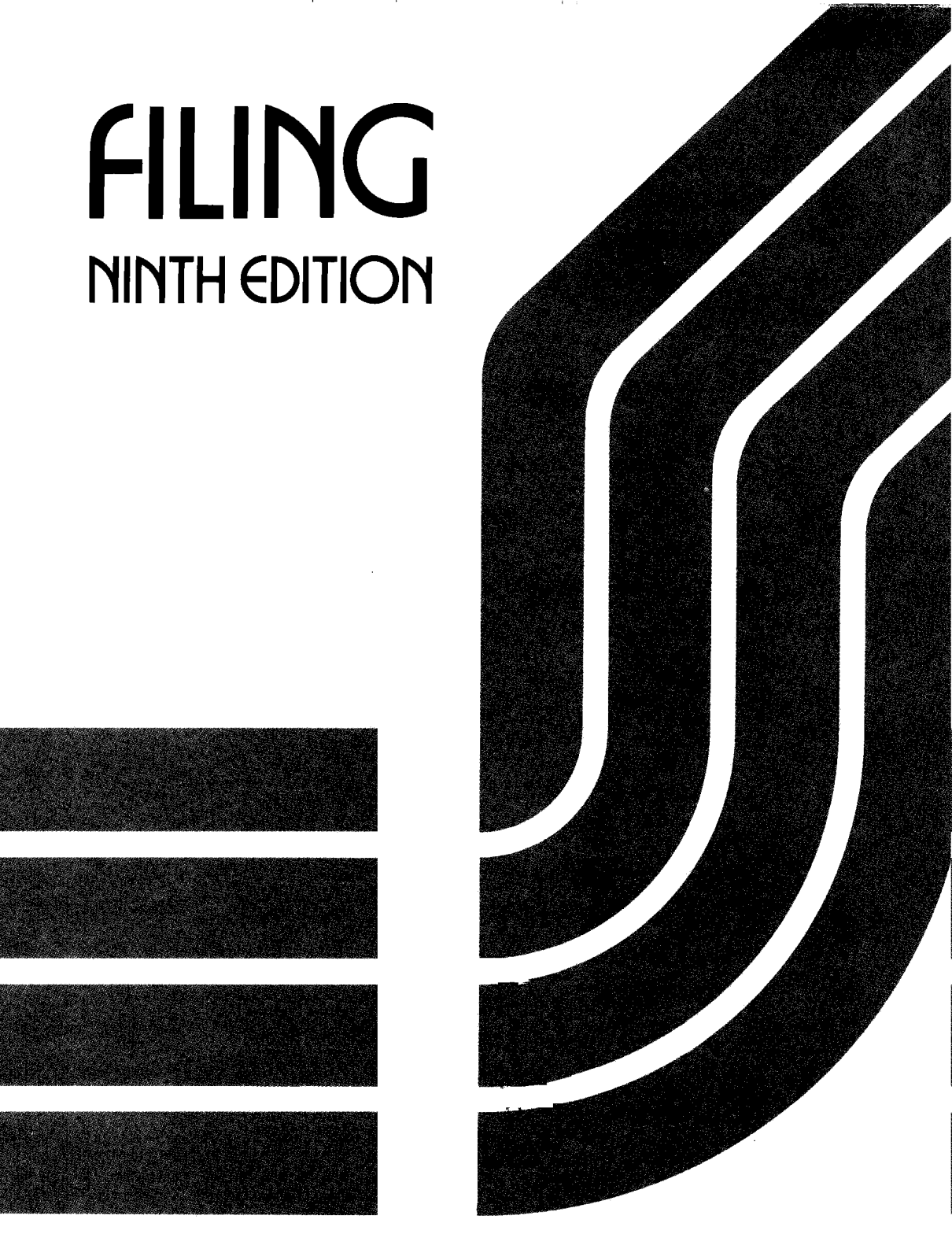

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Preface

Progressive Filing, Ninth Edition, treats the major filing and records management competencies needed for entry-level employment in a wide range of office occupations. Whether the student will be employed in a secretarial, stenographic, typing, accounting, word processing, data processing, or records management occupation, the skills and information needed to deal with the paperwork associated with these jobs are presented in this book. Specific competencies are listed at the beginning of each chapter (including competencies correlated with the *Practice Set for Progressive Filing, Ninth Edition*). Reference is made to each competency in the chapter, and practice on each competency is provided within or at the end of each chapter. It is therefore easy for both student and teacher to select those competencies that will be most applicable to the office position sought by the student and to tailor the filing course to the student's needs.

Features

The ninth edition retains many of the features of the previous edition and includes several new elements that take into account the changes in office technology and procedures.

