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fifth edition

Complete Secretary's Handbook

Lillian Doris & Besse May Miller

REVISED BY MARY A. DeVRIES

COMPLETE SECRETARY'S HANDBOOK

fifth
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Mary A. De Vries

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An Important Message from the Reviser

Something is happening in the business world—something of crucial importance to secretaries everywhere, at every level of expertise. That something, very simply, is called “opportunity.” Every day, businesses and organizations of all types are adapting to the rapid spread of modern technology and advanced communications by training their personnel to function more effectively and more efficiently in this changing environment.

Secretaries have become prime beneficiaries of our new, modern business world. For every advanced operation and every streamlined procedure, a new opportunity arises for you to assume greater responsibility, to enjoy a more exciting and appealing work environment, and to develop and use your important secretarial skills and creative talents. Best of all, this new world has an open door to a wider selection of available positions, more avenues to professional advancement, and better pay for the secretary who takes advantage of a myriad of professional opportunities.

Since the previous edition of *Complete Secretary's Handbook* was published in 1977, significant—almost revolutionary—changes have occurred in offices nationwide. The increasing emphasis on using the latest techniques and procedures has had a strong impact on the secretarial profession. To help you keep in stride with the new look of the eighties, this edition offers some extensive and timely changes: how to modernize and improve your secretarial techniques; how to use new and better procedures; how to select, operate, and maintain modern equipment; and how to handle new duties and responsibilities. Of course, many of the principles and techniques described in the previous edition are still essential and basic to the functioning of any office. All of these time-tested and proven methods have been retained in this edition and, combined with the many new and improved practices and procedures described throughout, they provide everything you need to know to handle your job easily and successfully.

To bring you the latest information on practices, procedures, and office equipment and products, it was necessary to expand and reorganize the contents of the previous edition. However, the material is still arranged in five key parts: Techniques for General Secretarial Duties, How to Write Good Letters and Memos, How to Write Correctly, the Secretary's Handy Information Guide, and Glossary of Important Busi-

ness Terms. These five parts consist of twenty-four chapters, including five completely new chapters, and introducing a helpful review section at the end of each chapter that summarizes “Key Points to Remember.”

Part 1 has twelve chapters covering a broad range of practical information about general secretarial duties: using effective filing and follow-up techniques, developing good typing and stenographic skills, handling in and out mail efficiently, using postal information to save money and time, using the telephone effectively, sending telegrams and cables, making travel arrangements, using proper business etiquette, and four all-new chapters on keeping company books and records, preparing and publishing reports, making meeting arrangements, and developing personal skills and good human relations. The following are a few examples of the vast amount of new and updated information in these chapters:

- using computers and other automated processes (page 59)
- organizing work and planning ahead (page 81)
- researching and writing reports (page 100)
- maintaining mailing lists (page 136)
- making arrangements for meetings (page 194)
- keeping office and company books (page 230)
- finding and interviewing new employees (page 300)

Today’s secretary must know how to correct the writing of others and how to prepare her own material. Thus parts 2 and 3 have nine chapters that show you the fastest and easiest route to good grammar and good letter writing: mechanics of business correspondence, forms of address for official or honorary positions, valuable aids for good letter writing, model letters and memos, correct word usage, spelling and word division, punctuation, capitalization, and abbreviations. Thoroughly updated and expanded sections in these chapters describe the most recent styles and practices, for example:

- current forms for addressing women (page 316)
- timesaving form letters and memos (page 375)
- examples of goodwill letters, reminders, and collection letters (page 379)
- troublesome words and phrases (page 413)
- tips on improving your spelling (page 464)

correct use of parentheses and brackets (page 483)

basic rules for capitalizing headings and titles (page 494)

Finding information quickly is a regular duty for most secretaries. Part 4, therefore, provides two chapters to help you handle this task more efficiently. Some of the new, expanded, and updated information includes:

tips for looking up information (page 526)

basic library reference books (page 527)

a list of desk references for the secretary (page 537)

tables of metric weights, measures, and values (page 548)

a list of Greek letter symbols (page 555)

interest on \$100 at various rates for various periods (page 557)

Developing your vocabulary so you recognize and understand common business terminology is a must for every secretary. Part 5 offers you a new glossary of easy-to-remember definitions of selected business terms in three key areas—business law, business management, and accounting and finance, for example:

bill of exchange • negotiable instrument • consignment
• waiver • rescission • downtime • feedback • merit
rating • straight loan • pyramiding • workmen's compensa-
tion • depreciation • fixed assets • liabilities • posting •
trial balance • time sharing

Paralleling the sweeping changes taking place in today's business office, this fifth edition has undergone the most extensive revision of any edition to date. The broad scope of coverage has been geared to match the changing nature and ever widening scope of your own duties. Everything you need to know to work efficiently and effectively in a modern office is collected here in the same easy-to-read manner that characterized the previous editions. Specific directions to follow are given for each task, and an abundant supply of examples and illustrations accompanies the step-by-step instructions. Almost every page, in fact, offers you a practical solution to some problem or question. Thus with a copy of the *Complete Secretary's Handbook* on your desk for daily consultation, you can enter the business world of the eighties with a new sense of assurance, and you can approach the new requirements and opportunities of your job with confidence and ease.

Mary A. De Vries

Acknowledgments

This fifth edition of the *Complete Secretary's Handbook* was prepared with the help of numerous contributors and reviewers who offered an abundance of expert knowledge and constructive suggestions. In addition, many business firms, educational institutions, and associations supplied useful literature and other practical information. My thanks to all of them for the countless hours of time and the careful attention they generously gave to this project.

In particular, I want to thank Linda K. Brown, CPS, executive secretary and former business instructor at North Arkansas Community College, whose in-depth review of the fourth edition and detailed recommendations for the fifth edition helped form the basis of the extensive modernization and wide-ranging improvements contained in this book. Other invaluable assistance came from Suzanne Wylie, director of library services at Nathaniel Hawthorne College; Julie A. Dad, research consultant and co-owner of Research Unlimited; Mary Wolfe, manager of the Decker International travel agency; Jane M. Fullerton, account executive, Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith, Inc.; Jerry Heitman, executive director, Professional Secretaries International; and Gayle N. Fedrowitz, administrative assistant in Corporate Communications at the National Railroad Passenger Corporation.

Through the dedicated efforts of these and other contributors, who work for many different types of organizations across the country from New York to Los Angeles, I was able to collect the variety of current data and opinions essential for a handbook of this scope and depth. I genuinely appreciate the helpfulness and strong interest shown by so many individuals and organizations in this fifth edition of the *Complete Secretary's Handbook*.

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