Structured Presentation of Indexing Rules. The newly revised indexing rules are now treated in two chapters. Chapter 2 presents the indexing rules that deal with names of individuals; Chapter 3 covers the rules that apply to business and organization names. The presentation of the rules is structured so that the student receives practice on a few rules at a time and progresses from the less complex rules to those that are more complex.

Liberal Use of Illustrations. A hallmark of *Progressive Filing* for many years has been its visual approach to filing. The ninth edition, too, provides many illustrations of forms, systems, steps, supplies, and equipment.

New Treatment of Work Station Organization. An entirely new chapter is devoted to the organization of the employee's work station on the job. Chapter 7 deals with the arrangement of the desk top and desk

drawers, as well as with forms files, log books, reference books for the desk, priority setting, follow-up files, and setting up new files at the work station. All these topics represent significant filing and records management activities for most office workers.

Correlated Practice Set. A completely new practice set has been developed for, and is correlated with, *Progressive Filing, Ninth Edition.* The *Practice Set for Progressive Filing, Ninth Edition,* contains guides and hanging folders for the seven most-used filing systems: (1) alphabetic card, (2) alphabetic correspondence, (3) alphabetic subject correspondence, (4) numeric subject correspondence, (5) consecutive numeric card, (6) terminal-digit card, and (7) geographic card. In addition, the set provides practice in preparing file labels, cross-referencing, organizing letters chronologically for follow-up, charging out letters, transferring letters from active to inactive status, and filing correspondence geographically. The set includes all the cards, letters, answer sheets, and other forms needed to complete the jobs in the set. The *Practice Set* also includes comprehensive performance and objective tests.

Supporting Materials

The following publications are available and may be used to supplement *Progressive Filing, Ninth Edition,* and the *Practice Set for Progressive Filing.*

Gregg Filing Transparencies, Volume I: Alphabetic Indexing, presents the 25 indexing rules as well as illustrated instructions for steps in card filing, typing captions on file cards, and cross-referencing in card files.

Gregg Filing Transparencies, Volume II: Systems and Procedures, contains illustrations and teacher's guide notes on filing systems and procedures, including alphabetic, numeric, subject, and geographic.

Workbook Exercises in Alphabetic Filing, Third Edition, provides file cards containing over 650 names for extensive practice in the application of the 25 indexing rules.

Teacher's Manual and Key for Progressive Filing, Ninth Edition, includes teaching suggestions, alternate time schedules, and a complete key to *Progressive Filing, Ninth Edition,* the *Practice Set for Progressive Filing,* and the tests included in the *Practice Set.* The objective tests in the *Practice Set* are also printed in the *Teacher's Manual* so that teachers who do not have the *Practice Set* may reproduce them for their classes.

Acknowledgment

The authors appreciate the constructive ideas and suggestions received from the many users of the previous editions of *Progressive Filing.*

Jeffrey R. Stewart, Jr.
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Contents

Chapter 1	Survey of Filing Systems and Career Skills	1
Chapter 2	Card-Filing Names of Individuals	9
Chapter 3	Card-Filing Business and Organization Names	27
Chapter 4	Organizing Alphabetic Correspondence Files	45
Chapter 5	Alphabetic Correspondence Filing Procedures	55
Chapter 6	Subject Correspondence Filing Procedures	71
Chapter 7	Organizing Your Work Station	87
Chapter 8	Numeric Filing Systems	103
Chapter 9	Geographic Filing Systems	113
Chapter 10	Filing Systems for Modern Office Technology	121
	Glossary	129
	Index	134

Chapter

1

Survey of Filing Systems and Career Skills

Competencies

1.1 Define *filing.*

1.2 State the purpose of filing in business.

1.3 Name jobs in which filing skills are needed.

1.4 Describe how filing may be used for job advancement.

1.5 Identify the skills needed in filing.

1.6 Identify the filing system that would be most useful for a given type of business.

1.7 Define *micrographics* and give two or more examples of the use of micrographics in business.

1.8 State the importance of the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act to the file worker.

Purpose of a Filing System

1.1 Written communications—reports, letters, memorandums, order forms, and so on—are needed for the everyday operations of business firms and other organizations. If businesses are to stay in business and to operate efficiently, it is important for them to store these written communications in a standard, systematic manner. *Filing is simply the classifying, arranging, and storing of records so that they can be found quickly whenever they are needed.* So that anyone can file and find records easily and efficiently, a set of basic rules for filing must be followed by all.

1.2 Once you learn to use one ten-key adding machine, you can use any ten-key adding machine that has a similar keyboard. In the same way, once you know the basic rules of filing, you can file and find records rapidly as long as you follow the basic rules. Remember, files are of no value to a business if records cannot be found when they are needed. Thus we can say that the purpose of a filing system is *retrieval,* or the finding and removal of records from files.

Filing in Office Occupations

1.3 Filing will be one of your responsibilities when you accept an office job. Whether you work in a centralized filing department, or whether you keep files just for yourself, keep only some of your supervisor's files, or keep all of your supervisor's files, filing is a basic part of office work.

Filing as a Job Entry-Level Skill

If you can tell a person interviewing you that you know how to organize papers, file them in good order, and find them quickly, you will most likely make a favorable impression. Some office workers never bother to learn the basic rules for filing, yet the inability to locate a record when it is needed can throw an entire office into chaos. Every office occupation requires the knowledge of some kind of system for filing written records.

Secretaries, typists, stenographers, and other office workers all need filing skills to perform some of their job responsibilities, and more and more jobs now require filing as the primary responsibility of the office worker. Many organizations have centralized filing departments; these departments are staffed with skilled file workers. It is the responsibility of the file worker to classify and file records as well as to remove records from the files as they are requested by other departments. It is the job of some of these file workers to make sure that the records are returned to the filing department by a specific date.

The number of occupations that require filing skills has increased in the last decade. Computers, micrographics (the process of reducing records to miniature size), and word processing centers (offices or de-

Sybil Shelton/Monkmeyer

An interviewer will want to know if an applicant for an office position is able to take charge of files related to the job.

partments with automatic typewriters and other automatic equipment) have added to the number of jobs available for people with a knowledge of the fundamentals of filing.

Automatic data processing equipment has improved the efficiency of many businesses—large and small alike. However, the large volume of data that such machines produce has made it increasingly difficult to organize and file records. Not only is the *volume* of data that such automatic printers produce greater because of the speed of production, but the *size* of the paper on which computers print out records is usually larger than the standard sizes of paper used in offices. The media (or form) used as input for computers—punched cards, magnetic tape, or punched tape—must also be stored. Data processing employees require special skills for filing and finding such records.

Word processing centers have similar problems. The unusual media used by the machines, and the written records produced by such

Kenneth Karp

A good way for a new employee to start learning the job is to consult the files.

machines, must be organized and filed in such a way that they can be found quickly when needed. As a word processing employee, part of your job may include the filing of documents and other kinds of records for use by you or others at a later date.

Filing in Management Positions

1.4 Knowing how to classify and how and where to store records is important for people who want to move into positions in records management and information processing. A records manager plans and sets up systems for organizing and controlling records. Information processing is another area where management positions are opening up. The manager of an information processing unit plans, sets up, and implements procedures for recording and distributing information within the company.

Filing in Other Occupations

1.3 Apart from its obvious importance in business, filing is a very useful skill in many other occupations. Doctors, lawyers, journalists, teachers, auto mechanics, cosmetologists, printers, electricians, and salespeople

all use files at some point or other. It is worth your while to study hard and to learn that filing is not the mere putting away of records and forgetting about them! Filing is essential to business: without the *organization, protection,* and *control* of records, businesses cannot function.

Filing Skills, Attitudes, and Aptitudes

1.5 Skills in filing come with the knowledge of some very basic indexing rules. If each employee made up his or her own rules for filing information, no one else would be able to find that information. And even the person who made up the rules may soon forget them! So that anyone can file records and find them when they are needed, there must be a set of basic filing rules. For this reason, file workers must be skilled in the use of the alphabet and numbers, and they must know how to read and write numbers accurately. File workers should also be able to pay special attention to details. Some skill in handling papers and file folders is necessary; this can be further developed with experience. An attitude of promptness and efficiency is very important in order to assure that all records and communications are filed regularly. All in all, the file worker must be a good organizer.

The Four Basic Filing Systems

1.6 Records are filed in such a way that will make them easiest to find. There are four basic systems of filing: *alphabetic, subject, numeric,* and *geographic.* The alphabet in its proper order is used in all systems of filing because names usually provide the *captions* (the names or letters under which records are filed) for the storing of records.

In *alphabetic* systems, the captions are generally names of people or organizations. In *subject* systems, the captions are names of objects (usually products) or categories of information (such as advertising, travel expenses, personnel policies, and so on). In *numeric* systems, the captions are numbers that have been assigned to names and subjects. In *geographic* systems, the captions are names of places. Businesses and other kinds of organizations do not usually make use of all four systems. Instead, they use only those systems that best fit their needs. For example, organizations that handle a great deal of correspondence from other organizations or from individuals often find the alphabetic system of filing most useful. Using the letters of the alphabet in their proper order makes it possible to store correspondence according to the names of these organizations or individuals.

A business that deals with products, such as an office machines retail store, may wish to organize its files according to subject. Hence its files might have captions such as these: *Adding Machines, Bookkeeping Machines, Calculators, Dictation Equipment,* and so on.

Businesses such as drugstores that deal with prescription numbers, insurance companies that deal with policy numbers, government offices that issue licenses, and other businesses whose transactions are

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Jane Hamilton-Merritt

The ability to organize papers, file them, and *find them* is needed in almost every occupation.

identified by numbers, use a numeric filing system. Government offices that handle transactions with states or cities or other political divisions find it more efficient to file their records geographically. Businesses with branch offices, where sales are accounted for by territory, often use geographic files.

Sometimes one system will overlap another. For example, in an alphabetic system there may be a few cases where records can be filed more efficiently by subject. Correspondence might be filed according to the name of the correspondent, but records relating to employee vacations, for example, might be filed under *Employee Vacations.* In some subject systems, the name of a person or geographic title may appear. You will find that many of the statements made about the procedures and materials of, say, alphabetic filing apply to all other filing systems.

You will study each of these systems—alphabetic, subject, numeric, and geographic—in detail as you complete this text (and the *Progressive Filing Practice Set,* if you have it). The important thing to remember is that the basic goal of any filing system is retrieval. For this reason, businesses use those systems that are most efficient for their needs. Some businesses may need to use all four systems while others may use only one or two of them. Whatever the business, the system of

filing used must be the one that is most convenient for people who work with—and are responsible for—files.

Micrographics

1.7 Besides the storing of business records in their original size, another well-established means of storing records is *micrographics,* or microphotography. This technique makes it possible for businesses to store records in reduced size. These records are maintained on microfilm and can be stored in single-frame lengths, on reels, or on sheets of film. The single-frame lengths are mounted on special cards that are called *aperture cards.* All these reduced records are called *microforms.* Once a record has been filmed, it can be viewed on a projector that enlarges it to its approximate original size. Since space can be a problem in maintaining records, the use of micrographics saves a considerable amount of money in storage space. For example, a single microfilm cabinet can hold, on rolls of film, the contents of at least 160 four-drawer file cabinets equipped to store letter-size records.

More and more often, banks are using microfilm to store copies of canceled checks. Department stores, dairies, and bus companies make use of microfilm in their billing operations. With the proper equipment, businesses can convert microfilm copy to original-size paper documents.

The Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act

1.8 In 1974 Congress passed two laws to protect the individual against misuse of information on file. One of these laws is the Freedom of Information Act, which gives you the right to ask for information that pertains to you. Examples of records which might be requested include those kept by doctors, dentists, lawyers, priests, and psychiatrists. Also, records of educational institutions, government agencies, and lending institutions that have information about you are available to read when you obtain permission from the organization that maintains those records.

The other law which was passed at the same time was called the Privacy Act. This law controls information which is readily available to the public. It serves to safeguard individual privacy. For someone to see your records within a particular organization, your permission is necessary.

What does this mean to you if you are a file worker? If you are responsible for files that are covered by the acts, you may have to screen people who request access to the files. You may be in charge of checking permission granted to people to use the files or to see that persons requesting various files sign a logbook. You also might have the authority to refuse access to certain records and documents. These respon-

sibilities may make it necessary for you to qualify for a security classification in order to work for a government agency.

Hence we can say that the Freedom of Information Act allows you to see records about yourself. The Privacy Act limits those people who are allowed to see information about you in the files.

◆ HAVE YOU MET YOUR COMPETENCIES?

1.1 Define *filing.*

1.2 State the purpose of a filing system.

1.3 Name six jobs in which filing skills are needed.

1.4 Describe the possibilities for advancement in filing jobs.

1.5 Identify the skills needed in filing records.

1.6 Which system of filing would be used in each of the following examples?

Note: The last three examples may need more than one type of filing system.

1. Prescriptions in a drugstore.
2. Accounts in a billing department of a large department store.
3. Correspondence from a large number of people and organizations.
4. Records needed by a member of Congress who deals with a number of regions of the country.
5. A chemical company that deals with a variety of chemicals for industrial use.
6. A large food distribution company that has branch offices in thirty states.
7. A real estate firm that deals with twenty-one types of real estate.
8. An industrial kitchen equipment company that deals with people, organizations, and products.
9. An architect whose projects are identified by numbers and who has a large amount of correspondence in addition to those projects.
10. A merchandising firm whose accounts are listed by number but which also deals with products.

1.7 Define *micrographics* and give two or more examples of the use of micrographics in business.

1.8 State the importance of the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act to the file worker.

Chapter

2

Card-Filing Names of Individuals

Competencies

2.1 Write or type the names of individuals in indexing order on file cards.

2.2 Alphabetize, using rough and fine sorting, and find cards on which names of individuals have been typed or written in indexing order.

2.3 Prepare alphabetic cross-reference cards containing names of individuals and arrange them in sequence with alphabetic cards.

2.4 State the importance of address files in the business office.

2.5 Name two types of equipment that can be used for the storage of address files.

2.6 Demonstrate the procedure for placing information on address cards.

2.7 Using an alphabetic card file with guides, file and find cards containing the names of individuals. Use appropriate rough and fine sorting procedures. (See Jobs 1 through 8 in the *Progressive Filing Practice Set.*)

2.8 Prepare alphabetic cross-reference cards and arrange them in sequence in an alphabetic card file. (See Jobs 6 and 7 in the *Progressive Filing Practice Set.*)

Just as there are rules for setting up a letter on the typewriter, there are also rules for filing records in the office. These rules are called *indexing rules.* Indexing rules determine the order in which records are filed. Such rules must be followed by everyone who uses files.

Fundamental Filing Terms

Before you learn the indexing rules, you must first become familiar with some of the filing terms that you will need to use.

2.2 **Alphabetic Arrangement.** Indexing rules, you will see, are set up so that names are arranged according to the alphabet. Most people are already aware of this method, which is often called *alphabetizing.* For example, let us use the four names *Allen, Bryant, Morris,* and *Walters.* They are listed in that order because in the alphabet the first letter of *Allen* comes before the first letter of *Bryant.* The first letter of *Bryant* comes before the first letter of *Morris,* and the first letter of *Morris* comes before the first letter of *Walters.* The name *Burton* would follow *Bryant* because the second letter in *Burton* follows the second letter in *Bryant* in the alphabet even though the first letter of both names is the same.

Unit. Each part of the name of a person or organization is called a *unit.* For example, in the name *Arthur Ray Allen* there are three units: *Arthur, Ray,* and *Allen.* Names of firms also have units, such as *Barretts Paper Container Company,* which has four units: *Barretts, Paper, Container,* and *Company.*

Indexing. *Indexing* is the selection of a name or caption under which a record is to be filed. When you select a caption, you must determine the order in which the units are to be considered. For example, in the name *Margaret Ferguson,* indexing would occur when you were making the decision to file the record under the first name, *Margaret,* or under the last name, *Ferguson.* If you were deciding whether to file *Herman Ferguson* before or after *Margaret Ferguson,* you would also be indexing. The indexing process takes place *mentally,* and it is very important. Indexing must be completed before records are actually placed in the files.

Surname, Given Name, and Middle Name. The name *Arthur Ray Allen* contains three parts: a surname, a given name, and a middle name. The last name, *Allen,* is the *surname;* the first name, *Arthur,* is the *given name;* and *Ray* is the *middle name.* You will use these terms again and again as you learn and apply the indexing rules.

Rules for Filing

The prevailing indexing rules are used in all businesses. The twenty-five rules presented in this chapter and in Chapter 3 are divided into five sections. The first two sections, in this chapter, deal with names of individuals. The last three sections, in Chapter 3, deal with names of firms and organizations, names of government agencies, and names of other institutions.

Following each section of rules, there are exercises in which you will use the rules you have learned. The exercises include practice on the rules you have just studied as well as on rules studied in previous sections.

RULE 1. ALPHABETIC ORDER

Alphabetize names by comparing the first units of the names letter by letter. Consider second units only when the first units are identical. Consider third units only when both the first and second are identical, and so on.

Note: If two names are identical, consider addresses (see Rule 18).

NAME	UNIT 1	UNIT 2	UNIT 3
Ajax	Ajax		
Baker	Baker		
Berkley	Berkley		
Berry Repairs	Berry	Repairs	
Berry Services	Berry	Services	
Carter Power Equipment	Carter	Power	Equipment
Carter Power Fixtures	Carter	Power	Fixtures

RULE 2. NOTHING COMES BEFORE SOMETHING

A name consisting of a single letter comes before a name consisting of a word that begins with the same letter. A name consisting of one word comes before a name that consists of the same word plus one or more other words. A name consisting of two or more words comes before a name that consists of the same two or more words plus another word, and so on.

NAME	UNIT 1	UNIT 2	UNIT 3
A	A		
Abbott Ballet	Abbott	Ballet	
Abbott Ballet Supplies	Abbott	Ballet	Supplies

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